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## Strive to Maintain an Overall Stable Great Power Relationship

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The theme of this dialogue is a strategic security topic with global influence and realistic significance. Behind the concrete geostrategic cases, it involves reflections on how to look at the great change of the world and “how to deal with the Sino-U.S. relations”. Most people present here today are either former politicians or prominent experts and scholars from different countries, so here, I would like to briefly share three of my personal points with you.

Firstly, is it real that the great power competition is the primary threat to the international security? Doctor Kissinger holds the view that the world is witnessing a big change in hundreds of years. At this critical

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historical juncture, we should, above all, make a correct judgment of the international situation and the world development trend. Being shortsighted, seeking quick success and instant benefits, or subjectively acting against the trend will lead to irreparable strategically erroneous judgment and strategic mistakes, bringing disasters to the whole world and one's own nation.

What is the great trend to which those who submit will prosper and those who resist shall perish? In my view, first, billions of people have entered and formed a single world market since the end of Cold war. The general trend of integrated development of the world economy has presented itself and the process of economic globalization is irresistible. Second, influenced by the law of unbalanced world development, the international powers will definitely experience growth and decline, which impels the trend of multi-polarization. Third, as countries are even more interdependent with their interests intertwined, "the global village" that stands together in peril or safety has gradually formed. Humans are facing increasingly more common problems and challenges. Fourth, science and technology and industrial revolution have deeply influenced the world and changed the growth pattern of national strength, the content of the international competition and the traditional form of war. There is no winner in the world war and great power confrontations. The nature and content of great power relationship is quite different from that during the Cold war and hot wars due to the interdependent relations and intertwined interests. Facing common threats and challenges concerning the survival and development of countries and human beings in the age of globalization, the interior and exterior requirements for the great power relationship are the coexistence of competition and cooperation, and the reality and space for the cooperation is far bigger than that for the competition.

However, some ignore the development and change of the world and

stick to the traditional thinking of realpolitik and zero-sum game. Instead of making serious historical reflections on fundamental issues, including whether the international relations, based on common interests, can be developed from “zero-sum” into “positive-sum”, and whether the ubiquitous competitions between great powers and within international relations are antagonistic and will inevitably lead to conflicts in the age of globalization, they firmly believe that the great power competition, replacing terrorism and other challenges, has again become the primary threat to national and international security. This is one of the core issues of international relations in the age of globalization. Everything will go wrong if the general logic starts wrong.

Secondly, is it normal that the Sino-U.S. relations have a sharp change? If we continue to apply the Hobbesian “jungle law” and make a choice between the limited “life-or-death” and “black-and-white” strategic models, we will inevitably make some “rivals” and “opponents”, dragging ourselves into an unfathomable abyss. In the great change of the world, the stability and cooperation of the great power relations and Sino-U.S. relations are extremely important! However, unfortunately, driven by the confusion, sense of loss, restlessness, anxiety and extremity that we all feel, the U.S. has labelled China as “its main strategic rival” and even “its globally and comprehensively major strategic rival” before figuring out how to look at and cope with the world change. China is being treated as a punching bag and whipping boy innocently. The strategic framework for Sino-U.S. relations that has been implemented for over three decades is denied, which shakes the “ballast” that has supported the long-term development of Sino-U.S. relations. Instead, antagonistic pressure means such as the trade war is adopted. Such an abnormal and irrational jolt and sharp change just happened to the most important great power relationship in the world, which has raised great concerns among the people of both countries as

well as from the international community about whether the U.S. and China will move towards a new cold war and fall into the “Thucydides Trap” . It’s really perplexing and regrettable.

Thirdly, how should we forge ahead with the stable development of Sino-U.S. relations? At the critical time of the world’s development, countries in the world, including China and the U.S., all need to figure out how to regard and cope with such changes and to comprehensively examine the national and international strategies so as to make calm and prudent decisions. This requires a process of adjustment, fitting-in and “trial and error”. In the strategic anxiety, we are extremely vulnerable to suspicion, misjudgment, impulsion and blind actions, so we need to take some targeted measures.

First, maintain strategic composure. Great power relations and strategies concern the strategic stability of the world and among countries. The world will fall into a chaos if the great powers are in disarray, especially when the world is experiencing a great change. In the first place, the Sino-U.S. relations should maintain continuity and stability, allowing no room for emotional misjudgment, antagonistic disposal and subversive destruction. Composure and patience are required in the turbulent situations. After all, how could the Sino-U.S. relations, cultivated for decades by several generations, be denied or changed so easily? Moreover, a wrong strategic and policy choice may be made if the strategic environment during the change is assessed wrongly, the major threat is identified wrongly, the strategic target is set up wrongly or the other countries’ strategic culture and intent are understood wrongly, this will result in counterproductivity and will deviate from the original intention. Lay aside things that cannot be seen clearly for a moment and do not rush to pin labels on them indiscreetly. In the second place, with the primary goal of stabilizing Sino-U.S. relations, great efforts should be made to safeguard the political and

economic foundation and the overall framework of the bilateral relations, and to give a full play to the stability mechanism of the great power relations and the stabilizing function of the great power negotiations and cooperation in the international affairs. Besides, top leaders' guidance, strategic dialogue, consultations at different levels and other mechanisms are all available and should be especially applied at the critical moments.

