

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Nations told to respect China's sovereignty

Ex-diplomat sets out stance at US think tank as Xi makes security pledge in speech

By AN BAIJIE
anbaijie@chinadaily.com.cn

China will not bully other countries and hopes that its sovereignty and security are respected, one of China's former top diplomats told an influential US think tank, as President Xi Jinping also pledged to safeguard national interests.

Dai Bingguo, a former State councilor, said China's path of peaceful development, which had brought better governance and a flourishing future, is an opportunity for the United States and the rest of the world.

He made the remarks during a meeting on Friday in Washington at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, which in 2013 was named the No 1 think tank on defense and national security issues in the University of Pennsylvania's global rankings.

China and the US should enhance high-level communication, handle and contain disputes properly, and strengthen exchanges to share experiences in governance, Dai told scholars at the meeting, including the center's president, John Hamre. China would like to make construct-



No foreign country ... should expect us to swallow the bitter fruit of damage to our sovereignty, security and development interests."

President Xi Jinping

ive contributions to global governance, he added.

Dai's comments came on the same day Xi delivered a keynote speech to celebrate the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. The president vowed to safeguard sovereignty, stressed his opposition to "Taiwan independence" and promised that China will neither generate nor fear trouble.

"No foreign country ... should expect us to swallow the bitter fruit of damage to our sovereignty, security and development interests," he said.

Arbitration

Xi's speech attracted wide attention from the international community given that it came amid rising tensions in the South China Sea. The ruling in the arbitration case the Philippines unilaterally initiated against China is to be announced on July 12, according to reports.

China insists the tribunal appointed by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague has no jurisdiction over the issue because it concerns territory and security issues.

Han Qingxiang, an expert on public administration studies at the Central Party School of the CPC Central Committee, said China has sent a clear signal to the international community that it will not allow any major power to manipulate the world for its own interests.

"China has the capacity, the confidence and the right guidelines to participate in global governance, and that is China's commitment to the world," he said.

Xie Chuntao, another researcher at the Central Party School, added that China's stance on national security and military defense has been widely recognized by the public and has boosted the morale of the whole nation.

SCIENCE



The Five-Hundred-Meter Aperture Spherical Telescope in Pingtang county, Guizhou province, could be operational in September. DENG GANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Target in sight for giant telescope

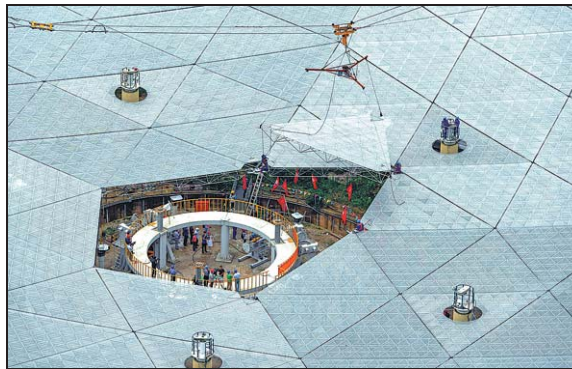
By YANG JUN in Pingtang, Guizhou, and CHEN MENGWEI in Beijing

The final panel was placed onto the world's largest single-aperture radio telescope on Sunday, putting the project on target to start searching the stars this year.

Situated in a natural basin in mountainous Pingtang county, Guizhou province, the Five-Hundred-Meter Aperture Spherical Telescope, known as FAST, has a reflecting surface equal in size to 30 soccer fields, breaking the record set in 1963 by the United States' 305-meter Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.

At 10:47 am on Sunday, Yan Jun, general manager of the project, gave the order to fix the last piece. The process, which involved cranes and robots, took about 40 minutes and was marked with a fireworks celebration.

If things go as planned, after further trials, the telescope will go into service in September, said Zheng



Robots place the last panel of the radio telescope on Sunday. HE JUNYI / FOR CHINA DAILY

The FAST's large hemispheric surface is made up of 4,450 triangular, 1.3-millimeter-thin panels. Each panel weighs 427 to 482.5 kilograms.

Patching these panels together took construction workers and robots 11 months, although the project has been a long time in the making. The idea was first mooted in 1993, and after winning government approval in 2007, construction was started on March 25, 2011.

The authorities in Guizhou hope to make the area around the FAST into a tourist attraction, with an astronomy theme park to be built about 8 kilometers away at a cost of 12 billion yuan (\$1.8 billion).

However, visitors will be required to hand in all electric devices before approaching the telescope, while only traditional film cameras will be allowed, the government said.

Contact the writers at chenmengwei@chinadaily.com.cn

DIPLMACY

Ramos: Young people can give Sino-Philippine ties a fresh start

By DENG YANZI in Manila
iris@chinadailyhk.com



Fidel Ramos, the Philippine president from 1992 to 1998 who steered the country through an economic crisis

Improved relations between China and the Philippines are in sight through deeper people-to-people engagement, according to former Philippine president Fidel Ramos, who has urged the countries' leaders to meet soon.

