UN chief on trade: Cooperation, not protectionism

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International cooperation and dialogue are the way to solve trade disputes, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday.  
"Trade wars are always bad for those involved in the trade war and for the international economy as a whole. We need to have international cooperation," Guterres said in an interview with Chinese media at United Nations headquarters in New York before his visit to China.  
"Wherever there's a problem, there must be dialogue, there must be a serious discussion to overcome the problem," he said.  
Guterres said efforts need to be made "to preserve what was acquired by many years of work of world organizations" to make sure there is trade benefit to the international economy as a whole.  
Guterres said he is delighted to be visiting China and participating in the Boao Forum for Asia annual conference 2018 at the invitation of President Xi Jinping. Gutteres will meet Xi and other Chinese officials and then give a speech at the opening session of the forum, which will be held April 8-11 in Hainan province.  
"It will be an enormous pleasure for me to participate in this event and to recognize the extremely important contribution of China to multilateralism in today's world, where multilateralism is sometimes under attack," said Guterres, whose first visit to China was in the 1980s.  
He described the occasion as a very important moment in the history of China, with 40 years of reform and opening up leading to an "unparalleled" process of economic growth and a reduction of poverty that have contributed to the improvement of the global economy.  
The UN chief expressed his belief in China's commitment to globalization, free trade and international cooperation, especially the developing world.  
"The Belt and Road Initiative is a perfect demonstration of that," he said.

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