



High-quality development an anchor of stability

The West feels that it has to blacken the image of China. In reality, there is zero chance that China can be defeated by this "China collapse" theory **7**

US' selfish move to harm EU's tech development

US move to force allies to crack down on China's new-energy products will affect their tech development, while disrupting global supply chains: experts **10**

Who is destroyer of South China Sea ecosystem, and why?

The Philippines has accused China of destroying marine environment of the S.China Sea. But GT's field trip in Philippines revealed the opposite. China has set a model for global marine ecological preservation **8-9**

► Tourism summit convenes for first time in 5 yrs, to boost exchanges

China welcomes US tourists to experience the real China: Xi

By Xu Liulu in Xi'an, and Wang Cong and Ma Tong in Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday extended a warm welcome to US tourists to travel to China, meet Chinese friends, experience Chinese culture, visit beautiful landscapes and experience the real China, in a congratulatory message to the 14th China-US Tourism Leadership Summit

held in Xi'an, Northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

The summit, a crucial platform for officials and industry players from both countries to promote cooperation in the tourism sector, convened for the first time since 2019, is adding to the increased interactions between the world's two biggest economies as they seek to stabilize bilateral ties. The event is set to boost bilateral tourism cooperation and peo-

ple-to-people exchanges, officials and industry players said.

While increased dialogues and exchanges between the two countries send a positive signal of stabilizing ties, Washington's hostile attitude toward China and visa restrictions still pose a major hurdle for cooperation, Chinese experts said, urging the US to abandon its attempt to contain China's development and return to a path of win-win cooperation.

Under the theme of "Expanding China-US Travel and Tourism and People-to-people Exchanges," the summit officially kicked off in Xi'an on Wednesday, with about 400 representatives from the two countries participating. Highlighting the increased enthusiasm among Chinese and US tourism industry players to boost cooperation, the number of participants this year

► **2** Increased

Three European countries to recognize Palestinian state

By Fan Anqi

In a historic move expected to quell the flames of war in the Middle East, Ireland, Norway and Spain announced the recognition of a Palestinian state on Wednesday. The move is hailed by Chinese experts as representing an overdue correction of "a previously skewed balance," while bringing the Palestinian question, which had intentionally been obscured before, back to the center stage.

Experts believe the decision may trigger a global wave of recognition for the state of Palestine, not only in support of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people but it will also exert significant international pressure on Israel's aggressive practices.

However, they noted that there is still a long way to go for the actual establishment of a Palestinian state, and the root of the problem preventing the realization of the two-State solution lies in the bias and indulgence of the US.

Ireland, Norway, and Spain have all confirmed that the decision will take effect from May 28, the BBC reported.

"In the midst of a war, with tens of thousands killed and injured, we must keep alive the only alternative that offers a political solution for Israelis and Palestinians alike: Two states, living side by side, in peace and security," said Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store, per a government press release on Wednesday.

The statement adds, "There will be no peace in the Middle East without a two-State solution. There can be no two-State solution without a Pal-

► **2** Move

第14届中美旅游高层对话 The 14th China - U.S. Tourism Leadership Summit

陕西·西安

Xi'an, Shaanxi

2024.5.22



Swearing in



To Lam (left, onstage) attends his swearing-in ceremony as Vietnam's President during the National Assembly's summer session in Hanoi on May 22, 2024. Vietnam's parliament voted in public security minister To Lam as the country's new president on the day after his predecessor resigned. Photo: VCG

Increased dialogues inject positivity, but US must stop obstruction: expert

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is triple that of the last summit in 2019, according to official data.

Warm welcome

In the message to the summit, Xi stressed that tourism is an important bridge for exchanges and mutual understanding between the people of China and the US, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

"We warmly welcome American tourists to travel to China, meet Chinese friends, experience Chinese culture, visit beautiful landscapes and experience the real China," Xi said.

US President Joe Biden also sent a letter to the summit, saying that "this annual event plays a critical role in harnessing power of travel and tourism to strengthen important ties between our peoples." He also said that "the US welcomes the people of China to discover our cities, learn about our history and engage with our people in destinations across the country."

Enthusiasm for boosting cultural and people-to-people exchanges is on vivid display at the summit in Xi'an. Students from Brigham Young University sang the Chinese song "Jasmine," while students from Shaanxi performed the song "Moon River" – both songs are familiar to the people of the two countries.

"Chinese kids can sing American songs so well and it is done in such a fine style," Rowena E Minott, CEO of Unlimited Connections, a Florida-based travel agency, told the Global Times on the sidelines of the summit

on Wednesday, adding that she was impressed about Chinese city Xi'an and its rich culture like the world-known terracotta warriors.

