

# Comment

editorial • opinion

**CHINADAILY**

中国日报

EDITORIALS

## Unite in anti-terror fight

**THE SECOND TERRORIST ATTACK IN LESS** than a month in the capital of Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region points to the severity and complexity of China's anti-terror fight.

The attack on an open market in Urumqi on Thursday morning, which killed 31 people and injured 94, raised immediate associations with the attack at a railway station in the city on April 30, when President Xi Jinping was visiting the region. It was confirmed that attack was plotted by a separatist organization called the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement.

Although no organization has so far claimed responsibility for the latest attack, the timing of its occurrence, one day after the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia summit concluded in Shanghai, suggests the organizers of the attack may have intended to send a provocative message not only to the Chinese government but also to the regional security forum.

However, the message the Chinese people and the government received was they must be prepared for a long-term and hard battle against terrorism.

By launching terrorist attacks, the separatists wanted to sow the seeds of animosity between the Uygurs and other ethnicities. By causing such bloody events, they seek to sabotage the social and political stability in Xinjiang and the rest of China.

Yet, the more attacks they launch, the more importance the Chinese people and the government will attach to the unity of all ethnic groups and to economic development and social progress in Xinjiang.

As Xi said during his Xinjiang trip in April, development is the key to the settlement of all problems and is also the key to the settlement of problems in Xinjiang. Prosperity will undermine the very foundations of separatism and extremism.

It is not difficult for the majority of Uygurs to recognize that their well-being rests with the unity of all ethnic groups and with the prosperity of the motherland. Neither is it difficult for the rest of the country to realize how important the anti-terror battle is to the life and stability of the entire nation, which is the very guarantee for the realization of the Chinese Dream.

That is the converging point of interest, from which the anti-terror fight will get its power and Xinjiang its economic development and social progress.

## Hanoi's latest provocation

**STANDING BESIDE THE PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT** Benigno Aquino III, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung highlighted their "shared" concern about the "extremely dangerous situation" "caused by China's many actions that violate international law", a common determination to stand against China, and a joint appeal for the world to "condemn China" and demand China end its "violations".

Such remarks, along with Nguyen's claim that Vietnam may follow Manila's example and take "legal actions" against Beijing, are clear signs that the situation in the South China Sea is becoming even more complicated, and are a reminder that Hanoi's overtures for bilateral moves toward a peaceful resolution of its dispute with China should be taken with a grain of salt.

Tensions in the Asia-Pacific have taken a dangerous turn lately. The cronies of the outside instigator crouching in the shadows are ganging up in an attempt to contain China.

Chinese President Xi Jinping recently unveiled Beijing's new Asian security outlook, which seeks to promote "common, comprehensive, cooperative, sustainable" security. The words and deeds of Tokyo, Manila, and now Hanoi, however, disprove their claims of a shared commitment to peace and the peaceful resolution of the disputes.

Peace is out of the question when they opt for confrontation.

A tall tree catches the wind, and China's international profile has risen in such a manner that some countries are worried and even fearful of it. And even though the tree craves calm, the wind won't abate. Proceeding from their own instincts, these countries have moved to bully China.

Beijing has demonstrated great patience and made strenuous endeavors to showcase its dedication to peace and good-neighborliness. The repeated promise to "befriend, pacify, and enrich neighboring countries", including at the just concluded Shanghai Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, is a cornerstone of the leadership's ideal of a world where all nations co-exist in harmony.

However, Vietnam's latest show of solidarity on fault-finding with the Philippines should serve as a wake-up call to Beijing that solving disputes through peaceful consultations may well be one-sided wishful thinking.

Hanoi's unapologetic attitude after the fatal anti-China riots in Vietnam, as well as its assumption of an openly confrontational approach indicate it wishes to confront China while benefiting from Chinese investments and markets.

A comprehensive review of our relations with Vietnam is imperative. And Hanoi must be told it cannot have it both ways.

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CHINA FORUM | ROBERT LAWRENCE KUHN

# Xi's foreign policy is no secret

## China promotes mutually beneficial cooperation to help realize the dreams of different peoples and does not seek hegemony

**I**s President Xi Jinping's foreign policy really a mystery, as some foreign media seem to think? Ever since Xi became China's senior leader in November 2012, Western analysts have been trying to get the measure of the man, particularly his vision of China's international relations.

There is little doubt that Xi is China's strongest leader in a generation, and that Xi's China has enacted a more proactive foreign policy: enhancing relations with Africa, strengthening the strategic partnership of cooperation with Russia, advancing territorial claims in the South and East China seas, proposing the development of a Silk Road economic belt and a maritime Silk Road for the 21st century, solidifying relations with Europe, and calling for a "new kind of big power relationship" with the United States.

At the just concluded fourth summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, Xi met with the heads of almost every Asian nation, which included a high-profile joint declaration with Russian President Vladimir Putin and the signing of a huge gas deal with Russia. Speaking with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Xi said, "Displays of power and pressure and the use of external force are not acceptable."

In his keynote address, Xi said China is a strong champion of the

Asian security concept and is working to put it into practice.

While some may question China's deep intent, Xi's diplomatic philosophy is hardly a secret. It was prominent in his May 15 speech celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (underreported in global media).

Xi began by "paying tribute" to foreign friends who helped China's construction and reform, who did China "the smallest favor" (China is indeed loyal to its friends, even when they retire from power or fall from grace, like former US president Richard Nixon and former Japanese prime minister Kakuei Tanaka, both of whom re-opened relations with China.)

