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Good Handling of Relations among Major Powers Needs a New Mindset

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This year marks the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Anti-Fascist War. How do we look at these 70 years of international developments and changes? What are the experiences and lessons learned? How should we face endless new challenges? Are we able to maintain peace and development? The big problem the world is facing is whether to go back to the Cold War and confrontation or to work together to establish a new international order.

After the victory of the Anti-Fascist War, countries involved in the war created an international order and system centered on the United Nations and based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. This is a great progress of human civilization. Yet the Yalta System is essentially based on the spheres of influence marked off by the major powers. The rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union hegemony pulled the world into the Cold

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War for more than 40 years. Although the relative balance of two powers kept the world in a general balance, the balance is based on the threat of nuclear weapons. After the Cold War, the world has entered a new era. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia's strength is relatively weakened, while China's revival has drawn much attention from the U.S, Russia and the world. Meanwhile, as the world economy has become globalized, new problems and new challenges that affect global development are emerging. The issues are made even bigger and complicated, as the control and management capacity of the international community has not yet adapted to the new environment, and the world's major countries have misjudgment, missteps and poor response on some issues.

1. The U.S.

Henry Luce, one of the co-founders of *Life*, urged the U.S. in an editorial in 1941 to enter World War II in order to defend American values and create the "first great American century". The U.S. made a significant contribution to the Anti-Fascist War, and played an important role in the post-war revival of Europe. But when the Cold War ended, the U.S. posed itself as a triumphalist, and claimed superciliously that it will lead the world for a century. It wanted to transform the world with the American way, being a world police and selling the American democracy to the entire world, even at the expense of waging war on several countries. However, we should not forget that the international forces of terrorism started from the anti-Americanism. Besides, the U.S. meddling in internal affairs of many countries under the pretext of democracy and human rights as well as the support for a variety of "Color Revolutions" to overthrow the legitimate government and establish a pro-American government have led to long-term war and chaos in some regions. The U.S. strong intervention in affairs of Ukraine is also a representation of its Cold War mentality. The problem of Ukraine originates from the former Ukrainian government's management missteps on its country that result in long-term economic turmoil and poverty of its

people. The current government that dominated by extremist forces, however, attempts to solve all problems by relying on the aid from the U.S. and the West.

Joseph Nye is a strong defender of the "American century" view, but what he emphasizes is the U.S. geopolitical advantage and that the U.S. is far ahead of other countries in many fields. In this sense, the "American century" will likely continue. Yet this is not an absolute, but only temporary state. In this state, the U.S. should still reflect ethically on how to lower its posture and treat other countries equally, and consider how to use its advantages to make a positive contribution to the world's development rather than ordering other countries. Even Nye himself admitted that the greatest threat to the U.S. is neither China nor India and Russia, but the U.S. itself. Currently, the U.S. is actually in trouble both internally and externally. Internally, the vicious struggle between the two parties has seriously dragged the White House's decision-making capacity. Externally, given its relative decline, the U.S. is unable to play the role of world police. Whether the U.S. can give up the hegemony mentality of being superior and giving orders everywhere, and recognize that any country, no matter how powerful, cannot face the new challenges alone but must work together with other countries, will be important points to follow in the future development of international situation. The 21st century should be the century of reflection for the U.S.

2. Russia

Russia is in a difficult transitional period. To position itself in the East or in the West has long troubled Russia's social elite. Historically, Russia's attempts of integrating into Europe had all been rejected. Some Russian scholars believe that the incident in Ukraine has made Russia completely disappointed with Europe. As Russia and Europe relations are impossible to return to the former situation, Russia has to turn to Asia. I don't agree with this opinion. Given its

geographical position, Russia's best option is to look at both the East and the West by making use of its geopolitical advantages, except that it may have different priorities in different periods, which is exactly what the Chinese saying goes: "when there is dark in the west, it is light in the east." Peter the Great once said, we need in Europe for decades, and then we will let Europe kiss our ass. These may be angry words. I don't think Russia has entered a period of complete confrontation with the U.S. and Europe, nor can I say the Cold War seems to have continued and even been reinforcing. In fact, Europe has split. The European Union has no idea how to protect itself, and it has shown its weak side on the issue of Ukraine and Minsk II. Both the U.S. and Europe know that without Russia, they are unable to cope with major challenges in Europe and around the world.

The current situation in Europe enters a period of high risk, in which all the parties do not want to compromise for many reasons. This period is favorable to Russia. Other external forces should be restraint and calm, and try to promote peace talks to find a compromise. In my opinion, the best way out is that Ukraine gives up joining NATO, and develops relations with the European Union and Russia at the same time; Russia ensures the territorial integrity of Ukraine in return. Ukraine's neutrality is in the interests of all parties. Neither the European Union nor the NATO can handle Ukraine. In short, I think the way out of the Ukrainian crisis is to find the balance between different regions and interests of different ethnics and find the balance between the relations with the two neighbors of Russia and Europe. Ukraine should be a bridge between the East and West rather than an outpost for confrontation. Since the collapse of Soviet Union, Russia have experienced ups and downs and exploration for many years. Now it has finally found the political system in keeping with its historical and cultural traditions. Some people in the West made irresponsible remarks on this, and even demonized Putin. These acts are extremely unethical.

