

CHINA WATCH

No. 16

March 2012

POLITICAL ISSUES

KUWAIT

1. Chinese president appoints six new ambassadors

Beijing, Friday, 17 February 2012

President Hu Jintao appointed six new ambassadors to foreign countries and international organizations, according to a statement from the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC). Cui Jianchun was appointed ambassador to Kuwait, replacing Huang Jiemin.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/17/c_131417064.htm

ISRAEL

2. Israel's home front defence minister pegged as next ambassador to China

Jerusalem, Sunday, 12 February 2012

Israeli Minister of Home Front Defence Matan Vilnai was elected as Israel's next envoy to China in a unanimous cabinet vote. Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman announced Vilnai's nomination last week during a diplomatic visit to the United States.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/12/c_131405748.htm

IRAN

3. China hopes to resume dialogues on Iran nuclear issue: FM spokesman

Beijing, Friday, 10 February 2012

Spokesperson Liu Weimin said at a press briefing that China has the desire to work with relevant parties to realize the early resumption of dialogues between Iran and a group of six international mediators. At the invitation of Deputy Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Baqeri, Foreign Ministry Assistant Minister Ma Zhaoxu will visit Iran from 12-13 February

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/10/c_131403402.htm

4. China calls for early resumption of Iran nuclear issue talks

Beijing, Thursday, 16 February 2012

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu paid a two-day visit to Iran. During the visit, Ma urged Iran to respond to Catherine Ashton, the EU foreign policy chief's letter, restore nuclear talks with the

P5+1 partners -- Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and Germany, and enhance cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/16/c_131414926.htm

5. China hopes for continued cooperation between Iran, IAEA

Beijing, Thursday, 23 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei when asked to comment on the IAEA's latest mission to Iran said that China hoped the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would continue to enhance cooperation with Iran. Yukiya Amano, director of the IAEA, said that no agreement was reached with Iran over its nuclear issue during the agency's recent visit to Tehran.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/23/c_131427772.htm

6. China hopes for early resumption of dialogue on Iran

Beijing, Monday, 27 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said that the IAEA should maintain an impartial manner and continue to be actively committed to dialogue with Iran, adding that Iran should show "flexibility and sincerity" in continuing to strengthen cooperation with the IAEA.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/27/c_131434331.htm

OMAN

7. Chinese top legislature officials visit Oman

Muscat, Wednesday, 29 February 2012

A delegation of China's top legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), concluded a friendly visit to Oman. During their three-day visit, the delegation headed by Han Qide, vice chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, held talks with Omani Deputy Prime Minister for Cabinet Affairs Fahd bin Mahmoud al-Said, Chairman of Omani Majlis' Consultative Council Khalid bin Hilal al- Ma'awali, and Chairman of the State Council Yahya Bin Mahfoudh Al Mantheri, to exchange views on bilateral relations and international and regional affairs of common concerns.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/29/c_131438420.htm

PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY

8. Abbas, Chinese envoy meet on Palestinian-Israeli peace process

Ramallah, Monday, 20 February 2012

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas met with Chinese Middle East envoy Wu Sike and they exchanged views on the current situation between the Palestinians and Israel. Abbas welcomed China's support of the Palestinian cause, stressing that the relations between China and the Palestine is steady "like mountains rooted in the ground." Abbas blamed Israel for the failure of the peace process due to its refusal to stop building Jewish settlements and to recognize the borders of the future Palestinian state. Wu, who has already visited Israel before his Palestinian trip, said that the two sides should create an atmosphere suitable for reviving the peace talks to resolve their conflict.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-02/21/c_131421297.htm

9. Israel should accept Palestinian unity bid: China's Mideast envoy

Middle East Institute @ New Delhi, www.mei.org.in

Jerusalem, Monday, 20 February 2012

Chinese special envoy to the Middle East Wu Sike said that Israel should accept the reconciliation between Palestinian factions of Fatah and Hamas, rejecting Israel's official stance on not negotiating with a Palestinian government that includes Hamas.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-02/21/c_131421260.htm

10. China's Middle East envoy meets Quartet representative on peace process

London, Friday, 24 February 2012

China's Middle East envoy Wu Sike met with representative of the Middle East Quartet Tony Blair to exchange views on the current situation in the region. Wu briefed Blair on China's efforts to help mediate peace talks between the Israelis and Palestinians and said the Palestinian issue remains at the core of the Middle East peace process.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/25/c_131430832.htm

SUDAN and SOUTH SUDAN

11. China welcomes Sudan-South Sudan non-aggression pact

Beijing, Monday, 13 February 2012

China welcomes the signing of a non-aggression and cooperation agreement between Sudan and South Sudan, said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Liu Weimin.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/13/c_131407571.htm

