Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi

# Remarks

**by**

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**at the**

## Sixth ICWA-CPIFA Dialogue

**Sapru House, New Delhi**
**7 November 2019**

Ambassador of PRC to India, Mr Sun Weidong
Ambassador Yang Yanyi, Head of CPIFA Delegation
Ambassador Ou Boqian, Vice President, CPIFA,
Amb. Wang Chungui
Ambassador H K Singh
Ambassador Anil Wadhwa
Ambassador Gautam Bambawale
Distinguished members of the two delegations, Ladies and gentlemen,

Greetings

I warmly welcome you all to the Indian Council of World Affairs. A especially warm welcome is extended to Mr Sun Weidong, Chinese Ambassador to India and the distinguished members of delegation from the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs. I am glad to note that Ambassador Yang Yanyi is leading this delegation from China.

2. We are aware that our two institutions – ICWA and CPIFA had signed an MoU on cooperation in April 2005. Today, we are going to commence our sixth structured dialogue which first started in November 2013 in Beijing. We have had meaningful and successful bilateral dialogue in the past six years.

3. A word about our Council's China programme: -The Council has also been assigned other major responsibilities as far as India-China relations are concerned. The Fourth India-China Think-Tanks Forum is scheduled to be held in China in November-December 2019. The Forum will be organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs, and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The Forum is a bilateral platform established by a Memorandum of Understanding concluded between Ministry of External Affairs, India and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, during the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to China in May 2015. The Council has also been a participant in the India-China high level segment on cultural and people-to -people exchanges.

4. As we are aware India and China have charted a year-long celebration to mark the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations beginning from April 2020. ICWA will be organising a number of activities including a National seminar on 70 years of India-China relations and a conference on 'Sinology and Indology" in China during this period.

5. We have an agreed agenda for our discussion today. We wish to discuss three important aspects of our relationship and we are delighted to have so many experts amongst us.

- From Wuhan to Chennai: Looking Forward to the 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations
- Global Economic Outlook: Perspectives from India and China

- Significance of Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

6. The second informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping was concluded in Chennai on 11-12 October 2019. India attaches great important to its relations with China and this has been evident in the number of times the two leaders have met each other since 2014. In Chennai, both the leaders had more than five hours of one-one meetings and discussed issues of mutual interest. The Chennai Connect that was achieved during the summit only adds up to the gains that we had made in the form of the Wuhan Spirit.

7. The informal summits have added a new dimension to the India-China bilateral diplomatic relationship.

8. Since the Wuhan Summit, India and China have achieved a great progress in all aspects of bilateral relations, most importantly, our strategic communication has deepened, and looking at the positive outcome of the Chennai Summit, the process will continue.

9. We hope that the economic engagements between India and China will also deepen and balance so that the concerns related to the issues like trade deficit, market access, investments can be addressed.

10. The two sides announced the setting up of a high-level economic and trade dialogue mechanism to discuss issues related to trade imbalances, investment, and services. The high-level trade-centric mechanism has raised hopes among the Indian establishment given the galloping trade deficit between the two countries and the market access related challenges that the Indian goods face vis-à-vis the Chinese markets. It is expected that the new mechanism on economic issues would be able to achieve mutually agreeable solutions in due course.

11. One of the major takeaways from the second held informal summit between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping is that the two biggest nations with a deep civilisational legacy could successfully explore the areas of detente and cooperation.

12. What the two summits reflected is that India and China were not 'adversaries' but two large economic powers open to a healthy competition in a multipolar world.

13. The proposal of WTO reform was moved by PM Narendra Modi for the first time at the 2018 Johannesburg BRICS Summit where he suggested that BRICS, a decade into existence, should try to reform the status quo in multilateralism. The proposal was included by the Prime Minister in his vision document at the informal BRICS Summit in June in Osaka.

14. Both India and China have emerged as key G20 members who have significantly influenced the ongoing process of reshaping the world's economic and financial order. At Osaka Summit in July 2019, the two Asian neighbours warned against rising protectionism in the international trade and the need to uphold multilateral rules and norms in the global economic system.

15. The establishment of the high Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges was an important outcome of the Wuhan Summit. The first meeting of the HLM was held in December 2018 in New Delhi. The second meeting of HLM on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges was co-chaired by EAM Jaishankar and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on August 12, 2019 in Beijing. The two rounds of HLM has reflected the desire of the two countries to broad-base the relationship through enhanced exchanges in areas such as culture, art, tourism, media, films, sports and academic, including think-tanks and youth exchanges.

16. It might be an understatement to say that India-China relations are complex, but both the leaders from India and China agree on putting into it all efforts necessary to overcome the difficulties and to work on the positive aspects sincerely and continuously. India and China are neighbours and are poised to play greater roles in global affairs once again as our economies grow and our capacities increase.

17. India continues to have a positive outlook on the future of the world order and that is why we continue to promote a policy of engagement across the world for mutual benefit in strategic, economic, social aspects towards improving people's lives and to avoid global conflicts. India will continue to promote a strategy of engagement that aims to achieving peace and prosperity and promote a rules-based and inclusive global order.

18. I welcome all participants and wish all of you a pleasant stay and useful substantive discussion.

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