China’s Peaceful Rise
and New Role of Asia

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One of the hot topics of international attention is China’s peaceful rise. Can China rise peacefully? Will it be a blessing or a peril to the rest of Asia and the world? Opinions vary. This roundtable jointly hosted by China Reform Forum, Bo’ao Forum for Asia and Asia Society, provides a platform for experts from across Asia and the world, including heavyweight statesmen and renowned scholars, to discuss this topic in depth.

We want to make our meeting an academic exchange for seeking consensus and wisdom, not a political meeting, still less a war of words. We say we seek consensus and wisdom because the peaceful rise of a country with 1.3-1.5 billion people requires more knowledge and experience than we possess now. So we need to learn from international experience and other human civilizations. For the sake of discussion and sharing ideas, I would like to make four points:

I. Serious Challenges and Strategic Options

Two years ago when we first touched upon the topic of China’s peaceful rise here, we described an existing fact: China, since the late 1970s when it explored the road of Chinese-style socialism, has chosen a road of seeking a peaceful international environment for development and, by its own development, contributing to the maintenance of world peace. This is the road to peaceful rise and a road of peaceful development.

In the past 20 years, this historic choice has stood the test of the time. This is a good beginning, but the process is far from complete. The rise of a country with a population of 1.3-1.5 billion is by no means an easy task. This is especially true in the first half of the 21st century when we are faced with both a “golden period of development” and an “intense period of paradoxes”. Speaking of paradoxes, there are three fundamental challenges in the areas of economic and social growth:

The first is the challenge in resources, especially energy. China lags behind in terms of per-capita possession of resources. At the same time, its fast economic growth and lower level of technology and know-how have contributed to the high rate of energy consumption in manufacturing by international standard, in terms of both aggregate and unit consumption. The massive shift of international manufacturing to China has also brought about a certain degree of “shift of energy consumption”. This has made the shortage of resources, especially energy, a big hindrance to China’s peaceful rise.

The second is the challenge of the eco-system. Grave environmental pollution, the deterioration of the eco-system, and the relatively low efficiency of resource consumption as a result of fast industrialization and modernization have all contributed to a bottleneck in sustainable growth. Also, this is the backdrop against which China’s leadership is advocating the scientific concept of development.

The third challenge is a series of paradoxes in the process of economic and social coordination. For example, our GDP has to maintain its fast growth and social undertakings also need to keep booming; technological advances and industry upgrading should be promoted, but employment should also be augmented; the strong economic momentum in the eastern part must be maintained but development in the cen-
entral and western parts should also be promoted; urbanization should be bolstered but rural areas should be nourished by the process; there should be fairness in redistribution to narrow the urban-rural gap, but it should not affect vitality and efficiency in the economy; more foreign investment should be sought, but the structure should be optimized; exchange of market for technology should continue, but our own innovation is equally important; reform should be deepened, but social stability must be maintained; market competition should be espoused, but the livelihood of those in economic difficulties should also receive attention, and so on and so forth. The solution to these paradoxes does not lie in a lopsided approach. Instead, a series of coordinated measures are called for in order to achieve fast and healthy growth.

These three big challenges in the first half of the 21st century can, in my opinion, turn into three ways of transcendence, or three strategies, when the Chinese government formulates solutions:

The first big strategy is to transcend the old-style road of industrialization and continue on the road of new-style industrialization. Since the Industrial Revolution, the world has taken 250 years to lead 1.5 billion people into the industrialized society, but we have only 100 years, from the founding of New China in 1949 up to 2050, to achieve the goal for the same number of people. China, a populous country, is marching in step with the advance of world civilization. It is impossible to stop it. But equally impossible is the old-style road of industrialization of high input, high consumption and high pollution. Therefore, China is determined to blaze a new road of industrialization characterized by high technology input, economic efficiency, low consumption of resources, low pollution to the environment and full play of human resources advantage.

The second big strategy is to transcend the traditional development approach that big powers took in modern history and the cold-war mentality marked by ideology, and to continue participating in economic globalization. China will not take the road of Germany of World War I or Germany and Japan of World War II, i.e. using violence to pillage resources and seek world hegemony. Neither will China embark on the beaten track of cold-war confrontation and rivalry for domination which was the feature of the post-war period. We are able to transcend both the old road of fighting for resources, an inevitable consequence of old-style industrialization and the cold-war mentality of rejecting peace, development and cooperation on account of ideological differences. We have bravely adopted the reform and open-door policy, and that means we will, in the process of participating in, rather than divorcing ourselves from economic globalization, learn and benefit from the fruits of human civilization and independently build Chinese-style socialism and gradually realize our goal of peaceful rise.

The third big strategy is to transcend outdated social management modes and continue to build a harmonious socialist society. New problems China is encountering include simultaneous appearance of economic vitality and disorders, efficiency and lack of balance. Facing these paradoxes, China's leadership is focused on building a social network that links government control mechanisms with social coordination mechanisms, complement government administrative functions with social self-regulating functions, and fuse government management forces with social adjustment forces. This is aimed at improving governance and social management. Currently, government functions in China are gradually being transformed, and mechanisms are being built to facilitate movement of people, rationally regulate interests, provide stable social security and defuse crises with efficiency. Also, the level of scientific governance, democratic governance and rule of law is being enhanced and a harmonious society is gradually taking shape.

The three strategies for China during the first half of the 21st century can be summed up as maintaining peace and harmony – external peace and internal harmony – the two are linked with each other and complement each other. The goal is to lead the 1.3-1.5 billion Chinese people in their arduous endeavor to build a better life and make more contribution to humanity in response to risks and challenges and through win-win cooperation with other countries. This is the development road to China’s peaceful rise as we understand it.
II. Reality and Future

We are fully aware that, to successfully address the “three challenges” and effectively implement the “three strategies” for the realization of peaceful rise, it will take more than five, ten or even twenty years. In other words, it will not be until the mid-century that noticeable results will be seen. The Chinese government has scientifically planned three stages for the first half of the 21st century, i.e. doubling the GDP in 2000 by the year 2010; quadrupling it by 2020 and achieving a per-capita GDP of US$ 3,000, building a moderately prosperous society of a higher level that will benefit a billion-plus population. On that foundation, a few more decades of hard work, until the mid-century, will lead to the basic realization of modernization and turn China into a prosperous, democratic and culturally advanced socialist country. When that goal is attained, it means that the country will have rid itself of the “underdeveloped” status and advanced into the rank of medium-level developed countries. It means rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and peaceful rise of the country.

