

► Recent high-level interactions between China and Europe ‘show strong economic ties’

Fico’s China visit to deepen ties, enhance co-op

By Liu Xin

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico will pay an official visit to China from October 31 to November 5, which is set to deepen friendship and trust, amid a series of high-level interactions between China and European countries. Analysts said these underscore differences over Chinese electric vehicles (EVs) are only a small part of the broader China-EU relationship, noting that economic ties between the two sides remain strong.

Through Fico’s visit, China stands ready to work with Slovakia to deepen the traditional friendship and political mutual trust, expand exchanges and

cooperation in various fields, promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries, and elevate bilateral relations to a higher level, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said on Monday.

According to a release from the press office of the Slovak government, Fico is set to depart from Slovakia on Wednesday evening accompanied by a delegation of ministers and business representatives for a six-day visit to China. In addition to Beijing, he will travel to Hefei, East China’s Anhui Province, to visit a company specializing in energy solutions, and to Shanghai to attend the open-

ing ceremony of the China International Import Expo.

Slovakia and China have maintained close and friendly relations. As the head of Slovakia’s left-wing Smer-SD party, Fico administration has maintained a similarly positive approach toward China. The upcoming visit is expected to further deepen cooperation and foster stronger exchanges between the two countries, Jian Junbo, deputy director of the Center for China-Europe Relations at Fudan University’s Institute of International Studies, told the Global Times.

Slovakia was one of the five countries to vote against the EU imposing tariffs on China-produced electric vehicles in Oc-

tober, signaling its support for China, Jian said, noting that the EV sector presents substantial opportunities for collaboration between the two countries. Slovakia and China can strengthen cooperation across the entire EV supply chain and work together to drive the industry’s growth.

Beyond the EV sector, there is further potential for economic and trade cooperation, particularly by encouraging Chinese enterprises to invest in Slovakia, said the expert.

Fico’s visit comes amid a series of recent high-level interactions between China and European countries. Currently, Finnish President Alexander Stubb is on a state visit to China

from October 28 to 31.

Although the European Commission oversees policy-making, individual member states differ significantly in their economic and trade relations with China, resulting in varying interests and stances toward China. The EV issue is only a small part of China-EU relations, and their economic ties remain strong, with opportunities to further enhance investment cooperation, Jian told the Global Times.

However, the current friction over EVs carries symbolic significance and broader implications, and the EU should show sincerity in consulting with China to resolve them, Jian said.

Demonstrating unity



People gather at an event to mark the 101st anniversary of the Turkish Republic Day in Republic Square in Sivas, Turkey, on October 29, 2024. According to Hurriyet Daily News, commemorations are spread across major cities, bringing citizens together for concerts, parades and public gatherings. Photo: VCG

US funding to Philippine coast guard ‘intends to instigate more frictions in South China Sea’

By Yang Sheng

The US’ decision to bolster the Philippines’ coast guard strength with the announcement of a funding of \$8 million following a bilateral military dialogue is intended to encourage Manila to continue its unwise and unnecessary frictions with China in the South China Sea, Chinese experts said on Tuesday, noting that the money is far from enough to equip a modern coast guard fleet, but may be enough to meet the demands of decision-makers of Manila to keep serving US strategy to contain China.

According to a statement released by the US Embassy in the Philippines on Monday, the Philippines and the US held their third Maritime Dialogue in Manila. During the Maritime Dialogue, the US Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement announced \$8 million in new funding for the modernization of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert, said that the US’ funding could instigate more frictions in the South China Sea. “The Philippines has never been able to gain any advantage during the frictions it provoked in recent years [in the South China Sea], mainly because the PCG lacks sufficient capability to provoke and challenge China’s sovereignty in the region again and again, this is why the US needs to fund the PCG.”

However, the PCG will not receive the most advanced vessels and weapons from the US, and a few million dollars are far from enough to equip a modern coast guard fleet that is able to repeatedly provoke frictions with China’s modern and powerful law-enforcement forces in the region, Song said. “Maybe the money is enough to meet the demand of decision-makers of Manila to keep serving US strategy to contain China.”

The feasible way out for the Philippines is to stop provocations and solve the issue with China in diplomatic approach, Song said.

Israel votes to ban UN Palestinian aid agency, drawing outcry

By Liu Caiyu

Israel passed a law on Monday banning the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA from operating in the country, legislation that could impact its work in war-torn Gaza, Reuters reported.

According to the UN website, in the statement of the Secretary-General on Israeli legislation on UNRWA, Antonio Guterres said he is “deeply concerned by the adoption today by the Knesset of Israel of two laws concerning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).”

“The implementation of the laws could have devastating consequences for Palestine refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is

unacceptable. I call on Israel to act consistently with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and its other obligations under international law, including under international humanitarian law and those concerning privileges and immunities of the United Nations,” he said.

“If UNRWA goes away, you will see civilians – including children, including babies – not be able to get access to food and water and medicine that they need to live. We find that unacceptable,” US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller also criticized, the Times of Israel reported.

UNRWA has existed even during peacetime, indicating that the livelihoods of Palestinian people require external support, and now in the cur-

rent situation, its role has become even more crucial, said Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University.

“If Israel proceeds to ban this agency’s operations, it would further exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in Gaza,” Liu said.

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip has surpassed 43,000, the Xinhua News Agency reported on Tuesday citing Gaza-based health authorities.

From an international law perspective, Israel’s disregard for the UN’s authority manifests in concrete actions, such as shredding the charter of the UN and banning UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres from entering the country, Liu said.