12. Chinese VP hopes for early solution to Sudan-South Sudan dispute

Beijing, Tuesday, 28 February 2012

Vice President Xi Jinping on Tuesday said he hopes Sudan and South Sudan will properly solve their differences at an early date. China hopes the two countries can remain patient and maintain communication, keeping in mind their fundamental interests and the overall regional situation, Xi said.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/28/c_131435829.htm

SYRIA

13. China warns of rising safety risks in Syria

Beijing, Wednesday, 1 February 2012

China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) urged Chinese citizens and companies in Syria to take caution due to rising turmoil in the country. In a statement posted on its website, the MOC warned Chinese people and enterprises to avoid travelling to Syria for the time being and urged Chinese companies in the country to enhance security procedures and withdraw from regions that are experiencing armed conflict.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/01/c_131386800.htm

14. China stands its ground on UN draft resolution veto

Beijing, Tuesday, 7 February 2012

China has defended its decision to veto a UN draft resolution pressing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to step down from power. The Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman said that China is not favouring either side or deliberately backing anyone, and that it will continue to play a constructive role within the international community, to help solve the Syrian crisis.

Middle East Institute @ New Delhi, www.mei.org.in

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/video/2012-02/07/c_131395878.htm

15. Premier Wen: no protection for any party on Syria issue

Beijing, Tuesday, 14 February 2012

At a joint press conference with European Council President Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso after they held the 14th China-EU leaders' meeting, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said that the fate of Syria must be decided by the Syrian people on their own, and stressed that the current priority is to "prevent war and chaos," in an aim to shelter the Syrian people from greater suffering.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/14/c_122701624.htm

16. China: UN action on Syria should comply with UN charter

Beijing, Tuesday, 14 February 2012

China has called for a "positive and constructive role" of the international community on Syria. Wang Min, China's deputy permanent representative to the UN told the General Assembly that the UN action on Syria "should comply with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter" and the basic norms guiding international relations.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/video/2012-02/14/c_131409164.htm

17. Syria won't accept peacekeepers: Syrian Ambassador to China

Beijing, Wednesday, 15 February 2012

Ambassador Imad Moustapha said that replacing the withdrawn Arab League observer mission to Syria with a joint peacekeeping force comprised of Arab and United Nations forces to monitor a ceasefire between the rival sides was totally unacceptable. But he added that Syria welcomed observer missions from the international community to conduct a fair and objective investigation of what was going on in Syria.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-02/15/c_122707430.htm

18. Syrian government, opposition must listen to people's demands: ambassador

Beijing, Thursday, 16 February 2012

The Syrian government and Syrian opposition must listen to the people's demands, asserted Syrian ambassador to China Dr. Imad Moustapha, and said that this can only take place through free elections. He thanked the Chinese people for their concern.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2012-02/16/c_131414712.htm

19. Chinese Vice FM arrives in Syria

Damascus, Friday, 17 February 2012

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhai Jun, a special envoy of the Chinese government, arrived in the Syrian capital of Damascus for a two-day visit. President Bashar al-Assad and Foreign Minister Walid Mualem will meet Zhai Saturday to explore ways to boost bilateral ties and hold consultations on the Syrian situation as well as regional and international affairs.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/17/c_122719264.htm

See also: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/16/c_131414688.htm

20. China urges peaceful solution to Syrian crisis amid fears of more violence

Beijing, Wednesday, 22 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei at a daily news briefing said that the Syrian crisis should be addressed peacefully, as concerns have risen about the possibility of other countries providing weapons to the opposition in the violence-wracked country.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131425739.htm

21. China not to attend Friends of Syria conference

Beijing, Thursday, 23 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei said that China will not attend the Friends of Syria conference as China needs to further study the aim, effect and mechanism of the conference and it has no idea of the preparations of the conference.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/23/c_131428139.htm

22. China welcomes Annan as Syrian envoy

Beijing, Friday, 24 February 2012

China welcomes former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as the special envoy of the United Nations (UN) and the Arab League on the Syria issue, said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/24/c_131430105.htm

23. China backs all efforts to solve Syrian crisis peacefully, appropriately: spokesman

Beijing, Monday, 27 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei said that China hopes the referendum on a new draft constitution will help advance the reform and start the political dialogue in Syria. Syrians went to the polls for a referendum on a new draft constitution, as Damascus struggles under mounting international pressure to carry out reforms and end the turmoil.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/27/c_131434415.htm

TURKEY

24. Chinese vice president arrives in Turkish capital for official visit

Ankara, Monday, 20 February 2012

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping arrived here for an official visit to Turkey at the invitation of Turkish President Abdullah Gul.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/21/c_131421272.htm

