

# The Riga Guidelines for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries

On 5 November 2016, the 5th Summit of China and Central and Eastern European Countries (hereinafter referred to as "CEECs") was held in Riga, Latvia. Prime Minister Maris Kucinskis of Latvia, Premier Li Keqiang of the People's Republic of China, Prime Minister Edi Rama of the Republic of Albania, Chairman of the Council of Ministers Denis Zvizdic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Prime Minister Boyko Borissov of the Republic of Bulgaria, Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic of Croatia, Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka of the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Taavi Roivas of the Republic of Estonia, Prime Minister Orban Viktor of Hungary, Prime

Minister Algirdas Butkevicius of the Republic of Lithuania, Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev of the Republic of Macedonia, Prime Minister Beata Szydlo of the Republic of Poland, Prime Minister Dacian Ciolos of Romania, Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic of the Republic of Serbia, Prime Minister Robert Fico of the Slovak Republic, Prime Minister Miro Cerar of the Republic of Slovenia, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information, Society and Telecommunications Vujica Lazovic of Montenegro attended the meeting. They expressed appreciation and gratitude to Latvia for the efforts it had made as the host country to ensure the success of the meeting.

Representatives of other parties, including Austria, Belarus, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the EU, Greece and Switzerland were present as observers.

The Participants at the meeting (hereinafter referred to as "the Participants") reviewed the good progress and results of the cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries (hereinafter referred to as "16+1 Cooperation") since the establishment of the format in 2012, commended the implementation of the Medium-Term Agenda and the Suzhou Guidelines for Cooperation between China and CEECs (see Annex).

The Participants recognized that the 16+1 Cooperation has proven its viability by enhancing the scope and magnitude of cooperation among the 17 countries and has become more mature and ready for harvest. The Participants reaffirmed the intention to forge an efficient, practical and lasting 16+1 Cooperation, to build a partnership featuring openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit, as well as to develop synergies between 16+1 Cooperation and the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, including through the EU-China Connectivity Platform.

In that perspective, the Participants jointly formulated and issued, on the theme of "Connectivity, Innovation, Inclusiveness and Common Development", the Riga Guidelines for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries with a view to enhancing existing cooperation and fostering cooperation in new areas, and affirmed that its implementation will conform with their respective laws and regulations, and in the case of EU member states, relevant EU legislation and regulations.

**1. The Participants support Hungary in hosting the 6th China-CEEC Summit in 2017.**

**2. The Participants appreciate the guiding and facilitating role that the Medium-Term Agenda has played in enhancing 16+1 Cooperation and express readiness to continuously implement the Agenda in light of their respective realities, needs, and priorities.**

**3. 16+1 National Coordinators' Meetings will be held in China and Hungary respectively in 2017.**

#### **4. Trade and investment**

(1) The Participants encourage and support progress in the ongoing EU-China negotiations over an ambitious and comprehensive investment agreement, which will contribute markedly to the development of the China-CEEC investment cooperation and will create a mutually favorable investment environment and market access for all companies.

(2) The China-CEEC Investment and Trade Expo will be held in Ningbo, China in June 2017 during the China International Consumer Goods Fair.

(3) The China Investment Forum will be held in the Czech Republic in 2017.

(4) The Participants acknowledge the important role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in promoting trade and investment cooperation and intend to facilitate cooperation and networking among CEEC and Chinese SMEs. They welcome the participation of Chinese and CEEC SMEs in the China International Small and Medium Enterprises Fair 2017, and are willing to explore the possibility of establishing 16+1 SME Association.

(5) The Participants welcome further cooperation on enhancing trade through e-commerce platforms and encourage Chinese and CEECs' businesses to promote exports and imports of their quality and featured products through e-commerce.

## 5. Connectivity

(1) The Participants acknowledge the importance and comprehensive character of connectivity between Europe and Asia and reaffirm support to the progress made under the EU-China Connectivity Platform. They recognize the need and indicate their willingness to make concerted efforts to develop synergies between the "Belt and Road Initiative" and the relevant EU initiatives such as the Trans-European Networks (TEN-T) .

