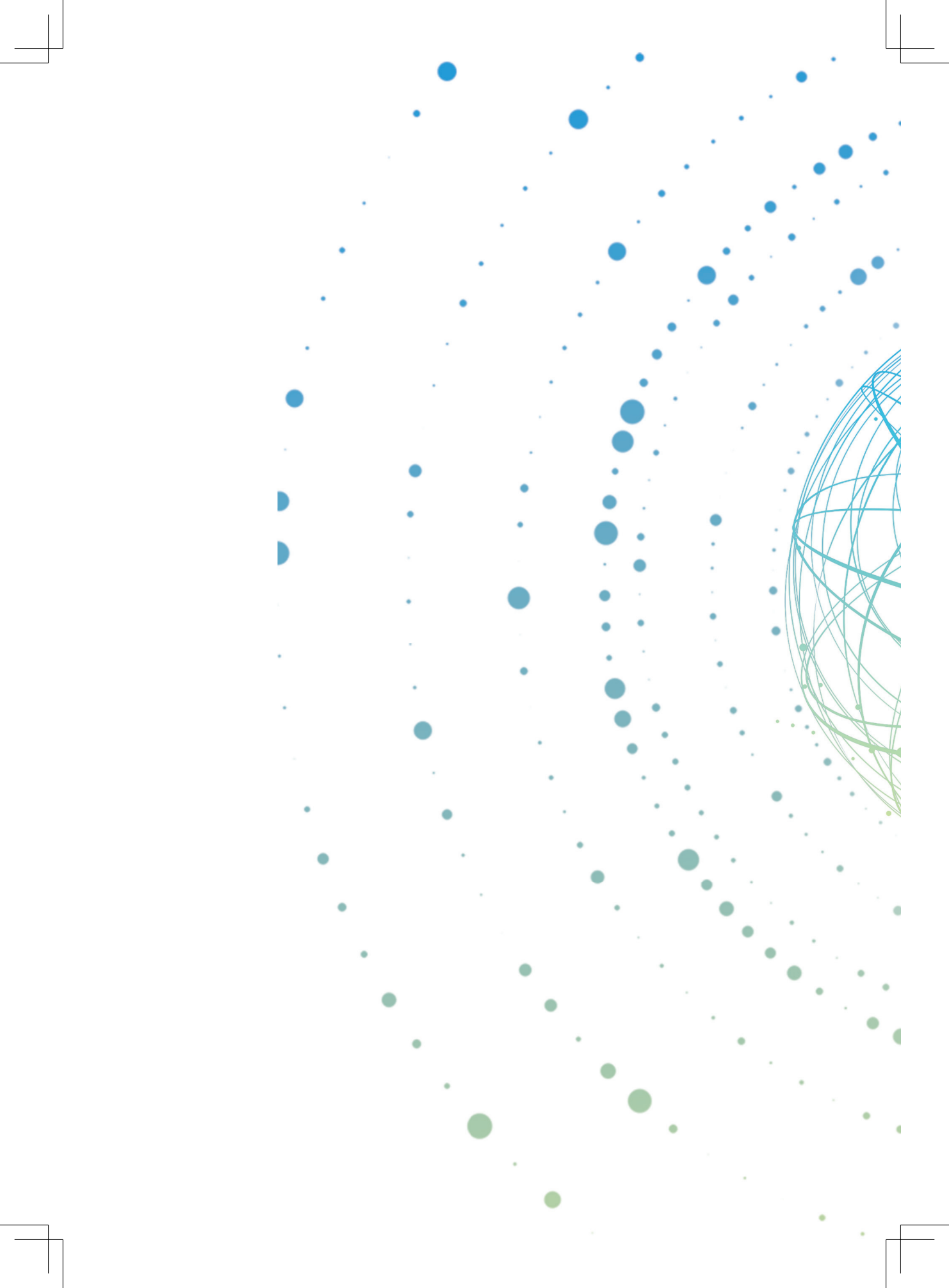


In 2024, China and Russia held grand celebrations of 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Over the past 75 years, China-Russia relations have weathered winds and rains and become more mature and stable. In the new era, under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and President Putin, facing profound changes unseen in a century, the political mutual trust between China and Russia continues to deepen, the practical cooperation has achieved remarkable results, and the friendship between the two countries has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. The two countries have made important contributions to improving the well-being of the two peoples and promoting international fairness and justice. The current China-Russia relationship is at its best in history and has become a prime example of the new form of international relations as well as good-neighborly relations between major countries.

CIIS organized dedicated teams to conduct systematic research on the fundamental rationale for the development of China-Russia relations over the past 75 years, the remarkable achievements of cooperation in the fields of politics, economy and trade, people-to-people exchange, as well as their positive contributions to the improvement of global governance in the new era. The research results have been formed into this report.



CIIS Report



China-Russia Relations in the New Era

China Institute of International Studies
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China-Russia Relations in the New Era

01

Preface

01 Preface

China and Russia, as each other's largest neighbor and comprehensive strategic partner of coordination for the new era, are major countries in the world and permanent members of the UN Security Council. Both countries pursue independent foreign policies and place the bilateral relations high on their diplomatic agendas. The development of China-Russia relations has an inevitable historical logic and strong internal driving forces. The relationship, based on principles of equality, mutual respect and beneficial cooperation, is now at its best in history and has become a model between major countries and neighbors.

In March 2013, Xi Jinping chose Russia for his first foreign visit after being elected president and made a clear position on the bilateral relations: the China-Russia relationship is one of the most important in the world and also the best one between major countries; a high-level and strong China-Russia relationship is not only in the interests of both countries, but also serves as an important guarantee of international strategic balance and world peace and stability.^① This visit started a new chapter of the bilateral ties. In 2019, China-Russia relations were upgraded to a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era.

In the new era, China-Russia relations maintain healthy and steady development, with

^① Chinese President delivers an important speech at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, China.gov.cn, March 24, 2013, https://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2013-03/24/content_2584822.htm.



cooperation in various fields being advanced at an unprecedented pace. High-level interactions have become more frequent, featuring regular annual state visits. Political mutual trust has been enhanced. The potential of the two highly complementary economies has been unlocked. Trade volume has reached new highs, exceeding the \$200 billion target set by the two leaders ahead of schedule. Cultural and people-to-people exchanges have flourished, with the friendship between the two peoples continuing to deepen, solidifying the social foundation of the bilateral relationship. China and Russia have maintained close strategic coordination in international and regional affairs, emerging as a pivotal force in the pursuit of a just and fair world order. In short, throughout the decade of the new era, the bilateral relations have withstood the test of the evolving international landscape and yielded abundant fruits across various fields, marking a new golden era in history.

President Xi Jinping attributed the success of China-Russia relations to the two countries' commitment to five principles, namely China and Russia are committed to:

Mutual respect as the fundamental principle of relations, and always render support for each other's core interests;

Win-win cooperation as the driving force of relations, and work to foster a new paradigm of mutual benefit;

Lasting friendship as the foundation of relations, and carry forward the torch of Sino-Russian friendship;

Strategic coordination as an underpinning of relations, and steer global governance in the right direction;

Fairness and justice as the purpose of relations, and dedicated to the political settlement of hotspots.

It is foreseeable that China-Russia relations for the new era will become more mature, stable, constructive and sustainable.

China-Russia Relations in the New Era

02

Fundamental Rationale for the Continuous Development of China-Russia Relations

- Historical Logic for the Continuous and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations
- Internal Driving Forces for the Sustained and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations
- International Coordination as a Key Component of China-Russia Relations

Fundamental Rationale for the Continuous Development of China-Russia Relations

President Xi Jinping noted, “China and Russia have found a right path of state-to-state interactions. This is essential for the relationship to stand the test of changing international circumstances, a lesson borne out by both history and reality.”^① President Vladimir Putin stated, “the high level of China-Russia relations today is not the result of a single political event but rooted in enduring shared interests. China-Russia relations are rigorous, calm and steadfast.”^②

Over the past 75 years, China-Russia relations have weathered winds and rains. Taking a new path of mutual respect, equality, trust, good neighborliness, friendship and win-win cooperation between major countries and neighbors, China-Russia relations have become the healthiest, most mature, stable, and resilient state-to-state relations and have set a good example for relations between major countries and neighbors. China and Russia unequivocally stress that the development of a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era serves the fundamental interests

^① Xi Jinping Publishes Signed Article in Russian Media Titled “Forging Ahead to Open a New Chapter of China-Russia Friendship, Cooperation and Common Development”, People’s Daily, March 20, 2023, Page 01.

^② *Встреча с руководителями международных информагентств*, 5 июня 2024 года, <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/74223>.



of both countries and their peoples. This partnership is not a temporary strategy but a relationship endowed with strong internal driving force and independent value. It will not be changed by any turn of events.^①

1. Historical Logic for the Continuous and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

In May 1989, the leaders of China and the Soviet Union held a historic meeting to normalize their relations, opening a new page in the bilateral relationship. President Xi Jinping in his article *Forging Ahead to Open a New Chapter of China-Russia Friendship, Cooperation and Common Development* pointed out, “looking back on the extraordinary journey of China-Russia relations over the past 70 years and more, we feel strongly that our relationship has not reached easily where it is today, and that our friendship is growing steadily and must be cherished by us all.”^② There are five lessons that China and Russia have learned from history:

Firstly, China and Russia are neighbors who cannot move away from each other. Non-conflict and non-confrontation is the bottom line, while developing good-neighborly and friendly relations is the only correct path. In 2001, the two countries signed the China-Russia *Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*, pledging to comprehensively foster a long-standing strategic partnership of coordination based on good-neighborliness, friendship, cooperation, equality, and mutual trust. In 2021, the two countries issued the *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the 20th Anniversary of the Signing of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*, noting that “the Treaty organically combined the historical experience of the development of the Russian-Chinese relations and the universally recognized principles and norms of international law. This basic

^① Joint Statement Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era in the Context of the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between the Two Countries, China.gov.cn, May 16, 2024, https://www.gov.cn/yaowen/liebiao/202405/content_6951404.htm.

^② Xi Jinping Publishes Signed Article in Russian Media Titled “Forging Ahead to Open a New Chapter of China-Russia Friendship, Cooperation and Common Development”, People's Daily, March 20, 2023, Page 01.

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policy document created the legal framework for the long-term and stable development of the China-Russia comprehensive partnership and strategic interaction in the twenty-first century.” During his visit to Russia in March 2023, President Xi Jinping met with President Putin and pointed out that China and Russia are each other’s biggest neighbor, and that consolidating and developing long-term good-neighboring relations with Russia is consistent with historical logic and a strategic choice of China, which will not be changed by any turn of events.^①

Secondly, China and Russia do not draw lines based on ideology, but respect the diversity of civilizations and development paths. In December 1992, the two countries signed the *Joint Statement on the Basis of Mutual Relations Between the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation*, stressing that the right of people of all countries to freely choose their own domestic development path should be respected, and differences in social systems and ideologies should not hinder the normal development of state relations. In 2016, the two countries issued a joint statement affirming that “the foundation of China-Russia relations is non-ideological”. With the development of the times, the two countries upgraded the expression of mutual respect for each other’s development paths to a broader one, namely “respect the diversity of world civilizations and national development paths, respect and safeguard the right of people of all countries to independently choose their social systems”,^② stressing that all countries have the right to determine their own development models based on their national conditions and the will of their people and opposing drawing ideological lines.

Thirdly, China and Russia always adhere to mutual respect and equality. In 1996, the two countries issued a joint statement, making commitments to developing a strategic partnership of coordination towards the 21st century and characterized by equality and trust. In 2001, the principle of mutual respect was enshrined in the China-Russia *Treaty*

^① President Xi Jinping Holds Talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, People’s Daily, March 22, 2023, Page 01.