With a view to implementing these strategies, various Chinese government agencies and research departments are focused on how to meet the challenges through self-reliance and resources saving and how to promote the building of a harmonious society. Their studies include short-term, medium-term and long-term development strategies for different fields, particularly energy, environment, population and the ageing of population, technology and education, etc. Take energy for instance, the past 20 years saw China quadrupling its GDP at the cost of doubling its energy consumption. In the next 20 years, China is set to quadruple its GDP. How to balance development with energy conservation and how to find a way of resources saving – these are questions that cry for solution.

While formulating this goal and drawing up development plans, we keep in mind the advantages and the economic foundation China now has. China has the advantages of a potentially huge market, a huge pool of human resources, social stability, fast economic growth, deepening reform of the economic system and expanding relations with the outside world, increasing competitiveness of industries, ever improving infrastructure, better legal environment, tradition of frugality which explains a high savings rate and abundance of private capital. The list goes on and on.

Speaking of advantages and foundations, I would bring your attention to some of the economic and social growth areas that will present more opportunities in the first half of the 21st century.

For example, along China’s east coast there are clusters of cities vibrant with economic activities, but in central and western areas are also emerging central cities. They will be the driving forces behind the nation’s fast economic growth, the centers of manufacturing, services, logistics and financial services that enable the country to participate in global division of labor and competition, the places that absorb abundant labor from the vast rural area, and the hubs that attract advanced productive forces, advanced culture and international experience. The enlarging middle income group, as well as ever increasing demand, both domestic and international, will come from these places.

Another example is the vast rural labor force that is intent on getting out of poverty. They are not only the reserve force for the country’s manufacturing, but also a vital new force to replace rural deprivation with industrial civilization. In the future, with training, they will enter urban areas in an orderly manner, in the quantity of 10 million each year, thus providing an ever renewing labor force for urban growth and creating new market demand, and at the same time dramatically changing the backward landscape of the nation’s countryside.

The third example is the immense vitality generated by labor, knowledge, technology, management, capital and other elements that have been discharged by the reform and open policy. China adopts a basic socialist economic system that depends on State ownership as the backbone and multiple forms of ownership in common development. This has not only ignited the vitality of State capital and has con-
tinuously advanced new-style collective and coope-
ratve economy, but also keeps attracting investors
from home and abroad including private capital on
the mainland, from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan,
thus spurring entrepreneurial activities in China and
helping form a business-creating mechanism that
promotes productivity and increases employment.
Another benefit will be the growing army of high-
quality entrepreneurs and high-tech, high-skill talents
of every stripe.

Last but not least, it should be noted that practice
has proved that innovation is the unceasing driving
engine that propels China’s prosperity and peaceful
rise in the 21st century. This includes innovation in
theory, technology, systems, culture and other areas.

III. International Experience
and Chinese Characteristics

China’s peaceful rise is the most important character-
istic of its road of development.

China, as a country that has been late in moderniza-
tion, needs most to study international experience.
Since reform and opening, it was the emancipation of
mind, the opening of the nation’s door and the con-
scientious study and drawing lessons from both pos-
itive and negative experiences in industrialization and
modernization of countries from East Asia, Europe,
America and Latin America that has opened a new
vista for the Chinese people in theory and practice. It
is the internal, long-term and objective need for China
to study and benefit from international experience in
its endeavor for peaceful rise. However, we know full
well that there are things that we should reject: first,
we should not emulate the barbaric acts of launching
wars to plunder other countries’ resources; second,
we should not emulate the cold-war mentality of
exporting ideologies and values or engaging in bloc
politics; third, we should not emulate predatory acts in
the process of industrialization such as excessive
consumption of non-renewable resources; fourth, we
should not emulate the expansionist acts of massive
exporting of emigrants and setting up overseas
colonies. Our nation suffered bitterly in the past 100
years, and our understanding is: we should not do
anything harmful to others, whether or not it is for our
own interest, as the Chinese saying goes: “Don’t do
to others what you would not have them do to you.”

We endorse “emulation”, such as learning from foreign
successful models and turn the fruits of world civiliza-
tion for our use. In the late 1970s, we proposed
Chinese-style modernization and socialism with
Chinese characteristics. Whether it is called
“Chinese-style” or “Chinese characteristics”, it means
to start from our own situation and go our own way,
to rely mainly on ourselves, solve our own problems
and difficulties and not create trouble for others.

As we entered the 21st century, a series of new
changes have taken place, and now we are faced
with heavy tasks of the second 20 years of China’s
modernization and the ensuing burdens of popula-
tion, resources, environment and social develop-
ment. In order to do better, we need to work hard
and study in depth “Chinese characteristics”. Modernization with Chinese characteristics entails a
series of concrete actions, such as industrialization,
urbanization, rural modernization, resources-effi-
cient society, environmentally-friendly society, learn-
ing society, advantage in human resources, demo-
cracy, rule of law and political civilization, spiritual
civilization, harmonious socialist society, etc. – all
with Chinese characteristics. However, all this
should be placed in the context of the basic situa-
tion of 1.3-1.5 billion population, late-start advan-
tage, self-reliance in solving all the difficulties such
as the massive labor force from rural areas as well
as resources and environment etc. that accompany
the process of industrialization and urbanization.
We firmly believe that China’s peaceful rise is the
right way because, to a great extent, we firmly
believe that all the “Chinese characteristics” in various
areas have immense potency.

To sum up, scientifically using world experience will
help quicken the pace of our late-start modernization,
and the promotion of Chinese characteristics will
enable us to avoid pitfalls. To conclude, we will con-
tinue to learn from international experience and con-
tinue with our Chinese characteristics.
IV. Looking to the Future and the Whole World

China’s peaceful rise is a great cause that encompasses modernization, looks to the world and the future. An important result is the emerging of a huge market with 1.3-1.5 billion. Such an expanding open market provides new opportunities for Asia and the world. It will help expand the world market, just as “expansion of the universe”, so to speak. Therefore, what China’s peaceful rise will mean to Asia and the world is opportunities rather than threat.

