

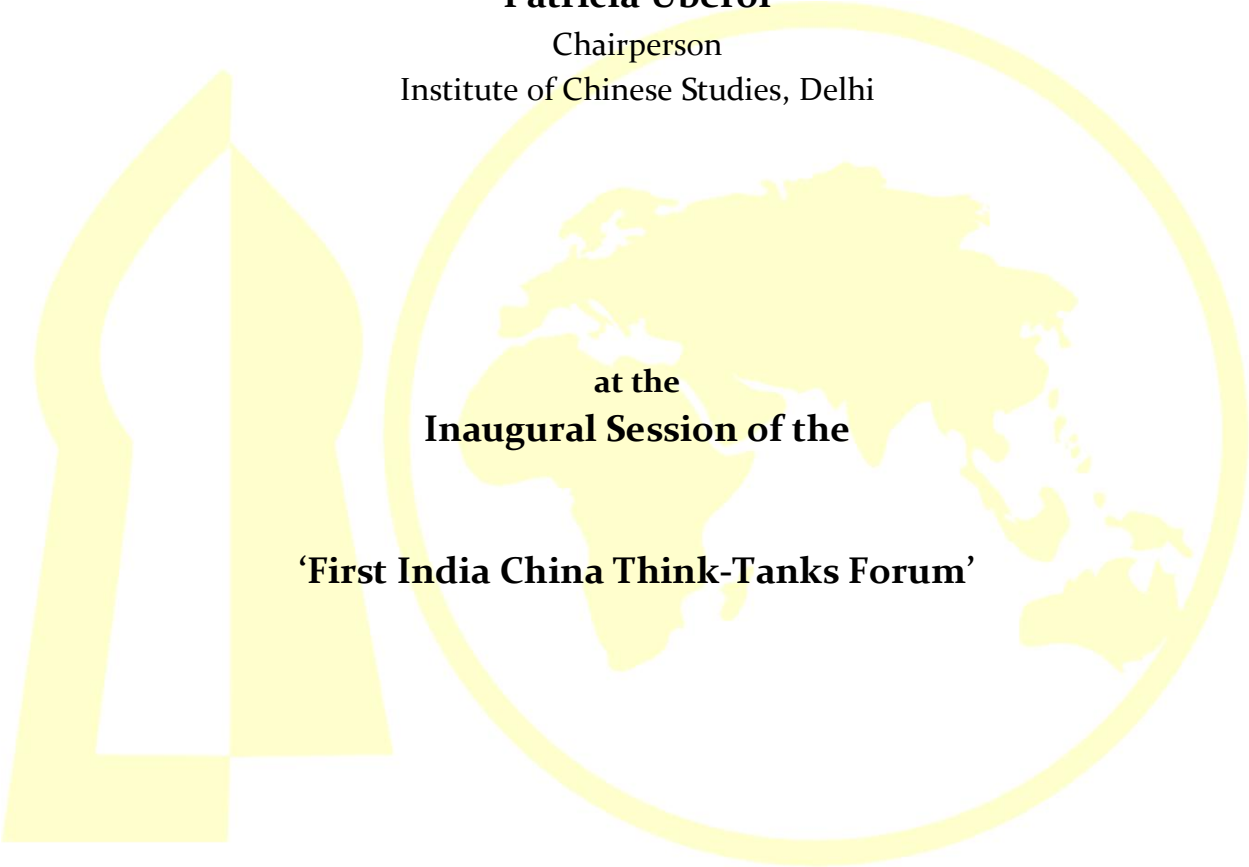
Welcome Remarks

by

Patricia Uberoi

Chairperson

Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi



at the
Inaugural Session of the

'First India China Think-Tanks Forum'

at
Sapru House, New Delhi
9 December, 2016

Excellency, Mr M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs

Professor Wang Weiguang, President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Ambassador Nalin Surie, Director-General of the Indian Council of World Affairs

Professor Alka Acharya, my colleague and Director of the Institute of Chinese Studies

Distinguished participants and friends

1. On behalf of the Institute of Chinese Studies, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to Delhi and to this First India-China Think Tanks Forum.
2. As you are aware, the decision to hold an annual India-China Think Tanks Forum was taken at the time of the momentous visit to China of the Honorable Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi, in May 2015.
3. It was one of several initiatives undertaken with the aim of fostering “closer dialogue and mutual understanding” at the people-to-people level between the two countries. In this sense, it runs parallel to the innovative State / Provincial Leaders Forum which was established concurrently to enhance broader political dialogue and strategic communication at the level of the Indian and Chinese states and provinces.
4. We are honoured to welcome here Professor Wang Weiguang, President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), China’s premier social science research institute, who is accompanied by distinguished faculty from several of CASS’s region- and discipline-specialized departments. Many of us of the Institute of Chinese Studies, and no doubt many other academics in this distinguished audience, have been privileged to have been hosted for our research in China by one or another Department of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
5. We are also privileged to welcome scholars of other Chinese think tanks, including the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, the Chinese Association for South Asian Studies, and the Peking University. Many of these scholars are well known to us, for their research and, in many cases, as personal friends of long-standing.
6. The distinguished Indian participants in this Forum are drawn from a wide variety of Think Tanks and organizations. Prominent among them is our partner institution, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), in whose historic premises we are now meeting. Almost seven decades ago, this was the venue of the famous Asian Relations Conference of March

1947, as various countries of Asia emerged from the ashes of World War II and began to chart their future as nation-states independent of foreign rule.

7. The theme of this Forum is “Towards a Closer India-China Developmental Partnership”. It spans not merely issues of security and bilateral relations, but also the domestic economies of India and China, the role of multilateral economic initiatives and institutions, the scope for enhanced people-to-people engagement, and global issues of climate change and cyber-security.
8. We look forward to a frank and productive exchange of views on these issues. It is our hope and dream that this annual interaction of Indian and Chinese Think Tanks will lay the ground for purposeful joint research projects between individuals and institutions on themes of mutual interest and relevance in a global context of uncertainty, opportunity, challenge and change.

