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Penglai Revisited

——“2012 stars in Penglai”

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Following the successful convocation of the international symposium “2011 stars in Penglai”, the CPAFFC staged the 2012 version in cooperation with the Shandong Provincial People’s Government and the Swiss stars Foundation from June 9 to 12. The main streets and scenic spots of Penglai were decorated with flags and banners while the symposium venue—the five-star China Bayview Hotel overlooking the beautiful Bohai Sea—was also elegantly decorated to welcome distinguished guests and young leaders from home and abroad.

On the afternoon of June 9, the opening ceremony and the first plenary session was held in the new conference hall with the attendance of about 200 young leaders, well-known experts and scholars and executives of large enterprises and organizations from 24 coun-

tries and regions. They heard speeches from Abdul’ahat Abdulrixit, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Dr. Joseph Deiss, former President of Switzerland, Chen Guang, Vice Chairman of the CPPCC Shandong Provincial Committee, and CPAFFC Vice President Li Jianping.

In his welcoming address, Abdul’ahat Abdulrixit said that, against the backdrop of deepening economic globalization, all countries were interrelated and interdependent in their development. For none of them could achieve future economic and social



Dr. Toni Schonenberger, Chairman of the Board of the Swiss stars Foundation, speaking at the opening ceremony

development without international cooperation and mutual support. Youth always represented a future guarantee of humanity and young leaders were a dynamic force in promoting social progress and development. It was necessary for young leaders in all countries to acquire an international vision and assume important responsibilities in preserving world peace, carrying out harmonious cooperation and pursuing sustainable development to meet various global challenges.

In his keynote speech on “2020—Challenges and Choices”, Dr. Deiss observed that poverty, environmental deterioration and war were the three main challenges facing humanity and the first two decades of the 21st century provided an important opportunity for the international community to resolve them. Bold decisions and measures were necessary to ensure rapid economic development and improvement



of the global governance system. While economic development was the key for poverty reduction, a green economy was the key for sustainable development, while global governance was needed for peace and security.

During the remaining sessions, many scholars, entrepreneurs and experts elaborated on the conference topics in thought-provoking manner. Prof. Ding Yifan of the Development Research Center of the State Council analyzed from several perspectives future prospects of China's economic development and the resulting opportunities and challenges; Prof. Huang Weiping of the People's University introduced a new form of enterprise—namely, the social enterprise; Dr. Tang Min, counselor of the State Council stressed innovation was the driving force for enterprise growth, but sustainability and inclusiveness should also be part of development.

Mr. Nobuyuki Idei, former president of Japan's Sony Corporation, analyzed the economic, political and social challenges in the coming 5-10 years from an Asian perspective. He pointed out that Asian countries should build a new model of economic develop-

A light moment shared by Chinese and foreign participants during tea break



ment, in order to avoid the economic recession inflicting many Western economies. Using the example of the European debt crisis, Lord Michael Hastings of Scarisbrick analyzed emerging risks and challenges such as the failure of Western thinking, failure of leadership, growing of secularism, etc. Chi-Won Yoon, Chairman and CEO of the Asia-Pacific region of UBS AG discussed some of the emerging challenges such as non-implementation of contracts on the part of governments, social instability and political risk, etc. based on his own experiences.

The interactive session of the symposium was lively and dynamic. Challenging questions were posed and persuasive answers given by the speakers based on reality. During group discussions, all the participants showed an open mind, an inclusive attitude and a desire to deepen understanding of the themes and topics. Such sessions greatly facilitated exchanges between the delegates and achieved very positive results.

Compared with the 2011 symposium, some innovative programs were added to the agenda, including the Bell Boat Launching Ceremony. The Bell Boat was designed by former British Olympic rowing coach David Train, who is also a green environmentalist based on the concepts of energy saving, emission control and sustain-



The participants at the symposium

able development. They fitted in well with the symposium themes—building bridges, promoting harmony. In addition, a variety of social programs such as field visits, exchange sessions and cultural activities provided the delegates with a platform for in-depth communication. Many delegates said that they had had the opportunity of meeting friends from so many countries within two or three days and it was indeed a very effective and efficient means networking.

As the four-day symposium ended, the participants left with deepened understanding of the topics. For the majority of foreign participants who had come to China for the first time, the success of the symposium in explaining China's economic and social development since reform and opening up helped changed their previous partial views about the country. Many said that the trip enabled them to see the present-day China and to understand the real Chinese people.

Although this is by no means a large-scale event, it has produced a far-reaching impact. It has built up a bridge of knowledge, vision, understanding and friendship for all the young leaders. ■