

World needs to adapt to new China

Nation now has more influence than ever before, creating fresh frontiers and challenges for Chinese diplomacy

The inside dynamic, in synchronization with international forces, is remolding China's diplomacy as the country steers into new frontiers during the new era.

Facing the new situation at home and abroad, the Chinese leadership has been promising to open its door wider to the world and continuously and comprehensively carry out reform.



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As the second-largest economy, China today is an important international power after fast growth since 1978. Moreover, this year witnesses the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy, as chaos and turbulence loom over the international community in the aftermath of pushes for deglobalization, and unbalanced development worldwide.

Therefore, the diplomacy of China needs a new stance in a bid to reach the new target for "a new paradigm of international relations and a community of common destiny for all mankind". This indicates that China will not only safeguard its interests at home and abroad, but also contribute more to global society.

First of all, with more interaction with the outside world, more players like tourists and overseas working staff from China take the role as "Chinese diplomats". Millions of Chinese tourists, students and workers now travel across the world as Chinese people get rich and their enterprises go abroad, with the inherent demand for bigger markets and the advancement of competition capacity.

It is estimated that 130 million Chinese tourists went overseas and spent as much as \$115 billion in 2017. Regarding outbound investment, China had set up more than 6,230 companies, with a total of \$120 billion invested, in 174 countries and regions as of last year.

Thus, the Chinese image will not only depend on well-trained diplomats, but also be in closer association with each ordinary Chinese abroad. Each country or region has its own culture and laws, and Chinese travelers should realize and respect that now. On the one hand, systematic promotion is badly needed through public media and travel agencies. On the other, a related course should be brought into curriculums, beginning with primary school.

A negative image would make China and its people unwelcome



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by locals in the short term, while Chinese interests would be in peril in the long run.

Second, China now has more influence than ever before, so diplomatic awareness and policies need to reflect such a dramatic change.

As one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, China is also a leading player of the international economy. In 2017, China retook the No 1 trade title with a total of \$4.1 trillion in goods, according to the World Trade Organization. According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, China accounts for 15.3 percent of the world economy and more than 30 percent of global growth.

China has become an influential player in the international community, and any inward or outward change of its policy will ripple throughout the world.

Under such circumstances, more outside doubts or challenges against China will follow, with some even toward China's inner policies. Awareness should be updated, therefore, and perceptions need to be improved to see that China is not an isolated land but a stakeholder of humankind.

From the cognitive perspective, Chinese diplomacy should be more rational on its position in this community and get rid of a fragile men-

tality and learn to be in harmony with criticism from others. At the same time, China should be alert to any self-important thought, which could also backfire, based on the lessons of history.

In practice, the mutual benefit and win-win principle has won a good reputation for China. An image of responsibility has been accepted by the international community. China plays a bigger role in such international issues as the Iran nuclear solution and the progress of peace on the Korean Peninsula. In the new era, China will take a more active attitude toward global issues and seek more partners to protect its own people and interests.

It is understandable that China's diplomacy will shoulder new tasks, since Chinese people and their businesses are found around the world. Apart from the good image mentioned above, good and close partners around the world will be indispensable.

In 2011, in cooperation with Greece, Tunisia and Malta, 35,860 Chinese were evacuated within 10 days from Libya as the African country slid into turbulence. Greece helped ship out around 15,000 Chinese from ports of Libya, and it is hard to imagine that the evacuation mission could have been completed in such a short time without assis-

tance from neighboring countries.

Therefore, based on the peaceful development and win-win principles, China will try to make more all-weather partners across the world. China is transforming into a global stakeholder from a regional or even isolated one.

Undoubtedly, China may be misunderstood by other countries during this transitional process, due to its differences of political system and ways of development. We can hear skeptical voices about China's success from those putting on tainted glasses.

Even worse, some deliberately exaggerate Chinese power and influence from an adverse perspective and then peddle the "Chinese threat" worldwide. These remarks could echo with China's rising influence and receive feedback from some countries and regions to some extent.

It is understandable that the world will need time, just like China itself does, to adapt to a new China. Reasonable competition based on market-oriented rules will benefit China and the world alike, but this could also amplify the "threat" perception and toughen the stance of opponents.

China could dispel the buzz of "China collapse" by its remarkable achievements through active efforts. However, it is hard to prove

its peace-minded development route while China is still on the way to building up to a modern country, with a fast increase in the military budget, for example. Explanation and refutation toward international society are necessary, and time is also needed.

Strategic patience with China's foreign policy will be crucial in the current situation. China should make more international friends rather than foes in today's world to eschew the solitary situation.

Moreover, China should pay much attention to lessons and experiences. The "China solution" could be provided, but there is no need for it to be hawked aggressively.

In the past 40 years, China has changed dramatically, and so has the world. The diplomacy of China now comes to a new stage to safeguard its complex interests as well as those of the world, in tune with such radical changes. Challenges are imaginable during this balanced process. The overhaul of Chinese diplomacy is underway to fulfill the premier targets for China and humankind.

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