^② Joint Statement of the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Win-Win Cooperation and Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China website, March 22, 2013, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/zili-ao_674904/1179_674909/201303/t20130323_9868238.shtml.



of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, which provides a fundamental guarantee of the sustained high-level development of bilateral relations. Equality, mutual trust and mutual respect are reflected in all dimensions of China-Russia relations in the new era, from political interactions, economic cooperation to synergy of strategies. The *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era* issued in 2023 stresses that “China and Russia regard each other as priority partners, always respect each other and treat each other as equals, and have become a good example of major-country relations today.” During talks with President Putin in May 2024, President Xi Jinping noted that the most important conclusion drawn from the 75-year history of China-Russia relations is that two neighboring major countries must always promote the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, respect each other on an equal footing, trust each other, accommodate each other's concerns, and truly provide mutual assistance for the development and revitalization of both sides. President Putin stressed that the establishment and development of Russian-Chinese relations are based on the principles of good neighborliness, friendship, mutual respect, and mutual support for the development of each country.

Fourthly, China and Russia have completely resolved the border issue left over from history through peaceful negotiation, clearing away obstacles to bilateral relations. The *Joint Statement on the Basis of Mutual Relations Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation*, which was signed in 1992, stated that the two sides will continue consultations and negotiations on the basis of treaties on the current Sino-Russian border, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, in the spirit of equal consultation, mutual understanding and mutual accommodation, so as to resolve the border issue in a fair and reasonable manner. Acting on this spirit, the two countries signed a series of border agreements. The signing of the *Complementary Agreement on the Eastern Section of the China-Russia Boundary* in 2004 marks the complete identification of the trend of the over 4,300 km-long China-Russia border line, the end of 40-year border negotiations and the complete resolution of border issues left over from history, eliminating the biggest obstacle and hidden trouble to the development of China-Russia relations. The *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the 20th Anniversary of the Signing of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation* issued in 2021 stated that “Russia and China have completely resolved the border issue inherited from history and now the two countries have no

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mutual territorial claims. The Parties are determined to turn the common border into a belt of eternal peace and friendship handed down from generation to generation, which will be the cornerstone of our interstate relations”.

Fifthly, Partnership rather than alliance is the most suitable bilateral relationship model for China and Russia. The two countries entered into alliances in 1945 and 1950, both of which eventually dissolved for various reasons. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the two countries agreed, “the days of countries forming alliances and strategic alliances against third party are over. Countries, especially major countries, should follow the trend of multipolarization in the world and develop relations on the basis of mutual respect, equality, benefiting all parties and accommodating all parties’ interests. This is crucial to world peace and development.”^① The *Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation Between the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation* stated, the contracting parties: “shall not enter into any alliance or be a party to any bloc nor shall they embark on any such action, including the conclusion of such treaty with a third country which compromises the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the other contracting party”; “will neither resort to the use of force or the threat of force and will only solve their differences through peaceful means”; “reaffirm their commitment that they will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other nor target strategic nuclear missiles against each other” and “will carry out the military and military technology cooperation in accordance with the relevant agreements are not directed at third countries”. The *Joint Statement on Developing a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era* signed on June 6, 2019 reaffirmed that “non-alignment, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party” are the basic features of China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era. This shows that “non-alignment, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party” are the unshakable principles of Sino-Russian relations and the prerequisite for the continuous development of bilateral ties. Based on this foundation, China and Russia firmly defend the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order based on international law, and are committed to promoting a multipolar world and democratization of international

^① Joint Statement between China and Russia, Gazette of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, No. 34, 1997, p. 1513, <https://www.gov.cn/gongbao/shuju/1997/gwyb199734.pdf>.



Fundamental Rationale for the Continuous Development of China-Russia Relations

relations, standing as the cornerstone of maintaining world peace and stability and defending international fairness and justice.

2. Internal Driving Forces for the Sustained and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

The development of China-Russia relations shows that the real driving force behind the relationship is the intrinsic need of the two countries for cooperation in safeguarding national and regional security, economic mutual benefit, and understanding and amity between the peoples.

Safeguarding national strategic security

Upholding a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, China and Russia viewed and handled their differences rationally, solved the border issues left over from history in a historic and creative way, and jointly safeguarded the larger interest and the mainstream of the China-Russia friendship. The two countries not only share a 4,300-kilometer common border, but also share a common neighborhood - Central Asia and Northeast Asia. China and Russia also have many common interests in security and development issues in these regions, such as jointly combating the “three forces” in Central Asia. Therefore, it is an important practical need for China and Russia to build the border into a bond of stability and friendship, oppose external forces from creating chaos and conflicts in the common neighborhood, and effectively maintain regional peace and stability. Security, as a positive and important factor, closely links the interests of China and Russia and promotes the steady development of China-Russia relations.

Economic complementarity serving each other's revitalization

China and Russia view each other as strategic opportunity that can help each other's development and revitalization. President Putin once made the important judgment that “Russia needs a prosperous and stable China, and China also needs a strong and

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successful Russia.”^① More importantly, the high economic complementarity and the untapped potential provides conditions for both sides to deepen economic cooperation.

First, complementarity in industrial structure. The formation of the industrial structure is closely related to the resource endowments of a country. In the early days of reform and opening up, relying on the advantage of labor resources, China gained an edge in the production of labor-intensive goods such as textiles, clothing, shoes and toys. Since then, with the development of manufacturing, China has gradually gained competitive advantages in fields such as consumer electronics, new energy, automobiles, and power batteries. By 2023, China had become the global leader in the production and sales of consumer electronics and the export of new energy vehicles, with its production of key power battery components accounting for 70% of the global total. While Russia, by virtue of its resource endowment, has obvious advantages in areas such as oil and gas industry, nonferrous metallurgy, chemical industry, nuclear energy and fuel rods, aerospace and agriculture. In 2023, Russia’s energy and fuel complex contributed over 27% to its GDP and approximately 57% to its total export revenue^②.

Second, highly complementary markets. According to UN Commodity Trade Statistics, the complementarity index for China-Russia trade in goods and services is high. In 2020, the complementarity index between the export of 43 of China’s goods trade sectors and 2 of its services trade sectors and Russian imports is greater than 1, showing a strong complementary feature. These goods sectors include fur, ceramics, railway locomotives, toys, base metal products, textiles and clothing, while service sectors include construction and tourism. Russia has 15 goods sectors and 3 service sectors whose export are highly complementary to China’s imports, including metal products, energy minerals, wood products and agricultural products^③. For example, China is the world’s largest importer of energy, agricultural products and wood, while Russia is a

^① Putin: Russia and China: A New Horizon for Cooperation, People’s Daily, June 5, 2012, Page 03.

^② *Власти оценили нефтегазовые доходы бюджета по итогам года, 27 декабря 2023 года*, <https://lenta.ru/news/2023/12/27/vlasti-otsenili-neftegazovye-dohody-byudzheta-po-itogam-goda/>.

^③ Cui Xiaomin, Su Qingyi: Characteristics and Prospects of China-Russia Trade Cooperation from the Perspective of Global Industrial Chains, *Russian East European & Central Asian Studies*, 2023, Issue 2.



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leading exporter of energy, agricultural products and wood, making China Russia's largest export market in these areas.

Third, the advantage of geographical proximity and interconnected roads. Straddling both Europe and Asia, Russia serves as the ideal bridge connecting China and Europe. The Arctic shipping route (Northern Sea Route) is the shortest route connecting Europe and Asia. To this end, China and Russia established a subcommittee on Arctic shipping routes cooperation to carry out collaboration on Arctic development and utilization, intending to build the route into an important international transport corridor. The two countries have implemented a number of major transportation and logistics projects, including: the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, China-Europe Railway Express, the Tongjiang-Nizhnelenskoye Railway Bridge and the Heihe-Blagoveshchensk Highway Bridge. The roads between the two countries are becoming more connected, and trade costs are consequently decreasing.

Commonalities in values and solid public opinion foundation

Although China and Russia belong to different civilizations, they share many common traditional values, which makes it easy for them to resonate and empathize with each other. At the end of 2022, President Putin signed an executive order titled *On approving the Fundamentals of State Policy to Preserve and Strengthen Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values*, which clarified that the traditional values include life, dignity, human rights and freedoms, patriotism, civic consciousness, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its destiny, high moral ideals, strong families, productive labour, the primacy of the spiritual over corporeal, humanism, charity, justice, collectivism, mutual assistance and mutual respect, historical memory and the continuity of generations, as well as the unity of Russia's peoples. It can be seen that both Chinese and Russians have a strong sense of collectivism and patriotism, attach importance to national unity, believe that national interest is above all else, value family and historical inheritance. Both Chinese and Russians oppose the exclusive theory of "civilizational superiority". The vast majority of people in China and Russia follow traditional moral values, believe in noble morality, love of work, kindness, mutual assistance, and do not agree with the practice of legalizing transgender and drugs in some countries.

3. International Coordination as a Key Component of China-Russia Relations

China and Russia have basically the same assessment of the general trend of world development. Both countries are of the view that the international order is changing at an accelerated pace, that the share of emerging powers in the global economy continues to rise, that the influence of the Global South is increasing, that a multipolar international landscape is taking shape at a faster pace, and that the democratization of international relations is where global opinion trends. At the same time, both countries oppose hegemonism, unilateralism, protectionism, as well as attempts by individual countries to replace the universally recognized principles and norms of international law with the so-called “rule-based order”.

As major countries in the world and permanent members of the UN Security Council, both China and Russia pursue independent foreign policies, represent emerging powers and stand as cornerstones in promoting the multipolarization of the world and the democratization of international relations. Both countries are of the view that there should not be an international order in which individual countries have the final say, that the international order based on universally recognized international law should be upheld, and that hegemonism goes against the trend of the times.

In the face of an increasingly complex and severe international situation, President Xi Jinping put forward the important concepts of “a community with a shared future for mankind” and “a new type of international relations” in a speech delivered in 2013 at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. These concepts have been deeply implemented during the process of growing a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination between China and Russia. This has created a favorable external environment for the economic and social development of the two countries, and is also conducive to establishing a just and fair new international political and economic order and to promoting world prosperity and progress.



Fundamental Rationale for the Continuous Development of China-Russia Relations

China-Russia Relations in the New Era

03

New Heights in Political Mutual Trust to Ensure the Healthy and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

- **Head-of-State Diplomacy Playing the Role of
Strategic Guidance**
- **Smooth Operation of Cooperation Mechanisms at
Various Levels and Areas**
- **Unity and Mutual Support**

New Heights in Political Mutual Trust to Ensure the Healthy and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

As President Xi Jinping pointed out, “solid political mutual trust is the most important feature of China-Russia relations. Firm mutual support is the core value of the relationship between the two countries. In the new era, China-Russia relations must always be based on mutual trust and build a solid strategic support for each other.”^①

Since 2013, the leaders of both countries have been laying out the top-level design and jointly guiding the development of China-Russia relations, consistently promoting political mutual trust. Working to deliver the important consensus reached by the two leaders, exchange mechanisms of Prime Ministers, top legislators, foreign and defense ministers and ruling-parties have been continuously cementing the political and social foundations of China-Russia enduring good-neighborliness, friendship, comprehensive strategic coordination, and mutually beneficial cooperation and win-win outcomes. Under the firm guidance of the head-of-state diplomacy and with the guarantee and promotion of various cooperation mechanisms, the two countries always adhere to mutual respect and equal treatment as the fundamental principles, and jointly take a new path of mutual respect, harmonious coexistence and win-win cooperation between major countries and neighbors.

