

## INSIGHTS

## Global Community Backs Chinese Long-term Vision

## Voice of the World

By Staff Reporters

The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) convened its fourth plenary session in Beijing from October 20 to 23.

The participants deliberated over and adopted the Recommendations of the CPC Central Committee for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, according to a communique.

This important plenary session and the 15th Five-Year Plan for the 2026-2030 period attracted great attention from the international community. Many foreign media outlets indicated that China's long-term planning is not only vital to its own development but will also have a profound impact on the global economic landscape.

**Strategic resilience amid global shifts**

Faced with a complex and changing international situation, China has demonstrated strong strategic resilience and development tenacity, a quality that has become a key perspective through which the international community observed the meeting.

The *Financial Times* quoted Bert Hofman, a professor at the National University of Singapore, as saying: "I think it's a lot of continuity [and] not that much change" with "small nuanced changes" and "no big surprises."

The emphasis on continuity had a "tactical" element, he added. "[There are] lots of things going on in the world, upheaval, but China is continuing to implement their plan towards socialist modernization."

CNN highlighted China's strategic advantage in long-term planning, saying, "China sees an advantage: the long game." The report noted, "The country has raised hundreds of millions out of poverty, transformed into the world's second-largest economy and a global growth engine, and more recently emerged as a technological powerhouse



In a company located in east China's Zhejiang province, technicians operate industrial robots to produce components for new energy vehicles. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

and a proponent of the green transition across the world."

Sputnik News cited Russian Academy of Sciences expert Zakhar Shenkarev, called the 15th Five-Year Plan continuing the logic of the 14th Five-Year Plan while being more flexible, enabling China to respond quickly to turbulent external environments.

Dr. Imran Khalid, commentator for the *Pakistan Observer*, remarked, "What makes this meeting significant is not the prospect of dramatic shifts, but rather the reaffirmation of a steady, pragmatic vision that has enabled China to weather global uncertainty and maintain momentum as the world's second-largest economy."

**A plan to shape the world**

The international media and scholars said that due to its strategic layout and global spillover effects, the 15th Five-Year Plan will have significant implications for the global economic landscape and global governance.

The BBC published an article about how China's Five-Year Plans have changed the world, quoting Neil Thomas, a fellow in Chinese politics at the Asia Society Policy Institute, as saying: "Five-Year Plans spell out what China wants to achieve, signal the direction the leadership wants to go in and move the resources of the state towards these

predefined conclusions."

History tells us that what hundreds of Chinese leaders decide often has huge repercussions for the world, the BBC said.

The U.S.-based website *The Diplomat* reported: "Since the 1950s, these centrally formulated plans have served as the backbone of China's economic governance... Each plan sets the tone for the nation's social and economic priorities for half a decade, with ripple effects that extend far beyond China's borders. The upcoming 15th Five-Year Plan is therefore not simply a bureaucratic document; it is the single most important economic roadmap that will shape the direction of the world's second-largest economy through 2030."

India's *First Post* pointed out: "As the world's second-largest economy and leading manufacturer, China's policy direction influences global supply chains, investment flows, and commodity markets. The meeting's outcomes are particularly relevant to sectors such as semiconductors, renewable energy, electric mobility, and high-end manufacturing, where China's industrial policies could affect competition and pricing worldwide."

**Opportunities behind buzzwords**

"High-quality development," "innovation," and "high-standard opening up,"

these key terms from the communique have become focal points in international discourse, reflecting the global community's expectations for opportunities from China.

Japan's *Asahi TV* said the communique calls for "safeguarding the multilateral trading system" and "boosting consumption." According to the Japanese media, this reflects China's continued commitment to an open economy and multilateral cooperation, which will help stabilize international economic and trade relations.

Scientific and technological innovation, a key driving force of the economy, is being further integrated into the overall national development strategy.

Canada's *Digital Journal* emphasized that China's vitality comes from innovation. Under the guiding concept of new-quality productive forces, China's innovation system is shifting from being "R&D-driven" to becoming "collaboration-driven." China's "development certainty" has become a scarce global public good.

