

Intl trade forum to promote BRI cooperation

Thousands of ventures to be announced over the next few days

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019 opened in Xiamen, East China's Fujian province on Sunday, highlighting cooperation among countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative and their surging investment opportunities.

Aiming to facilitate bilateral investment globally, the fair was held together with the first Belt and Road Investment Congress, which will run through Wednesday.

"We are always open for any kind of cooperation and are willing to play as a linkage to connect the other parts of the country, especially those inland areas, with the outside worlds," said Yu Weiguo, Party secretary of Fujian.

"We hope the countries and regions taking part in the BRI can have a better future because the initiative is for the common interests of the people involved and will lead to peace, prosperity, openness, innovation and civilization," Yu said.

Covering an area of 130,000 square meters at the Xiamen International Conference and Exhibition Center, the fair is composed of 16 professional exhibits in three major categories: investment, business attraction and trading along the Silk Road.

While setting up a national investment pavilion for countries and regions taking part in the BRI to showcase their advantages and projects seeking cooperation, there is also a digital Silk Road area displaying the achievements of these countries and regions, including 5G devices, telecommunications network equipment and data security.

A couple of entities and associations, including the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Silk Road Fund, New Development Bank, China International Contractors Association and China Association of Development Zones, set up an area for infrastructural and development zone cooperation.

Dozens of large-scale State-owned enterprises and leading private companies are exhibiting to promote connectivity of infrastructure and more funding in BRI and regions.



The booth for industrial internet attracts visitors at the ongoing China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019 in Xiamen, Fujian province. PHOTOS BY LIN YUYANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

China Co-op Group, a State-owned company specializing in agribusiness, has organized the first Belt and Road farm products trade fair at the CIFTT, attracting the interest of nearly 20 countries and regions involved in the BRI, including Italy, Nepal, India, Sri-Lanka and Kenya.

The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade also moved its fair for products featuring green innovation technologies to the CIFTT this year, presenting China's cooperation with countries and regions along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road in environmentally friendly industrial investment, green development and poverty alleviation.

According to the CIFTT organizing committee, the fair has attracted exhibitors from more than 40 countries and regions with Serbia, an important country involved in the BRI, acting as this year's Guest Country of Honor. The committee has arranged nearly 100 forums and conferences — with a wide variety of themes from industrial internet,



Participants discuss business opportunities during the fair.

green innovation, modern sea transportation to robots and agriculture — during the four-day event to solicit global wisdom and exchanges. Representatives from at least 200

international associations and business chambers have also attended, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, The United Nations Industrial

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30,000 projects are expected to be announced at the fair

Development Organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat and the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies. An incredible 30,000 projects will be announced at the fair, while the organizing committee will arrange no less than 3,000 activities to promote project match-making and business talks.

The CIFTT organizing committee will also arrange project match-making activities exclusively for the countries and regions along the Belt and Road route and invite their governmental agencies, investment promotion agencies and companies to give briefings on business environment, preferential policies and potential projects. According to the organizing committee, the fair is expected to attract more than 100,000 professional visitors and 3,000 companies from over 120 countries and regions. More than 100 multinational corporations and Fortune 500 firms will attend the events.



The China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019 in Xiamen focuses on promoting open development and facilitating bilateral investment. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Officials encourage wider opening-up at Xiamen expo

By CHEN HONG
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Governments should give up protectionism, unilateralism and populism in favor of restoring trust and cooperation in trade for the revitalization of the global economy, said officials and entrepreneurs attending the China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019 in Xiamen, East China's Fujian province.

Rasim Ljajic, deputy prime minister of Serbia, said populism has been a rising problem that worsens relations between some countries and hurts global trade, which could be cut by 9 percent next year if the trade war carries on.

Ljajic made a keynote speech for the international investment forum of the fair, shortly after the opening ceremony on Sunday, which focused on promoting open integrated development and facilitating bilateral investment. He said China's Belt and Road Initiative is very important to ease the tension, improve competitiveness among countries and create rising opportunities, in which Serbia supports.

Beside cooperation in infrastructures, Ljajic said the digitalization development will provide opportuni-

ties for the developing countries to catch up with the developed countries in the fourth industrial revolution.

Chinese technology giant Huawei has worked with some Serbian companies on an optical fiber project, which is expected to improve the country's telecommunication network, he said.

Carlos M. Gutierrez, chairman of Albright Stonebridge, a global strategy firm, and a former secretary of commerce of the United States, said trade tensions between the US and China are bringing uncertainty not only to these two countries, but to the whole world, which will be adverse to the investment flow.

He noted that China continues to make investment in the developing countries with BRI, keeps opening-up and reducing barriers to the investment flow, which are critically important to the consistent development of the country and the world economy.

Essam Abdel-Aziz Sharaf, former prime minister of Egypt, said countries are becoming more interdependent with one another, and should work together for a shared future. He said BRI is a platform for international cooperation that is to build common responsibility, peace, trust, projects and development.

Silk Road maritime project strengthens trade ties

By CHEN HONG

Fujian province in East China is building a more efficient and less-costly shipping transportation platform to strengthen trade ties among countries and regions along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

The province launched its Silk Road Maritime project in December 2018 in Xiamen, which has opened 50 routes providing nearly 1,100 shipping services so far this year, handling a total container throughput of 927,000 twenty-foot equivalent units, according to official figures.

Meanwhile, more than 100 entities, including shipping companies, logistics companies, trade and manufacturing companies, research institutes and industrial associations, have joined the alliance centering on the project.

"The Silk Road Maritime project has been working as a link between the Chinese economy and the global economy, and has demonstrated huge potential and presents a good future," said Yu Weiguo, Party secretary of Fujian.

He made the remarks at the recent Silk Road Maritime International Cooperation Forum, one of the major events of the China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019, with a theme of sharing the prosperity through cooperation and connectivity.

"The project is believed to serve as a new driving force, develop new momentum and foster new business patterns for the exchange and cooperation among countries and regions along the Maritime Silk Road, which will lead to better connectivity," Yu said.

He noted that the project still has room to improve in terms of cost reduction, quality and efficiency, customs clearance and the automation and intellectualization of management systems.

He encouraged operators to provide more solutions to link shipping



The Silk Road Maritime International Cooperation Forum in Xiamen focuses on themes such as sharing economy and cooperation.



Participants attend a meeting at the Silk Road Maritime International Cooperation Forum, one of the major events of the China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2019.

services with road and rail to further extend the network.

Tim Smith, vice-president of Maersk, a world leader in container logistics, said that developing emerging markets in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin American is critically important at a time that the exports from the United States and Europe are weak.

Once the bottleneck of transporta-

tion can be solved, the countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative will witness a robust growth in trade, said Smith.

He noted that shipping companies, port operators and logistics companies can all benefit from taking part in the BRI through, for example, investing in new ports and providing new inland services, and offering new shipping lines and ser-

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vices. The first blue paper on the Silk Road Maritime project was issued on Saturday afternoon, revealing the project is helping Fujian build a new ocean logistics passageway that can lead coastal areas, radiate its influence to inland cities and serve countries and regions along the Maritime Silk Road.