In today’s world, China is not the only country that is rising peacefully. As I said here two years ago, China on peaceful rise is part of Asia peacefully rising. Now, we have more confidence to say that the peaceful rise of Asia, especially East Asia and South Asia has been providing a strong impetus to the world economy. A comparison of the world’s three economic regions will reveal that the East Asian economic region, featuring “10+3”, has the biggest potential for growth among all regions. Today, internal trade in the East Asian economic region accounts for 54% of total trade of all East Asian countries, 20% higher than in 1980. The figure exceeds the internal trade of NAFTA, which is 46%, and is close to that of the Euro zone, which is 64%.

At the same time, Asia has the largest population and emerging market. The combined population of East Asia and South Asia totals about 3 billion, which makes up about half of the world’s total, or 65% of the total of developing countries. This is at once a major part of the problem that constrains modern development and a new market with vast growth potential.

Besides, the peaceful rise of Asia, especially East Asia and South Asia, will provide a new experience and a new model for the peaceful co-existence of countries and regions with diverse systems and cultures. A series of non-conventional security crises since 1997 have shown that the multiple forms of cooperation that exist among East Asian countries have already surmounted, are surmounting, and will surmount differences in social system and culture. Hot issues and historical conflicts remain in this region. But I believe that statesmen and peoples in the region, with their wisdom and capability, can deal with them.

It should also be noted that cooperation inside this region does not exclude the interests of the United States and the EU in Asia. On the contrary, the United States and the European Union will reap more and more benefits from the rise and regional cooperation of East Asia and South Asia. Take trade alone for example, in 2004 China’s import from Japan grew by 27.3%, from ASEAN by 33.1%, and from India by 80.6%. During the same period, China’s import from EU grew by 28.8%, and from the US 31.9%. The peaceful rise of China and Asia has not only provided the international community with a vast market, but has created jobs and opportunities of development for other countries.

We are glad to see that, in the first half of the 21st century, a group of countries are heading towards peaceful rise in different ways and at different speed and following different models. At the same time, developed countries are also seeking new and sweeping growth in another round of modernization. Looking at the European Continent and the Asian Continent, one will see that East Asia, South Asia and Europe are rising just like the sunrise. This is an important new trend in today’s peaceful development of the world, and we should embrace it.

As you can see, the road of China’s peaceful rise or peaceful development is, as I have stated, an organic integration of China’s domestic policies and foreign policies, and of international experience and Chinese characteristics. It is a fundamental strategic choice for China’s modernization drive. There is no other alternative.
Introduction

China is an economic and political continent in itself. She is today a global trading power too. When China recently put forward a political philosophy called the “peaceful rise”, the world sat up to it.

My relations with China date back to more than thirty years. I have perceived its evolution as the Chairman of a large industrial enterprise, through my experience in politics and at the Fondation pour l’innovation politique which I created recently. At the Foundation, we work on the experimentation and innovation in political mechanisms and policy processes with a long term view. In doing so, not only have we been attentive to the Chinese experimentation of socialist capitalism, but also learnt well that with challenges come obstacles. Some of those might be anticipated in China’s peaceful rise.

I. “Peaceful Rise”

There have been semantic hesitations: peaceful development, peaceful stability, peaceful coexistence. But whatever be the name, it is quite clearly to me China’s “peaceful rise”.

In recent history, the rise of great nations has often been materialized in three ways: through a hawkish foreign policy, in an enduring cold war or in a diplomatic power accession. China demonstrates today another way to rise on the world stage: participation in economic globalisation, competition with others in the world market, recognition of a world system that is mutually beneficial to all. And that indeed would here be the meaning of “peace” in China’s rise.

II. China’s Current Age of Diplomacy

The evolution of this current era of Chinese diplomacy began even more than two decades ago with Deng Xiaoping - and France has been an appreciative observer of it.

The rise of the European Union continues to be a similar evolutive process, like the Chinese case. Today the two are highly complementary economically and share many common views: the importance of multilateral policies, rules for global governance, a stronger role of the U.N. in regional and global conflict resolution and in the co-ordination of actions addressing global concerns, from weapons control, through international terrorism, to climate change.

In 1964, General de Gaulle’s words resounded “You cannot isolate China”, marking the new diplomatic links between France and China. Because both France and China have similar visions of a Nation State, share similar ideals about international order, both are strong proponents for peaceful solutions over war, both believe in being the motors of regional cooperation in their respective geographic areas. Being permanent members of the Security Council, they are two of the strongest advocates of a just and multilateral world today.

The year 2004 witnessed the State visit in France of Chinese President Hu Jintao in January and a reciprocal visit of the French President Jacques Chirac in China, to which I was party to and we were extremely moved by the warm and exceptional welcome that we received. This visit provided the occasion for a Franco-Chinese declaration signature for marking a new step in a global strategic partnership.
There is an ongoing relationship between France and China on energy, transport, aeronautics, environment and agriculture, besides cooperation in the field of the rule of law, strengthening the judiciary, and in the processes of collaboration between local regional units. The relationship is also intimate: 2004 - 2005 witnessed the success of the France-China Cultural Years, and also the number of French students studying Chinese has doubled in five years. What better way to share the culture than to share the language of the other!

### III. Challenges and Opportunities

Ever since the end of the cold war and the subsequent end to the bipolar world order, there has been a quest for a new, more balanced, more peaceful world system: a quest for a multilateral world. And this is the vision of China today. It is a vision embraced by France and Europe of a China who is open to strategic partnerships with her European counterparts. The materialisation of this vision is a challenge for both China and Europe.

But there are other challenges on the way too.

**First**, China has to prove itself as a country which not just “participates” in international order, but which contributes to “design” it without creating ruptures. At the international level as a large successful trader, China is in a good position to shape rules in the WTO and other international bodies. At the regional level, China's interests coincide with those of other regional developing countries. Many of them look to China for support and as a compelling example of how a developing country's open economies can spur rapid growth.