Relations could improve in the coming year, the 88-year-old told China Daily, as he urged the countries to promote more interaction among young people in areas such as education, art and music.

Rodrigo Duterte, the new president of the Philippines, has proposed opening bilateral talks with China after the ongoing arbitration tribunal announces its ruling on the South China Sea disputes. Ramos said the countries had continued talks through various informal channels despite the recent turbulence in diplomatic ties.

For example, the business communities in both countries have engaged in "back-channel" talks to ensure the continuation of trade activities, he said.

Ramos said he hopes Duterte will meet with President Xi Jinping soon, preferably in his first year in office. Their cabinet colleagues should also meet at an early date, he added.

He called for the Philippines to play a bigger role in China's Belt and Road Initiative, which comprises the strategic Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and seeks to connect China with Europe, Asia and Africa through closer trade, infrastructure and people-to-people cooperation.

As the Philippines is on two of the world's most important oceanic trading routes, the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea, Ramos said it should occupy an important place in the maritime route.

With regard to the new administration, he believes it is essential for Duterte to build an inclusive economy, which can benefit and empower people in general.

Ramos, who served as president of the Philippines from 1992 to 1998, steered the country through an economic crisis. During his time in office, the annual GDP growth rate averaged 5 percent.

The country is now one of Asia's fastest-growing economies and recorded a GDP growth rate of 6.7 percent in the first quarter of this year.

However, as the Philippines continues to be affected by socio-economic inequality, Ramos said he is concerned about the gap between the rich and poor in terms of income, housing, education, health and life expectancy.

If the nation can "spread the benefits of growth" for six to 10 years, including throughout the six-year term of the Duterte administration, the country could successfully improve people's livelihoods, Ramos added.

What they say



"I fervently believe that positive breakthroughs can happen for the now-problematic Philippine-China relations if the highest leaders, as well as top-level diplomats, can directly sit down to dialogue, to constantly communicate in order to focus on common interests rather than to exaggerate irritants or worsen points of disagreement."

Wilson Lee Flores, analyst and columnist at the Philippine Star newspaper



"Downplaying the arbitration may be an ideal choice that will lead bilateral relations out of the deadlock. ... The arbitration case is a hot potato left by former Philippine leader Benigno Aquino for his successor. The best way to tackle it is by putting the ruling aside. Then the two sides can return to the bilateral consensus made by past administrations and resume bilateral negotiations for a peaceful settlement."

Chen Qinghong, researcher on Southeast Asian studies and an expert on the Philippines at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations



"Based on the body language of (Rodrigo) Duterte and the Chinese ambassador, it seems the new Philippine president is intent on reviving bilateral relations by separating the territorial disputes from broader economic relations, which have suffered in recent years. ... But it is still up to the Duterte and Xi Jinping administrations to explore a way to overcome tensions and find a peaceful way forward."

Richard Heydarian, political analyst at De La Salle University in Manila



"The arbitration has given some major countries outside the region a chance to stir up the situation there, escalate tensions, and make the South China Sea issue into a geopolitical problem. They forced the (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries to take sides. ... As the ASEAN has played a peaceful role in tackling the South China Sea issue, Manila unilaterally seeking arbitration is a betrayal of the ASEAN."

Xu Liping, senior researcher on Southeast Asian studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Disputes: Negotiation viewed as being the only viable choice

FROM PAGE 1

China has rejected being part of the compulsory arbitral proceedings partly because the case involves sovereignty and maritime delimitation, which it declared in 2006 are issues that are not subject to any third-party arbitration.

Although the outgoing Philippine government said it had exhausted all diplomatic approaches before seeking arbitration, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Manila did not embark on any serious two-way negotiations over the claims it had raised with the tribunal.

Wilson Lee Flores, an analyst and columnist for the Philippine Star newspaper, said he expects "more pragmatism and bilateral diplomacy to prevail in the Duterte government's dealings with China, instead of the past six years of confrontations".

Normalizing bilateral relations with China would help to balance the Philippines' foreign policy with its traditional ally the United States, Flores said.

Li Guoqiang, a senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Chinese Borderland Studies, said: "For all the disputes concerning the South China Sea, negotiation is the only choice and the only viable approach. Confrontation will never help to resolve the South China Sea issue." Li said that no matter how the tri-



Confrontation will never help to resolve the South China Sea issue."

Li Guoqiang, senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Chinese Borderland Studies

bunal rules, he believes the situation will not go into free fall, but that the decision will possibly lead to some "new chaos".

"No matter how the new president acts on the ruling, diplomatic negotiation is second to none. Using the ruling as a condition for resuming diplomatic consultations will not be viable," Li said.

Zhu Feng, professor and executive director at Nanjing University's China Center for Collaborative Studies of the South China Sea, said it will be "a very important and ideal start" if the new Philippine government repairs ties with China.

He said this will be the case if it "effectively manages in a reasoned manner the impact brought by the ruling on the existing bilateral disputes between China and the Philippines".