(2) The Participants noted the progress made in and underlined the importance of cooperation in the field of transport and logistics under the framework of China-CEEC cooperation. The Participants welcome fostering of information exchange on transport and logistics services as well as strengthening of relevant bilateral and multilateral cooperation in order to develop integrated transport corridors between Asia and Europe.

(3) The Participants support development of transport routes between Europe and Asia, including intensifying development of the Europe-China international railway container traffic so that goods could be transported in both directions. The Participants support the establishment of multimodal logistic centers in CEECs and throughout the whole Eurasian Land Bridge areas and improvement of the international supply chain and border crossing rules on the transport corridors in line with national and EU competences.

(4) The Participants appreciate the progress made by Serbia in leading the efforts to establish a China-CEEC association on transport and infrastructure cooperation and welcome the participation of relevant Chinese and CEEC institutions, businesses and organizations on a voluntary basis.

(5) The Participants welcome Latvia in establishing the China-CEEC Secretariat on Logistics Cooperation in Riga, as well as creating the Virtual Information Platform [www.ceec-china-logistics.org](http://www.ceec-china-logistics.org), and support the Secretariat in playing a leading role in coordinating and facilitating the cooperation in the field of logistics.

(6) The Participants support deepening cooperation in scheduled air transport and general aviation, between China and CEECs and appreciate the launch of direct flights between Shanghai, Chengdu and Prague, as well as between Beijing and Warsaw. The Participants welcome airline companies of both sides in opening new routes and flights between China and CEECs. The possibility of holding a CEEC-China Civil Aviation Forum in the Czech Republic will be discussed.

(7) The Participants welcome the modernization of Bar–Belgrade track section and further development of high-speed railway network under the

framework of 16+1 Cooperation, with a view to improving the connection of Port of Bar to the modern railway network in Central and Eastern Europe.

(8) The 2nd China-CEEC Transport Ministers' Meeting will be held in CEEC, in 2017.

(9) China, Hungary, Serbia and Macedonia will organize the 3rd working group meeting in Serbia 2017 under the Framework Agreement on Cooperation in Facilitating Customs Clearance among the Chinese, Hungarian, Serbian and Macedonian Customs. The Participants commend Poland for participating in the third phase of the China-EU Smart and Secure Trade Lanes Pilot Project. More eligible CEECs are encouraged to take part in the SSTL pilot project and other cooperation projects under the China-EU Strategic Framework for Customs Cooperation, if they fulfill requirements, based on the purpose and principle of mutual exchange of information, mutual recognition of supervision and mutual assistance in law enforcement.

(10) The 6th meeting of the China-Hungary-Serbia joint working group on transport infrastructure cooperation will be held in Hungary in May 2017.

## **6. Cooperation in industry, energy, science and technology**

(1) The Participants welcome and support Port Area Cooperation between China and CEECs bordering the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Sea, and establishment of China-CEEC Secretariat for Maritime Issues in Poland, to promote cooperation among the major ports of the coastal areas, support building coastal industrial clusters, and encourage cooperation in infrastructure development, including railways, roads, waterways and logistics hubs.

(2) The Participants support Romania's imminent establishment of a China-CEEC Center for Dialogue and Cooperation on Energy Projects and welcome the participation of relevant Chinese and CEEC institutions, businesses and organizations as well as other partners, on a voluntary basis, and support the Center in facilitating the cooperation in the field of energy. The first edition of the 16+1 Energy Fair and Expo will be held in Bucharest in the first quarter of 2017.

(3) The 2nd China-CEEC Conference on Innovation Cooperation will be held in CEEC in 2017.

(4) The Participants support development of China-CEEC Technology Transfer Center established in Bratislava, Slovakia.

(5) The Participants support the environmental protection authorities of China and CEECs in enhancing exchanges under the framework of 16+1 Cooperation and exploration of cooperation with a third party.

## **7. Financial cooperation**

(1) CEECs financial institutions and businesses are invited to contribute on voluntary basis to the investment fund launched by Sino-CEE Finance Holding Company Ltd., to jointly promote China-CEEC cooperation on connectivity and relevant industries.