3. China

China's road of modernization is long and winding. After repeated trials and explorations for many years, China has finally found a developing path in keeping with its own characteristics, which is socialism with Chinese characteristics. China has made progress, but it still has a long way to go before achieving prosperity and strength. We know very well the difficulties and risks we are facing.

From poverty and backwardness to revival, China has become the world's second largest economy in terms of GDP, which naturally attracts wide attention. The key question is, what kind of foreign policy will this stronger China adopt? The Chinese people, including the leaders of China, have made a number of solemn declarations for this question.

China's plan is to build a new type of international relations with cooperation and win-win partnership as its core. Why the type is new? In short, it is because that it replaces confrontation with cooperation, and replaces monopoly with win-win partnership. In these relations, there are no zero-sum games and winner-take-all. A new thinking of building partnerships beyond the traditional international relations and the cycle of alliance or confrontation is to be established, and a new way of "dialogue rather than confrontation, partnership rather than alliance" is to be explored. China seeks no spheres of influence, nor want to pursue any dominance. Instead, China hopes to provide a new choice for international relations.

For the U.S., China has proposed the establishment of Sino-U.S. new type of major power relations, which is "no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect, cooperation and win-win partnership". The Americans have a variety of explanations for this new type of relations. Given that President Obama had verbal acknowledgement of it, the U.S. may not want to repeat the tragic history of

confrontation between major powers. But the core issue is that the U.S. is not willing to acknowledge China's major power status that is equal to its. It is because that the goal of the U.S. is to maintain its leadership in the world and its dominance in international affairs, and ensure that emerging powers like China and Russia comply with international planning and norms made by the U.S. Therefore, the states of cooperation and friction and struggles will exist at the same time in the Sino-U.S. relations for a fairly long period. China will strive to expand the cooperation to achieve a win-win situation, and seek to increase mutual understanding and reduce misjudgments. But on the issues concerning the core interests, China will struggle resolutely with the U.S. The U.S. policy toward China has been constantly adjusting over these years. From isolating and containing China, proposing G2, to the current so-called "rebalance toward Asia", what it truly wants is nothing but to hinder China's development. One factor the U.S. must consider is that China holds more than one trillion U.S. bonds. China and the U.S. cooperate and struggle; this is what the Chinese called "two hands against two hands". The contest is in many fields, including military, politics, economy, finance, technology and information etc. The struggle will last for a long period, for the U.S. is constantly changing tactics, and the Chinese will respond in their own way.

4. Sino-Russian relations

There are a number of different voices in both China and Russia, which can be generally grouped into two extremes: the pro-West group holds that being close with China will only turn the declined Russia into China's "satellite state" or "raw materials appendage"; the group that stresses the confrontation with the West holds that Russia should ally with China to strengthen Russia's position. In China, there is also the opinion that China should form alliance or quasi-alliance with Russia to deal with the pressure from the U.S.

I would like to emphasize that the development and closeness of

Sino-Russian relations over the past decades have their own laws, and the root cause of the closeness can be found in the trend of domestic development in both countries and international situation.

Firstly, both China and Russia are big countries. They are among the real independent countries that are rare in the world, being independent in both domestic and foreign affairs. Both countries have their own unique historical and cultural traditions, and they must follow their own path of development. Both China and Russia will not follow the U.S. baton.

Secondly, the development of Sino-Russian relations has an intrinsic motivation. Facing the same long-term task of domestic development and having no political problems that hinder cooperation, a long-term development of good-neighborly relations is an inevitable choice for the two big neighboring countries.

Thirdly, both China and Russia advocate independence in the complicated and changing international situation, and oppose to a single country's domination of the world, especially the country's being a backseat driver to China and Russia. The rise of China and Russia is regarded as a challenge to the West-dominated system. In this case, the two countries' mutual reliance can reduce their cost of the rise.

Fourthly, both China and Russia have gained experience and learned lessons from history. From a military and political alliance to an open ideological debate and then border conflict, from a brotherly relationship to a hostile relationship, the Sino-Russian relations had gone through many ups and downs, and were finally normalized after more than a decade's efforts. That was in 1991, before the collapse of Soviet Union. After that, through continuous exploration, the two countries proposed a guiding principle for bilateral relations, which are non-alignment, non-confrontation and non-targeting at any third country. In 2001, by signing the *Sino-Russian Good-*

Neighborly Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, the two countries clearly oriented their relationship from a legal perspective. Today, the relationship has developed into a comprehensive strategic cooperation partnership. China has established partnerships with more than 70 countries, many of which are strategic partners (such as Kazakhstan). The term "strategic cooperation", however, is used only on the relationship with Russia, suggesting the particularity of the Sino-Russian relations. Sino-Russian relations have already gone beyond the framework of bilateral relations, and are of global significance. Facing the complicated international situation, the importance of Sino-Russian relations is obvious. To look at the Sino-Russian relations from the perspective of the world's trend of development is essential. Both China and Russia should develop into powerful countries. The tactics the U.S. adopts are simply to delay our development. We should be full of confidence, stick to our own way and support each other. We don't need to deliberately divide the world into the West and the non-West. With patience and concentration, and uniting all forces that can be united, we will ultimately establish a new world order of equality and fairness.

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