^① Xi Jinping: Working together to create a better future for China-Russia relations in the new era (June 5, 2019), Selected discourses of President Xi Jinping on major-country diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics, Central Party Literature Press, 2019, p. 195.



New Heights in Political Mutual Trust to Ensure the Healthy and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

1. Head-of-State Diplomacy Playing the Role of Strategic Guidance

With solid friendship and trust, the leaders of China and Russia properly manage the bilateral relations and jointly blueprint their future from a strategic perspective, constantly injecting new impetus into the bilateral relations. President Xi Jinping said that he and President Putin share similar views on the international landscape and approaches to national governance, a high degree of consensus on the strategic significance of the China-Russia relationship and therefore the same resolve and desire to deepen and sustain its growth. “I have had closer interactions with President Putin than with any other foreign colleagues. He is my best and bosom friend.”^① Likewise, President Putin also speaks highly of President Xi Jinping, saying that “President Xi Jinping is approachable, sincere, and a very reliable partner” and “for me, President Xi Jinping is a suitable partner and a reliable friend.”^②

Over the past decade, President Xi Jinping and President Putin have maintained frequent exchanges through meetings, phone calls and letters and the political mutual trust between the two countries has reached an unprecedented level. From March 2013 to October 2024, the two leaders met over 40 times. President Putin is the foreign head of state with whom President Xi has met most frequently since assuming office as Chinese president. In March 2013, President Xi chose Russia as the first stop of his foreign visit after being elected president, breaking new ground for the bilateral relations. From March 20 to 22, 2023, President Xi again chose Russia as the first stop of his foreign visit in his new term. From May 16 to 17, 2024, President Putin chose China as the first stop of his overseas visit after the fifth term as president. This speaks volumes about the high mutual trust and close interaction between the two heads of state and that China and Russia are at the top on each other’s diplomatic agendas. President Xi and President Putin have also conferred upon each other their respective

① Written Interview by H.E. Xi Jinping President of the People’s Republic of China With Mainstream Russian Media Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China website, June 5, 2019, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/oz_678770/1206_679110/1209_679120/201906/t20190605_9337092.shtml.

② Putin Receives Exclusive Interview with China Media Group, CNR News, June 6, 2018, http://china.cnr.cn/news/20180606/t20180606_524259484.shtml.

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countries' highest foreign honors -- the “Friendship Medal” and the “Order of St. Andrew”.

Under the strategic guidance of the heads of state of China and Russia, the level of bilateral relationship has been continuously elevated, characterized by high-quality and high-level development. In 2013, the two heads of state signed the *Joint Statement on Win-win Cooperation and Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination*, proposing for the first time to promote the establishment of a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation at its core. In 2019, the two countries issued the *Joint Statement on Developing a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era*, elevating bilateral ties to the comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era. In 2021, the two countries extended the *China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*, further solidifying and carrying on the idea of “ever-lasting friendship and never becoming enemies”. In 2024, the two countries issued the *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era in the Context of the 75th Anniversary of China-Russia Diplomatic Relations*. The bilateral relationship has entered a new stage of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era.



The picture shows the national flags of China and Russia.



New Heights in Political Mutual Trust to Ensure the Healthy and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

2. Smooth Operation of Cooperation Mechanisms at Various Levels and Areas

Under the top-level design and strategic guidance of the heads of state, a multi-tiered and full-field intergovernmental cooperation framework has been established between China and Russia. In addition to the mechanism of regular meetings between heads of state, multi-tiered exchange mechanisms between prime ministers, top legislators, foreign ministers and ruling parties have been established, as well as exchange and cooperation mechanisms such as strategic security consultations and law-enforcement and security cooperation. The above-mentioned mechanisms have played an important role in delivering the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, consolidating political and strategic mutual trust, promoting all-round mutually beneficial cooperation, and deepening strategic coordination between the two countries.

The mechanism of regular meetings between Chinese and Russian prime ministers began in 1996. In 1997, the two countries signed the *Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on the establishment of a mechanism for regular meetings between the Chinese and Russian Prime Ministers and its organizational principles*. According to this Agreement, the two Prime Ministers will meet at least once a year, alternately in China and Russia, to coordinate cooperation in various practical fields. The regular meeting mechanism between the Chinese and Russian Prime Ministers is an important mechanism for the two governments to comprehensively plan, guide and promote bilateral practical cooperation. It is also the highest-level consultation mechanism in China's foreign cooperation with the most complete organizational structure and the widest bandwidth. This mechanism has successfully operated for 29 years, with a prime ministerial meeting held every year. The five vice-premier-level intergovernmental cooperation committees also operate efficiently, promoting the continuous deepening of practical cooperation between the two countries in the fields of economy, trade, investment, energy, people-to-people and sub-national exchanges.

Legislative exchanges are important part of the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination. In 2014, the two countries established the China-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, which has successfully held nine meetings so far. The institutionalization of exchanges between the two countries' legislative bodies is conducive to strengthening China-Russia strategic coordination, promoting

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cooperation in various fields, and expanding the depth and breadth of China-Russia relations. Through the regular dialogue mechanism meetings between the Communist Party of China and the United Russia Party and the China-Russia Political Parties Forum, the ruling parties of China and Russia have conducted in-depth exchanges on party building and major issues of common concern, playing a positive role in improving the governance of their respective countries, enhancing bilateral strategic mutual trust, and deepening practical cooperation between the two countries. The platforms and mechanisms for sub-national cooperation between China and Russia keep innovating. The establishment of two major regional cooperation mechanisms – “Northeast-Far East” and “Yangtze-Volga” – has played an important role in advancing the cooperation between China and Russia’s adjacent and non-adjacent regions.



On November 20th, 2023, the 10th meeting of the Dialogue Mechanism between the Ruling Parties of China and Russia, co-hosted by the International Department of the CPC Central Committee (IDCPC) and the United Russia Party, was held via video link. The picture shows the venue of the Chinese side.

3. Unity and Mutual Support

China and Russia firmly support each other’s independently chosen development paths,



New Heights in Political Mutual Trust to Ensure the Healthy and Stable Development of China-Russia Relations

running each other's own affairs well, defending each other's sovereignty and security interests, and realizing each other's economic growth and revitalization.

Firstly, the two countries support each other on issues concerning each other's core interests, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and development. Russia firmly adheres to the one-China principle and resolutely supports China's position on Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and the South China Sea. In July 2020, during a telephone conversation with President Xi Jinping, President Putin reaffirmed Russia's firm support for China's efforts to safeguard national security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and its opposition to any provocation aimed at undermining China's sovereignty. After the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi's visit to China's Taiwan region in 2022, the Russian Foreign Ministry immediately released a statement saying that Russia considers her visit a clear provocation, and that there is only one China, and the PRC government is the only legitimate government representing all of China, and that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. China also firmly supports Russia's right to independently choose its development path and social and political system, and opposes external interference in Russia's internal affairs. China supports Russia's constitutional reform in 2020 and the realization of its Development Goals through 2030. President Xi Jinping pointed out that the high vote for the constitutional amendment in the referendum "speaks volume about the Russian people's support for their government and their recognition of the Russian government's governance philosophy."^① Similarly, Russia also supports China's efforts to achieve Chinese modernization, and speaks highly of China's propositions and visions such as building a community with a shared future for mankind and the three major global initiatives, namely the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative.

Secondly, the two countries support each other in times of adversity. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly struck and continued to spread, causing certain impacts on the development of China and Russia both internally and externally. Against this backdrop, while fighting against the pandemic themselves, the two countries

^① Four Calls within Four Months, President Xi Jinping Once Again Stressed Mutual Support with Putin, Xinhua Net, July 10, 2020, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2020-07/10/c_1210695403.htm.

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provided various “hardcore” support to each other in terms of spirit and material. The two countries’ top leaders affirmed each other’s anti-pandemic achievements. President Putin was the first head of a major country to call President Xi Jinping to extend his sympathy. President Xi Jinping highly recognized Russia’s anti-pandemic efforts, saying that “the effectiveness of Russia’s prevention and control measures is gradually showing, and China has full confidence that Russia will eventually defeat the pandemic.”^① The two countries unanimously oppose the politicization of the pandemic and jointly lead international cooperation in fighting the pandemic. After the outbreak of the pandemic, the two countries immediately established a communication mechanism for pandemic notification and provided each other with material and personnel assistance. Russia was one of the first countries to provide aid materials to China, and was also the first country to send a delegation of experts on pandemic prevention to China. In short, after the pandemic, the friendship and trust between the two countries have been further deepened.

Thirdly, the two countries support each other in hosting major home-ground diplomatic events. In early 2014, President Xi Jinping paid a special visit to Russia to attend the opening ceremony of the Sochi Winter Olympics, which were boycotted by the West. He told President Putin, “by the Chinese tradition, when a neighbor is holding a happy event, I should certainly come to you to extend my congratulations, and share happiness with the Russian people as well.”^② In 2015, on the occasion of commemorating the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, as well as the 70th anniversary of the victory in Russia’s Great Patriotic War, the two heads of state went to each other’s country to attend the “May 9” and “September 3” celebrations. On February 4, 2022, President Putin visited China and attended the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics. It is worth mentioning that the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) has been held three times so far, and President Putin has attended all of them, which fully demonstrates Russia’s support for China’s Belt and Road

^① Same as above.

^② President Xi Jinping Meets with Russian President Putin. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China website, February 6, 2014, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/oz_678770/1206_679110/xgxw_679116/201402/t20140206_9336513.shtml.



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Initiative. In addition, from 2013 to date, President Xi Jinping also attended the 4th Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (via video link), the 23rd St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, the 8th G20 Summit in St. Petersburg, the 7th BRICS Summit and the 15th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Ufa, and the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan. President Putin attended the 11th G20 Summit in Hangzhou, the 9th BRICS Summit in Xiamen, and the 18th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Qingdao and other events. In short, supporting each other in hosting home-ground diplomatic events has always been a friendly tradition between the China and Russia, which speaks volume about the high-level and special China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination.



On May 9, 2015, Russia held a grand celebration to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Great Patriotic War. The picture shows the guard of honor of the three services of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) marching during the military parade in Moscow's Red Square.

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04

New Achievements in Practical Cooperation to Consolidate the Economic Foundation for a Shared Future of China and Russia

- **Continuous Consolidation and Improvement of Economic and Trade Cooperation Mechanism**
 - **Breakthroughs in Trade**
 - **Steady Growth in Mutual Investment**
- **Rapid Growth of Sub-national Cooperation**

04

New Achievements in Practical Cooperation to Consolidate the Economic Foundation for a Shared Future of China and Russia

As the joint statement issued on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia says, “practical cooperation between China and Russia is an important factor in promoting the economic and social development and common prosperity of the two countries, ensuring technological progress and national economic sovereignty, realizing national modernization, enhancing people’s well-being, and maintaining the stability and sustainability of the world economy”.^①

China-Russia relations have maintained a high level of development, becoming increasingly mature, stable and resilient, which provides an important guarantee for the deepening of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries. 2013-2023 is the fastest growing period in history of the Sino-Russian economic and trade relations.

^① Joint Statement on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era on the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China website, May 16, 2024, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/oz_678770/1206_679110/xgxw_679116/202405/t20240516_11305860.shtml.



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During this period of time, the cooperation mechanism between the two sides has been increasingly improved, and the trade volume has increased from US\$89.2 billion to US\$240.1 billion, an increase of nearly 1.7 times, which has promoted the economic development of the two countries and met the people's needs. China has been Russia's largest trading partner for 14 consecutive years.