It is foreseeable that with the formal implementation of the 15th Five-Year Plan, this endogenous vitality will continue to transform into a driving force for global economic recovery, injecting lasting momentum into shared prosperity worldwide.

## Comment

## R&amp;D Fuels China's Innovation Surge

By LIANG Yilian

China has broken into the global innovation top 10 ranking for the first time, up one place from last year, according to the *Global Innovation Index 2025* report released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in September.

Notably, China remains the only middle-income economy among the top 30 economies in the ranking. Since 2013, its position has advanced from 35th to 10th, making it one of the fastest-climbing economies in innovation capacity worldwide.

China's steady ascent over more than a decade is much more than a flash in the pan, as it shows a systemic and sustainable rise in its innovation strength. This is demonstrated by the effectiveness of China's development model — driven by the synergy between an "effective market" and a "proactive government."

The government has long prioritized innovation, putting it at the core of the national strategy. China has established a comprehensive policy support system and continuously increased its investment in science and technology. In 2024, total R&D expenditure exceeded 3.6 trillion RMB, up 48 percent from 2020, while R&D intensity reached 2.68 percent, surpassing the European Union average. The country also leads the world in total number of R&D personnel.

The market sees enterprises as the

main engine of innovation. Fierce market competition and vibrant venture capital activity have fueled a powerful drive for technological advancement. Corporate R&D accounted for over 77 percent of total R&D spending, and in 2024, 524 mainland Chinese firms made it to the world's top 2,000 industrial R&D investors — 26.2 percent of the global total, up 4.8 percentage points from 2020. The number of high-tech enterprises has surpassed 500,000, an 83 percent increase from 2020.

China's innovation achievements have evolved from quantitative accumulation to qualitative breakthroughs, forming strong innovation clusters across regions. The country ranks fifth globally in innovation output, leading the world in key indicators such as patents, trademarks, scientific publications, and the number of top 100 global innovation clusters.

According to the WIPO, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou cluster topped the global innovation cluster rankings for the first time, underscoring the success of regional collaborative ecosystems and the growing concentration of innovation power.

In future-oriented sectors such as AI, new energy and biotechnology, China has secured a favorable position. Its vast domestic market continues to serve as a unique testing ground for technology iterations and commercialization — propelling China's innovation capacity, and its global ranking, ever higher.



Cars are getting ready for shipment at the Lianyungang Port in Jiangsu province, October 14. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

## Innovation Ecosystem in China Empowers Young Scientists

## Opinion

By LONG Yun

The 2025 World Young Scientist Summit (WYSS), held in Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, from October 24 to 26, has emerged as a powerful symbol of China's commitment to fostering a globally inclusive and supportive environment for scientific innovation.

As the third "Young Scientists Sustainable Development Goals Award" was announced at the event, drawing a record 204 applications from 29 countries and regions, it became clear that China is advancing its own technological frontiers and creating a dynamic ecosystem where global young scientists can innovate, collaborate and lead.

**A call for collaboration**

Donald Bruce Dingwell, president

of Academia Europaea and a foreign academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, set the tone of the summit with his address.

Applauding the WYSS as a "cornerstone event in the global scientific calendar" that was evolving into "a dynamic and open ecosystem of exchange," he emphasized that today's greatest challenges, such as climate change, energy security and biodiversity loss, "recognize no national borders."

Hoping that the era of isolated scientific endeavor was over, Dingwell said, "Our future depends on our ability to work together across borders and disciplines."

He placed young scientists at the heart of this collaborative future. "You are the true catalysts of innovation," he told the audience. "You arrive with new perspectives, unburdened by too much conventional wisdom."

But he warned that this potential

"cannot flourish in isolation." Therefore, he called on the established scientific community to provide young researchers not just with funding, but with leadership opportunities, mentorship, access to state-of-the-art facilities, and, above all, "the freedom to take intellectual

risks."

Dingwell's message was clear: A supportive environment that tolerates well-intentioned failure is essential for breakthroughs.

