

Foreword

Wang Jisi[†]

The editorial team of *China International Strategy Review* is well situated with the Institute of International and Strategic Studies (www.iiss.pku.edu.cn), Peking University. Since its launch in 2008 in the Chinese language, the *Review* in the form of a collection of annual reports, has followed up, analyzed and commented on a wide range of major subjects in the international strategic situation. The English edition of the *Review* has been published since 2012. With the support of China International Publishing Group and the Foreign Languages Press Co. Ltd., it has provided a channel for international readers to access the viewpoints and output of research carried out by Chinese scholars on key strategic issues in international politics. To our delight, both the Chinese and the English editions of the *Review* have reached a good number of audiences as our regular readership grows. This in turn has boosted our confidence to publish this new annual volume.

The years of 2016 and 2017 marked historic changes in world politics. In 2016, the British people voted in a referendum for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. Toward the end of the same year, Mr. Donald Trump, a former real estate tycoon, was elected President of the United States. These two dramatic and largely unexpected events were of watershed significance, reflecting to a great degree a strong dissatisfaction of the general public in the two countries with the existing political establishments, in particular their failure to narrow the exacerbating income gaps and improve social safety nets.

[†] Wang Jisi is Professor at the School of International Studies and President of the Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Peking University.

In many ways, world politics has entered a new age. Two deep-rooted causes may have precipitated the global political transformation. The first is the world-wide socioeconomic inequality that has been persistent for decades and is still exacerbating not only between nations but also within almost every single society. The second is identity divisions along national, ethnic, religious, sectional, and cultural lines when globalization brings people of divergent identities together. Politics at domestic, transnational, and interstate levels is driving people apart, while market forces continue to underpin globalization.

One may find four intermingled trends at this new stage of global politics. First, populism and nationalism - ethnic or state-centered - are reinforcing each other in holding sway over many countries' domestic and foreign policies. Second, authoritarianism and strong-man politics have found their path back to a large number of nations, some of which used to introduce democratic institutions after the end of the Cold War. Third, geostrategic competitions have been intensified in the Eurasian continent and the Asia-Pacific region (Americans are now referring to it as "Indo-Pacific"). Arms race, once subsiding for years, has returned portentously. War between great powers is no longer unthinkable. Fourth, technological innovation is a double-edged sword. New technologies let people live a longer and healthier life and make communication easier. Meanwhile, AI will dramatically enhance capabilities for the collection and analysis of data, and also make creation of data easier. This means that governments, institutions, and individuals can gain more instruments for political purposes like surveillance, slander, and persecution. In addition, technological innovations, when applied to armed conflicts, could be more catastrophic.

These trends in global politics, economy, and society demand that all concerned international observers and scholars broaden their horizons in making timely and accurate assessments about where we are and where we should go. This volume of the *Review* features 20 commentaries by experts and scholars from countries including China, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Indonesia. It covers both major international themes of general concern and those concerning China's foreign relations.

Moreover, the reports contained in this *Review* as a whole, in comparison with the previous issues, have been made in a timelier fashion, with greater depth and breadth, and of higher quality.

The editorial team wants to express our deepest gratitude to those who contributed to the previous and updated issues and welcomes any comments that may advance our work.

Wang Jisi
January 2018

