

# COMMENT

## Editorials

## Mutual respect and sincerity can reset relations between China and Australia

The news that Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong will visit China this week can be seen as a sign that relations between the two countries, which had deteriorated under the previous Australian government, are beginning to improve.

It will be the first visit to Beijing by an Australian minister since 2019. Wong will meet State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and attend the sixth Australia-China Foreign and Strategic Dialogue on Wednesday, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said in a statement, “Australia seeks a stable relationship with China; we will cooperate where we can, disagree where we must and engage in the national interest.”

Such a pragmatic approach is the right thing to do in handling diplomatic relations between the two countries. With different political and social systems, it is natural that both countries have differences, but there is always common ground to be found. Cooperation in these areas not only benefits both countries and both peoples it also builds contacts and trust.

It has long been China’s foreign policy that ideological differences should never stand in the way of economic cooperation, and that trade and economic cooperation should not be politicized.

Allowing geopolitical concerns to interfere with economic and trade deals is not in the interest of both countries and peoples, which should be a lesson the Albanese government draws from what has happened between the two nations in recent years.

That the business community in Australia has wel-

comed Wong’s visit speaks volumes about how businesses involved in China-Australia trade and economic cooperation have been longing for an upturn in bilateral relations.

Warwick Smith, chairman of the Business Council of Australia’s international engagement committee, told Reuters, the meeting is to celebrate 50 years of relations with China and its significance is that “it’s a meeting not in a conference but a physical meeting in Beijing”. He said that both sides of the political spectrum welcome it “and certainly businesses welcome it”.

It goes without saying the business community in China also welcomes a rapprochement between the two countries, which will make things easier for them to do business with their Australian counterparts.

More talks should be held between both governments in a wide range of areas to increase political trust between the two countries. With mutual respect for each other’s political systems and without interference in each other’s internal affairs, efforts should be made on both sides to let differences stay on the shelf while common ground is expanded with cooperation in an increasingly wide range of fields.

The Australian government should not let itself be swayed by Washington. There is no need for Australia’s ties with the US to be at the expense of its relations with China.

Reflecting on the course of bilateral relations over the past 50 years, the two sides should work together to make their relations more stable, resilient and accident-free to set a good foundation for the next 50 years.

## DPP selling Taiwan’s interests to Washington

Citing security concerns, the Democratic Progressive Party administration of Taiwan island said on Saturday that it is considering fining Foxconn for one of its branches operating on the Chinese mainland holding some shares of Tsinghua Unigroup, a major Chinese integrated circuit manufacturer, without obtaining approval in advance.

Although Foxconn said it will sell these shares, the DPP administration is still hinting that the company might face a heavy fine.

The matter began to simmer when Foxconn disclosed its stake in July. The DPP administration immediately put intense pressure on Foxconn to stop the investment of about \$800 million.

That constitutes a stark contrast with the DPP administration’s flattering attitude toward Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, which is building two massive plants in the US state of Arizona, with a total investment of \$40 billion.

This was prompted by the US administration’s carrot-and-stick strategy to hijack the global supply chain for high-end chips, rather than a normal practice based on market laws.

That TSMC has become “USSMC” by relocating its core plants to the US, something the US hailed as a sign showing “American manufacturing is back”, is what the DPP administration should truly lament as it represents the island’s readiness to surrender its advantages in the industry to the US.

## Crucial to fire up economy on all cylinders

After the central authorities recently optimized the country’s pandemic prevention and control measures, a fast forward button has been pressed in terms of work and production resumption nationwide.

To bring the country’s social and economic development back onto the normal track at an early date has become a new task that governments at all levels now face as the country turns a new page in the fight against the novel coronavirus.

In a latest move, the Ministry of Transport on Sunday issued a notice requiring authorities to make efforts to resume the regular operation of public transport services. They must work to ensure that passengers can travel to other regions without any hindrance such as having negative nucleic acid test results, a green health code, doing a test upon arrival, or information registration, according to the notice.

The resumption of work and production is crucial because it has a direct bearing on employment and the country’s overall economic performance. The task is given an additional sense of urgency now that the Central Economic Work Conference held last week has made economic stability and steady economic progress the top priorities for next year.

Yet to resume work and production as quickly as possible is easier said than done given the dire straits many businesses find themselves in. Apart from weak

demand, increasing costs and disrupted logistics, many enterprises now face the additional woe of a worker shortage due to the recent surge in infections in many places and the exodus of workers returning to their hometowns for Spring Festival. Moreover, many enterprises are hesitating to draft any long-term plans due to many production disruptions they have experienced as a result of pandemic prevention and control responses over the past three years.

All this requires officials to not only make the best use of policy support to help businesses address their concerns, but more important, take concrete steps to stabilize the expectations of enterprises for the future so as to stimulate the vitality of the market.

