

Op-ed: BRICS cooperation to shine brightly in its second golden decade

By Zhong Sheng

The important speech delivered by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Plenary Session of the BRICS Johannesburg Summit on Thursday pointed a direction for the BRICS countries to play bigger roles amid the adjustments of world pattern.

In the speech titled "Turn Our Vision into a Reality", he revealed the characteristics of the new industrial revolution and made proposals for the future development of BRICS cooperation.

Practical cooperation, which serves as the foundation of BRICS mechanism, to a great extent decides the future of the BRICS cooperation in the next decade.

A new round of revolution in science and technology, as well as industries is on the horizon, with an overwhelming strength to reshape the mode of economic production and the lifestyles of human beings.

Against such background, it is more important for the BRICS countries to take the opportunities of the new industrial revolution in creative thinking when they plan for the pragmatic collaboration in the next step.

"The 4th industrial revolution" is incorporated into the theme of this summit, which has shifted the world's focus on innovation cooperation.

China has always been a promoter and leader for innovation cooperation among the BRICS countries. It actively pushed for the making of the BRICS Action Plan for Innovation Cooperation when the country assumed rotating presidency of the BRICS mechanism in Xiamen last year. This time in Johannesburg, Chinese proposals on innovation cooperation once again struck a chord.

"It is important that we continue to pursue innovation-driven development and build a Partnership on New Industrial Revolution to strengthen coordination on macroeconomic policies, find more complementarities in our development strategies, and reinforce each other's efforts in renewing economic driving forces and upgrading economic structure," Xi expounded on the paths and goals of BRICS innovation cooperation from a comprehensive perspective in his speech.

He called on the BRICS members to unlock the enormous potential of economic cooperation, safeguard global peace and security, expand people-to-people exchanges, and build a network of closer partnerships.

His systematic discourse offered practical action plan to deepen strategic partnership of BRICS countries and consolidate the cooperation framework underpinned by economic, political and security cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the BRICS mechanism. To make new breakthroughs calls

for both experience and a grasp of the changes of international situation.

Today's world is faced with negative spillovers and aggravated downward pressure brought by undergoing geopolitical conflicts, intensified economic profit gambling, escalated protectionism and unilateralism, as well as policy changes of some countries.

Delegates from multiple countries pointed out during the Johannesburg summit that emerging markets and developing countries are the major victims of such changes.

After the plenary session, the BRICS leaders watched the Cradle of Humankind in South Africa via video connection and printed their handprint as a souvenir. This activity symbolized the common commitment made by the five BRICS countries to the humankind, said South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

BRICS cooperation is not confined within the five countries. The BRICS countries are representatives for emerging markets and developing countries, and their firm stance to oppose protectionism, safeguard global multilateral rules and go for win-win cooperation comes from not only their own demand for development, but also the hope that justice and fairness can play a more constructive role on the international arena.

"The basic driving force for BRICS cooperation to flourish and shine forever comes from our common pursuit of greater development and improvement of people's well-being, and from our common aspiration to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity," Xi said at an informal meeting to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the BRICS mechanism in Johannesburg.

Looking ahead, the BRICS cooperation is expected to go far with its strong momentum and make greater contribution to the peace and development for mankind.