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“2011 stars in Penglai” International Symposium

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The 2011 stars in Penglai International Symposium, jointly sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), the Shandong Provincial People's Government and the Swiss stars Foundation, was held in Penglai, Shandong Province from May 21-24. About 200 young leaders, experts and scholars, senior executives of large enterprises and organizations from 15 countries and regions attended to discuss the theme of "building bridges and creating harmony". Through discussions and debates, the participants deepened their understanding of some current hot issues of the world, fostered friendship, shared what they knew, and learned

what they didn't.

The idea for the symposium originated in Stein am Rhein, a small, quiet and picturesque Swiss city located on the banks of Rhine. The Chinese side translated "stars" (abbreviation of Stein am Rhein Symposium) into "future stars", reflecting fully the objective and essence of the event as a meeting of leaders of the next generation.

Initiated by the stars Foundation in 2008, symposia have been successfully held in three consecutive years in Switzerland, attracting a wide range of the young elite from all walks of life and from dozens of countries and regions. This year, the event left its homeland to locate in its

first overseas host city in Penglai, Shandong Province.

The 2011 Penglai stars adopted a diversified and flexible format. In addition to plenary presentations, small group discussions, Q and A sessions, panel discussions and study tours were also a prominent feature. English was used as the official language, and all the participants were eager to take part in the group discussions and express their views freely.

The symposium agenda was designed to cover a wide range of topics, including current hot issues such as the global energy crisis, environmental protection and financial system reform, as well as cutting-edge issues such as the sustainability of

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science, technology and politics, and the problems and challenges China faces in development. Top quality experts in their respective fields were invited as speakers, including Mr. Xu Kuangdi, an energy expert and former Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the CPPCC; Dr. Hans-Rudolf Merz, a financial expert and former President of the Confederation of Switzerland; Ms. Li Xiaolin, Vice President of the CPAFFC; Mr. Cai Limin, Vice Governor of Shandong Province; Mr. Xu Yuming, Deputy Director of the IAEA China Office and a nuclear energy expert;

Prof. Wang Chen, Director of the National Nanoscience and Technology Center; Prof. Sun Zhe, an expert on American affairs in Tsinghua University's Institute of International Studies; Mr. Chen Yuandong, Board Chairman of the Western Development Holdings Co. Ltd.; Dr. Heinrich Rohrer, Nobel Price laureate in Physics; Dr. Toni Schonemberger, Chairman of the stars Foundation Board; Mr. Wilson Zhu, Executive Vice President of Michaels Stores Inc.

In her opening remarks on May 21, Li Xiaolin stated that since Chi-

na's opening and reform, dramatic changes had taken place attracting world attention. While undergoing rapid development and transformation in socio-economic fields, China has been playing an increasingly important role in helping the world out of financial crises. At the same time, by setting up all kinds of cooperative mechanisms in economic, scientific and technological and humanitarian fields, it had deepened cooperation with many countries. The stars symposium created a new platform for young business leaders to strengthen exchange and enhance cooperation,

Friendship Activities



Xu Kuangdi, former Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the CP-PCC, meeting with Hans-Rudolf Merz, former President of Switzerland

she said.

Vice Governor Cai Limin observed that the young people today were already a key driving force in propelling social progress featuring rapid economic growth. While providing an effective platform for young people, as well as experts and scholars, to explore issues, increase mutual understanding and enhance

Shandong Vice Governor Cai Limin making an opening speech



cooperation, the symposium offered a new opportunity for young people of Shandong to embrace the world, broaden their horizons and increase their knowledge and intellectual powers.

Mr. Toni Schonenberger, Chairman of the stars Foundation Board commented in his remarks, that in the 21st century, the world faced many challenges such as resource shortage, climate change, geo-political complexity, unemployment, widening gap between rich and poor, technology revolution, economic and financial crises, etc. This forced the business sector, enterprises and organizations to re-examine their management concepts and operational models. The symposium offered a good platform where young people from different countries could meet to learn from each other and pool their efforts to help build a better world. In the ensuing keynote speeches, speakers delivered thought-provoking presentations on their respective areas of specialty.

On the issue of coordinated political and economic development,

Dr. Hanz-Rudolf Merz concluded that, to a large extent, the world's smooth development depended on whether mechanisms for communication, coordination and cooperation were in place. It also depended on the availability of political and economic bridges between economies and states to cope with economic globalization and political internationalization.

Xu Kuangdi delivered a keynote speech on the energy crisis. He pointed out that, while China had achieved remarkable economic growth, it also encountered many challenges such as increased energy consumption and environmental degradation. At present, the most imperative challenge was energy conservation and emission reduction. Citing the Japanese Fukushima nuclear incident as a case in point, Mr. Xu spoke of China's responsive measures and the overview of new energy development in the country.

Director Xu Yuming introduced China's overall energy landscape, stating that the existing nuclear power stations maintained low waste emission to the environment. Power generated by nuclear energy was low in cost and high in efficiency, playing a key role in supporting the local power grids. He also pointed out that China needed to build an energy supply system that was stable, economical, clean and safe. Future nuclear energy development had to be guided by a scientific, green, and low carbon energy concept and principles. He stressed that China had to develop nuclear energy in order to meet the low-carbon and green energy requirement.

Wilson Zhu explained the global economic imbalance in trade through a case study analysis; Prof. E Yunlong elaborated on the impact of im-

balanced economic development on employment and social stability; Dr. Rohrer and Prof. Wang Chen jointly tackled the issue of sustainable development of nanotechnology and the potential of Chinese science and technology; Prof. Sun Zhe and Chairman Chen Yuandong made in-depth analysis on Sino-US relations and the importance of political sustainable development. Airing their own views, both Chinese and foreign participants carried out discussions on emerging risks, global economic transformation, sustainability of science, technology and politics. During the question and answer periods and other interactive sessions, the speakers skillfully and tactfully responded to various queries raised by the participants from their respective professional

perspectives to full audience approval.

The four-day event wound up on May 24 with full success. The participants left the symposium with a deeper understanding of the discussed issues and better preparedness for responding to potential challenges in the future. For most of the foreign participants who came to China for the first time, the success of the symposium and social economic achievements of the reform and opening as reflected in the course of the symposium changed some of their prior views on China which tended to be partial and biased. Many observed that the current visit had enabled them to see the real China, and to truly understand and appreciate the Chinese people. They found the experi-

ence inspiring and rewarding and wish to have more opportunities to deepen their understanding of China.

Although the scale of the 2011 stars in Penglai symposium was not very big, its impact is far-reaching. Indeed it has built a bridge to increase mutual understanding, foster friendship, enrich knowledge and enhance cooperation between young leaders of the world. We believe that all the participants, speakers and partners of the symposium will enjoy this unique experience and have their own gains. Indeed it will be difficult to efface the Penglai stars from one's memory just as it is difficult to shield the glory of color paintings and frescos at Stein am Rhine, or to submerge the sound of the sea waves slapping the Penglai Pavilion. ■