(2) The Participants encourage Chinese banks to develop business in the CEECs and vice versa. The Participants support more regular exchanges and cooperation among financial regulatory and supervisory authorities.

(3) The Participants encourage Chinese financial institutions, including the Silk Road Fund, in actively expanding investment and cooperation in CEECs, and providing financing support for China-CEEC cooperation.

(4) The Participants support China and CEECs in enhancing practical cooperation under the framework of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, including third party cooperation with other countries and regions.

(5) The China-CEEC Investment Cooperation Fund (stage two) will be launched and put into operation in 2017.

(6) The Participants are willing to explore the possibility of establishing a China-CEEC Inter-Bank Association, and welcome participation of CEEC institutions on a voluntary basis.

## **8. Agricultural and forestry cooperation**

(1) The 12th China-CEEC Agrotrade and Economic Cooperation Forum and the 5th Meeting of the Consultative Board of the Association for the Promotion of Agricultural Cooperation between China and CEECs will be held in Slovenia in 2017 in order to further promote China-CEEC agrotrade and economic cooperation.

(2) China welcomes CEEC delegations' participation at the 15th China International Agricultural Trade Fair to be held in China in the second half of 2017.

(3) China will continue to provide free-of-charge exhibition space for top-quality CEEC wines and other kinds of alcohol at the National

Agriculture Exhibition Center. China-CEEC Agricultural Products and Wine Fair will be held during the Mostar International Trade Fair in Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2017.

(4) Recognizing that agricultural investment and cooperation will help bring common development in agriculture for China and every CEEC by giving full play to their complementary advantages, the Participants support more agrotrade promotion activities between China and CEECs, such as international agricultural expos, and more exchanges of information regarding agrotrade market access.

(5) The participants encourage China and CEECs to work towards signing of the relevant protocols on quarantine of animal and animal-originated products and on quarantine of plants and plant-originated products to be exported to China.

(6) The Participants commend Slovenia in leading the efforts to establish a China-CEEC coordination mechanism on forestry cooperation, support the implementation of the Action Plan for China-CEEC Coordination Mechanism on Forestry Cooperation, and intensified cooperation in the field of sustainable forest, multi-functional management, forestry research and education, wood processing and forestry products trade between China and CEECs. The Participants support the convening of the China-CEEC High-level Meeting on Cooperation in Forestry on a regular basis.

(7) The Participants welcome China and CEECs in signing relevant agreements on strengthening cooperation in water resources management and agricultural irrigation, and deepening bilateral and multilateral exchanges and cooperation in water-related fields.

## **9. People-to-people contacts**

(1) Designate 2017 as Year of China-CEEC Media Cooperation. Under this framework, strengthen media exchanges, hold a forum on media cooperation, organize mutual visits by Chinese and CEEC journalists, encourage media from China and CEECs to film promotional videos, documentaries, and other multi-media products in each other's country, and explore the possibility of co-production.

(2) The Secretariat will continue to invite senior CEEC officials for a trip to China in 2017.

(3) The 5th China-CEEC Education Policy Dialogue and the 4th meeting of China-CEEC Higher Education Institutes Consortium will be held in CEECs in 2017.

- (4) The 3rd China-CEEC Culture Cooperation Forum will be held in China in 2017.
- (5) The China-CEEC Culture Season will be held in China in 2017.
- (6) The 2nd China-CEEC Cultural and Creative Industries Forum will be held in China in 2017.
- (7) The 3rd China-CEEC Summer Dance Camp will be held in China in 2017.
- (8) The Participants support China and CEEC in carrying out joint projects on translation and publication of each other's literary works.
- (9) The Participants encourage and support China and CEEC in carrying out cooperation on projects in areas such as historical and cultural heritage protection and repair, joint archaeological activities, exhibition exchanges, and personnel training.
- (10) The 4th China-CEEC High-Level Symposium of Think Tanks will be held in China in 2017.
- (11) The Forum on Cultural Heritage will be held in Serbia in 2017.
- (12) The Participants recognize the important significance of China and CEEC's cooperation in tourism and support further transnational cooperation through various means such as exchange of tourism experiences, promotion of mutual tourist visits and development of regional tourism products. Support China and CEECs in taking more measures to facilitate mobility of people between China and CEECs.
- (13) The 4th China-CEEC High-Level Conference on Tourism Cooperation will be held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2017.
- (14) The Participants support strengthened youth exchanges, and mutual visits of youth. The 3rd China-CEEC Young Political Leaders' Forum will be held in Romania in 2017.
- (15) The 2nd China-CEEC Literature Forum will be held in 2017.
- (16) The Participants encourage China and CEECs in mutually establishing culture centers.



