

► Frequency of his visits noted by Spanish media

# Spanish PM Sanchez starts China visit with priorities to deepen co-op

By Li Yawei

On a balmy spring weekend, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, currently on his fourth visit to China within four years, was spotted visiting Beijing's Drum Tower, the Summer Palace and Shichahai lake. Experts said the visit underscores the continuity and stability of high-level exchanges between China and Spain, and expressed optimism that Sanchez's trip is expected to usher in a new chapter of bilateral relations.

In a video released by Beijing Radio and Television Station (BRTV) filmed by tourists, Sanchez appeared smiling among the crowds at the Summer Palace on Sunday, sporting a blue jacket and jeans. The report also said that he also visited the Drum Tower the previous day.

Earlier on Saturday, Sanchez and his wife arrived in Beijing, kicking off a five-day official visit to China, according to a video released by China News Service on its official WeChat channel.

Spanish daily El Mundo compared

Sanchez's visit with the frequency of trips to China made by other European leaders, saying, "No other European leader has visited this Asian giant as many times during the same period," according to a report on Sunday.

Cui Hongjian, a professor at the Academy of Regional and Global Governance at Beijing Foreign Studies University, told the Global Times that a striking characteristic of China-Spain relations in recent years has been their steadiness.

Reuters reported that Sanchez is making his fourth trip "as Madrid seeks to build on its commercial ties with the world's second-largest economy."

Spanish news outlet La Vanguardia reported that Spain has also identified the promotion of deeper technological and innovation cooperation as a top priority for this trip. Spanish newspaper El Periodico reported that prominent among the Spanish business delegation are representatives from the technology, energy, telecommunications and automotive sectors.

According to Spanish media outlets,

Sanchez will formally kick off his official schedule on Monday with visits to Tsinghua University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the headquarters of Xiaomi. During his stay in China, he will also engage with Chinese investors to advance their business presence in Spain, and hold talks with representatives from a range of innovative enterprises as well as officials of the EU-China Chamber of Commerce.

Zhao Junjie, a senior research fellow at the Institute of European Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times on Sunday that the special emphasis on examining China's technological innovation during the itinerary reflects Sanchez's pragmatic approach, as well as his aspiration for China-Spain relations to reap even more new fruits. China and Spain enjoy vast prospects in digital economy sectors such as artificial intelligence, big data and 5G technology, he added.

The green economy is a sphere in which both sides can engage in in-depth exchanges in the future, Zhao said.

## Japan's LDP adopts 2026 policies, pushing constitutional revision amid home opposition

By Feng Fan and Sun Langchen

Expressing her intention on constitutional revision, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi claimed on Sunday that "Voluntary constitutional revision crafted by the Japanese people is a core party principle. The time has come," the Asahi Shimbun reported on Sunday. A Chinese expert said the move reflects an attempt by Takaichi and Japanese right-wing forces to set a clearer timetable for amending the pacifist Constitution and loosening legal constraints on the Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF).

Amid domestic opposition, Japan's ruling party, the LDP on Sunday adopted its 2026 policies for its political and campaign activities, including a goal to submit a draft constitutional amendment to the Diet, Japan's parliament.

Takaichi also claimed that discussions on constitutional revision in the Diet should be accelerated, per Asahi Shimbun.

Takaichi has repeatedly expressed her intention for pushing constitutional revision and has voiced expectations for progress in parliamentary debates. However, her reference to a specific timeline for initiating the amendment process is considered unusual, Tokyo Shimbun reported.

Xiang Haoyu, a distinguished research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies, warned that the ultimate goal behind such moves is to amend Japan's pacifist Constitution, particularly Article 9, which imposes constraints on the SDF.

"Such actions carry clear risks, especially considering the potential impact of the SDF on Japan's own security posture and on regional security dynamics beyond Japan," Xiang told the Global Times on Sunday, citing previous extreme incidents such as a Japan Ground SDF member broke into the Chinese Embassy in Japan, threatening to kill diplomatic personnel on March 24.

Xiang added that attempts to revise the pacifist Constitution are not merely a domestic issue for Japan, but also involve questions of historical recognition. "Such backtracking would raise concerns among neighboring countries over possible spillover effects on regional security," Xiang noted.

## ► Voting begins

**Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban addresses the media outside a polling station after voting in Budapest, Hungary, Sunday, April 12, 2026. Hungary's parliamentary elections kicked off at 6 am local time on Sunday, with about 8.1 million eligible voters.**

Photo: VCG



## Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, UAE visits China; trip expected to elevate bilateral ties: expert

By Li Yu

Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), arrived in Beijing on Sunday for a visit to China, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

At the invitation of Premier of the State Council Li Qiang, HH Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, UAE, is set to visit China from

April 12 to 14, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson announced on Sunday.

According to an official release from the Abu Dhabi media office, responsible for communication of the Abu Dhabi Government, on Saturday, the Crown Prince's visit is a part of the two countries' shared commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation serving mutual interests, for the benefit of both nations and their peoples.

Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Sunday that the visit by the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, UAE, is expected to help elevate both China-UAE relations and broader China-Arab cooperation to a new level, while could also serve as preparation for the second China-Arab States Summit.

According to a release from the Chinese Foreign Ministry

in December 2025, China will host the second China-Arab States Summit to complete negotiations on a China-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) Free Trade Agreement, and move toward the building of a China-Arab community with a shared future.

He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials, business leaders and prominent economic partners from the UAE, read the release.

China-UAE economic and trade cooperation is broad and comprehensive, covering both traditional sectors such as energy and emerging areas including high-tech industries, finance and artificial intelligence, said Liu, adding that the UAE could serve as a bridge for exploring cooperation between China and the GCC countries.

