



HK plans to set up anti-Japanese war museum

HK SAR plans to establish a memorial museum themed with the city's history of resistance against Japanese aggression **3**

Xizang's largest lake sees ecologic achievements

Siling Lake has seen notable achievements in environmental protection after decades of efforts from local people and the government **6**

BRI: A project of the century, a path to global well-being

Over the past decade, no other proposal in modern history attracted the participation of large number of countries in a short time as compared to the BRI. Why would the initiative gain such global endorsement? **S1-S8**



第三届“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛

THE THIRD BELT AND ROAD FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Israel-Palestine conflict at critical point amid rising concerns, tensions

By GT staff reporters

With a looming Israeli ground invasion in Gaza and the catastrophic humanitarian crisis that the Palestinian people are facing, the Israel-Gaza conflict is escalating at a crucial point. Israel may not stop its military actions despite mounting pressure from the international community, and the battlefield between Israel and Palestine is now extending to diplomacy and public opinion, which will make the situation more complicated, analysts said, calling for the acceleration of mediation efforts to prevent the situation from getting worse.

The war has continued for 10 days after Hamas' surprise attack against Israel on October 7. Israel's military said Hamas' attack has killed more than 1,300 people, and injured 3,200 others. In Gaza, the Health Ministry said Monday that Israeli airstrikes have killed at least 2,750 people and wounded at least 9,700, according to media reports.

China is providing emergency humanitarian assistance to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Palestinian National Authority respectively, for the urgent needs of food, medical care and housing in Gaza, a spokesperson from China International Development Cooperation Agency said on Monday.

On Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning confirmed that four Chinese citizens died in the conflict, two are missing and six injured. Mao added that the operation of commercial flights between China and Israel continues and advised Chinese nationals to re-

The first press briefing of the Media Center of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation is held at China National Convention Center in Beijing on October 16, 2023. Photo: VCG

► High-profile event expected to produce substantial outcomes

3rd BRF opens as world seeks answers to global challenges

By Yang Sheng and Li Xuanmin

The third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) will be held in Beijing from Tuesday to Wednesday, as the year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Leaders and representatives of countries from around the globe and in-



ternational organizations have arrived in China, and Beijing is fully prepared for this major home diplomatic event.

In recent days, floral decorations, flags and banners bearing slogans for the third BRF can be seen in many parts

of the capital, and some foreign guests who came for the event told the Global

Times that with so much bad news about wars, conflicts and chaos elsewhere, China makes them believe that peace and development are still the mainstream of the world, and they are confident that by working together, members of the

international community will eventually find solutions to the global challenges.

More world leaders arrived in Beijing on Monday. Following Kenyan President William Ruto and Chilean President Gabriel Boric, who arrived on Sunday, foreign leaders including Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Serbian



Forum



Split



Forum to chart future blueprint for BRI

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President Aleksandar Vucic, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, Lao President Thongloun Sisoulith, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea James Marape, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, and President of the Republic of the Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso have arrived in Beijing for the event, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov also arrived on Monday. During his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, Lavrov said Russian President Vladimir Putin is very much looking forward to having a summit with President Xi Jinping in China and participating in the forum, expressing confidence over the success of the event, Xinhua reported.

The first press briefing of the Media Center of the third BRF was held at the China National Convention Center in Beijing on Monday. Officials of the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and other related departments were invited to brief the press and take questions

from journalists of different countries, Xinhua reported.

Chinese analysts said the BRF will be a key and historic event, because the world is in turbulence and needs solutions and answers, and China, just like it has done in the past decade, will continue playing a role to guide and contribute to global development and governance when world peace and stability are facing serious challenges.

The BRI has distinguished China from traditional major powers. The BRI is a rejection of zero-sum confrontation, it is not even a "national strategy" by the traditional definition, nor a policy to serve the interests of only one country, said experts.

"In the past, many people asked what China's rise will bring to this world, and the BRI is an answer from China. The reason why more and more countries have become interested and participated in the initiative, despite some noises and stigmatizations from some Western politicians and media, is simple: It brings benefits to everyone," said Shen Yi, an expert on international relations and professor at Fudan University, on Monday.

Some Chinese netizens also said that the world is thread-worn and China is

sewing it up, which is a vivid and accurate metaphor.

The world today needs new answers, and this is why representatives of over 140 countries and 30-plus international organizations, including state leaders, heads of international organizations, ministerial officials and representatives of the business sector, academia and nongovernmental organizations will participate the forum, said experts.