(17) The Participants will explore the possibility of establishing a China-CEEC cultural cooperation coordination center in the Republic of Macedonia.

(18) The Participants support enhancing sports exchanges, and exploring new possibilities of cooperation.

(19) The All-China Youth Federation will invite young people from CEECs to participate in the Bridge of Future youth campus and workshop.

(20) The Participants welcome the organization of Happy Spring Festival events in CEECs.

## **10. Health Cooperation**

(1) The Participants support activities and projects to be held in multiple forms under the framework of the China-CEEC Association on the Promotion of Health Cooperation, and the strengthening of direct cooperation between medical institutions of China and CEECs.

(2) The Participants continue to support the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Lithuania and other CEECs in their exploration in the field of traditional Chinese medicine, and China will provide necessary technical assistance.

(3) Taking into account the healthcare system diversity, national specificities and legal framework, the Participants support cooperation between CEECs and China in the field of health industry, and welcome medical and health enterprises from both sides in carrying out direct cooperation.

(4) The 3rd China-CEEC Health Ministers' Forum will be held in Hungary in 2017.

## **11. Local Cooperation**

(1) The 3rd working meeting of the China-CEEC Association of Provincial Governors will be held in Bulgaria in 2017.

(2) The 4th China-CEEC Local Leaders' Meeting will be held in Bulgaria in 2018.

(3) The Participants encourage and support exchanges and cooperation between mayors of Chinese and CEEC capital cities.



(4) The Participants encourage China-CEEC cooperation at the local level and support the twinning of provinces, regions and municipalities.

## **Annex**

### **Implementation of the Measures of the Suzhou Guidelines for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries**

1. In January 2016, the "Treasures of Romania" Exhibition was held at the National Museum of China in Beijing, China.
2. In February 2016, the 1st Quarterly Meeting of 2016 between the Secretariat for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries and CEEC embassies in China was held in Beijing, China.
3. In February 2016, the Press Conference for the 2016 year of China-CEEC people-to-people and cultural exchanges was held in Beijing, China.
4. In February 2016, the 2nd meeting of the China-CEEC Association on Promoting Agricultural Cooperation was held in Sofia, Bulgaria.
5. From February to March 2016, the "Happy Spring Festival" activities were held in the Estonian capital of Tallinn, the Croatian capital of Zagreb and the Czech capital of Prague.
6. In March 2016, the eRegions on the New eAmber and New eSilk Roads Think Tank Meeting was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia.
7. In March 2016, the regional center of the China National Tourism Administration was launched in Budapest, Hungary.
8. In April 2016, the 2nd Quarterly Meeting of 2016 between the Secretariat for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries and CEEC embassies in China was held in Beijing, China.
9. In May 2016, Sarajevo Business Forum 16+1 was held in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
10. In May 2016, the Conference of the Presidents of the Supreme Courts of China and CEECs was held in Suzhou, China.
11. In May 2016, the China-CEEC forum on cooperation in the field of art was held in Beijing, China.