25. Chinese vice president pledges to advance China-Turkey ties

Ankara, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping made a four-point proposal to further develop relations between China and Turkey, while holding talks with Turkish President Abdullah Gul in the capital of Turkey. These included high-level exchanges between the two countries to consolidate strategic mutual-trust through joint working groups, and exchanges and cooperation among think tanks and non-governmental organizations.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131423564.htm

26. Chinese VP discusses bilateral ties, regional situation with Turkish leaders

Istanbul, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping met with Turkish Parliament Speaker Cemil Cicek and held talks with President Abdullah Gul in Ankara and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The Chinese vice president and Turkish leaders discussed ways and means to advance bilateral ties, particularly in economic and trade areas.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131424829.htm

27. Chinese vice president urges Turkey to prevent separatist activities by "East Turkistan" forces

Istanbul, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping urged Turkey to prevent "East Turkistan" forces from conducting anti-China separatist activities on its territory. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan reaffirmed that Turkey has consistently adhered to the one-China policy, recognized the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of the whole Chinese people, and never allowed any activity on its territory that aims to undermine sovereignty.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131423634.htm

28. Chinese VP: Mutual support on issues of core interests cornerstone of Sino-Turkish ties

Ankara, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping while meeting with Turkish Parliament Speaker Cemil Cicek said that mutual support on issues related with the other's core interests is the cornerstone of Sino-Turkish strategic ties. Xi remarked that China firmly supports Turkey for its endeavour on maintaining domestic political stability and economic growth.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131423550.htm

YEMEN

29. China welcomes presidential election in Yemen

Beijing, Thursday, 23 February 2012

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei at a regular press briefing said that China welcomed the holding of Yemen's presidential election as scheduled, and hoped the country would restore normal social order at an early date.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/23/c_131427675.htm

30. China congratulates Yemen's new president

Beijing, Monday, 27 February 2012

China congratulated Yemen's new president, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, and called on the country to resolve disputes through peaceful dialogue and consultation.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/27/c_131434364.htm

ENERGY ISSUES

Middle East Institute @ New Delhi, www.mei.org.in

IRAN

31. Iran oil ban triggers Chinese oil reserve concerns

Beijing, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

Benchmark March crude oil hit a nine-month high of US\$ 105.26 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange on Monday after Iran said it has stopped crude exports to Britain and France in an escalating dispute over its nuclear program. The price hike has fuelled discussions over whether it is the right time for China to buy oil, as the country is working to rapidly boost its oil reserves, which are at a low level in comparison to many developed countries.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2012-02/21/c_131423403.htm

ECONOMIC ISSUES

EGYPT

32. Chinese firms: Good prospects in Egypt

Beijing, Monday, 13 February 2012

Chinese companies in Egypt are confident in the economy and investment future in Egypt, saying its political reshuffle might offer a chance for foreign investment.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/13/c_131406773.htm

ISRAEL

33. Israel to loan China 300 billion dollars in water saving

Beijing, Wednesday, 29 February 2012

US\$ 300 billion will be loaned to China by Israel for high-tech water-saving agricultural projects, according to an agreement signed by both countries' finance ministers. The loan will support the water saving programs in five provinces and autonomous regions in western China including Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia and Xinjiang.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/29/c_131438555.htm

LIBYA

34. Chinese gov't team arrives in Tripoli for assets protection, reconstruction participation

Tripoli, Saturday, 4 February 2012

A team of China's Ministry of Commerce arrived to discuss with Libyan authorities about protecting assets of Chinese companies and its participation in the North African country's post-war reconstruction.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/05/c_131392108.htm

SOUTH SUDAN

35. FM spokesman: China-S.Sudan cooperation brings benefits to both peoples

Beijing, Thursday, 23 February 2012

In response to a question concerning South Sudan's expulsion of the head of a China-Malaysia-owned company, Hong Lei, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that the cooperation between China and South Sudan has brought concrete benefits to the people of both countries. He added that he hoped the parties involved could step up communication and coordination to diminish misunderstandings in a bid to foster long-term cooperation.

Source: *Xinhua*, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/23/c_131427810.htm

TURKEY

36. China, Turkey sign currency swap deal

Beijing, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

China's central bank said that it has signed a US\$ 1.59 billion currency swap agreement with the Central Bank of Turkey. The three-year agreement will be extendable by mutual consent, and is aimed at enhancing financial cooperation and promoting bilateral trade and investment, as well as ensuring regional financial stability.

Source: *Xinhua*, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/21/c_131423399.htm

37. Chinese VP calls for more efforts in boosting trade with Turkey

Istanbul, Wednesday, 22 February 2012

Visiting Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping addressing a Sino-Turkish business forum in Istanbul, told business leaders from China and Turkey that efforts should be made in four aspects in elevating bilateral economic cooperation, namely, to increase political trust, to explore more cooperation fields and deepen substantial cooperation, to join hands to reject trade protectionism and to enhance cultural exchange and people-to-people communication.