Second, manage and control the contradictions and differences. There is a process of adjusting the relations between the two countries, in which the control over the contradictions and differences is especially important. First of all, various crisis and frictions control mechanisms, including the trust measures, notification systems, hot lines and emergency management, should be further strengthened to enhance self-discipline and self-restraint, reducing misjudgments, accidents and situations of being out of control to the minimum extent, and prevent any escalation of frictions and intensification of contradictions. Next, we should know how to deal with and disassemble contradictions. Problems should be coped with at the respective levels, and the prominent frictions and disputes in the middle or short term should be especially stressed and overcome lest they get escalated and complicated. Then, based on the development needs, trade issues should be dealt with through negotiations in accordance with the international trade rules. Both sides should try to identify the integrating point concerning both sides and the balance point of interests, and then give their best to duly handle and control trade disputes. Global industrial chains and supply chains in the age of globalization are formed based on the comparative advantages and market laws. Enterprises from different countries all have their own calculations. The so-called "decoupling" and "exclusion" policy cannot be realized and will only harm others without benefiting oneself. President Xi Jinping repeatedly stresses that China will unswervingly follow the path of opening up, continue observing the rules for

multilateral trade, and vigorously advance opening-up in the direction of internationalization, marketization, and rule of law, because these are in line with China's national interests and the world's development trend. Last, we should watch out for and constrain words and deeds with evil attempts to damage the bilateral relations, avoiding the antagonistic sentiments of the public opinion in both countries.

Third, expand coordination and cooperation. The strategic foundation of Sino-U.S. relations should be reinforced rather than weakened, which requires our coordination and cooperation on common interests, common challenges, common problems and common concerns. On the one hand, bilateral and multilateral communication, negotiation and cooperation should be reinforced in the global, regional and hot issues as well as in such non-traditional security fields as anti-terrorism, non-proliferation and cyber security so as to keep the foundation for mutual trust and cooperation, actually safeguarding common interests, meeting common challenges and handling common problems. We should especially maintain communication, accumulate and expand our consensus when things appear to go wrong. On the other hand, in terms of constructing Asia-Pacific region and "Belt and Road Initiative," that has raised doubts, both sides should actively explore bilateral interaction and linkage patterns, synergistically providing public products and expanding international participation and cooperation in the less sensitive non-traditional security and economic fields so as to make the "cake" of common interests bigger.

Fourth, conduct joint researches. How could we build a new model of Sino-U.S. great power relationship and avoid the "Thucydides Trap"? This is not only a historical challenge but also a significant mission concerning the peaceful future of both countries and the world, which requires political and academic elites from both and even more countries to fulfil it by joining their hands. First of all, efforts should be made

to strengthen the substantive exchange and cooperation among high-level and professional think tanks, support influential figures and think tanks to establish a stable dialogue mechanism, keep deepening strategic interpretations, specifically dispel doubts and confusions, accumulate and expand consensus, reduce misunderstanding and misjudgment, and make strategic and policy recommendations that comply with the fundamental interests of both countries and the world through various forms, providing rational and prudent intellectual support for the stability and development of Sino-U.S. relations. Secondly, it is time for academic circles around the world to have a collective reflection on the traditional theory of international relations. Among the turbulent situations that led to disastrous consequences for international relations in the history, we really need to figure out which ones were designed and misled by people for the sake of our offspring. If we fail to break through the historic and cultural limitations and continue to regard the human society in the age of globalization as animal world in a jungle, the interdependent competition and cooperation relationship as the antagonism of zero-sum game and the military and security strategy as the dominant great strategy, we will inevitably define the international relations from the antagonistic perspective of “imaginary enemies”. In that way, there will be no peace for the world. Thirdly, in face of the turbulent situations, men of insight from all countries should keep calm and determined at times of anxiety within the society, provide rational guidance through the bustle of the world, point out a sagacious path to peace at this critical moment, actively lead the public opinion, support national governments to balance the extreme thoughts and mighty interest groups in the transformation and adjustment period of the world, keep control of contradictions and differences in the period of strategic anxiety, and thus maintain world peace and overall stability of great power relations.

In this respect, the “North Pavilion Dialogue” should also be able to play a greater role.

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