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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

01 September 2018

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03.09.2018

Africa and China strengthen ties



The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Summit in Beijing on Sept. 3 and 4 will help strengthen what are already good Sino-African political and economic relations. With this objective as the goal, the motto of the meeting is “China and Africa: Toward an Even Stronger Community with a Shared Future through Win-win Cooperation.”

Along with President Xi Jinping and other senior Chinese leaders, numerous African leaders, heads of the African Union, the United Nations secretary-general and representatives of international and regional entities are expected to attend the summit.

Indicators of the strength of the current economic ties between Africa and China are impressive. For example, the volume of trade between the two parties increased 17 times between 2000 and 2017. According to Chinese customs statistics, the value of trade

between the two zones last year amounted to \$170 billion. By April 2017, with financing from China, more than 3,000 miles of motorways and railways had been built in African countries.

These days, more and more opinions have been expressed on the third summit of FOCAC, an organization created in 2000.

The Ethiopian deputy minister for Finance and Economic Cooperation, Admasu Nebebe, told Xinhua that “African countries need to transform their agricultural sector, engage in vigorous industrial development, invest in their infrastructure, and put resources to develop their science and technology if they are to successfully develop their economies like China.” (Aug. 26)

Sun Baohong, Chinese ambassador to Kenya, said the upcoming FOCAC Beijing Summit will mark a new stage in China-Africa ties as it will formulate the direction of future development, backed by traditional friendship between the two sides. “The summit will also help China-Africa cooperation develop in a more coordinated and balanced manner and further promote South-South collaboration as well.” (China Daily, Aug. 27)

Another diplomat, Ahcène Boukhalfa, Algerian ambassador to Beijing, said the traditional friendship between China and African countries has a long history and has always been based on mutual respect, mutual benefit, noninterference in internal affairs and win-win cooperation.

While calling for further cooperation in science and technology and infrastructure construction, Boukhalfa said that he is certain that China and Africa “have a common future.” (China Daily)

He Yafei, a former Chinese foreign minister, is of the opinion that the summit will confirm the success of cooperation with mutual advantages between different civilizations. He stresses that the deepening partnership between China and Africa will benefit both sides economically and help safeguard the rule-based international trading system.

A Chinese scholar, Wang Liming, executive vice-president of Renmin University of China, said China and African countries have provided wisdom and solutions to building a more reasonable international order through FOCAC. “Given the increasing calls for reforming the existing global governance system to cope with the world’s common challenges, China-Africa friendly cooperation provides new thinking for resolving major global problems,” Wang said.

This article was first published in Avante, the weekly newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party on Aug. 30. Its author was formerly a member of the Secretariat of the

PAIGC, the party leading the struggle for the liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Translation by WW Managing Editor John Catalinotto.