

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me profound pleasure to address the participants of Nanking Dialogue devoted to the 10-th anniversary of the first Chinese global economic initiative One Belt-One Road, internationally known as the Belt and Road Initiative or BRI.

As a representative of Kazakhstan I am particularly proud that the leader of the People's Republic of China Chairman Xi Zingpin choose the capital of my country – Astana as a place to offer in September 2013 to the world his vision of the most effective way to restore the Great Silk Road. I believe that the Chairman selected Astana after careful consideration, wanting to deliver strategic political and economic message that China views Central Asia and Kazakhstan in particular as key partners in promoting cooperation within the framework of shared destiny, of shared goals, of shared principles, as becoming of good neighbors living side by side through generations and generations.

These goals and principles are embodied in the title of today's Forum "Peace, Inclusiveness and Sustainable Development". Peace because the BRI is based on development of friendly relations and constructive cooperation instead of confrontation and hostile attitude which, unfortunately is increasingly becoming a new norm in the current international relations. Inclusiveness because the BRI has no geographical limitations or ideological undertones. Sustainable development because the BRI is the Chinese contribution to implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as the international solution to the most acute problems of the humanity.

It is quite natural that the whole world was fascinated by the grand vision. Never before such a bold, comprehensive, far sighted and inclusive initiative, devoid of political or any other types of strings attached was presented to all potential partners. What is more – the initiative was not only about transportation and industrial infrastructure projects, its scope from the very beginning was multidimensional, encompassing trade, finance, energy, social advancement and cultural exchanges. The BRI is adapting to new

challenges and is targeting new needs like protection of environment, climate change, digitalization of economy and social sphere, development of human potential.

From the very beginning our Chinese friends were underlining the voluntary character of participation in the BRI. Those countries that were genuinely concerned about their social and economic advancement were making a right decision to avail Beijing's generous offer to cooperate in meeting pressing challenges and find common solutions to problems which otherwise would be taking decades to resolve.

Comparing infrastructure maps of Central Asia of 2013 with infrastructure maps of the region today, 10 years after, will provide strong argument to any sceptics who are still trying to present the BRI as something not worthwhile participating in, as something which did not change the ground reality substantially. Sceptics are either misinformed, or politically biased, because the difference in the number of hard surface highways, railroads, bridges, cargo processing terminals, sea ports, canals, water ways, factories and industrial facilities built throughout 10 years of implementation of the BRI is evident.

As President Kasym Jomart Tokayev has recently stated during the Dushanbe summit of Central Asian states, today we have quite new economic geography. Each BRI participant was free to select suitable ways of involvement in the initiative, financial terms, scope of projects etc, thus proving that the whole conceptual basis of the BRI was benign support of the countries that needed financial and technological assistance, otherwise not available. The BRI is truly about sharing the benefits of your economic success with willing partners. And, of course, the BRI throughout last decade became the key instrument in promoting the soft power of China, as a global actor driving social and economic development of 140 countries participating in the initiative. One more thought to share: nowadays other major powers are advancing their own economic and infrastructural initiatives with global outreach. I suspect that if it were not for the BRI, these

initiatives would not materialize. So the BRI had a collateral benefit of introducing a healthy competition among international initiatives of several countries and regional organizations. As long as it is beneficial to all partners, this phenomena should be encouraged and welcomed. In conclusion I would like to express my confidence that there will be celebrations of the 20-th, 30-th and 50-th anniversaries of the BRI as one of the most successful and far-sighted initiatives transforming the world in a positive way. We in Kazakhstan are ready to further promote partnership with our great neighbor China within the framework of this grand project. We view our participation in the BRI not only as economically beneficial, its role in promoting human, people-to-people exchanges is impossible to underestimate.

Good health, prosperity and wellbeing to the organizers and participants of the Forum. Thank you for your kind attention.