High expectations

Expectations for the upcoming BRF are high, with national leaders, former foreign officials, foreign scholars and representatives from foreign business communities all looking to hear about the remarkable achievements the BRI has made in the past decade and how the cooperation platform will lead to more opportunities and benefit more people.

"The important thing is the celebration of the 10th anniversary of BRI and a presentation of all the BRI projects which are valued at over \$1 trillion in investment," said Michele Geraci, former undersecretary of state at the Italian Ministry of Economic Development.

"The forum will bring the BRI to a higher level of discussion, and really increase the image of the BRI in the

eyes of many Western countries. And I also expect there will be discussions on the role of BRI in bringing peace to the world," he noted.

Mario Renduli, President of the Chinese Southeast European Business Association, told the Global Times on Monday that the increasing number of participating countries and organizations could "lead to a more diverse range of perspectives, experience and opportunities for collaboration."

Having been to the BRF's first and second editions, Renduli noted that the third edition is "built on the progress and experiences of the previous ones," and is thus widely anticipated to serve a platform for countries to chart the future course of BRI, with a great emphasis on quality and sustainable development.

"I'm very interested in hearing about the latest investment themes at the summit, and analyzing how [my company] can provide support," said Rani Jarkas, chairman of Swiss financial group Cerdus Group. Having traveled to many BRI countries and witnessed firsthand the great work Chinese investors are doing to benefit local communities, Jarkas praised BRI as "an astounding success and a major catalyst for global economic development."

Split within West widens as Israel faces 'mounting pressure' for ground operation: observer

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turn to China as soon as possible.

The crisis has reached a turning point as Israel reportedly plans to conduct ground operations in Gaza. Israel's retaliatory actions have also alarmed the international community and more major countries have increased their efforts at mediation, Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

The conflict is escalating as Israel is currently adopting a more aggressive offensive policy, which is to completely eradicate Hamas and prevent them from remaining in the Gaza Strip, said Sun Degang, director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Fudan University.

Sun noted that Israel will have to bear the burden of international moral responsibility and increase the political cost of its military actions in the Gaza Strip.

According to Liu, growing support for the Palestinians also reveal growing concerns about the dim future of the conflict because it is difficult to predict when Israel will cease.

The military battles would continue, and the situation would be more tense and contentious and greater efforts



Palestinian prime minister Mohammad Shtayyeh calls on "all relevant countries to intervene immediately to open safe corridors for the entry of health and food supplies and the evacuation of the wounded," during a cabinet meeting in Ramallah on October 16, 2023. Photo: VCG

would be made to establish moral superiority, with both Israel and Palestine engaging in diplomatic efforts to gain sympathy or support, said Liu.

The risk for an escalation exists, said Tian Wenlin, a research fellow at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations. Although the main conflict took place in the Gaza Strip, there are some militant anti-Israel groups in the West Bank, and if they de-

cide to launch an attack on Israel together, the fighting will spread. The war fire will also grow if new parties, like Syria and Lebanon, are drawn into the fight, said Tian.

A source with knowledge on escalating Israel-Palestine conflicts told the Global Times on Monday that the goal of Israel's military operations is to eliminate Hamas and to make sure that it will not govern Gaza anymore.

"For now, I don't think the ceasefire or peace talks is on the table until Hamas will be eliminated," the source said.

Split widens

The prolonged conflict between Israel and Palestine has increased divisions both inside and between the US and the EU, analysts said.

In response to the deteriorating situation in the Gaza Strip, citizens of numerous European

nations and in US colleges demonstrated in the streets for the past days. Also, Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, has been under criticism for the past days for an omission of international law when showing support to Israel's "right to defend itself," media reported.

Sun said that Europe is very concerned that the current protests may lead to increasing tensions or even conflicts between the Muslim population and pro-Israel forces within their own countries, as well as polarization within the European public opinion sphere.

"While Europe is politically supportive of Israel, it also fears that if Israel's military actions escalate, it could lead to a spillover effect, meaning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict spreading to Europe," Sun said.

Liu noted that the longer Israel maintains its military operations in the Gaza Strip, the more the EU's position toward Israel would increasingly diverge from US', with more sympathy being shown for Palestine. Moreover, the EU has another serious concern – if two to three million people are displaced in the Gaza Strip, the refugee situation in the EU will become worse.