



## China's top court drafts AI dispute guidelines

China's Supreme People's Court is accelerating a judicial guideline to better handle AI-related disputes and strengthen intellectual property protection in high-tech sectors **4**

## China is indispensable for green transition

China pioneered renewable energies because it, at a very early stage, saw the benefits of energy independence, says a UN director **6**

## 'Spring Reading' salon echoes call for a book-loving society

On the commencement of China's inaugural national reading week, the Global Times hosted the Spring Reading Literature Salon in Beijing, aiming to contribute to the building of a book-loving society **14-15**

www.globaltimes.cn VOLUME 18 • NO. 4891 • TUESDAY APRIL 21, 2026 • PRICE 2 YUAN 人民日报社主管 《环球时报》社有限公司主办、出版

# ► Normal passage through Strait of Hormuz should be maintained: Chinese leader Xi holds phone talks with Saudi crown prince

By Wang Qi and Li Yu

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday held a phone conversation with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, with the two leaders talking over the Middle East situation and bilateral ties, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

The latest engagement between China and Middle East countries at the top level came after the Chinese leader's meeting with Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in Beijing on April 14. During the meeting, Xi put forward a four-point proposal on promoting peace and stability in the Middle East.

Some Western media outlets, such as

Reuters, noticed that the phone conversation was held amid mounting worries over the survival of the ceasefire between Washington and Tehran after the US seizure of an Iranian vessel, saying Beijing "steps up efforts to end the Iran war."

### Calls for ceasefire

On the current situation in the Middle East and the Gulf region, Xi stressed that China calls for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire and cessation of hostilities, supports all efforts conducive to restoring peace, and remains committed to resolving disputes through political and diplomatic means, according to Xinhua.

The Chinese leader said that the normal passage through the Strait of Hormuz serves the common interests of

regional countries and the international community, adding that China supports regional countries in building a common home marked by good-neighborliness, development, security and cooperation, mastering their own future and destiny, and promoting long-term peace and stability in the region.

According to a readout released by the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman noted that Saudi Arabia is committed to resolving disputes and differences through dialogue and hopes to prevent further escalation.

He said that China is a responsible major country that consistently upholds a just position and supports Middle Eastern countries in pursuing good-neighborliness, dialogue and cooperation.

Saudi Arabia is ready to strengthen communication and coordination with China to maintain the ceasefire, prevent the resumption of hostilities, ensure the safety and freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, and work together to find a pathway to lasting peace and stability in the region, Mohammed said.

"China upholds an objective and fair stance on the Strait of Hormuz issue. It opposes military strikes by the US and Israel against Iran, while stressing the importance of ensuring normal passage of the strait and safeguarding security in the region," said Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University.

"Amid conflict, Saudi Arabia has still, taking into

► 2 Exemplary



Mozambican President Daniel Chapo attends an investment roundtable in Xining, Northwest China's Qinghai Province on April 20, 2026. Photo: CNS Photo

## Foreign leaders explore China in new, diverse ways

By Zhang Yuying and Liu Xin

From learning about the advanced experiences in green mining development in Qinghai and joining villagers in the Anzhao dance, to trying his hand at operating a crane in Central China's Hunan Province, visiting Mozambican President Daniel Chapo's China itinerary moved well beyond the traditional Beijing-Shanghai route, highlighting how recent foreign leaders' visits to China are becoming more diverse, immersive and closely connected to the country's wider development landscape.

Chapo's decision to begin his trip in Central China's Hunan Province and continue it in Northwest China's Qinghai comes amid changes noted by Chinese media and analysts in the way foreign leaders are experiencing China as the country enters a busy diplomatic season with more visiting dignitaries.

Chapo, who is on his first visit to China from April 16 to 22 since he took office, arrived in Beijing on Monday, per Xinhua. This came after his itiner-

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# Exemplary nature of ties lies also in communication, coordination: expert

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account its special relationship with the US, maintained overall rationality and restraint so far. It has also kept communication with China and affirmed China's role, which is of great significance for the prospect of peace," said Zhu Yongbiao, a Middle East affairs expert with Lanzhou University.

In April 2023, Iran and Saudi Arabia announced the resumption of diplomatic relations under the mediation of China.

This followed in 2022, China put forward the Global Security Initiative, taking the security and stability of the Middle East as a priority area for its implementation.

The process of reconciliation between Iran and the Gulf states has been disrupted by US and Israeli strikes on Iran, as well as Iran's retaliatory attacks on US military bases in the Gulf region, including Saudi Arabia, Liu said.

In this context, the Chinese leader's emphasis on good-neighborliness is particularly important for jointly preserving the security momentum since 2023 and preventing the Middle East situation from sliding out of control, he added.

According to Zhu, the core root cause of the Middle East issue lies in US intervention. "The US has consistently attempted to sow discord among relevant countries in the region and intensify strategic mistrust between them. Therefore, breaking free from such external interference is a realistic path toward achieving peace in the region."

