

# 19<sup>th</sup> CPC NATIONAL CONGRESS | International perspective

**Editor's Note:** The Communist Party of China will hold its 19th National Congress on Oct 18. In the run-up to the meeting, China Daily asked four prominent experts for their views on developments in China and the country's global leadership.

## China's growing role wins recognition

French politician notes Xi's successes both at home and on the world stage as he works for peace and prosperity through reform and cooperation

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President Xi Jinping visited France in 2014 and 2015, putting it among the few countries that he has traveled to more than once since he became China's top leader in late 2012.

Such close and effective engagement with big powers has turned Xi into a household name in France, said Jean-Pierre Raffarin, a veteran French politician who has devoted himself to bringing his country and China closer for decades.

"When you run across people on the streets of Paris, everybody knows him, and Xi is already a world star," Raffarin said in Paris.

He attributed Xi's widespread recognition to the fact that he lives up to his words not only in domestic affairs, but also on the global stage. Raffarin said Xi has successfully showcased a dynamic China at home by deepening structural reforms, fighting corruption, addressing environmental problems and taking radical measures to end extreme poverty.

"Internationally, Xi is a frank supporter of multilateralism and has made important efforts to improve international relations during the past five years," said Raffarin, adding that these efforts have shown Xi's strong desire for peace.

Citing Xi's view that the world can achieve peace and prosperity amid growing interdependency, Raffarin said the Chinese president is among the world leaders who have traveled most and is making every effort to bring global players to the table to discuss common solutions to international problems.

"He is not afraid of difficult situations," Raffarin added, pointing to Xi's visits to the Middle East and North African countries and his desire to bring peace and cooperation to regions ravaged by conflict.

"The world is dangerous and we need to have a strong force for peace. China supports peace in the world, giving the world more balance."

Looking back at the past five years,



**Jean-Pierre Raffarin,**  
veteran French politician.

Raffarin said he has been impressed by China's big vision and its two "centenary goals", which were proposed at the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012 and pegged to the 100th anniversaries of the founding of the CPC in 2021 and the People's Republic of China in 2049.

By 2020, China's GDP and per capita income should be double the 2010 levels, and the building of a "moderately prosperous society" should be complete.

By the middle of this century, China will be a modern socialist country that is "prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious".

Raffarin said under Xi's leadership, China is on the right track to achieve the two goals. "China's economy is strong, its people have become healthier and wealthier. And on the global stage, its influence and presence are growing and it is playing a central role in bringing countries around the table."

He said it has not been an easy job to achieve this progress and that "Xi has shown courage to deliver reform". China's decision to close many old and polluting factories during the past five years shows this, as it is always much easier to stay on the same path than to change, he said.

Internationally, in terms of the Paris climate agreement, Xi has also acted with "strong determination and political will" together with other global leaders. Raffarin has criti-

cized US President Donald Trump for directing the United States to withdraw from the global deal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

China has adopted many new roles during the past five years, he said, but it faces difficulties because more explanation needs to be given to the people. When facing such challenges, leaders in the West mostly choose not to act.

"So I have a lot of respect for Xi and the Chinese leadership for having the vision to take this way for the future. I think it's difficult, but it's important," he said.

Looking at the upcoming Party congress, Raffarin said Xi and the Party face many challenges because China is playing a new global role. The country needs to implement social and economic changes.

At the same time, he said the governance of the Party will improve, based on the success it has achieved during the past five years. With 89 million members, the Party is bigger than the population of France, "so we know how difficult it must be to make reforms".

However, he said the Party has shown the determination to be more modern and well disciplined, while reform within the Party has seen smooth progress.

"As a close friend and observer of China, I know that Xi wants the Party to be for the people," Raffarin said.

He added that Xi has also delivered an important message to the world that he advocates "innovation". Raffarin has read *The Governance of China* by Xi. He noted that the Chinese president has urged the people, especially the younger generation, to be innovative and think of the future.

Raffarin has met Xi on several occasions, including when he joined former French prime minister Bernard Cazeneuve's mission in February and when he attended the Belt and Road Initiative Forum for International Cooperation in May as special envoy of French President Emmanuel Macron.

"Xi has not changed in terms of his personality. He is a clear and quiet person," Raffarin said. "He is a man who fulfills his words."

Q&A | MOHAMED HIGAZY

## Humane model for development

China's strategy more sustainable and positive toward people than the Western approach

**What do you think about the current influence of China in the world?**

As the world's second-largest economy, (which is) expected to bypass the United States economy in due course, according to economic indicators of current trends, China is definitely a major player on the global stage. The kind of progress achieved so far is a huge plus, not only to the international economy but, most important, to the progress of humanity.

If by 2020 China achieves its strategy of completely eradicating poverty, we are talking of about 1.3 billion people with a better living standard — a great asset to humanity.

**How do you evaluate President Xi Jinping's performance as the leader of a great power?**

President Xi's book, which I have read and studied and even given lectures about, is proof of a leader who works and leads in difficult circumstances, and prevails and achieves success.

He is a leader who started a long way from the top, so his life success is bottom-up and not detached from people's realities. Truly, he stands tall among leaders who have led their people to success.

**What do you think about the future of China?**

China introduced a new approach to development, which is more humane compared with the Western economic approach, which ignores people to the benefit of interest groups.

Therefore, China's model of development is sustainable and will positively impact many people around the world, particularly in Africa, where partnerships with China are prevailing.

**What Chinese wisdom and Chinese experience do you think could be used to solve the urgent problems facing the world?**

The belief in change and positive



**Mohamed Higazy,**  
former assistant  
foreign minister of Egypt

results for a better future is the lesson most to be learned from the Chinese experience. Success can happen in a shorter time through integral and inner unity among the communities within a country.

If the rule of law prevails, if discipline and anti-corruption regulations are strictly applied — as has long been the case in China — any nation can move ahead.

**What three words would you use to describe China today?**

Development with a human face.

**What is the biggest challenge facing China now?**

Anti-globalization is the biggest challenge, not only facing China but all other emerging economies and developing countries. I think China is already taking steps toward solving this by adjusting its economic structure and upgrading.

In the recent past, China has struggled with excessive capacity in some traditional but key industries, and they have initiated reforms, such as tightening lending, in selected industries — among other strategies.

Promoting the service industries is another strategy that I think is moving in the right direction. China needs to explore this to complement its exports of goods.