

Join hands to fulfill centenary dreams and strive for new progress in cooperation

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For *El Comercio*

I am looking forward to coming to Peru for the 24th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting and my state visit to this country at the invitation of President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski. President Kuczynski visited China in September. By the time of my visit, the presidents of China and Peru will have exchanged visits in less than two months. This will send a strong signal of China and Peru working together for common development.

This would be the second time for Peru to play host to the leaders of APEC economies in eight years. It marks another new and important contribution Peru makes to Asia-Pacific cooperation. Peru will have China's full support and cooperation in facilitating positive outcomes of the meeting.

I still recall my visit to Peru in the 1990s, which left me deeply impressed by the majestic landscape and rich natural endowments of this country. The Andes Mountains, "the backbone of South America", extends from North to South, and the mighty Amazon has nourished a treasure house of minerals, fossil fuel, forests and biological resources. Peru is also known for its hard-working and courageous people, who created a time-honored history and rich culture. Its dazzling cultural heritage such as the Inca civilization, Machu Picchu and Nazca Lines are favored destinations for international visitors. *El Cándor Pasa* and other Andean folk melodies are popular all over the world.

China and Peru enjoy a long and deep friendship. Back more than 400 years ago, braving storms and waves, the Chinese people opened a maritime Silk Road across the Pacific. The Chinese and the Peruvians have been visiting each other ever since. In the past 100 years, a large number of Chinese traveled to Peru to seek a life of happiness on this promising land. They worked diligently with the local people and actively contributed to Peru's development. They were the first generation of friendship envoys who brought Chinese culture to Peru. Today, nearly one tenth of the Peruvian population descended from Chinese ancestry. The Chinese are even called by an affectionate nickname in Peru the "paisano" (old pal), showing the deep roots of friendship between our peoples. This is a valuable asset shared by our two countries.

Peru was one of the first Latin American countries to establish diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China. Over the past 45 years of our diplomatic relations, we have treated each other with respect and equality, firmly supported each other on issues concerning our respective core interests and major concerns and developed strong political trust, which formed the cornerstone of China-Peru relations. Our two countries have established a comprehensive strategic partnership, the highest level of relations between China and Latin American countries, which embodies the high degree of our political mutual trust.

Despite the wintry state of the global economy in recent years, China and Peru are enjoying spring in their practical cooperation. Bilateral trade has remained on an upward trajectory, hitting a record level of nearly US\$15 billion in 2015. In the first eight months of this year, trade grew by 9% year-on-year, outpaced by a 21.8% uptick in Peruvian exports to China. China has been Peru's largest trading partner, export market and source of import for years, and Peru has become one of the top destinations in Latin America for Chinese investment. Over 170 Chinese businesses have invested more than US\$14 billion in Peru, helping to create tens of thousands of jobs and new sources of tax revenue for local communities and benefiting economic and social development in this country.

The robust people-to-people exchanges between Chinese and Peruvian peoples have brought them even closer to each other. Exchanges and cooperation in culture, education, science and technology, health and the judicial sector as well as between media, think tanks and youths are

growing. More and more Peruvians, especially students, want to study Chinese and learn more about Chinese culture. The four Confucius Institutes in Peru have attracted more than 4,000 registered students. We welcome more Peruvians to visit China. More and more Chinese admirers of the Inca civilization are hoping to visit Peru as tourists.

China and Peru have maintained close communication and coordination on international and regional affairs to jointly uphold the common interests of developing countries. We hold the same or similar views and have consistently echoed and supported each other's positions, be it on key international issues such as UN reform, climate change, sustainable development or regional ones like Asia-Pacific cooperation, Latin American integration and cooperation between China and Latin America.

I believe that the tremendous progress and strong momentum in China-Peru ties is attributable to the extensive public support for our friendship, to our enormous economic complementarity and enthusiasm toward cooperation and to the right decision of successive governments of both countries to place high importance on this relationship. The Chinese people are working vigorously to attain the two centenary goals, namely, completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the Communist Party's centenary in 2021 and building a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious country by the centenary of the People's Republic in 2049, and the Chinese dream of great national renewal. The Peruvian people are making relentless efforts toward a just, fair and united Peru by the bicentennial of Peru's independence in 2021. Cherishing the same dream and vision, it is only natural that we should push forward all-round cooperation.

— **We need to deepen political mutual trust and remain partners for each other on the way ahead.** We should continue to view our relations from a strategic and long-term perspective, understand and support each other on issues concerning core interests and major concerns and ensure the sustained and steady growth of bilateral ties. I have said on many occasions, "Only the wearer knows if the shoes fit or not." China supports Peru in exploring a development path suited to its national conditions and stands ready to enhance the sharing of experience on governance to make greater achievements in our respective development endeavors.

— **We need to expand practical cooperation and promote common development and prosperity.** China and Peru are natural partners on the strength of our wide-ranging, large-scale and fruitful cooperation. We have set up mechanisms such as the strategic dialogue on economic cooperation and the joint committee on economic cooperation and trade. We need to formulate and implement a well-structured action plan to guide our practical cooperation in the years to come. China suggests that we intensify production capacity and investment cooperation. We are ready to provide Peru with all the equipment and technology it needs for industrialization, supported by personnel training and matching funds. This will be conducive to Peru's efforts towards diversified economic development, and raise the quality and efficiency of bilateral cooperation.

— **We need to promote cultural exchange and cement public support for our relations.** Amity between the people holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. We need to expand exchanges and cooperation in culture, education, science and technology and tourism and facilitate the interflow of people between our two countries. China welcomes more Peruvian students to study in China and supports more youth exchanges to pass on our traditional friendship from one generation to the next.

— **We need to strengthen cooperation in international and regional affairs to uphold common interests.** Lasting peace and sustained progress is the shared aspiration of all humanity. China hopes to work with Peru to maintain close communication and cooperation on major international issues, build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation and contribute to a community of shared interests and shared future for all mankind.

The baton of China-Peru friendship is now passed to us. Let us join hands and work closely

together to pursue the dream of our people for a happy life and promote peace, stability and prosperity of the world.