**Second**, the “Peaceful rising” will have to overcome certain lacuna in China's domestic institutional and social mechanisms. The path of development can be very destabilizing. Institutionally for example, there is a need to reinforce judiciary security in investment and related procedures. Socially, economic differences and regional disparities associated with uneven distribution of goods and services, could create ripples. Inequality, while acceptable at the early stage of economic transformation, can in the long run weaken the social consensus without which no progress is possible. Added to this is that China's model of “socialist capitalism”, is a challenge in itself. France appreciates President Hu Jintao’s initiatives towards progressive democratisation, which he announced in January 2004 at the French National Assembly. This would certainly lead to the development of China’s growing new urban middle class, and also of its poverty ridden masses. Hence is the need for China’s rise to include strong reforms aiming at innovating its systems.

**Third** is the question of rhythm. On one hand, China’s rise must respect a rhythm which if too fast would risk a social and structural skid, and if too slow could deter investments and hamper future growth. On the other hand the appropriate rhythm must be maintained in China’s process of opening up to the world. If too fast, China would find it difficult to integrate some norms of the international community quickly enough, if too slow China would feel slowed down in its development.

**Fourth**, the “peaceful rise” policy implies to put aside areas of disagreement with States to favour a stable environment for economic development. But the criteria to do so could be affected by China’s strategic interests, for instance in assuring its routes for energy and raw material supply. Hence it will be a challenge for China in answering critics who question if the policy of “peaceful rise” is limited only to areas where China’s vital strategic interests are not threatened.

**Finally**, is the challenge of maintenance of equilibrium. Regional security would be weakened by a downward turn in China’s economy, and a consequent political instability could encourage economic turbulences, social disorder, violence, and illegal migration in the region. Regarding the international arena, China’s role of a large economic power will need a sensitive equilibrium in its economic growth practices. The recent question of quotas is a case in point.

However obstacles which need to be overcome are inevitable. Here I mention two of them.
One is China’s rapidly aging society\textsuperscript{10}. Europe is facing the same challenge today\textsuperscript{11}, and China will do so the most beginning in the 2020s. The one-child policy will diminish China’s working age population and China presently lacks the coping mechanisms of adequate pension and health care systems that Europe is adopting.

Second is energy\textsuperscript{12}. China’s quest for energy resources and its subsequent involvement in regions with conflicts could create a destabilizing bottleneck effect on international and regional security. For example, China’s increasing activity in Central Asia for energy resources has been accompanied by a Russian reengagement with the region, an increasing U.S. presence following 9/11, an increasing role by India using its historical links, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan using their regional links, Turkey and Iran using their cultural links, finally South Korea and Japan that are relying on economic links to the region. Hence conflicts of interests amongst power blocs arising from this increasing need to access a particular region’s energy resources could be an obstacle to China’s development.

Yet undeniably, China’s rise over the years has improved the well-being of many Chinese people while also creating opportunities for European trade.

The points of convergence are many: firstly, the EU has a transparent relationship\textsuperscript{13} with China with strong economic links. Secondly, trade\textsuperscript{14} will remain the core of the EU-China relationship. The EU is China’s largest trade partner and EU-based companies have invested about the same amount as US enterprises have in Chinese ventures. Thirdly, much common ground does exist in international politics between the EU and China: both seek sustainable development rather than raw capitalism; and are focused on internal challenges more than external developments. There finally is no fundamental conflict of interest between China and the EU.

Hence the opportunities abound for the growth of the EU China cooperation. In the global domain, Europe’s encouragement to China’s vision of multilateralism was reflected historically by EU’s early stand for China joining the WTO in which France played an important role, as also to seek an end to the embargo against arms export to China. Cooperation is placed above sanctions, and the past must vanish before the future. In the regional domain, EU appreciates China’s role in the formation of regional institutions: the Asean Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit, a North-East Asia dialogue. In fact, the Asia-Europe meeting is a unique geographical and institutional grouping in this respect.

France indeed is well placed to promote EU-China cooperation opportunities. This is because of its large involvement in building the European Union, its active participation in the United Nations at all levels, now working towards the reform of the Security Council, and also as being one of the few global economies that has invested in advanced technologies and who is particularly open to share agreements in this domain.

Yet there are still some challenges to achieve these opportunities, of which perhaps the foremost is the question of unfamiliarity. China’s political and economic system is different from that of most other major developing countries which EU and its member countries are dealing with. The role of civil society in both countries, in addition to traditional people-to-people contacts and co-operation activities, could be a solution to overcome this obstacle.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion I observe that China is already on its way to meeting challenges. On one hand there is considerable poverty reduction\textsuperscript{15}, and on the other, China is shouldering greater global and regional responsibilities in its positive contribution to UN peace-keeping efforts and in favouring South-South cooperation.

There however are some larger questions in my mind: China is on the fast track of economic construction, but can we speak of globalization without its moral dimensions? We can agree on the world vision of China’s political road map, but what is China’s vision of tomorrow’s world? Does China rely on the European political ability? Crucial energy issues, security alliances between its neighboring countries and world powers, rejection of the hegemonic system
at large: how will China handle such growing imbroglios with its vision of peaceful co-existence? Not to mention the accumulation of foreign exchange and the bubble which has been created: what happens if the bubble bursts?

The experience and challenges for China are unprecedented, and hence the questions which it evokes. But I believe China’s peaceful rise is something to emulate and not to fear. This indeed, is unquestionable.

1. The term was first used by Zheng Bijian, in November 2003 during the Bo’ao Forum for Asia in his speech entitled “A new path for China’s peaceful rise and the future of Asia”. He introduced a new concept in international relations, which he termed “peaceful rise” (heping jueqi). “In the 25 years since the inception of its reform and opening up, China has blazed a new strategic path that not only suits its national conditions but also conforms to the tide of the times. This new strategic path is China’s peaceful rise through independently building socialism with Chinese characteristics, while participating in rather than detaching from economic globalization”. The concept was then reiterated by Wen Jiabao in an ASEAN meeting as well as his visit to Harvard University in the United States on 10 December 2003.


3. According to the Joint French-Chinese Declaration - Paris, January 27th, 2004, the French Government confirms its constant position on the unity of China. It is opposed to any unilateral initiative of any kind, including a referendum which would aim at altering the status quo, increase tensions in the Taiwan Strait and lead to the independence of Taiwan.

   The French Government considers that relations between the two sides of the Strait must be based on a constructive dialogue in order to secure a peaceful settlement of the issue of Taiwan and to ensure the region’s stability and prosperity.