In May 2024, during a joint press conference with President Putin, President Xi Jinping noted that the two countries need to look for areas where their interests converge, tap into their comparative strengths, deepen the integration of interests, and enable each other's success. The two countries need to make further structural improvements to their cooperation, consolidate the good momentum in trade and other traditional areas of cooperation, support the formation of platforms and networks for basic research, continue to unlock cooperation potential in frontier areas, step up cooperation on ports, transportation and logistics, and help keep the global industrial and supply chains stable.

1. Continuous Consolidation and Improvement of Economic and Trade Cooperation Mechanism

Since 2013, the governments of China and Russia have continuously consolidated and improved the legal foundations and cooperative frameworks for bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

First, drafting new foundational legal documents. On October 13, 2014 and May 8, 2015, China and Russia signed the *Agreement about avoidance of double taxation and about prevention of evasion from the taxation concerning taxes on the income* and its accompanying protocol. On August 21, 2024, the two countries signed a new version of the *Outline of the China-Russia investment cooperation plan* and agreed to upgrade the *Agreement on Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments* (2006). These documents provide essential basic legal guarantees for promoting and protecting mutual investment.

To facilitate bilateral economic and trade cooperation, the two governments signed a

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series of cooperation agreements (detailed in the table below), providing significant support for deepening economic and trade relations. In order to realize the goal of achieving a trade volume of \$200 billion by 2024 proposed by the heads of state of the two countries, China's Ministry of Commerce, in collaboration with Russia's Ministry of Economic Development, devised the *Road Map of High-Quality Development of Goods and Services Trade*. The Roadmap includes over 200 cooperation measures and projects across more than 20 sectors, such as oil and gas, chemicals, machinery and electronics, agriculture and forestry, and high technology. It also involves mechanisms of guarantee in areas such as transportation, customs clearance, financial services, trade and investment facilitation, intellectual property rights, and sub-national cooperation, thereby turbocharging the high-quality development of economic and trade ties between the two countries.

In March 2023, China and Russia issued the *Joint Statement on Pre-2030 Development Plan on Priorities in China-Russia Economic Cooperation*, which covers eight aspects of China-Russia economic cooperation by 2030: expanding trade volumes, developing connectivity, enhancing financial cooperation; consolidating all-round energy cooperation; developing long-term mutually beneficial supply cooperation of commodities; promoting exchanges and cooperation in the fields of technology and innovation; upgrading industrial cooperation; and improving agricultural cooperation. This document makes the “improvement of quality and efficiency” as the priority task of the practical cooperation for the new era, and points out the direction for China-Russia economic and trade cooperation in the coming years.



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Bilateral Economic and Trade Agreements Between China and Russia (including FTAs)

Agreements	Year of Signing
Trade Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	1990
Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on Economic and Trade Relations	1992
Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on the Settlement of Government Loan Debts	1998
Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on Short-term Employment of Citizens of the People's Republic of China in the Russian Federation and Citizens of the Russian Federation in the People's Republic of China	2000
Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Joint Development of Forest Resources	2000
Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation on E-commerce Cooperation	2018
Joint Declaration of the Joint Feasible Studies on Completing Eurasian Economic Partnership Agreement between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation	2018
Sino-Russian Cooperation and Development Plan in Russia's Far East Region (2018-2024)	2018
Joint Statement on the Preparation of the Road Map of High-Quality Development of Goods and Services Trade by 2024	2019
Joint Statement on Completing the Road Map of High-Quality Development of Goods and Services Trade	2022
Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Investment Cooperation in the Field of Sustainable (Green) Development	2022
Joint Statement on Pre-2030 Development Plan on Priorities in China-Russia Economic Cooperation	2023
Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation on Strengthening Cooperation in the Exhibition Field	2023
Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation on Deepening Sub-national Investment Cooperation in the Soybean Sector Between China and Russia	2023
Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry for the Development of the Russian Far East and Arctic on Strengthening Cooperation in the Fields of Industry and Infrastructure Within the Framework of the Preferential System for the Russian Far East	2023
Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation on Deepening Investment Cooperation in Forest Resource Development and Utilization	2023
Memorandum of Understanding Between the State Administration for Market Regulation of the People's Republic of China and Russian Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing on Consumer Rights Protection Cooperation	2023
Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Trade in Services	2023

Source: *Guide for Countries and Regions on Overseas Investment and Cooperation - Russia (2023 edition)*, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China.

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At the multilateral level, China, Russia, and Mongolia approved the *Medium-Term Roadmap for the Development of Trilateral Cooperation among the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and Mongolia* in July 2015 as a top-level design to facilitate and strengthen trilateral trade, investment and business partnership. In June 2016, the three countries signed the *Guidelines on Construction of the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor*, which outlined cooperation directions in areas such as infrastructure construction and interconnection, port construction, customs and inspection and quarantine supervision, production capacity and investment cooperation. In May 2018, during the Astana Economic Forum in Kazakhstan, China's Ministry of Commerce and the Eurasian Economic Commission signed the *Agreement on Economic and Trade Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Eurasian Economic Union*. Cooperation in this agreement covers areas such as customs, trade facilitation, intellectual property rights, sector-specific cooperation, e-commerce, and government procurement. Aimed at reducing non-tariff trade barriers, enhancing trade facilitation and creating an enabling environment for industrial development, the agreement is conducive to further deepening economic and trade cooperation between China and the Eurasian Economic Union countries including Russia. In addition, in the *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era in the Context of the 75th Anniversary of China-Russia Diplomatic Relations* signed by the heads of state of China and Russia in 2024, it was pointed out that the two sides will conduct constructive dialogue with the DPRK on the navigation of Chinese ships to the sea via the lower reaches of the Tumen River.

Second, improving the bilateral economic and trade cooperation framework. The regular meeting mechanism between China's Premier and Russia's Prime Minister serves as the primary framework for bilateral economic and trade cooperation, comprising 5 commissions and over 20 subcommittees. The 5 committees are: the Committee for regular meetings between Chinese and Russian heads of government, the Committee on Investment Cooperation, the Committee on Energy Cooperation, the Committee on Humanities Cooperation, and the Intergovernmental Commission for Cooperation of Northeast China and the Far East Region of Russia. The subcommittees cover a wide range of cooperation areas, including economic and trade, science and technology, transportation, nuclear energy, communication and information technology, aerospace, finance, environmental protection, industry, customs, agriculture, education, culture, health, sports, tourism, youth policy, mass media, film and television, satellite



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navigation, and Arctic sea route.

In addition to mechanisms at the official level, the two countries have also established a host of non-governmental cooperation mechanisms such as Chinese Business Council of the China-Russia Committee for Friendship, Peace and Development, Business Council of Northeast China and the Far East Region of Russia, the Sino-Russian Regional Cooperation Park (Qingdao), and the China-Russia Agricultural Cooperation Demonstration Zone, which, as platforms of service and communication for enterprises in both countries, provide trade and investment consulting services and promote project matching between enterprises.

The multi-tiered cooperation mechanisms between China and Russia is conducive to implementing the cooperation agreements reached by the two governments, resolving problems rising in cooperation, and providing an all-round institutional guarantee for expanding and deepening practical cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

2. Breakthroughs in Trade

By virtue of the joint efforts of the political and business communities of the two countries, bilateral trade continues to reach new heights.

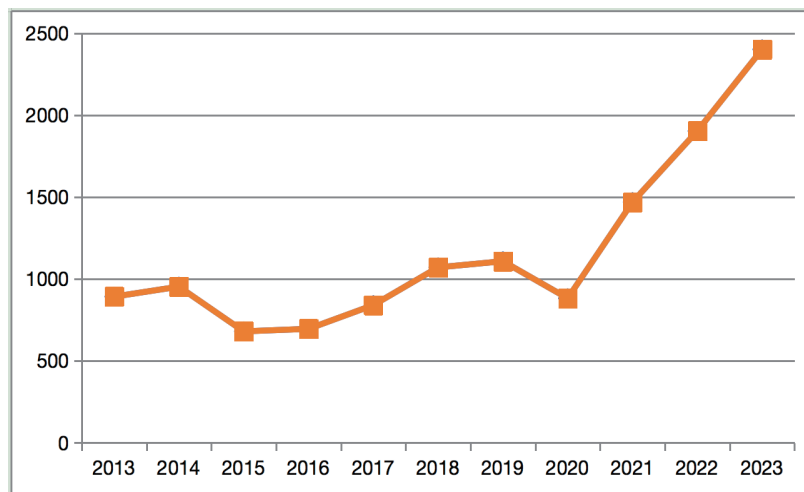
First, trade volume hit record high. According to data from the General Administration of Customs of China, the trade volume between China and Russia surpassed the \$200 billion mark for the first time in 2023, reaching \$240.1 billion -- a 26.3% year-on-year increase.^① China's exports to Russia totaled \$110.972 billion, reflecting a 46.9% increase year-on-year, while imports from Russia amounted to \$129.14 billion, a 12.7% rise. This has over-shotted the \$200 billion trade target set by the two heads of state ahead of schedule. Trade between China and Russia now accounts for 4% of China's

^① China's Total Import and Export Values in 2023 (in USD), General Administration of Customs of China website, January 18, 2024, <http://www.customs.gov.cn/customs/302249/zfxx-gk/2799825/302274/302277/302276/5637234/index.html>.

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total goods trade and over one-third of Russia's foreign trade, hitting a record high. China has maintained its position as Russia's largest trading partner for 14 consecutive years.

Development of China-Russia Trade from 2013 to 2023
(Unit: 100 million dollars)



Source: website of the General Administration of Customs of China

Second, the potential of the complementarity between the two economies has been further unleashed. Russia has now become China's largest source of crude oil and electricity imports and the second-largest source of coal and natural gas imports. Chinese customs statistics indicate that in 2023, China imported 107 million tons of crude oil from Russia, a 24% year-on-year increase, along with a record-breaking 34 billion cubic meters of natural gas (including LNG) and 102 million tons of coal. The two countries have also seen significant growth in agricultural trade, and further relaxation of market access. According to the Russian Agricultural Products Export Development Center, the total trade volume of agricultural products between China



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and Russia surged to \$11.3 billion in 2023, a 33% year-on-year increase.^① China has surpassed the EU to become Russia's largest importer of agricultural goods. In October 2023, the two countries signed an agreement for China to import 70 million tons of grain from Russia over the next 12 years, including cereals, beans and oilseeds, averaging 5.83 million tons annually. Machinery and electronic products have emerged as China's primary exports to Russia, totaling \$75.64 billion in 2023 with a year-on-year increase of 68.8%.^② High-tech product exports grew by 22.4%, while exports of automobiles and parts skyrocketed by 374%.^③ Over 900,000 complete vehicles were exported to Russia, making Russia China's largest automobile export destination. The 2024 Russian Eastern Economic Forum specially set up a Sub-Forum on China-Russia Automobile Whole Industry Chain, which shows the importance both sides attach to cooperation in the automotive field. Additionally, Chinese-brand smartphones and household appliances are increasingly favored by Russian consumers. Russian statistics show that in 2023, Russia imported approximately 29.5 million smartphones, with Chinese brands accounting for 79%^④.

^① *Между РФ и Китаем вырос товарооборот продукции АПК на треть в 2023 году*, 22 апреля 2024, <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/20616693?ysclid=m4ayt4chj3449234240..>

^② TOP 10 Export Markets for Machinery and Electronic Products in 2023, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Guangxi Sub-branch website, February 26, 2024, https://www.ccpitgx.org/webcpit-gx/2024/jmxx_0226/13695.html.

^③ Ambassador Zhang Hanhui Accepts Written Interview with Izvestia, Chinese Embassy in Russia website, April 1, 2024. http://ru.china-embassy.gov.cn/chn/sghd/202404/t20240401_11274243.htm.

