

► BRI to continue benefiting North African region: experts

China, Algeria to jointly promote 'global governance'

By Yang Sheng

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune arrived in Beijing on Monday morning, starting his five-day state visit to China. The trip marks the Algerian leader's first visit to China since taking office in 2019.

Chinese experts said the visit will promote bilateral ties to a higher level, and the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) will continue to benefit the North African region with more comprehensive cooperation projects.

China and Algeria have a profound traditional friendship. China is the first non-Arab country to recognize the interim government of Algeria, and Algeria had made outstanding contributions to the restoration of China's lawful seat in the United Nations, according to Chinese Foreign Ministry website.

"Tebboune's visit is of great significance not only for China-Algeria rela-

tions but also for China's overall relationship with the whole Arab world. In recent years, the most eye-catching news about China and Arab countries has normally been related to the Middle East, so Tebboune's visit proves that China has a balanced policy to deal with the whole Arab world," said Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University.

Ma Xiaolin, dean of the Institute for Studies on the Mediterranean Rim at Zhejiang International Studies University, noted that Algeria is a key partner of China in Africa that is jointly building the Belt and Road, and after the first China-Arab Summit in 2022, China would increase investment and input to boost the high-quality BRI construction, so prospects for China-Algeria relations will be bright and full of potential.

Smail Debeche, president of the Algeria-China Friendship Association,

said in an interview with the Xinhua News Agency on Monday that Tebboune "seeks to enhance the existing strategic partnership in various key sectors, including agriculture, food security, technology, renewable energy, infrastructure development such as roads and ports, exploration of raw materials, higher education and scientific research."

"Algeria shows great interest in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the BRICS cooperation mechanism, so in the fields of promoting global governance and building a fairer and more reasonable world order, Arab countries like Algeria would be China's key partners," Liu said.

Wang Yiwei, an international relations professor at the Renmin University of China, said that as many cooperation projects under the framework of BRI are at the strategic level, stable bilateral ties are crucial to ensuring the sustainability of the cooperation.

NZ PM's speech outlines China policy, stresses on stable ties

By Liu Xin

New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins' latest remarks on China's Taiwan and South China Sea are clichés echoing the US' strategy toward China, but the essence of his speech is to stress the significance of stabilizing relations with China, which has been deliberately downplayed by some Western media, Chinese analysts said.

In a speech to the China Business Summit on Monday, Hipkins expounded New Zealand's connections with China. He noted that "It's normal for states to pursue their interests and to use all the tools at their disposal to exert influence regionally and internationally... but China's rise and how it seeks to exert that influence is also a major driver of the increasing strategic competition, particularly in our wider home region, the Indo-Pacific," read a transcript the New Zealand government released.

Hipkins' speech, which outlined the New Zealand leader's China policy after his first visit to China in June that helped expand cooperation in economy, trade, education, technology, tourism and other fields, was overlooked by some Western media.

Hipkins' remarks on the Taiwan question and South China Sea were a repeat clichés echoing the US' strategy toward China. However, compared to the rhetoric used by other US Western allies, the New Zealand leader's words were "much more toned down," and the essence of Hipkins' speech is stabilizing China-New Zealand relations, Chen Hong, director of New Zealand Studies Centre in East China Normal University, told the Global Times on Monday.

During the Monday speech, Hipkins took more time to talk about the economic and people-to-people connections between China and New Zealand, and the importance of continuing to engage with China, which has been deliberately underplayed by these Western media, said analysts.

While New Zealand is pursuing stable relations with China, analysts also warned that it should also remain vigilant for some hawkish politicians pushing for a tougher China stance as well as pressure from Australia and the US to sow discord and disturb bilateral relations.

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Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Maanasseh Sogavare (left) and Secretary to the Prime Minister Jimmie Rodgers speak at a press conference in Honiara on July 17, 2023, after returning home from a seven-day trip to China. Sogavare said that while in China, he signed nine agreements and memorandums, including a police cooperation plan. He said the plan "enhances cooperation on law enforcement and security matters with a commitment by China to provide support as needed" to strengthen the capacity of police law enforcement in the Pacific Island country.

Photo: AFP

Kishida's approval rate nears lowest level over nuke-contaminated wastewater dumping woes

By Xu Keyue

Approval rate for Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's cabinet continued to fall and neared the lowest level in his tenure amid mounting concerns over Japanese government's plan to dump the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated wastewater into the sea, according to the latest poll conducted by Japanese media outlet Kyodo News.

No matter how Japanese

government and TEPCO – the operator of the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant – repeated their narrative of the "safety" of the so-called ALPS-treated water, the poll results once again revealed that the explanations by Tokyo and TEPCO over the issue failed to convince the public, Chinese observers said.

According to a Kyodo News poll Sunday, as the Japanese government grapples with the trouble-plagued national iden-

tification card system and concerns over Fukushima nuclear disaster cleanup efforts, the approval rating for Kishida's cabinet continued to slide to 34.3 percent, nearing the lowest level in his tenure.

The poll showed 80.3 percent of respondents said they felt the explanation provided by the government on the issue was insufficient.

So far, the Japanese government has only committed to starting the dumping some

time "around the summer," but Kyodo noted that August could be a possible option, considering Kishida's busy diplomatic schedule and possible cabinet reshuffle in September.

Environmental experts stressed that Japan cannot call white black, as the dumping plan is a political decision that disregards human rights and interests as well as the marine environment.

On Monday, a large-scale protest against the dumping

plan organized by a Japanese environmental NGO and city assembly kicked off in Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture. The parade gathered around 200 to 300 residents across the country including representatives of fisheries associations, experts on fish immunology and genetics and breeding, according to a participant of the protest.

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