Some regional states, including Saudi Arabia, are trapped in an un-

favorable and precarious situation amid the US-Iran confrontation. Liu said, "This also highlights the fact that the traditional model of Middle Eastern countries depending on the US security umbrella is now outdated and no longer suitable."

For countries in the region, it is essential to enhance strategic autonomy and strengthen cooperation among themselves so as to safeguard the stable regional environment necessary for their development, he added.

## Comprehensive and strategic

In terms of bilateral ties, Xi pointed out that China attaches great importance to developing relations with Saudi Arabia and has always adhered to the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, according to Xinhua.

Noting that this year marks the 10th anniversary of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Saudi Arabia, Xi said China is willing to work with Saudi Arabia to seize this opportunity to deepen strategic mutual trust, strengthen practical cooperation, and enhance exchanges at all levels, so as to continuously expand the breadth and depth of bilateral relations and set an example for advancing relations between China and Arab countries.

On his part, Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman noted that the relationship between Saudi Arabia and China is strategic in nature, and growing ties with China is of vital importance to Saudi Arabia, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

Liu pointed out that the exemplary nature of China-Saudi relations lies in the fact that the two sides not only

maintain traditional cooperation in the energy sector, but also engage in communication and policy coordination through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to jointly safeguard stability in the Gulf and the broader Middle East.

Similarly, Zhu said that China-Saudi cooperation is not targeted at any third party and enjoys broad prospects. "Overall, it is truly valuable that China and Saudi Arabia, on the basis of mutual respect and win-win cooperation, can set aside ideological differences and carry out constructive and pioneering cooperation on major issues."

During the meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in December 2025, Mohammed said that the Saudi side is willing to further deepen cooperation with China in areas such as oil and gas, new energy, artificial intelligence and high and new technologies. Wang said that China is ready to be the most trustworthy and reliable partner in Saudi Arabia's national revitalization process.

Looking ahead, China-Saudi cooperation is expected to further deepen in areas such as economic connectivity, the entire upstream and downstream energy industry chain, and defense collaboration, Zhu said.

Under the exemplary and leading role of the China-Saudi Arabia partnership, cooperation between China and the Gulf states is likely to be elevated comprehensively, Zhu said. "In particular, following a series of geopolitical conflicts, China's influence in the Middle East is likely to expand."

According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, China will host the second China-Arab States Summit in 2026.

# Multi-point itineraries help dispel old stereotypes, reveal co-op potential: expert

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ary in Xining of Northwest China's Qinghai Province on Monday, where he toured Western Mining group and Qinghai Copper Co., Ltd. to learn about Qinghai's advanced experience in non-ferrous metal smelting and green mining development, per Qinghai Daily. One day earlier, he visited the Qinghai clean energy and green computing scheduling center.

On the same day, a warm moment unfolded in Banyan village of Huzhu Tu Autonomous County in Qinghai, as Chao smiled and uttered "Thank you" in Putonghua after he exchanged gifts with local villagers, according to another report by the China News Service on Monday.

Yang Baorong, director of African Studies of the Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times that the Qinghai leg of the visit carries broader significance from a development perspective. Qinghai has made notable progress in clean energy, photovoltaics and other emerging sectors through national planning and the western region development strategy. Its experience may offer Mozambique a useful reference for pursuing industrial upgrading and more coordinated growth, Yang said.

## Diverse arrangements

The recent period has witnessed a greater diversity in the itineraries of foreign leaders on visits to China. "Muy bien (very good)," said Sanchez on April 13 as he sat behind the wheel of a new EV model at the headquarters of China's tech giant Xiaomi in Beijing. In February 2026, cameras captured German Chancellor Friedrich Merz clapping and nodding in approval as he watched boxing and martial arts performances by robots when visiting Chinese humanoid robot company Unitree Robotics in Hangzhou.

Departing Beijing on Thursday by high-speed train for South China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee and Vietnamese President To Lam kept the curtains open throughout the journey to observe the scenery, and noticed China's high level of urbanization, per Xinhua.

Uruguayan President Yamandu Orsi, during his February visit to China, toured the Museum of the Communist Party of China upon arriving in Beijing. In a post on Instagram, Orsi described the exhibition as offering a comprehensive journey through the country's historical development, featuring thousands of images, cultural relics and audiovisual materials that combine heritage, technology and historical memory.

The more foreign leaders travel across China and visit a wider range of cities, the better they can understand the country beyond old stereotypes and ideological filters. Such visits help replace one-dimensional impressions with a fuller and more realistic view of China, Song Wei, a professor at the School of International Relations and Diplomacy at Beijing Foreign Studies University. For a long time, many countries understood China and the Global South through narrow Western narratives, often producing biased or incomplete perceptions. As China opens up further and new media offers more direct access, there is a growing need to view China and the Global South in a more objective, multidimensional and balanced way, she said.

## Mass recital



Dressed in traditional costumes, hundreds of students recite Preface to Tengwang Pavilion, a masterpiece of ancient Chinese literature, in front of Tengwang Pavilion, Nanchang, East China's Jiangxi Province, on April 20, 2026. The 5th National Conference on Reading opened in Nanchang on the same day. Photo: CNS Photo