^④ *Россия резко увеличила закупки смартфонов китайских брендов*, 20 февраля 2024, <https://www.gazeta.ru/business/news/2024/02/20/22376413.shtml?ysclid=m103af5my2654876106>.

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On July 11, 2023, the 7th China-Russia Expo opened in Yekaterinburg, the capital city of Russia's Sverdlovsk Oblast.

Third, Cross-border e-commerce has grown rapidly. Fueled by technological advancements, cross-border e-commerce is adopting innovative technologies, adapting to new trends, and fostering fresh growth drivers. As a new business model of foreign trade, it has experienced rapid development. In 2023, online sales of imported goods in Russia reached 313 billion rubles, with 90% coming from China. The number of orders hit 174 million, with 98% coming from China.^① This makes China the top destination for overseas online shopping among Russian consumers. Alibaba Group's AliExpress has become the preferred platform for Russians engaging in cross-border online shopping, with strong growth prospects. Russia, in turn, is keen to expand its

^① Доля китайских заказов достигла 90% от всей суммы онлайн-импорта, 4 июня 2024, года https://new-retail.ru/novosti/retail/dolya_kitayskikh_zakazov_dostigla_90_ot_vsey_summy_onlayn_importa/?ysclid=m0dh613spn510518476.



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e-commerce presence in China. In June 2024, President Putin said that Russia has very successful e-commerce platforms and should help related companies enter markets such as China and India, and that the Russian government should formulate relevant support measures in the field of e-commerce.



In September 2021, AliExpress opened its first buyer and seller center in Russia.

Fourth, financial services continue to innovate. Financial cooperation has become a key area of collaboration between China and Russia. According to Russian data, the proportion of China-Russia trade settled in domestic currencies has reached 92%. The proportion of Renminbi (RMB) in trading volume on the Moscow Exchange has risen from 6% in April 2022 to 50% in October 2023.^① The Russian government has designated RMB as a reserve currency, with RMB accounting for up to 60% of Russia's sovereign wealth fund.^② China's UnionPay cards are now accepted at over 85% locations in the Russian market, and Ant Group has introduced payment solutions

^① *Полрынка за юань*, 10 ноября 2023, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6323457?ysclid=lovfj2lles822847770>.

^② *Минфин обнулит долю евро в ФНБ*, 9 февраля 2023, <https://ria.ru/20230209/evro-1850891739.html?ysclid=lovfwgo8mq692571665>.

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such as Alipay in Russia. Additionally, China and Russia have jointly established the China-Russia Financial Alliance, a non-profit and open cross-border financial cooperation organization, so as to support economic and trade exchanges, strengthen financial cooperation and facilitate domestic currency settlements between the two countries.



In Q1 2024, RMB's trading volume in foreign exchange transactions on the Moscow Exchange doubled.

Fifth, Cross-border transportation has flourished. On railway transportation, China-Europe Railway Express (CRE) registered over 90,000 trips in total as of August 20, 2024. Since the opening of Manzhouli, Suifenhe and Tongjiang railway ports, the cumulative number of CRE passing through these ports has exceeded 30,000, and 2.91 million TEUs of goods have been shipped, showing a good momentum of both quantity and quality improvement.^① The China-Russia New Land Grain Corridor has emerged as a fresh railway route connecting the eastern regions of China and Russia. On road transportation, the opening of the Heihe-Blagoveshchensk Highway Bridge between China and Russia has opened up a new international highway transport channel for

^① China-Europe freight trains on the “Eastern Route” surpass 30,000, Xinhua, August 20, 2024, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/fortune/20240820/de3fc0fad1d64b4ea0d9b1b08d8f97d3/c.html>.



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cooperation between China's Northeast and Russia's Far East region. On marine transportation, several Chinese ports have rolled out new shipping routes to Russian Far East ports, such as the foreign trade container route from Quanzhou Port in Fujian to Russian Far East, the "China-Russia Express" from Qingdao to Vladivostok Port, and the container shipping route from Nansha Port in Guangdong to Vladivostok Port in Russia. In July 2023, the China-Russia Arctic Express container liner was launched, which to a certain extent met the growing logistics and transportation needs of the two countries. In terms of air cargo, China-Russia cargo charter flights have become a new growth point. Harbin, Zhengzhou, Qingdao, Xi'an, Guangzhou, Xiamen, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Beijing have successively opened cargo charter routes to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and other Russian cities, playing a positive role in improving the cargo transportation capacity between China and Russia.



The picture shows the Heihe-Blagoveshchensk Highway Bridge, straddling the border between China and Russia.

In addition, China and Russia are actively enhancing "soft connectivity" in terms of norms and standards. The customs clearance processes between the two countries have been streamlined. Advantages such as fast and punctual customs clearance, economical freight rates, safety and stability, and green and environmentally friendly mode are gradually emerging, which better ensures the safety and stability of the industrial chain and supply chain.

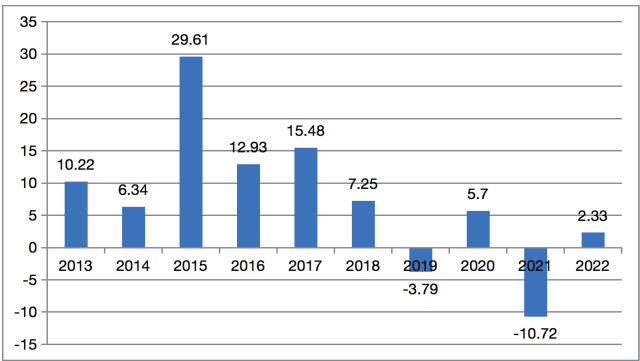
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3. Steady Growth in Mutual Investment

Since 2013, to expand the mutual investment has become a focus of attention for both China and Russia. In 2018, the two sides established the China-Russia Regional Cooperation Development Investment Fund. The scale and areas of mutual investment have continued to expand, playing a unique role in deepening bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

First, direct investment from China remains steady. By the end of 2022, China's direct investment stock in Russia reached \$9.9 billion, accounting for 0.3% of China's total outward direct investment, 0.7% of China's investment in Europe, and 2% of Russia's total foreign direct investment utilization^①. By September 30, 2022, there were 977 Chinese companies that had opened branches in Russia and registered with the Ministry of Commerce of China, employing 24,000 foreign employees. The business scope of these enterprises mainly covers mining, agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery, manufacturing, wholesale and retail, leasing and business services and finance.

China's Direct Investment Flow to Russia from 2013 to 2022 (Unit: 100 million dollars)



Source: *Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Direct Investment 2022*, jointly released by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, the National Bureau of Statistics, and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, published by China Statistics Press, 2023 edition.

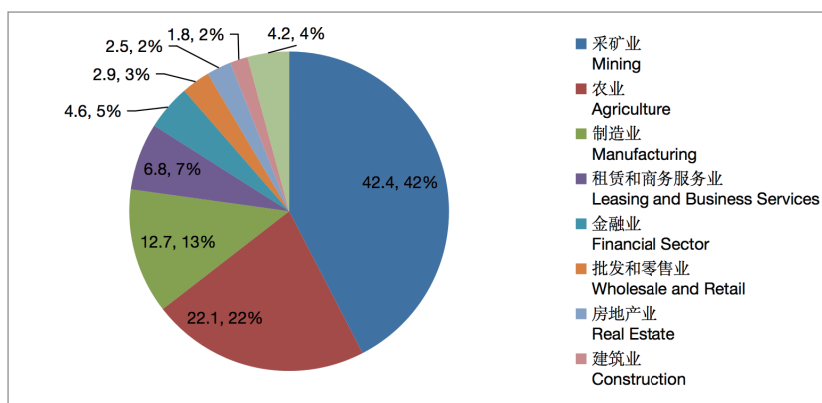
^① Statistical Bulletin of China's Outbound Direct Investment 2022, jointly released by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, the National Bureau of Statistics, and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, published by China Statistics Press, 2023 edition.



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Second, the investment structure of China in Russia continues to improve. The scope of Chinese investment in Russia is gradually expanding, though the mining industry still occupies a dominant position, accounting for nearly 45%. With the advancement of the Belt and Road international cooperation on production capacity, China's investment in Russia's manufacturing industry has shown an upward trend, with emerging large-scale production capacity investment projects such as Haier Group and Great Wall Motor, as well as large-scale infrastructure and real estate projects such as the "Baltic Pearl" housing estate and business center and Moscow Metro renovation project contracted and constructed by China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC), which reflects a growing trend toward diversification in investments. In addition, agricultural investment projects in Russia such as grain crops, rapeseed oil, and agricultural product logistics infrastructure have become new highlights, driving a substantial increase in agricultural product trade between the two countries.

Sector Distribution of China's Direct Investment in Russia in 2019



Source: China General Chamber of Commerce in Russia: *Report on the Development of Chinese Enterprises in Russia (2020)*

Third, overseas economic and trade parks become the main form of investment. Overseas economic and trade parks have emerged as the principal form of direct investment by China in Russia. Driven by the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese companies have built more than 40 overseas economic and trade parks in Russia, making Russia the country with the largest number of economic and trade parks outside China. These parks include agricultural planting parks, animal husbandry parks, wood processing parks, light industrial product manufacturing

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parks and trade parks, among which there are more agricultural planting parks and wood processing parks, while there are relatively fewer industrial parks in high-tech, petrochemical and other fields. Representative ones include: Sino-Russian Tomsk Timber Industry and Trade Cooperation Zone, Longyue Forestry Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone and Ussuriysk Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone.

Fourth, strategic large-scale projects are progressing smoothly. The two countries have promoted the construction of a series of major projects by expanding mutual investment. “The two sides have identified more than 60 key projects and more than 20 promising projects. Among the key projects, more than 40 have been successfully put into production and are being implemented, accounting for nearly 70%.”^① In the field of oil and gas, the China-Russia crude oil pipeline double line has been laid, the China-Russia East Line natural gas pipeline has been put into operation, and cooperation in the Yamal liquefied natural gas project has been carried out. In the field of nuclear energy, the construction of Units 7 and 8 of Tianwan Nuclear Power Plant and Units 3 and 4 of Xudabao Nuclear Power Plant has started. This is the largest nuclear energy cooperation project between China and Russia to date, representing the high level of practical cooperation between the two countries. In the field of infrastructure, the Heihe-Blagoveshchensk highway bridge and the Tongjiang-Nizhneleninskoye railway bridge successfully opened to traffic; the Moscow subway project invested and constructed by CRCC was successfully put into operation, and the first logistics center jointly built by China and Russia, the Berelast Logistics Center, was put into use. In the field of satellite navigation, the two sides signed an Agreement on China-Russia Intergovernmental Cooperation on Satellite Navigation. This marks a new stage in the cooperation between the Beidou and GLONASS systems, and will provide legal and organizational guarantees for the two countries to carry out extensive cooperation in the field of satellite navigation.

^① Ambassador to Russia Zhang Hanhui Accepts Written Interview with News World, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China website, September 12, 2024, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/zwbd_673032/wjzs/202409/t20240912_11489580.shtml.



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An aerial shot of the Yamal LNG project.

Fifth, Russia's investment in China is gradually increasing. By the end of 2022, Russia's total direct investment in China amounted to \$1.12 billion, encompassing 5,431 projects. These investments cover a wide range of sectors, including manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, logistics, postal services, telecommunications, construction, retail, and catering. In general, the scale of Russian investment projects in China remains relatively modest.