   In October 2004, during President Chirac’s visit to China, it was the first time the head of the French government reiterated the “one country, two systems” formula on Taiwan reunification China uses. It’s not that surprising since Germany’s Gerhard Schroeder did it before on his visit.


6. From October 2004 to July 2005, more than one hundred events are being presented in Beijing, Shanghai, Canton, Hong Kong, and many other cities. This strong and varied presence makes it possible to increase exchanges and to intensify the dialogue between France and China.

   The Year of France in China is benefiting from the joint involvement of French and Chinese national and local authorities, as well as cultural, educational and scientific institutions in the two countries. It is also receiving vital support from the Year of France in China’s Committee of Honor, which has united around 40 French and Chinese companies who have chosen to join forces with this unprecedented event.

7. 3,450 Chinese university students now study in France, up from 1,127 in 1997/1998 school year. The number of French students studying Chinese has doubled in five years and now totals about 6,000 and the number of French institutions that teach Chinese has doubled in 10 years, according to the French Ministry of National Education.

   Speaking to more than 400 Chinese college students, J. Chirac presented them an invitation. He said France delivered 7,000 to 8,000 visas to Chinese students who applied for overseas study in France every year, which cannot meet the demand. France is now preparing a service center for Chinese students, giving more beneficiary policies to Chinese overseas students.


   Hu Jintao: “The development of socialist democracy and of a spiritual civilization in China constitutes an important part of the construction of socialism in Chinese colours. This is also an important part for the construction of a society that enjoys living comforts in all ways. As we have always said that without democracy we would not have socialism, and therefore there would indeed have been no socialist modernization. If we want to construct a socialism in chinese colours, one must also develop equally well the economic civilization as we would develop China’s political and cultural civilization.”

9. 11% of China’s population still lives in absolute poverty (i.e., those with income below the World Bank benchmark of US$1.00 per day).
According to the Green Book of Population and Labor issued by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (China’s top think tank) China might become the second nation after Japan that will suffer a rapid aging of its population in the coming decades. From 2000 to 2007, the number of Chinese people aged 65 or older will increase from the current less than 100 million to more than 200 million, up over 4 million per year and the aged will make up 14 percent of the total population. But from 2028 to 2036, the number of the same group will surge from 200 million to over 300 million, indicating that the aged Chinese’s total will increase by some 10 million each year and make up 20 percent of the nation’s total population in the end.

Figures in the Green Paper on Demographic Change launched on 16th March 2005 by the Commission show that from now until 2030 the EU will lack 20.8 million (6.8 per cent) people of working age. In 2030 roughly two active people (15-65) will have to take care of one inactive person (65+). And Europe will have 18 million children and young people fewer than today.

China is the world’s second largest consumer of energy and the third largest producer.

Like the US, Europe has strong economic links with China. But unlike the US, the EU has no pretensions to become an Asian power. Questions of military deployments, the regional balance of power and the status of Taiwan therefore do not complicate EU-China relations.

China is now the EU’s second largest non-European trading partner after the US, and the EU is China’s second largest export market. In recent years, EU companies have invested considerably in China (new annual flows of utilized FDI of around USD 4.2 on average in the last 5 years), bringing stocks of EU FDI to over US$ 35 billion.

As of 2002, China no longer has a single province or autonomous region with a Human Development Index under 0.5 or in the “low development” category. This is an impressive achievement given China’s enormous size and population. China has an overarching ambition of halving poverty by 2015, and she is most likely going to achieve most of the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) by 2015.
In recent weeks, China announced a 12.6% increase in its defense spending; America’s CIA director, Porter Goss, testified about a worsening military balance in the Taiwan Strait; and President George W. Bush pleaded with Europeans not to lift their embargo on arms sales to China. Yet Chinese leaders have spoken of China’s “peaceful rise” or, more recently, its “peaceful development.”

Analysts such as John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago have flatly proclaimed that China cannot rise peacefully, and predict that “the United States and China are likely to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war.” Optimists point out that China has engaged in good neighbor policies since the 1990’s, settled border disputes, played a greater role in international institutions, and recognized the benefits of using soft power. But skeptics reply that China is merely waiting for its economy to lay the basis for future hegemony.

Who is right? We will not know for some time, but the debaters should recall Thucydides’ warning more than two millennia ago that belief in the inevitability of conflict can become one of its main causes. Each side, believing it will end up at war with the other, makes reasonable military preparations that are read by the other side as confirmation of its worst fears.

In fact, the “rise of China” is a misnomer. “Re-emergence” would be more accurate, since by size and history the Middle Kingdom has long been a major power in East Asia. Technically and economically, China was the world’s leader (though without global reach) from 500 to 1500. Only in the last half-millennium was it overtaken by Europe and America.

The Asian Development Bank has estimated that in 1820, at the beginning of the industrial age, Asia accounted for three-fifths of world output. By 1940, this fell to one-fifth, even though Asia was home to three-fifths of the world’s population. Rapid economic growth has brought output back to two-fifths of the world total today, and the Bank speculates that Asia could return to its historical levels by 2025.

Asia, of course, includes Japan, India, Korea, and others, but China will eventually play the largest role. Its high annual growth rates of 8-9% led to a tripling of its GNP in the last two decades of the twentieth century.

Nonetheless, China still has a long way to go and faces many obstacles. The US economy is about twice the size of China’s; if it grows by only 2% annually, and China’s economy grows by 6%, they could reach parity sometime after 2025. Even so, they would not be equal in composition or sophistication. China would still have a vast, underdeveloped countryside, and would not equal the US in per capita income until sometime after 2075 (depending on the measures of comparison.) China is a long way from posing the kind of challenge to American preponderance that the Kaiser’s Germany posed when it surpassed Britain in the years leading up to World War I.

Moreover, simple projections of economic growth trends can mislead. Countries tend to pick the low-hanging fruit as they benefit from imported technologies in the early stages of economic take-off, and growth rates generally slow as economies reach higher levels of development. In addition, China’s economy suffers from inefficient state-owned enterprises, a shaky financial system, and inadequate infrastructure.
At the same time, politics has a way of confounding economic projections. Creating a rule of law and institutions for political participation has lagged behind economic growth, and growing inequality, massive internal migration, an inadequate social safety net, and corruption could foster political instability. Indeed, some observers fear instability caused by a weak, rather than a rising, China.