12. In May 2016, the 1st China-CEEC Transport Ministers' Meeting was held in Riga, Latvia. The China-CEEC secretariat on logistics cooperation was established, and the Riga Declaration on Closer Cooperation in Logistics between CEECs and China was adopted.
13. In May 2016, officials from tourism authorities of CEECs attended the 1st World Conference on Tourism for Development in Beijing, China.
14. In May 2016, the 1st China-CEEC High-Level Meeting on Cooperation in Forestry and China-CEEC Forestry Business Forum were held in Ljubljana, Slovenia.
15. In May 2016, the 1st China-CEEC Literature Forum was held in Budapest, Hungary.
16. In May 2016, a delegation of CEEC journalists visited Guangdong Province, Jiangxi Province and Beijing, China.
17. In June 2016, the 2nd China-CEEC Ministerial Conference on Promoting Trade and Economic Cooperation, the China-CEEC Investment and Trade Expo and the 3rd Meeting of the China-CEEC Investment Promotion Agencies Contact Mechanism were held in Ningbo, China.
18. In June 2016, the 3rd China-CEEC Local Leaders' Meeting and the 2nd Working Meeting of the China-CEEC Association of Provincial Governors were held in Tangshan, China.
19. In June 2016, the 2nd China-CEEC Health Ministers' Forum was held in Suzhou, China.
20. In June 2016, the 7th China-CEEC National Coordinators' Meeting was held in Haikou, China.
21. In June 2016, the 1st China-CEEC Cultural and Creative Industries Forum was held in Belgrade, Serbia.
22. In June 2016, Chinese Performing Arts delegation paid the fourth visit to Slovenia, the Slovak Republic and Croatia to purchase programs.
23. In June 2016, famous painters from CEECs visited Guizhou Province, China.
24. From July to August 2016, the 2nd China-CEEC Summer Dance Camp was held in China.

25. In August 2016, a delegation of senior CEEC officials visited Fujian and Ningxia, China.

26. In August 2016, the Beijing International Book Fair with CEECs being the main guests of honor was held in Beijing, China.

27. In September 2016, the 5th meeting of the China-Hungary-Serbia joint working group on transport infrastructure cooperation was held in Belgrade, Serbia.

28. The China-CEEC Forum of Capital City Mayors was held in Sofia, Bulgaria in September 2016.

29. The 3rd Quarterly Meeting of 2016 between the Secretariat for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries and CEEC embassies in China was held in Beijing, China in October 2016.

30. The 4th China-CEEC Education Policy Dialogue and the 3rd meeting of China-CEEC Higher Education Institutes Consortium was held in China in October 2016.

31. In October 2016, Poland and Bulgaria participated in the China International Small and Medium Enterprises Fair held in Guangzhou, China.

32. Artistic directors of international opera festivals from CEECs visited China in October 2016.

33. The 1st China-CEEC Experts' Forum on Intangible Cultural Heritage was held in Krakow, Poland in October 2016.

34. China attended the Brno International Engineering Fair in the Czech Republic in October 2016 as a partner country.

35. In October 2016, the China-CEE Countries Political Parties Dialogue was held in Budapest, Hungary.

36. In October 2016, the 8th China-CEEC National Coordinators' Meeting was held in Riga, Latvia.

37. In October 2016, the China-CEEC Dance Culture Union was established in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, as part of the Forum for cooperation in the field of art.

38. In November 2016, the side events of the 5th CEEC-China Summit – the 6th 16+1 Business Forum, the International Forum of China and Central and Eastern European Countries and the Seminar on Sinology Research and

Chinese Teaching in Central and Eastern European Countries – were held in Riga, Latvia.

39. The China Investment Forum will be held in Prague in November 2016.

40. The 11th China-CEEC Agrotrade and Economic Cooperation Forum will be held in Kunming, China in November 2016.

41. The 3rd meeting of the China-CEEC Association on Promoting Agricultural Cooperation will be held in Kunming, China in November 2016.

42. The China-CEEC Conferences on Innovation Cooperation will be held in Jiangsu, Nanjing, China in November 2016. The technology transfer virtual center of China and CEECs will be formally established.

43. The China International Tourism Fair will be held in Shanghai, China in November 2016.

44. The Health Qigong Team will visit Slovenia and Serbia to hold promotional activities and training sessions in November 2016.

45. The China-CEEC High-Level Conference on Tourism Cooperation will be held in Croatia.

46. The 4th Quarterly Meeting of 2016 between the Secretariat for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries and CEEC embassies in China and the closing event of the Year of China-CEEC people-to-people and cultural exchanges be held in China in December 2016.