Source: *Xinhua*, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131425455.htm

See Also: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131425406.htm

MULTILATERAL ISSUES

38. Kidnapped Chinese workers are scapegoats of local disputes

Beijing, Tuesday, 7 February 2012

Three days after two dozen Chinese workers were kidnapped in Sudan after local rebels attacked their camp, another 25 workers were kidnapped in Egypt. Experts said the kidnappings of overseas Chinese in recent years were usually motivated by political goals rather than the desire for money, and had nothing to do with Chinese policies.

Source: *Xinhua*, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/07/c_131396095.htm

39. Chinese state councillor, U.S. secretary of state hold phone talk on ties, Xi's visit, Syria

Beijing, Monday, 13 February 2012

Chinese State Councillor Dai Bingguo and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke by phone on bilateral ties, Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping's visit to the United States, and the Syria issue. Both of them agreed that all kinds of violence should be immediately stopped and the peace and stability of Syria and the Middle East should be achieved through political settlement.

Source: *Xinhua*, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/14/c_122696430.htm

40. China steps up diplomatic efforts on Syria

Beijing, Tuesday, 14 February 2012

Chinese Ambassador Li Huaxin met with Arab League Secretary General Nabil al-Arabi at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo. China hopes to enhance communication with Arab countries and the Arab League in a bid to play a positive and constructive role in promoting a political settlement in Syria issues.

Middle East Institute @ New Delhi, www.mei.org.in

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/14/c_131410200.htm

41. Xi Jinping explains China's position on Syria

Beijing, Wednesday, 15 February 2012

During his talks with the US Vice President, Xi Jinping explained China's position on Syria and said that it is aimed at safeguarding peace and stability in the Middle East and is in line with relevant international principles.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/video/2012-02/15/c_131411780.htm

42. China opposes armed intervention or forcing "regime change" in Syria

United Nations, Thursday, 16 February 2012

China opposes armed intervention or forcing a so-called "regime change" in Syria, said China's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Wang Min. China condemns all acts of violence against innocent civilians and urges the government and all political factions of Syria to restore stability and the normal social order.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-02/17/c_122713545.htm

See Also: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/16/c_131414834.htm

43. Stance on Syria proves China as firm supporter of U.N. Charter: experts

Beijing, Friday, 17 February 2012

Wu Sike, China's special envoy to the Middle East, said rejecting the draft resolution is in line with China's long-term stance on the Syria issue. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China always upholds the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, Wu said.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/17/c_122719219.htm

See Also: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/17/c_131416929.htm

44. China's vote against Syria resolution shows responsibility: expert

Beijing, Saturday, 18 February 2012

China's "No" vote on a proposed Syria resolution at the UN General Assembly shows it can assume greater responsibility in international affairs, an expert says. Casting a "No" vote conforms to China's foreign policy of maintaining world peace and stability and principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2012-02/18/c_131418235.htm

45. China's Mideast envoy urges negotiations over regional issues

Jerusalem, Sunday, 19 February 2012

Chinese Middle East envoy Wu Sike said that China is willing to play a constructive role in bringing Israel and the Palestinians back to peace negotiations. Wu, on a visit to the region, met with Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Yitzhak Molcho, head of Israel's negotiating team to the Amman exploratory talks with Palestinians earlier this year.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/20/c_131419375.htm

46. Chinese FM holds phone talks with AL chief, Arab counterparts over Syria

Beijing, Tuesday, 28 February 2012

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi has talked over the phone with Arab League chief Nabil al-Arabi and his counterparts of some Arab nations over the situation of Syria.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/29/c_122767789.htm

47. China urges to end violence in Syria in UNHRC

Geneva, Tuesday, 28 February 2012

China, in the United Nations human rights forum, urged the government and all political parties of Syria to end violence, and called on various political factions in Syria to express their political aspirations through non-violent means under the rule of law.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/28/c_131436577.htm

See Also: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/28/c_131436413.htm

MISCELLANEOUS

IRAN

48. China, Iran set up committee to enhance cultural exchanges

Beijing, Thursday, 16 February 2012

China and Iran on Thursday established a joint committee to boost coordination in bilateral cultural cooperation. The China-Iran Joint Cultural Committee will review the implementation of executive programs on cultural and educational cooperation between the two governments.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/16/c_131414684.htm

ISRAEL

49. New exhibition explores life of Jewish refugees in Shanghai

Jerusalem, Thursday 23 February 2012

"Jewish refugees and Shanghai," a new exhibition inaugurated in Haifa dives into the history of Jewish refugees in China during the World War II.

Source: Xinhua, Beijing

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/24/c_131428353.htm

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