"I could not tell you how good it is to be back," Todd Davidson, board chair of Brand USA, a co-organizer of the summit, said in a speech on Wednesday. "The summit is especially full of hope and optimism for me."

The US is expecting rapid increases in Chinese visitor numbers to the US, a major source of tourism revenue for the country. "According to our latest forecast, we anticipate that Chinese visitation to the US will increase 150 percent from 2023 to 2025. That's 4.7 times faster than the rise in overall overseas visitations to the US during this time," Grant Harris, assistant secretary for industry and analysis of the US Department of Commerce, said at the summit.

With joint efforts to further boost tourism cooperation, industry players also expect a rise in trips.

On Chinese booking platform Tongcheng Travel, Chinese tourist bookings to the US surged by 200 percent in the first five months of 2024, with the number jumping 247 percent since the start of May. Demand is expected to further rise with further resumption of China-US flight routes and opening of new routes, the company said.

While Chinese and US industry players have high hopes for growth in tourism cooperation, Chinese officials and experts urged Washington to remove obstacles to travel, including visa restrictions on Chinese nationals traveling to the US.

In April, Chinese Ambassador to the US Xie Feng called on the US to remove obstacles hindering bilateral cultural exchanges, noting that in the past three years, nearly 300 Chinese citizens have been unjustly harassed and deported by the US, more than 70 of whom were students carrying legal and valid documents.

Facilitating tourism and cultural exchanges between the two nations results in win-win cooperation with high reciprocity, which will not only foster economic gains for both sides, but also help dispel misunderstandings amid grave global challenges, said Xin Qiang, a deputy director of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University.

Xin added that if the US further resumes flights, relaxes visa policies and adopts a positive attitude, it would not only help boost tourism but also set a positive example for other countries to follow.

On its part, China has recently taken effective steps to simplify visa applications for foreigners traveling to China and promote the facilitation of payments for foreigners, Zhang Zheng, deputy minister of the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism, said at the summit.

Zhou Mi, a senior research fellow at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said that while the US continues to promote a so-called decoupling from China in certain high-tech industries, there is still great willingness among the people in both countries and massive potential for cooperation in areas such as tourism.

'Move represents right direction, two-State solution only way out of conflict'

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estinian state."

In Madrid, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez stressed that the recognition "is not against anyone, but in favor of peace and coexistence." While his Irish counterpart Simon Harris said that the decision "is taken to help create a peaceful future" for both the Israeli and Palestinian people.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin, commenting on the latest development, said at Wednesday's press briefing that China always firmly supports the just cause of the Palestinian people in restoring their legitimate national rights, supports the two-State solution and is one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine. China's stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is consistent.

"We believe the immediate priority is to implement UNSC Resolution 2728, realize cease-fire at once, end the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Gaza and return to the right track of seeking a political settlement of the Palestinian question on the basis of the two-State solution as soon as possible," Wang said.

China will continue to work with the international community to play a constructive role for ending the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as early as possible and promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question, the spokesperson said.

"The three countries' announcement reflects a growing dissatisfaction and concern in the international community regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly on the Israeli side, as its assault has led to a severe humanitarian crisis, intensifying worries about the region's future," Zhu Yongbiao, director of School of Politics and International Relations of Lanzhou University, told the Global Times on Wednesday.

"Against this background, the decision in fact signifies a process of correction from the previously skewed balance, with more public opinion and practical support now contributing to rectifying the past practices," Zhu said.

Liu Zhongmin, a professor with the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, believes that as the horrors and sorrows in Gaza have brought the previously marginalized Palestinian question back to the center of Middle Eastern affairs, more countries are pushing the implementation of the two-State solution, not only to safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, but also to provide a long-term peace and security solution for Israel as well.

Chinese observers believe the decision by these three European countries will likely trigger a series of chain reactions around the globe. "Ireland, Norway and Spain have a weighty role especially in matters concerning human rights on the global stage," Zhu noted. So not only more EU members will follow suit, countries from other regions may also join in.

It could potentially spark a wave of recognition for the Palestinian statehood, with more countries supporting Palestine's formal membership in the UN, Zhu told the Global Times on Wednesday.

According to the AP, several EU countries have in the past weeks indicated that they plan to make the recognition, arguing a two-State solution is essential for lasting peace in the region. The decision could also spur further steps at the UN level, deepening Israel's isolation.