The award winners embodied the power of this open, collaborative model.

Professor Mariangela Russo of the University of Turin, Italy, whose research uncovered a key "stress response mechanism" in colorectal cancer cells that leads to drug resistance, was emphatic about the role of global partnership.

"This is not my personal achievement," she said. "I am here thanks to the collaboration of many colleagues in my lab, thanks to my mentor, and thanks to numerous collaborators around the world who have challenged my perspective."

**Rising center of science**

The vision of China as a rising center for global science is already shaping real-world career decisions at the highest levels. Stella Christie, vice minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology of Indonesia and a cognitive scientist, left tenured academic positions in the United States to join Tsinghua University in Beijing.

"The reason is simple," she said. "The future of science is in China."

Her decision reflects a growing trend: Scientists are increasingly being drawn to China's momentum, its substantial investment in research, and its ability to implement large-scale, interdisciplinary projects.

Describing China's research ecosys-

tem as "innovative, futuristic and implementing," Russo highlighted the environment that values not just ideas, but their execution. She urged young scientists to "be brave — be courageous enough — to question yourself, to question the way you think, a mindset nurtured by platforms like the WYSS."

Professor Wolfgang Tress of Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland, a leading researcher in photovoltaic technology, echoed this sentiment. "In China, there is tremendous growth and a strong drive for advancement," he told *Science and Technology Daily*. "The government and institutions provide substantial support and offer abundant resources, extensive development opportunities and a dynamic research environment."

He contrasted this with Europe, where "the situation tends to be more stable but often fragmented and less rapidly evolving." In the fields he is acquainted with, he has seen China "making remarkable progress, achieving impressive results, and cultivating a growing number of outstanding scientists."

China is building a platform where the world's brightest young minds can connect, experiment and innovate.

As Dingwell concluded, "The future of science is bright. The future of science is in your hands."

With its open doors and supportive ecosystem, China is ensuring that those hands — wherever they come from — have the freedom, resources and global network they need to shape a better future for all.

## A Crucial Five-Year Innovation Journey

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China's leap from a follower to a global leader in science and technology should be attributed to the continuous efforts of the Five-Year Plans.

**Key guarantee for technological leaps**

The experts pointed out that the 14th Five-Year Plan and the 14th Five-Year Plan for Scientific and Technological Innovation have provided fundamental guarantees for the historic leap of China's science and technology cause through institutional design, strategic resource allocation and deep-seated reform.

China has fully leveraged the advantages of its new national system, seized the opportunities presented by the new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation, and achieved a number of major original results in fields such as quantum science and technology, life sciences and material sciences.

Over the past five years, China has coordinated its policy tools, from finance, taxation, and trade to industry to support comprehensive innovation, promoting the integration of sci-tech innovation and industrial innovation, and fostering and developing new-quality productive forces.

Chinese modernization has been advanced with new, solid strides through technological modernization,

said Wan Jinbo, a researcher at the Institutes of Science and Development, Chinese Academy of Sciences. This has laid a solid foundation for the upcoming 15th Five-Year Plan period.

**Key breakthroughs on the road to modernization**

In Liu's view, the 15th Five-Year Plan is key to building China into a country strong in science and technology.

During this upcoming period, a new round of sci-tech revolution and industrial transformation will be accelerated with AI as the core driving force. China remains in a phase of development where strategic opportunities exist alongside risks and challenges, while uncertainties and unforeseen factors are rising.

Therefore, the country needs to further enhance original innovation, lead industrial innovation with sci-tech innovation, improve the overall efficiency of the innovation system, and provide higher-quality sci-tech supply for Chinese modernization, Liu said.

The plenary session made it clear that innovation is an important source of the new-quality productive forces, said Dong Yu, executive vice president of the China Institute for Development Planning at Tsinghua University. This means education, science and technology, and talent will be further coordinated, and sci-tech innovation and industrial innovation will be further integrated.



The conference site of the WYSS 2025. (COURTESY PHOTO)