As long as China’s economy does grow, its military power will likely increase, thus making China appear more dangerous to its neighbors and complicating America’s commitments in Asia. A RAND study projects that by 2015, China’s military expenditure will be more than six times higher than Japan’s, and its accumulated military capital stock will be roughly five times higher (measured at purchasing power parity).

Whatever the accuracy of such assessments of China’s military growth, the outcome will also depend on what the US and other countries do. The key to military power in the information age depends on the ability to collect, process, disseminate, and integrate complex systems of space-based surveillance, high speed computers, and “smart” weapons. China and others will develop some of these capabilities, but, according to many military analysts, China is not likely to close the gap with the US soon.

China’s inability to compete with the US on a global basis does not mean that it could not challenge the US in East Asia, or that war over Taiwan is impossible. Weaker countries sometimes attack when they feel backed into a corner, such as Japan did at Pearl Harbor or China did when it entered the Korean War in 1950.

If, for example, Taiwan were to declare independence, China would likely intervene with armed force, regardless of the perceived economic or military costs. But it would be unlikely to win such a war, and prudent policy on both sides can make such a war unlikely.

There is no need for the US and China to go to war. Not every rising power leads to war – witness America’s overtaking of Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. If China’s rise remains peaceful, it promises great benefits to its own people and to its neighbors – and to Americans. But, remembering Thucydides’ advice, it will be important not to mistake analysts’ theories for reality, and to continue pointing this out to political leaders and publics.
When I was the Ambassador in Paris, I often used to read the articles written by Erik Izraelewicz. I was always struck by the perspicacity and the depth of his analysis. A few weeks ago, in Davos, he was kind enough to give me his new book *When China Changes the World* (Grasset). In a very convincing manner, using facts to prove, he demonstrates the Chinese rise to power and pays homage to the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. Its original approach and graphic language made me read his book in its entirety in a go and led me to make some reflections.

It has been twenty seven years since Deng Xiaoping developed a strategy for the modernisation of China, where he insisted heavily to open and to reform. As time goes by, we realise better the wisdom and the vision with which he put these two words together. It was not by chance that he linked them together. As Erik Izraelewicz mentions, until about 1820, China was the leading economic power in the world. It collapsed after the Opium war of 1840. In 1840, China’s GDP accounted for one third of the global GDP; in 1949 it fell below 1%. The root cause of this collapse was that the country closed itself. Deng Xiaoping had diagnosed this extremely well. If China wanted to modernise, it had to open itself. We Chinese know that to what extent this opening up is crucial in the process of China’s reform. If there had been no opening, we would never have known which reforms to implement and how to manage them.

“Opening up” and “reform”, are two key words which have led to extraordinary changes in China. More than 600 billion dollars have been invested by foreign firms. These colossal investments brought modern technology, good governance and an efficient management system to us. Add to this the abundant Chinese man power which is well qualified and available for a very competitive price. Almost all the big multinationals of the world are now established here. So this is what makes the products produced in China, competitive. This short retrospective glance enables us to see that it is not China which changes the world, but instead, it is the world which first changes China.

The opening up and the reform have triggered a fast and sustained growth of the Chinese economy, a clear and significant improvement in the living conditions of the Chinese, an abundance of highly competitive products made in China. But there is always the other side to this. In France, there are protests against outsourcing from time to time, which causes the loss of tens or even hundreds of jobs. But, in China, this is much more serious. With the opening up of its market, the Chinese are exposed to the competition from foreign companies. Tens of millions of Chinese employees lost their work following the closing of thousands of non profitable public companies. For those who were unemployed, this is a terrible test. Many unemployed were trained and found a job; others created companies. The unemployed Chinese are not happy, like it is anywhere else in the world, but they do not go to protest on the streets because they are conscious that it is a price which is necessary to pay for reform. The companies which make losses and do not reform themselves are condemned to disappear. This is the law of market economy. Reform and opening up of its market is popular in China, the Chinese have understood that the more one reforms the more the country opens, the better it will be.

Actually, what we experience in China, is globalization. Whether we like it or not, globalization is an irresistible historical movement. The perspicacity of
Deng Xiaoping was that instead of fearing it and closing the Chinese market further, he opened the doors of the country and wanted that, as far as possible, it benefits from globalization, while accepting the sacrifices necessary at the same time. So if today China can contribute appreciably to the growth of the world, it is because it was first globalization that changed China. And the changes that we see today have only just started.

In his book, Erik Izrailewicz evokes the game of “Chinese scissors” which takes on France. It buys its energy and its raw materials from outside: which are more and more expensive for China. To pay for these, China sells its man power; which costs lesser and lesser. From my point of view, it is not right to speak about a game of “Chinese scissors”; it is about the game of “scissors of globalization”. It is true that the price of raw materials is rising, but this is not because of China. The industrialized countries consume a large chunk of the raw materials of the world. China buys some, but they buy much more. What’s more is that the war in Iraq contributed much to the oil blaze. The other blade of the scissor is the products made in China. It is not fair either to qualify this blade as “Chinese”: 60 % of exports from China are carried out by multinationals established in China, amongst whom the majority are European, American and Japanese. This scissor blade is, also, international.

Since his visit in October, President Chirac has spoken a lot about the opportunities for the Franco-Chinese and Euro Chinese partnership, created by China’s rise. He is certainly right. The economic assets of France and Europe coincide with the priorities of the development of the Chinese economy (energy, transport, aeronautics, environment and agriculture). French and European SME’s have a possibility of entering into cooperation with their Chinese counterparts. Faced with China’s rise, one should not agitate the “yellow peril” - Erik Izrailewicz is quite clear about this. Doing this would serve nothing but to ruin the opportunities of cooperation between Europe, France and China. We would all be losers. On the other hand, if one seizes this opportunity well to emphasize the immense potential of co-operation between China and Europe, it will be a win-win situation.