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China-Russia Two-way Investment from 2018 to 2022
(Unit: 100 million dollars)

Year	Russia to China		China to Russia	
	Annual Flow	Year-end Stock	Annual Flow	Year-end Stock
2018	0.6	10.0	7.3	142.1
2019	0.5	10.6	-3.8	128.0
2020	0.1	10.8	5.7	120.7
2021	0.1	10.8	-10.7	106.4
2022			2.3	99

Source: *Guide for Countries and Regions on Overseas Investment and Cooperation - Russia (2023 edition)*, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China.

4. Rapid Growth of Sub-national Cooperation

President Xi Jinping pointed out that China and Russia are each other’s largest neighbor and the most important comprehensive strategic partner of coordination, and have extensive common interests. Sub-national cooperation plays an important role in China-Russia relations.^① In recent years, China-Russia sub-national cooperation has achieved all-round coverage through mechanisms such as “Northeast-Far East” and “Yangtze-Volga”, along with platforms such as the Regional Cooperation Council under the China-Russia Committee for Friendship, Peace and Development and over a hundred sister-city agreements. Sub-national cooperation provides strong impetus for the continued healthy and stable development of China-Russia relations.

First, achievements have been made in cooperation between China’s Northeast and Russia’s Far East. Based on the consensus reached by the two heads of state to

^① President Xi Jinping and Russian President Putin Jointly Attend the Dialogue between Regional Leaders from China and Russia, China.gov.cn, September 11, 2018, https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-09/11/content_5321156.htm.



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strengthen practical cooperation between China's Northeast and Russia's Far East, the Intergovernmental Commission for Cooperation of Northeast China and the Far East Region of Russia was established in November 2016, with its first meeting held in 2017. The two sides have jointly developed the *Sino-Russian Cooperation and Development Plan in Russia's Far East Region (2018-2024)* and inked a *Memorandum for the Joint Development of the Primorye-1 and Primorye-2 International Transport Corridors*.

From 2013 to 2023, trade volume between China's Northeast and the Russian Far East doubled. According to Russian statistics, the trade volume between these two regions in 2023 was approximately \$27 billion, with China being the Russian Far East's largest trading partner. By the end of 2023, there were 49 Chinese-invested projects in Russia's Far East, with a total investment of nearly \$9 billion, making China the region's largest source of foreign investment. Currently, there are 19 China-Russia border ports in Heilongjiang Province. The two sides are planning to modernize and upgrade these ports, so as to adapt to new developments of the bilateral trade and continuously improve cargo handling capacity and customs clearance efficiency of the ports.



On March 29, 2023, Suifenhe port sees 2,000 China-Europe freight train trips.

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Second, steady progress has been made in regional cooperation between China's middle and upper reaches of the Yangtze River and Russia's Volga Federal District. In 2013, the Yangtze-Volga regional cooperation mechanism was launched, representing the first and only cooperation mechanism between non-adjacent regions of China and Russia. Over the past 11 years, the two sides have established a Council of regional cooperation, Joint Working Groups, Youth Forum, University Alliance and other mechanisms, creating significant platforms for advancing economic, trade, investment, educational and cultural cooperation. Economic and trade cooperation between the two regions has been steadily expanding, with China becoming a crucial trading partner for Russia's Volga Federal District. In 2022, trade volume between the two regions hit \$8.7 billion, a 45.2% year-on-year increase. The cooperation within the framework of the Yangtze-Volga mechanism shows great promise for the future and will turbocharge the high-quality development of regional cooperation between the two countries.



On July 19, 2016 (local time), the first meeting of the Council of Regional Cooperation between the Middle and Upper Reaches of the Yangtze River and the Volga Federal District was held in Ulyanovsk, Russia.



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Economic Foundation for a Shared Future of China and Russia**

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05

New Heights in People-to-People Connectivity as the Social Foundation for Everlasting China-Russia Friendship

- **Continuous Improvement of Mechanisms for People-to-people
and Cultural Cooperation**
- **Rich and Diverse Contents of China-Russia People-to-people
and Cultural Cooperation**
 - **Consolidation of Social and Popular Foundations for
Everlasting China-Russia Friendship**



New Heights in People-to-People Connectivity as the Social Foundation for Everlasting China-Russia Friendship

As President Xi Jinping noted, “interests wane and power withers, relations endure for those who stay heart-to-heart. The development of state-to-state relations ultimately depends on the people’s mutual understanding and consensus”.^① People-to-people and cultural cooperation is an important component of China-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era.

As the “lubricant” and “glue” of bilateral relations, people-to-people and cultural cooperation is characterized by its fundamental, pioneering, extensive and lasting nature, and plays an irreplaceable role in bridging cognitive gaps, fostering mutual trust and deepening friendship between the peoples of both countries.^② Indeed, grassroots-level understanding and interaction serve as a bedrock for the positive development of China-Russia relations and practical cooperation in various fields. In recent years, frequent interactions between the two leaders, coordinated efforts in international and regional affairs and increasingly close economic and trade ties have planted seeds of mutual trust in the hearts of the Chinese and Russian peoples. This has reinforced their sense of the solidity and reliability of China-Russia friendship and the interdependence of the two sides, and intensified their desire to enhance mutual

^① President Xi Jinping’s Speech at Seoul National University: Jointly Crafting the Future of China-ROK Cooperation and Contributing to the Revival and Prosperity of Asia, Xinhua, July 4, 2014, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-07/04/c_1111468087.htm.

^② Liu Limin, China-Russia People-to-People and Cultural Cooperation and Exchanges under the Framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, *Teaching Russian in China*, Vol. 34, No. 3, August 2015.



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understanding, communication and dialogue.

Thanks to the direct interest and vigorous promotion of the heads of state of both countries, people-to-people and cultural cooperation between China and Russia has yielded significant results. The policy and legal foundation for people-to-people and cultural cooperation has been steadily reinforced, mechanisms continuously improved, the scope of cooperation broadened, programs enriched, and the level of mutual understanding and connectivity greatly enhanced. The social and public foundation for enduring China-Russia friendship has been further strengthened.

1. Continuous Improvement of Mechanisms for People-to-people and Cultural Cooperation

China and Russia always attach great importance to people-to-people and cultural cooperation. Since 2013, the policy foundation for such cooperation has been steadily strengthened, and the institutional building has been continuously advanced.

First, the policy and legal groundwork has been consistently fortified. As early as 1992, China and Russia signed the *Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation*, a guiding document for cultural exchanges. As the first agreement between the two governments on cultural and people-to-people exchanges, the document provides policy guarantees for the two countries to carry out cultural and people-to-people exchanges. In July 2001, China and Russia signed the *Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*, proposing to develop exchanges and cooperation in the fields of culture, education, health, information, tourism, sports and law. In all bilateral joint statements, China and Russia emphasize the need to continue to deepen and expand people-to-people exchanges, enhance mutual understanding and traditional friendship between the two peoples, and consolidate the social foundation of China-Russia relations. China and Russia have also formulated the *Action Plan for China-Russia People-to-people and Cultural Cooperation*, further advancing the development of humanistic cooperation between the two countries.

Second, the cooperation mechanism has been increasingly improved. In order to coordinate, regulate and institutionalize the bilateral cooperation in people-to-people

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and cultural exchanges, in November 2000, China and Russia decided to establish the China-Russia Committee on Education, Culture, Health and Sports under the mechanism of regular meetings between the Chinese premier and the Russian prime minister. This marked the formal launch of the bilateral cooperation framework in these areas. According to regulations, subcommittees or working groups in various fields were established under the Committee. Annual meetings are convened to discuss and develop work plans and to review the implementation of these plans.

As the scope of China-Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation expanded, the name of the China-Russia Committee on Education, Culture, Health and Sports cannot cover the breadth of cooperation any longer. In July 2007, an intergovernmental protocol was signed, officially renaming the Committee as the China-Russia Committee on Humanities Cooperation. This became China's first vice-premier-level foreign cultural and people-to-people cooperation mechanism. The Committee includes subcommittees for education, culture, health, sports, tourism, media, film, youth, archives and more. Its primary responsibilities involve formulating plans for people-to-people and cultural cooperation based on important consensuses reached by the two heads of state and the needs of the development of China-Russia relations. It is tasked with identifying priority areas and projects, coordinating efforts among government departments, social organizations, enterprises and other stakeholders in both countries, advancing project implementation, addressing challenges in cooperation, monitoring and evaluating progress. The committee also works to continuously improve the cooperation mechanism and organizes a variety of exchange activities to deepen mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

By September 2024, the China-Russia Committee on Humanities Cooperation had convened 25 meetings. Under its guidance and coordination, China and Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation embarked on a fresh chapter, transitioning from leaders' consensus to practical implementation and from official exchanges to grassroots interactions. A robust mechanism for cultural and people-to-people cooperation has taken shape, rooted in political mutual trust, primarily driven by official initiatives, and encompassing diverse fields such as science and technology, education, culture and health. It actively involves various stakeholders, including universities, local governments, youth, enterprises, and social organizations. As an integral part of the China-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New



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Era, humanities cooperation has delivered increasingly significant results and holds bright prospects.

2. Rich and Diverse Contents of China-Russia People-to-people and Cultural Cooperation

The reciprocal hosting of “theme years” is a groundbreaking and distinctive hallmark of China-Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation, receiving widespread acclaim from peoples of both countries. Since 2006, China and Russia have successively organized nine national-level theme years, including the National Year (2006-2007), Language Year (2009-2010), Tourism Year (2012-2013), Year of Youth Friendly Exchanges (2014-2015), Media Exchange Year (2016-2017), Year of Local Cooperation and Exchanges (2018-2019), Year of Scientific and Technological Innovation (2020-2021), Sports Exchange Year (2022-2023), and Culture Year (2024-2025). These activities have significantly bolstered the depth and breadth of China-Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation in various fields.

Based on the national-level “theme years”, China-Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation has flourished in education, culture, science and technology, media, tourism, youth, health and sports and other areas, encompassing various aspects of social development.

In the field of education, both countries have prioritized fostering two-way student exchanges, university alliances, collaborative education programs, joint talent development, and cooperation in basic research. According to Russian statistics, by December 2023, over 44,000 Chinese students were enrolled in Russian universities, while more than 12,000 Russian students were studying at higher education institutions in China.^① Over 200 Russian universities have opened Chinese language courses, with approximately 90,000 students across primary, secondary and higher education

^① Li Yaoyuan, China-Russia People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges Are Timely, Guangming Daily, May 16, 2024, Page 012.

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levels learning Chinese. Established in 2014 and officially enrolling students in 2017, Shenzhen MSU-BIT University is a flagship project of educational cooperation between the two countries.



Campus scenery of Shenzhen MSU-BIT University.

In the field of culture, both country have organized cultural festivals, film festivals, various exhibitions, exchanged artistic groups for performances, and introduced each other's literary and artistic works. A host of significant cultural exchange platforms and branded projects have emerged, including Chinese Film Festival, Russian Film Festival, and China-Russia Cultural Fair. The 2024-2025 China-Russia Culture Year will feature a vibrant array of cultural activities, further deepening the friendly ties between the two peoples and solidifying the public foundation for enduring China-Russia amity.



The 14th China-Russia Cultural Fair kicked off in Blagoveshchensk, Russia, on June 29, 2024.

In the field of science and technology, the two sides are focusing on promoting joint research and development in key areas, supporting the joint construction of modern laboratories and advanced scientific research centers, cooperation in the transformation and industrialization of scientific and technological achievements, and promoting exchanges and training of scientific and technological personnel. Recent years have seen significant achievements in China-Russia scientific and technological cooperation. 116 cooperative education institutions and projects have been launched, 80 joint laboratories and research centers have been established, the China-Russia Joint Science and Technology Innovation Fund has been successfully activated, and notable progress has been made in strategic projects in areas such as aerospace and digital economy.