Xi outlined the key features of global affairs: a multipolar world, economic globalization, information society, converging interests, and community of destiny.

He lauded tolerance as a "virtue", especially regarding diversity. He pledged China would be "fully open" and he promoted "mutually beneficial cooperation with other countries".

Xi rejected the so-called "China threat" as "misleading", having been founded on "deeply rooted prejudices". He stressed that China has always been a peace-loving nation and Chinese culture advocates harmony; that China suffered tragically from foreign aggression and Chinese philosophy does not

impose on others. Chinese patriotism "defends the homeland," Xi said, but does not colonialize — the Silk Road exemplifies East-West exchanges for mutual benefit. Reiterating a familiar theme, Xi vowed that no matter how powerful China becomes, China will never seek hegemony over others.

He said history tells us that war is like the devil and a nightmare for all peoples, yet the world today is dangerous and in many countries wars rage or simmer. China will actively assume more international responsibility, with other countries, to jointly facilitate settlement of hot-spot issues, support peacekeeping, and respond to humanitarian crises. China, Xi pledged, will continue to deal with conflicts and differences through dialogue based on equality and patience.

Xi called for more multichannel, multilevel exchanges between peoples, such as sister cities, cultural activities, civil diplomacy between non-government organizations, and public diplomacy among diverse peoples, to promote mutual understanding and learning. Xi called for "good Chinese voices" telling "good Chinese stories" to show the world the true China in a multidimensional way.

China seeks ways to unify the diverse dreams of different peoples, promoting global peace and human development. But this will not be easy, he cautioned. China, he said, has major challenges and should

learn from the achievements of other countries.

Much of the world remains wary. Some wonder what to make of a peacefully developing China as seen through the prism of intensified claims and incidents in the South and East China seas. Sovereignty, from China's perspective, is a highly charged issue, as it is in most countries, but especially in light of China's century-long oppression by foreign powers. That said, all countries should fear the perils of tripping over small hurdles.

So should we take Xi's foreign policy philosophy at face value? I think so, for three reasons: first, we must eschew self-fulfilling prophecies of suspicion and retaliation; second, China has huge domestic challenges and international tensions are disruptive; and third, Xi has generated genuine goodwill abroad, so it would make no sense to undermine his own leadership by making statements that turn out to be false.

It is China's interest to help secure global peace and stability and to promote global development and prosperity. China must play an increasingly active role in the new world order.

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LUO JIE



HARVEY DZODIN

## Fewer sandstorms give hope for cleaner air

**I**t is depressing being subjected to Beijing's pollution. The World Health Organization standards for the most harmful particles, PM2.5, say that 20 is the recommended maximum safe level, but we are so used to the stratospheric measurements from both the Beijing government and the US Embassy that even my iPhone app doesn't set off alarm bells until the benchmark of 200 is reached.

Pollution masks and expensive air filters are now an increasingly visible everyday fashion accessory for most foreigners and many Chinese. Yet as many folks relocate from Beijing, and many more think of doing so, I think of sandstorms and have hope!

When I first came to Beijing a decade ago I dreaded springtime, normally my favorite season. It wasn't only the strong winds that could literally bowl a person over, but the sandstorms that invariably accompanied the blasts, blocked our air passages, buffed the shiny finishes off our cars and caused people to

wear all sorts of face coverings making them look like something from a Halloween horror movie.

There haven't been any appreciable sandstorms now for a number of years. While we may suffer from air-pocalypse at least we haven't recently fallen victim to "sandageddon" as British tabloids called it earlier this year when sand from the Sahara desert, 3,000 kilometers away, covered cars and people alike in Britain.

There were prodigious winds recently that all but blew me over, no easy task. Yet, remarkably, I couldn't detect a grain of sand. The reason that I am hopeful is that this result was no accident, but due to the hard work of governmental and scientific experts who reversed desertification of previously green areas and reclaimed them by planting trees and grasses, and using other more ingenious homegrown methods.

Remarkably, 2.6 million square kilometers, more than one-quarter of China's total land area, are deserts. It is scant wonder then that

China is the world's leader in desertification. And it comes as no surprise that in 2002 China enacted the world's first law on controlling and preventing desertification. In fact, by 2020 the country plans to reclaim 200,000 square kilometers of desert.

Using conventional technology, China, like other affected countries, plants grasses and trees to anchor the sand and keep it in place. This helps, but the winds can still carry grains of sand aloft. China has now gone to the next level and pioneered the use of cyanobacteria which can create a biocrust which is thick enough to help promote topsoil and prevent erosion, even in the harsh desert environment.

So when I think of air pollution, I know that it will one day be solved, and harbor some hope it will be sooner rather than later. Estimates range from five to fifty years before meaningful change can occur and the costs are staggering. Whole industries will have to be uprooted and the mix of energy resources will have to be radically changed.

Most youngsters today think of London fog as an upscale fashion brand. Yet after World War II the English capital was plagued by extreme pollution, even worse than we experience on most bad days, much of it, as here, from burning dirty coal. Today, however, London is a breath of fresh air albeit after many years, numerous laws and regulations, and billions of pounds sterling in anti-pollution equipment later.

Yet thinking back to the 2008 Olympics when Beijing and surrounding polluting factories and power generators were stopped, blue sky days returned. So we know that change is possible.

My personal hope is that based on the experience of China's conquest of sandstorms, in part by the use of novel technologies, the air pollution will be controlled in the not too distant future.

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