Erik Izrailewicz finally quotes what he heard in Beijing from a person who did not wish to reveal his identity: “If the 19th century signified humiliation for China, the 20th century signifying restoration, the 21st century would be that of domination”. Do the Chinese intend to dominate the world in 21st century? No, a categorical “no”! Firstly, the idea of domination is against the Chinese culture. During nearly the last fifteen centuries, when China held almost all the technological and military assets, the Chinese never used them to dominate the world. The Chinese are people who remain very attached to the lessons of the history. This tells us that all those who believed in hegemony have had a bad ending. In 1974, during the UN General meet, Deng Xiaoping had condemned hegemomism and solemnly declared that China would never aspire for hegemony. If a day does come when the idea to want to dominate the planet occurs to the Chinese, Deng Xiaoping called upon the people of the world to bring down this hegemony. It was the first time in the annals of UNO, that one had heard such a declaration! To never to aspire for hegemony, is a legacy that Deng Xiaoping left us with and the Chinese will respect that scrupulously.

1. Erik Izrailewicz is the Deputy Editor at Les Échos.
Appendices
The conference on China’s Peaceful Rise organized by the China Reform Forum presided by Zheng Bijian, was more Chinese or Asian than what we might call occidental. There was a one day meeting co-organized by the Bo’ao Forum for Asia and The Asia Society, that was kept relatively restricted (60 to 70 participants). This was held a day before the Bo’ao Forum which gathered more participants (400-500) but was relatively less interesting.

The China Reform Forum as a non profit, non governmental organization founded in 1994 devotes itself to issues pertaining to international relations and economic affairs. Under the auspices of its President, who is also the Vice-President of the Central School of the Party, which is a sort of a training institution for China’s diplomats and leaders, the Forum organized at Bo’ao has acquired since the past two years an excellent participant representation. The topic selected for this year was “The peaceful rise of China and its new role in Asia”. In fact, a third aspect, that of the world, was also extensively addressed. The program of the interventions may be found in Appendix 2.

The talks were extremely direct, sometimes harsh, at times cautious (Lee Kuan Yew), without any media presence and thus serious. Drawing from an extremely rich debate, the following broad lines can be identified.

I. The Assertion of the Peaceful Character of the Chinese Rise

This assertion was clearly evident amongst the Chinese themselves, while the goal during the day’s meeting was to hammer in this new slogan of the party’s political philosophy amongst the international participants present there. The remarkable keynote speech of Zheng Bijian mixing social democracy with political volunteerism was indeed noteworthy. He spoke in particular of:
- the will for a different kind of growth which would be based on technological progress and low levels of natural resource consumption; but one is still far from it;
- the refusal to follow the path treded by the 19th century European powers, which was a path of war and hegemony;
- on the domestic front, the will to build “a harmonious socialist society”, especially characterized by the action of nongovernmental social forces.

The Chinese speakers incorporated Zheng Bijian’s program in their respective domains.

II. Internal Problems

In his introductory speech, Zheng Bijian saw three major challenges on the internal level:
- energy;
- environment;
- the economic and social linkage, which implies controlling certain tensions : between economic

The Chinese Reform Meeting on the Peaceful Rise of China
Bo’ao (Hainan, P. R. China), April 22nd, 2005

Note on the China Reform Meeting on the Peaceful Rise of China
Bo’ao (Hainan, P. R. China), April 22nd, 2005
rationalization and unemployment; between development of the provinces of the East and of those of the West; between cities and the countryside; between importing technologies and developing technology domestically; and finally between the economic “boom” and social cohesion.

All these points were the subject of presentations made by the Chinese. These very points were identified as principal problems by even the international speakers.

III. External Problems

The international speakers concentrated on the repercussions of the “peaceful rise” on China’s external relations. There was generally a rather clear difference between those who highlighted the potential problems in China’s rise but were still ready to trust China, and those who were openly skeptical about it. Europeans and Asians mostly featured in the former group, while the Americans were amongst the latter.

Several participants (European, Japanese, Korean) regretted this American attitude in quoting Thucydides who said that when one thinks of the other as one’s enemy, the other does finally become a real enemy. Many speakers saw a factor of instability in this American latent hostility.

On the other hand, a potential for regional instability was also highlighted by many speakers. This is only a consequence of history and poor memory. In particular, Lee Kuan Yew made a remarkable intervention, where he talked about being persuaded by the peaceful will of the current generation in power. But he expressed deep concerns about the reactions of the newer generations, especially as the Governments in the region lack pedagogical efforts and efforts to overcome the traumas of the past, which in fact the Europeans have succeeded in doing. There remains thus a notion of belligerence and nationalisation between the principle countries of the region (China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan).

The Chinese on the contrary insisted on their desire for peace in the area. The warming China-India relations (which Lee Kuan Yew is convinced that it is not only temporary convenience) comes at the right moment for the Chinese to strengthen their thesis. Inspired by the European example, certain Chinese speakers proposed the creation of an Asian community to serve this economic moment.

Energy and the cost of China’s energy diplomacy were seen as another destabilizing factor, at the global level. Her relations with Iran, for example, could revive fears of the West. China would then risk to be perceived like a selfish power who does not partake of her global responsibilities.

Representatives of American think tanks emphasized the United States’ acceptance of the rise of Europe and Japan. Their attitude towards China’s peaceful rise was not hostile, but they remained wary and demanded proof of it. They naturally therefore insisted on the potential points of friction, be it Taiwan or Korea’s nuclear ambitions. China’s quest for energy was another issue in question: China was responsible as long as the over consumption was due to under-price energy costs.

Nevertheless, calls for co-operation were also heard from the representatives of the West. Many regretted the fact that the Westerners and in particular their political classes do not know China. It is thus necessary to increase contact between the elites of the two regions, and to include China in a world order that would otherwise be multi polar and which but without multilateralism. According to certain American participants, the United States could play the role of a mediator between China, Japan and India. It could also have a “creative leadership” between North and South Korea.

IV. Conclusions of the President of the “Asia Society”

The fact that Mrs. Vishakha Desai, an American of Indian origin, was asked by the Chinese to make the concluding remarks, is of some interest. This remarkable lady noted that the world asked for a factual evidence of the peaceful character of the Chinese rise. She deplored the fact that China’s development is
only spoken about in economic terms while forgetting the "soft" components of power: for example culture and immigration.