In the field of media, the cooperation between Chinese and Russian media in news coverage, content exchange and industrial development has demonstrated remarkable resilience and vitality, yielding impressive results. Activities such as China-Russia Media Forum, China-Russia Audio-visual Communication Week, China Pavilion at the Moscow World Content Market Exhibition, China-Russia Animation Industry Dialogue and China-Russia Short Video Contest were organized. Co-production documentaries and films such as “Echoes of the Silk Road” “New China” “Ballet in the flames of

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the War” “The Song of Lingshui” were shot. Magnolia Theatre was launched on mainstream Russian TV channels. All these events and activities have played an active role in advancing the people-to-people and cultural exchanges and the development of friendly relations between the two countries.



China and Russia co-produced the film *Ballet in the flames of the War* to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. The picture shows a still from the movie.

In the field of tourism, both sides have consistently promoted the development and marketing of tourism products as well as the enhancement of service standards. According to Chinese statistics, 997,900 Russian tourists visited China in 2023, while Russian figures show that 477,000 Chinese tourists travelled to Russia during the same period. The Russian Ministry of Economic Development predicts that by 2030, tourist flows between the two countries will increase by at least fivefold.^①

^① Wang Chao, Cultivating Fertile Soil for Cultural and People-to-People Engagements and Deepening China-Russia Friendship, *Guangming Net*, May 18, 2024, https://news.gmw.cn/2024-05/18/content_37329274.htm.



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In the field of youth, mutual understanding and friendship between the youth of both countries have been effectively strengthened through activities such as China-Russia Youth Walking Friendship Road Together, China-Russia Youth Development Forum, China-Russia Youth Business Incubator Project, China-Russia Yangtze-Volga Youth Forum, China-Russia Youth Ice Hockey and Football Friendship Matches, China-Russia University Student Exchange Conference, China-Russia Youth Cultural Exchange Carnival, as well as projects of youth cooperation within the frameworks of the SCO and BRICS.

In the field of health, the bilateral cooperation encompasses medical services, traditional medicine exchanges, infectious diseases prevention and control, and emergency drills. Notably, collaboration in traditional medicine has steadily expanded. Traditional Chinese Medicine Practice Development Center, the St. Petersburg Chinese Medicine Center of the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine (BUCM), the China-Russia Innovative Cooperation Alliance for Traditional Chinese Medicine were established, enabling traditional Chinese medicine to better serve the Russian populace.



The BUCM Chinese Medicine Center in St. Petersburg

In the field of sports, the two sides have focused on promoting athlete exchanges, event collaboration, and sports science research. Under the promotion of “the Year of Sports”,

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the two countries have organized a wide array of enriching sports exchange activities, including China-Russia Sports Congress, China-Russia Sports Exchange Week, China-Russia Folk Sports and Arts Festival, China-Russia Baseball Friendship Match, China-Russia Winter Youth Games, China-Russia Children's Football Friendship Match, Chess Match, Fitness Qigong, etc. These activities have further energized China-Russia sports exchanges and deepened the friendship between the two peoples.

3. Consolidation of Social and Popular Foundations for Everlasting China-Russia Friendship

Through joint efforts, the peoples of China and Russia have developed a deeper understanding of each other's rich histories, vibrant cultures, and significant economic achievements. Perceptions of one another have become increasingly positive, fostering greater confidence in the advancement of China-Russia relations. A survey conducted by the Levada Center in Russia shows that 75% of the Russian citizens now have a positive attitude toward China.^① The idea of “everlasting friendship and never becoming enemies” has firmly taken root in the hearts of both peoples, further solidifying the social and popular foundations of the China-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era.

The year 2021 marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia *Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*. According to the “China-Russia public opinion 2021” survey, 89% of Russian respondents and 97% of Chinese respondents expressed support for extending this landmark policy document. Respondents from both countries agreed that China and Russia have the capacity to jointly promote the multipolarization of the world and the democratization of international relations.^②

^① *Российско-китайские отношения*, 30 марта 2021, <https://www.levada.ru/2021/03/30/rossijsko-kitajskie-otnosheniya/>.

^② *Опубликованы итоги соцопроса “Общественное мнение о Китае и России-2021”*, 29 января 2022, <https://rg.ru/2022/01/29/opublikovany-itogi-socoprosa-obshchestvennoe-mnenie-o-kitae-i-rossii-2021.html>.



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The major findings of the public opinion survey are as follows.^① The social and popular foundations for the sustained high-level development of the China-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era are solid. The peoples of both countries strongly support the development of China-Russia relations and express confidence and anticipation for the future of bilateral ties. The people of each country show a high level of appreciation for the other country, are optimistic about and supportive of the other country's development and revitalization, and hold the other country's foreign policies in high regard. China-Russia friendship is deeply ingrained among the people, with the younger generation demonstrating even greater mutual goodwill. Amid increasingly complex international dynamics, the peoples of both countries support China and Russia in jointly opposing external interference and fostering close coordination in international affairs; and they recognize the vital role of China and Russia in promoting the multipolarization of the world, the democratization of international relations, and world peace and prosperity.

The China-Russia relations today are at their best in history, with rapid advancements in political and economic ties acting as a catalyst for deeper people-to-people connection. This has created enabling conditions for further enhancing people-to-people and cultural cooperation. Looking ahead, with well-crafted planning by both sides and appropriate government guidance, China-Russia people-to-people and cultural cooperation is poised to reach a new level of advancement.

^① How Do We Evaluate Each Other's People? Report on the Public Opinion Survey of China-Russia Relations, Beijing Daily, January 28, 2022.

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06

Taking up New Responsibilities and Making New Contributions to Jointly Safeguarding World Peace, Fairness and Justice

- **Maintaining Global Strategic Stability**
- **Working Together to Promote the Democratization of International Relations and Safeguard International Fairness and Justice**
- **Actively Promoting Global Governance**

Taking up New Responsibilities and Making New Contributions to Jointly Safeguarding World Peace, Fairness and Justice

President Xi Jinping pointed out that China and Russia are permanent members of the UN Security Council and major emerging markets, and that it is the shared strategic choice of both countries to deepen strategic coordination, expand mutually beneficial cooperation and follow the general historical trend of multipolarity in the world and economic globalization. President Vladimir Putin underscored that the development of Russia-China relations is not an expediency, is not directed against any third party, and is conducive to global strategic stability. Russia is willing to closely collaborate with China in international and regional affairs, and promote the establishment of a more just and fair international order.

Currently, the world has entered a new period of turbulence and change, characterized by intertwining traditional and non-traditional security challenges, sluggish global economic recovery, and unprecedented challenges to human society. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, leading emerging economies and key forces in regional multilateral affairs, China and Russia firmly uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order based on international law, and closely coordinate and cooperate with each other in multilateral platforms such as the United Nations, APEC, G20, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the BRICS, so as to promote equal and orderly multipolarity and inclusive economic globalization through true multilateralism.



Taking up New Responsibilities and Making New Contributions to Jointly Safeguarding World Peace, Fairness and Justice

1. Maintaining Global Strategic Stability

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the international security landscape has evolved in a complex manner, with rising instability and uncertainties in strategic security. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, China and Russia have undertaken a series of measures to uphold global strategic stability, “not for their own selfish interests, let alone to follow the old path of alliance against third parties”.^①

Firstly, China and Russia adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence. China and Russia have always stressed the importance of maintaining good relations between major countries in solving global strategic issues, unequivocally asserting that nuclear-weapon states bear significant responsibilities for international security and global strategic stability. As neighboring major powers, China and Russia uphold the principles of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation, setting a good example for peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation among major countries. The stability of the China-Russia relations itself undoubtedly makes a positive contribution to global strategic stability.

Secondly, China and Russia firmly uphold the arms control and non-proliferation system. The two countries have successively issued the *Joint Statement on Strengthening Global Strategic Stability* (2016) and the *Joint Statement on Strengthening Contemporary Global Strategic Stability* (2019), stating a common position on critical security and arms control issues, proposing measures to safeguard the system of international mechanisms in the field of arms control and non-proliferation, and saying that “the nuclear-weapon states have important responsibilities for international security and global strategic stability, and they ought to address each other’s concerns through dialogue and consultation to avoid strategic misunderstand-

^① Answer to Questions on the Joint Statement on Developing a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era Signed by the Heads of State of China and Russia, China.gov.cn, June 6, 2019, https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2019-06/06/content_5398117.htm.

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ings and miscalculations”.^① On January 3, 2022, China, Russia, the US, France and the UK issued a *Joint Statement by the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races*, reaffirming that nuclear weapons are not directed at each other or any other nation. On March 21, 2023, China and Russia issued the *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era*, stressing that the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT) constitutes the bedrock of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and expressing their commitment to continued collaboration to preserve and strengthen the treaty. On May 16, 2024, the two countries jointly issued the *Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era in the Context of the 75th Anniversary of China-Russia Diplomatic Relations*, expressing their opposition to “attempts to utilize the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process for political ends unrelated to the treaty's substance.”

China and Russia advocate maintaining the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), which is one of the foundations of today's international security system and a harmonious unity of equal cooperation in the areas of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In addition, the two countries have clearly expressed their support for the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction* (BWC) and the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction* (CWC).

Thirdly, China and Russia hold the same position on preventing the weaponization of outer space. The two countries unequivocally advocate for the peaceful use of outer space and oppose the weaponization and arms race in outer space. In 2008, they jointly submitted a draft *Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer*

^① Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Strengthening Contemporary Global Strategic Stability, China.gov.cn, June 6, 2019, https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2019-06/06/content_5397869.htm



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Space and of the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) to the Conference on Disarmament, and submitted an updated text in 2014. In 2017, China, Russia and relevant countries jointly promoted the adoption of a resolution by the UN General Assembly to establish a Group of Governmental Experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space to discuss the substantive elements of an international legal instrument on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space. In 2022, they promoted the adoption of a resolution by the 77th session of the UN General Assembly aimed at enabling an early consensus in the international community on the negotiation of relevant treaties, so as to effectively safeguard peace, security and long-term sustainable development in outer space. In December 2024, the 79th session of the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted two resolutions co-sponsored by China and Russia, namely *No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space* and *Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space*. Both resolutions emphasize that an arms race in outer space should be prevented, and that joint efforts should be made to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Lastly, Russia supports China's new security concept, which advocates maintaining the UN collective security mechanism and promoting political solutions to hotspot issues. In accordance with Article 9 of the *China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation*, China and Russia launched the strategic security consultation mechanism in 2005 and organized the first joint exercise "Peace Mission", while engaging in security cooperation at all levels and in multiple fields. Through regular security consultations and joint operational capacity-building, the two sides firmly support each other on issues involving each other's core interests such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security, and jointly maintain regional peace, security and stability. In 2022, China put forward the Global Security Initiative with "six adherences" as its core. In March 2023, China and Russia emphasized in their joint statement that they would "jointly act on the Global Security Initiative and contribute to maintaining world peace and security".^①

^① Joint Statement on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, China.gov.cn, March 22, 2023, https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2023-03/22/content_5747726.htm.

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In early to mid-July 2024, the Chinese and Russian militaries held the “Joint Sea-2024” joint exercise in the sea and airspace near Zhanjiang. The picture shows the Chinese and Russian naval fleets.

Since the full escalation of the Ukrainian crisis, China has been actively promoting peace talks, upholding an objective and fair position based on the right and wrong of the matter itself. The document *China’s Position on Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis* encapsulates the core of President Xi Jinping’s thought, such as the “four principles”, “joint efforts in four areas” and “three observations”. Li Hui, Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs, has carried out four rounds of shuttle diplomacy and had extensive contacts and exchanges with all parties on the political solution to the Ukrainian crisis. In May 2024, China and Brazil put forward a six-point consensus on the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis, including: no expansion of the battlefield, no escalation of fighting and no provocation by any party; call for dialogue and negotiation; increasing humanitarian assistance; opposing the use of nuclear weapons; opposing attacks on nuclear power



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plants; protecting the stability of global industrial and supply chains. China's position and relentless efforts of promoting peace talks have been widely understood and recognized by the international community including Russia.