The tone-setting Central Economic Work Conference has already served as a confidence-boosters to some extent as it sent a clear message that the authorities will continue to encourage, support and guide the development of the non-public sector, which accounts for the majority of the country’s employment, taxation and GDP. In particular, the real estate industry and platform-based economy, two major drivers of domestic consumption, are expected to receive more government support next year.

All market players must seize the hour and work to contribute to an early recovery of China’s economy in response to eased pandemic prevention and control measures.

Cai Meng



## Opinion Line

## No force can undo cross-Straits economic and trade cooperation

Statistics from the General Administration of Customs show that Taiwan’s import-export volume with the Chinese mainland from January to October totaled \$271 billion, up 2.4 percent from the previous year, hitting a record high.

The great resilience of the mainland’s economy, its unchanged long-term fundamentals, and huge potential have made it an important engine for the world economy, and injected impetus into cross-Straits trade.

Since 2018, the mainland has introduced a raft of measures to promote cross-Straits economic and trade exchanges, and help Taiwan people set up private businesses on the mainland. The mainland has

also supported Taiwan compatriots’ and enterprises’ participation in the Belt and Road Initiative and various kinds of development strategies.

Great efforts have been made to support enterprises on both sides to strengthen cooperation in capital, technology, management, standards, brands and channels. Thousands of Taiwan enterprises in Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Fujian provinces have gained various tax incentives from local governments, and hundreds have received special funding support for industrial transformation and upgrading, green and smart manufacturing.

The mainland has a population of over 1.4 billion, a middle-

income group of over 400 million, 160 million market players and a comparatively complete industrial system. The potential of the mainland’s vast domestic demand has been continuously unleashed. This will help Taiwan’s economy, industries and enterprises to integrate into and participate in the new development pattern of the mainland economy, and promote cross-Straits trade.

The facts show that neither the artificial restrictions imposed by Taiwan’s authorities nor the epidemic and other contingencies can shake the solid foundation of cross-Straits economic and trade cooperation.

— ECONOMIC DAILY

## Breaking another glass ceiling, in space

*The Three-Body Problem*, an animation movie based on a famous science fiction story of the same name by Liu Cixin, was released on a video website on Dec 10 to a record-high audience, with 140 million people watching it in just five days.

Science fiction has been a genre dominated by the West. *Star Wars*, *King Kong*, *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, even the latest blockbuster *Avatar 2*, are all written in English.

In fact people are so accustomed to seeing extraterrestrials speaking English, that when *Avatar* first hit the screens in 2009, a child asked why the

inhabitants of Planet Pandora didn’t speak English.

Now *The Three-Body Problem* has shaken that domination. When the novel was first published as a series in a domestic journal, *Science Fiction World*, in 2005, there were celebrations that a hardcore science fiction work written by a Chinese author had finally emerged. All three books in the series made a buzz in China and US book reviewers also gave it positive comments when the translated version was published in the United States in 2015.

Attempts were made to turn

the story into a movie, and now the official animation has finally emerged, proof that Chinese people can also write good science-fiction stories. Liu Cixin is himself an engineer, a profession that lays a solid basis for his science fiction writing.

Chinese scientists have made so many achievements lately that the concept of spaceships, travel to other planets in the solar system, and space travel looks increasingly possible.

*The Three-Body Problem* animation movie marks a good start for the science fiction industry in China.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

## What They Say

## Rise of emerging economies trend of the times

The success of the 2022 Qatar World Cup, which concluded on Sunday, is beyond doubt, despite the great lengths some Western countries went to in their attempts to smear the tournament with lies and unfounded charges on so-called human rights issues.

How the Qatar World Cup has unfolded over the past few weeks demonstrates how the most popular sport on Earth can unite people from around the world.

Many years from now, the impressive performances of such dark horses as Morocco and Japan, the unyielding spirits of Croatia and Argentina, along with the tears and joys of the players and their supporters, will still be remembered.

The tournament has provided the world with a valuable oppor-

tunity to experience the hospitality of the host country and the openness of the whole Arab world, and see with their own eyes how distorted the image of the Arab states is in some Western media.

The Arab countries, the Gulf states to be precise, are at a critical stage of development as they are transitioning away from their reliance on oil to a more balanced and sustainable growth model, which entails their further integration into the global industry and supply chains. At the same time, they are striving for a greater say on the world stage and more strategic autonomy in handling regional and global affairs.

However, swallowing the bitter truth that they are quickly losing their traditional control of the awakened Arab world, those Western forces choose to

ignore that, and continue to try and maintain the stereotyped image they have long cast for these “oil countries” — a tactic they also apply to the so-called banana republics, even though Latin American countries are also exploring new development models that are less reliant on exports of natural resources.

Behind the success of the Qatar World Cup is not only the popularity of soccer but more importantly the collective rise of the emerging market economies and developing countries that calls for a reform of the global governance system, which should better reflect their rising influence and contributions to the world.

This represents an overall trend of the times that the Western powers have to accept.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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