She finally highlighted the role of China’s development in regional integration. The concept of Asia becomes a reality, because of China’s economic development. The barriers of culture, language, history and the past remain, and also remains the fact that all these countries had been cut away from each other by conflicts, at several points in history. There thus is a need for new institutions to organize multilateralism.

V. Personal Remarks

On my way to Yunnan situated beyond Liongchang and about a hundred kilometers before the border of the Tibet region, I saw that there are only few average or small cities or villages where modern progress had not reached (constructions, schools, TV, vehicles, small supermarkets). But there remain 200 million poor rural Chinese who migrate across China to find basic living conditions (2 million illegal migrants in Shanghai itself). I ask to myself the following:

1. Can one speak for long about globalization and of the “peaceful rise” without evoking the moral dimensions (in the broader cultural sense)?

2. If one agrees on China’s roadmap for her economic integration in the world, then where does it lead her? What is China’s vision of herself and of the world in 25 years?

3. Does China really believe that Europe will be able to exist and act like a true political (and security) power?

4. In the current world imbroglio as it is known today and that as I described in my speech, how can China carry out an autonomous diplomacy, be integrated in the world, and manage its interests without major conflicts (energy, for example)?

I believe that it is necessary to trust this peaceful rise, to do everything to help China in her international relations, even if it is a kind of a “pascalian” challenge, especially if one thinks with the attitude of the United States.

VI. Further from this Conference

Zheng Bijian hopes sincerely (he had spoken about it in 2004) that the next China Reform Forum should take place in Paris, in November 2005. He asks the Fondation pour l’innovation politique to help, with the support of others, organize this European forum.

Jérôme Monod, April 27th, 2005.

1. This text is a report of Mr. Jérôme Monod visit to the Bo’ao Forum. Although it is a text originally meant for internal use, we chose to publish it because of wide interest that it drew.

2. Zheng Bijian was the direct collaborator of Deng Xiaoping and of the Secretary General of the Chinese Communist Party who succeeded him. He has an unquestionable influence, and is regarded as a true political thinker of China’s economic and social issues and its external political relations. Duly acclaimed to be having a broad vision, he works closely with Wu Jianmin. Wu Jianmin was the former Chinese Ambassador in France and he is currently the President of the China University of Foreign Affairs and of the Bureau International des Expositions (International Exhibitions Bureau).

3. Among the outstanding personalities present, there was Lee Kuan Yew Minister Mentor of Singapore, Lu Yongxiang President of the Academy of Sciences of China, Li Jiange Deputy Manager of the Development Research Center at the State Council.

4. To quote some non Chinese: Stanley Crossick Founder and President of the European Policy Centre, Michael D. Rich Deputy Vice-President of Rand Corporation, Hubert Védrine, Thierry de Montbrial, the President of Philips and the Vice-President of BP, as well as the Russian Director of the Institute of Research on the Far East and finally the impressive Vishakha Desai President of Asia Society who concluded the session.

5. Published in this Cahier des Débats, p. 5-9.
# China's Peaceful Rise and New Role of Asia
## International Roundtable (Preliminary Agenda)
April 21-22, 2005, Bo’ao, Hainan, P. R. China

### April 22nd, Friday

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<td>Opening Ceremony</td>
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<td>Moderator</td>
<td>Li Junru, Vice President of the Central Party School, CPC/Vice Chairman of China Reform Forum</td>
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<td>VIP Remarks</td>
<td>• Romano Prodi, Former President of the European Commission</td>
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<td>• Fidel Ramos, Former President of the Philippines</td>
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<td>• Robert James Lee Hawke, Former Prime Minister of Australia</td>
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<td>• Lu Yongxiang, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress</td>
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<td>Keynote Speech</td>
<td>• Zheng Bijian, Chairman of China Reform Forum</td>
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<td>Moderator</td>
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<td>Speakers</td>
<td>• Jerôme Monod, Chief Political Adviser to French President Jacques Chirac</td>
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<td>• Du Qinglin, Minister of Agriculture, China</td>
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<td>• John Thornton, Chairman of the Brookings Institution Board of Trustees/Trustee of Asia Society</td>
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<td>• Li Jiange, Deputy Director of the Development Research Center, the State Council</td>
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<td>• Gerard Kleisterlee, President &amp; CEO of Royal Philips Electronics Group</td>
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<td>• Xie Zhenhua, Director of State Environmental Protection Administration</td>
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<td>• Gary Dirks, Group Vice President, BP p.l.c.</td>
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<td>• Wang Tao, Senior Vice Chairman of World Oil Congress</td>
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<td>• Stanley Crossick, Director of the European Policy Centre</td>
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<td>• Li Zhensheng, Academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences</td>
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<td>• Lawrence J. Lau, Vice Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>• Niu Wenyuan, Academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences</td>
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<td>• Naoki Tanaka, President of The 21st Century Public Policy Institute</td>
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<td>12:20-13:00</td>
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<td>Moderator</td>
<td>Long Yongtu, Secretary-General of Boao Forum for Asia</td>
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<td>VIP Speaker</td>
<td>Lee Kuan Yew, Minister Mentor of the Republic of Singapore</td>
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<td>Session Two - Opportunities and Challenges Facing Asia's Common Peaceful Rise</td>
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Source: Boao Forum For Asia
Innovation is, above all, to debate: to take the risk in abandoning conformist ideas, accepting discourses which might perturb and experiences which do not always correspond to one’s own beliefs. This is why the Fondation pour l'Innovation politique endeavours to publish texts as they are, which have perspectives not necessarily conforming to the Foundation’s opinion. These are necessary elements to bring out a public debate – a public debate which certainly cannot exist without certain who might want to contradict.

China’s Peaceful Rise and New Role of Asia

By:

- Zheng Bijian
  Chairman of the Academic Committee of the Central Party School, CPC, Chairman of the China Reform Forum.

- Jérôme Monod
  Advisor to the President of the French Republic, Honorary Chairman of the Fondation pour l’innovation politique.

- Miniya Chatterji
  Researcher at the Fondation pour l’innovation politique.

- Joseph S. Nye
  A former US Assistant Secretary of Defense, he is Distinguished Service Professor at Harvard University. He recently published *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (2004).

- Wu Jianmin
  President of the China University of Foreign Affairs, Vice Director of the Committee of Foreign Affairs under China’s People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), he served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in France.