2. Working Together to Promote the Democratization of International Relations and Safeguard International Fairness and Justice

While mapping out the blueprint for bilateral relations, China and Russia have successively issued a number of joint statements and communiqués, speaking out together to maintain the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order based on international law, and defend international fairness and justice. Within the framework of the annual exchange of visits of heads of state, regular meetings of Prime Ministers, parliamentary cooperation committees and interactions and cooperation at all levels, the two countries have issued a series of strategic political documents on the international situation, including the *Joint Statement on Major International Issues* (2008), the *Joint Statement on the Current International Situation and Major International Issues* (2011), the *Joint Statement on the Current World Situation and Major International Issues* (2017), the *Joint Statement on Issues of the Current Global Governance* (2021), and the *Joint Statement on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development* (2022). These documents articulate the two countries' perspectives on issues of global and strategic significance such as global trends, themes of the times, transformation of the international system, changes of the international order and the agenda of global governance. Their purpose is to firmly defend the international system with the UN at its core, uphold the international order based on international law, and jointly promote the multipolarization of the world and the democratization of international relations.

China and Russia respect the historical traditions, cultural legacies and the right of all peoples to determine their own future, opposing interference in internal affairs and distortion of history. For instance, in response to the rising historical revisionism -- particularly some countries' attempts and actions to deny history and tamper with the results of the victory of World War II, China and Russia issued the *Joint Statement on the 70th Anniversary of the Victory of World War II and the Founding of the United*

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Nations (2015), reaffirming their commitment to promoting the development of international relations and international order in a fair and just direction on the basis of collective consultation and respect for civilizational and cultural diversity, and calling on the international community to further and comprehensively enhance the authority and status of the UN.^① Both China and Russia oppose the US and other countries interfering in other countries' internal affairs under the pretext of "human rights". In the 2020 *Joint statement by the foreign ministers of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China*, the two sides clearly stated that they are against politicizing the international human rights agenda and using human rights issues as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign states. In response to the increasingly fierce "legal war" in international games, especially the abuse of international law by some countries and the expansion, overreach and abuse of international dispute settlement mechanisms, China and Russia issued the *Declaration on the promotion of international law* (2016), emphasizing the importance of maintaining the authority of the international law, opposing interference in the internal affairs of other countries and unilateral coercive measures inconsistent with international law, as well as the abuse of international dispute settlement mechanisms. In response to cyberspace security challenges and the abuse of information technology by some countries, China and Russia issued the *Joint statement on cooperation in information space development* (2016), calling for respect for the national sovereignty in information space and the establishment of a new order in information cyberspace.

^① See Joint Statement of the 11th Round of China-Russia Strategic Security Consultations on the 70th Anniversary of the Victory of World War II and the Establishment of the United Nations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China website, May 26, 2015, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/zili-ao_674904/1179_674909/201505/t20150526_7947579.shtml.



On May 26, 2022 (local time), China and Russia vetoed a US draft resolution on tightening sanctions on DPRK at the UN Security Council.

In summary, China and Russia have demonstrated their responsibility to jointly safeguard the world order, international security, and fairness and justice by pooling consensus and speaking out together.

3. Actively Promoting Global Governance

China and Russia have been steadfastly advancing the reform and improvement of global governance, adhering to the principles of consultation, collaboration, and shared benefits. The two countries place special emphasis on the basic norms of equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules for all countries of the world in the conduct of international affairs. Attaching importance to the modernization of the global governance system, both countries are of the view that the current system cannot meet the objective needs of humanity's development and should be reformed and improved to conform to the development trend of the world politics and economy, adapt to the ever-changing world, respond to various global challenges more effectively, and provide more and more effective international public goods for world peace, stability and development.

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With effective coordination under multilateral frameworks such as the UN, G20, SCO, BRICS and CICA, China and Russia have been actively participating in global and regional governance processes. At the UN level, they adhere to the path of multilateralism and uphold the international system with the UN at its core. In treaties, joint statements and relevant agreements, they consistently underscore the status and role of the UN, oppose any actions that undermine or diminish the authority and influence of the UN, and reject any unilateral actions that bypass the UN. China and Russia's efforts to maintain the status and influence of the UN are conducive to the stability of the international order and the world security. China and Russia have also been playing a role of "constructive collaboration" in improving the global governance system under the framework of the UN General Assembly. In 2015, an updated draft of the *International Code of Conduct for Information Security* jointly submitted by 6 countries including China and Russia was circulated as an official document of the 69th session of the UNGA, calling for reaching a consensus on global cyberspace governance as soon as possible so as to build a multilateral, democratic and transparent global Internet governance system on the premise of ensuring the security and stability of the network systems of various countries. In 2019, China and Russia jointly promoted the establishment of the UN Open-ended Working Group on Information Security. The two countries have also promoted the adoption of resolutions on cybersecurity that incorporate the concept of a community of shared future for humankind at multiple sessions of the UNGA. Russia welcomes and supports China's global governance proposals such as *Global Artificial Intelligence Governance Initiative* and *Global Data Security Initiative*. China also welcomes the *Concept of the UN Convention on International Information Security* proposed by Russia and other countries.

China and Russia have also maintained close communication and coordination within key multilateral mechanisms such as the SCO, BRICS and CICA. At the regional level, with the joint efforts of China and Russia, the SCO has evolved from a mechanism to enhance border security and mutual trust at the outset into the most influential and comprehensive regional organization in Eurasia. The SCO's appeal to regional countries lies in its high degree of recognition and effective practice of the "Shanghai Spirit", the essence of which is "to guarantee peace through dialogue, establishing cooperation for development, being non-aligned and non-targeted to third parties, opening up to



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the outside world, and abandoning the Cold War mentality”.^① At the global level, the BRICS has gradually involved from an initial economic concept into a cooperation mechanism covering various fields such as politics, security, public health, sustainable development and people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and its attractiveness and influence have been significantly improved. At present, the BRICS has expanded from 5 member states to 10, and about 30 countries are interested in joining. The establishment and expansion of the BRICS cooperation mechanism is of great significance for building a global development partnership with different civilization attributes, different political systems and different ideologies. The development of these two mechanisms fully proves that China and Russia are working for an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization by practicing true multilateralism with a sense of responsibility of major countries, which have injected positive energy into the improvement of global governance.



The picture shows the SCO Secretariat in Beijing.

^① Exclusive Interview with SCO Secretary-General Norov by Global Times: SCO at 20, Promoting Democratization of International Relations, Global Times, June 16, 2021, Page 5.

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Conclusion

In 2024, China and Russia held grand celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic relations. Over the past 75 years, China-Russia relations have weathered winds and rains and come a long way with a healthy and stable growth. Under the strategic guidance of both heads of state, current China-Russia relations are at the highest level in history, and the cooperation in various fields is growing with a sound momentum. This has laid a solid foundation for the next stage of China-Russia cooperation. However, the further deepening of the bilateral relation also face challenges to a certain extent.

Firstly, the external environment for the development of China-Russia relations have become more complex. The world today has entered the most complex and volatile period since the end of the Cold War. The accelerating pace of the world towards multipolarity and intensifying geopolitical game and strategic competition of great powers leads to increasing instability. Mounting protectionism and rising deglobalization poses long-term threat to the global economy. Growing traditional and non-traditional security threats and emerging various global challenges further complicate the global governance. In order to maintain the hegemony, the US pursues a policy of dual containment against both China and Russia, provoking bloc confrontation and instigating a new Cold War. The China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination, based on principles of non-alignment, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party, has been subjected to interference, provocation and deliberate

smearing from a third party. This deteriorating external environment has placed a strain on China and Russia to deepen cooperation in various fields.

Secondly, practical cooperation between China and Russia needs to be further improved in quality and efficiency. Although historic breakthroughs have been made in bilateral economic and trade cooperation, challenges cannot be ignored, some of which may even restrict the long-term development of the practical cooperation. The problems include: the structure of commodity trading is not broad enough, especially Russia's exports to China are still dominated by energy. As China-Russia trade and freight demand grows, problems such as port congestion, poor cargo handover, uneven reloading capacity, and unbalanced outbound/inbound train schedules are becoming increasingly prominent. Besides, economic sanctions imposed by the US and Europe have created new barriers to the normal economic, trade, and investment cooperation between China and Russia, and settlement was difficult for a time, which affected the healthy development of the follow-up economic cooperation between China and Russia. In addition, the institutional guarantee for China-Russia cooperation still needs to be improved. The two sides have no free trade arrangement and have not started negotiations. Therefore, it is an important task facing the two countries to strengthen coordination and communication, pragmatically and effectively solve the problems in their cooperation under the new situation, turn resistance into driving force, and further deepen the practical cooperation between the two countries.

China-Russia relations are normal state-to-state relations, but also have their own special characteristics. The foundation of the relations is the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Mutual respect, equality and win-win cooperation are the norms governing China-Russia relations, as well as the norms that China follows in growing relations with all countries. Adhering to China's consistent diplomatic principles, President Xi Jinping, in a speech at the 70th Session of the UNGA in 2015 titled *Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-win Cooperation and Create a Community of Shared Future for Mankind*, reiterated that:

We should build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, namely all countries are equals, and all countries' right to independently choose social systems and development paths should be upheld;

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We should forge a global partnership and embrace a new approach to state-to-state relations, one that features dialogue rather than confrontation, and seeks partnership rather than alliance;

Major countries should follow the principles of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation in handling their relations;

We should uphold the spirit of openness and promote mutual assistance, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation;

Each civilization represents the unique vision and contribution of its people, and no civilization is superior to others. We should respect all civilizations and treat each other as equals. We should draw inspirations from each other to boost the creative development of human civilization.

It is on the basis of the above-mentioned principles that China-Russia relations in the new era continue to develop, and they are unique in two ways. Firstly, China and Russia are two major countries, and the changes in their relations will have a profound and far-reaching impact on the world. As President Xi Jinping said, “this relationship has gone far beyond the bilateral scope and acquired critical importance for the global landscape and the future of humanity.”^① Secondly, the two major countries have found the right way to get along with each other, breaking the stereotype that major countries are destined to have conflicting interests and inevitably to become competitors. China and Russia have successfully turned the “zero-sum game” of major powers into mutual support and assistance, thus setting a good example of relations between major countries and neighboring countries.

The exemplary significance of China-Russia relations lies in: always upholding mutual respect and equality; constantly consolidating political and security mutual trust, “treasuring the valuable mutual trust established by both sides just as we cherish our

^① Xi: China-Russia relations have gone far beyond bilateral scope, people.cn, March 22, 2023, <http://politics.people.com.cn/n1/2023/0322/c1024-32648599.html>.



own eyes”;^① always adhering to mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, supporting each other’s development and revitalization; promoting people-to-people connectivity under the principle of inclusiveness and mutual learning, cementing the foundation for lasting friendship; standing on the right side of history, acting with responsibility, and striving for a more prosperous, stable, fair, and just world. No matter how the international landscape may evolve, the core of China-Russia relations, namely non-alignment, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party, will not change, as well as their defining feature of mutual respect, equality and win-win cooperation.

^① Speech by Xi Jinping at the Commemorative Conference for the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between China and Russia, Xinhua, June 6, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2019-06/06/c_1124589505.htm.

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The English version is a translation from the Chinese version.