Nations' young hold keys to exchange: Liu

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At the heart of people-to-people exchange are young people, Vice-Premier Liu Yandong said on Thursday.   
Liu spoke at the US-China Social and Cultural Dialogue (SCD) at George Washington University, an event that highlighted people-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and the United States.   
"The people-to-people exchange is a career that faces the public and the future. It has the special effect of building the bridges between hearts and minds," Liu said.   
Liu said that young people have been the pioneering power in such exchanges. "I hope the young people can build a global vision, embrace a global perspective and face the future," she said. "I hope the young people in the two countries hold up the spirit of innovation, inspire each other and build the dream hand in hand."   
Liu said she hopes that young people "can enhance the emotional ties, promote mutual understanding and deepen the friendships".   
US Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos joined Liu to watch a panel discussion co-moderated by Yang Lan, co-founder and chairman of the Sun Media Group, and Bruce Dickson, director of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies at George Washington University.   
"Since the 1970s, one of the drivers spurring the opening up between the US and China has been entrepreneurship," Chao said.   
Chao announced a new program for young Chinese and American entrepreneurs, the US-China Youth Forum on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Economic Opportunities, which will take place in Guangzhou from Dec 5-8.   
Co-sponsored by the US Department of State and the All-China Youth Federation, this forum will bring together 100 entrepreneurs from the US and China. "It will provide an opportunity for young innovators from both countries to share insights and ideas and to further private sector cooperation and communication between our two countries," Chao said.   
Educational exchanges are another pillar of people-to-people exchange between the two countries.   
The number of Chinese students traveling to the US to study has grown exponentially. So far, there are about 1.42 million Chinese students who have studied in the US, according to Liu.   
"Students studying in America also contribute significantly to our economy," DeVos said. "According to the Department of Commerce, international students bring nearly $36 billion annually to the US economy."   
There are more than 14,000 American students studying in China annually.   
Liu announced that China will launch a program to provide scholarship to 10,000 American young people for them to study in China for a short term. "I really encourage our next generation, the kids, to have fun in China, during the wintertime or summertime. Come to China," said pianist Lang Lang.   
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