

China's Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean

2008/11/05

The Chinese government launched its first ever policy paper on Latin America and the Caribbean region. The full text of the policy paper is as follows:

China's Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean

Foreword

The world today is undergoing major transformation and adjustment. Peace and development are the trend of the times. The move toward multi-polarity is irreversible and economic globalization is gaining momentum. World peace and development are facing new opportunities as well as various challenges. It is in the fundamental interest of people of all countries and also their common aspiration to share development opportunities, jointly address challenges and promote the noble cause of peace and development of mankind.

As the largest developing country in the world, China is committed to the path of peaceful development and the win-win strategy of opening-up. It is ready to carry out friendly cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and build a harmonious world of durable peace and common prosperity.

Latin American and Caribbean countries are an important part of the developing world and a major force in the international arena. Under new circumstances, the development of relations between China and Latin American and Caribbean countries is faced with new opportunities. In issuing this policy paper on Latin America and the Caribbean, the Chinese Government aims to further clarify the goals of China's policy in this region, outline the guiding principles for future cooperation between the two sides in various fields and sustain the sound, steady and all-round growth of China's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.

I. The Status and Role of Latin America and The Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean have a long history, vast territory and abundant resources, and the region enjoys a good foundation for economic and social growth and huge development potential.

Countries in the region have been actively exploring development paths suited to their national conditions. They have maintained political stability and continued economic growth, and the life of the people is steadily improving. Latin American and Caribbean countries cherish a strong desire for self-development through unity and the commitment to promoting regional peace, stability and development. The region on the whole is growing in strength and its international influence is rising. Latin American and Caribbean countries have taken an active part in international affairs and contributed significantly to world peace and common development. They are playing an increasingly important role in regional and international affairs.

II. China's Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean

Though China and Latin America and the Caribbean are far from each other, the two peoples enjoy a time-honored friendship. The two sides are at a similar stage of development and face the common task of achieving development. Both sides cherish the desire for greater mutual understanding and closer cooperation.

During the twenty years or so after the founding of New China in 1949, China and Latin America and the Caribbean mainly conducted people-to-people exchanges. In the 1970s and 1980s, China established diplomatic ties with most countries in the region. Friendly cooperation between the two sides in various fields registered momentous growth in the 1990s. Since the beginning of the 21st

century, the two sides have enjoyed more frequent high-level exchanges, stronger political mutual trust and closer cooperation in economy, trade, science and technology, culture and education, and mutual support and close coordination in international affairs. New progress has been made in relations between the two sides in an all-round way at various levels and across a broad spectrum of areas.

Friendly cooperation between China and Latin America and the Caribbean serves the fundamental interest of the two peoples. Future growth of relationship between the two sides enjoys great potential and broad prospects, and will contribute more significantly to peace and development of mankind.

III. China's Policy on Latin America and the Caribbean

To enhance solidarity and cooperation with other developing countries is the cornerstone of China's independent foreign policy of peace. The Chinese Government views its relations with Latin America and the Caribbean from a strategic plane and seeks to build and develop a comprehensive and cooperative partnership featuring equality, mutual benefit and common development with Latin American and Caribbean countries. The goals of China's policy on Latin America and the Caribbean are:

-- Promote mutual respect and mutual trust and expand common ground. Based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, China and Latin America and the Caribbean will treat each other as equals and respect each other. They will strengthen dialogue and communication, enhance political mutual trust, expand strategic common ground, and continue to show understanding and support on issues involving each other's core interests and major concerns.

-- Deepen cooperation and achieve win-win results. The two sides will leverage their respective strengths, tap the potential of cooperation, and seek to become each other's partner in economic cooperation and trade for mutual benefit and common development.

-- Draw on each other's strengths to boost common progress and intensify exchanges. The two sides will carry out more cultural and people-to-people exchanges, learn from each other and jointly promote development and progress of human civilization.

-- The one China principle is the political basis for the establishment and development of relations between China and Latin American and Caribbean countries and regional organizations. The overwhelming majority of countries in the region are committed to the one China policy and the position of supporting China's reunification and not having official ties or contacts with Taiwan. The Chinese Government appreciates such a stance. China is ready to establish and develop state-to-state relations with all Latin American and Caribbean countries based on the one China principle.

IV. Strengthen China's Comprehensive Cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean Region

1. In the Political Field

(1) High-Level Exchanges

China wishes to maintain the momentum of close exchanges with leaders of Latin American and Caribbean countries to increase mutual understanding and trust, step up exchange of experience on governance and consolidate the political basis for the growth of relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries.

(2) Exchanges Between Legislatures

The National People's Congress of China wishes to strengthen friendly exchanges with parliaments of Latin American and Caribbean countries, the Latin American Parliament, the Mercosur

Parliament, the Andean Parliament, etc. at multiple levels and through various channels on the basis of respecting each other, deepening mutual understanding and promoting cooperation so as to enrich and invigorate relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries.

(3) Exchanges Between Political Parties

The Communist Party of China wishes to carry out friendly exchanges of various forms with political parties and organizations of Latin American and Caribbean countries on the basis of independence, full equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs to learn from each other, increase mutual understanding and friendship, and strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.

(4) Consultation Mechanisms

Relevant agencies of the Chinese Government wish to establish and improve the mechanisms of standing committee, high-level committee, high-level mixed committee, strategic dialogue, political consultation, mixed committee on economy and trade, consultation on economy and trade, high-level working group, business cooperation forum, cultural and education mixed committee, and science and technology committee with their counterparts in Latin America and the Caribbean to increase consultation and promote exchanges and cooperation.

(5) Cooperation in International Affairs

The Chinese Government will continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation on international issues with Latin American and Caribbean countries, and maintain regular consultation with them on major international and regional issues. The two sides will continue to support each other on such important issues as sovereignty and territorial integrity. China stands ready to work with Latin American and Caribbean countries to strengthen the role of the United Nations, make the international political and economic order more fair and equitable, promote democracy in international relations and uphold the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries. China supports a greater role of Latin American and Caribbean countries in international affairs.

(6) Local Government Exchanges

The Chinese side highly values exchanges at the local government level with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It supports the twinning of provinces/states or cities between China and Latin American and Caribbean countries, and exchanges and cooperation in business, science and technology, culture and other fields to increase mutual understanding and friendship. It attaches great importance to cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in international local governments organizations.

2. In the Economic Field

(1) Trade

The Chinese Government will continue to work with its Latin American and Caribbean counterparts in the spirit of equality and mutual benefit to expand and balance two-way trade and improve the trade structure to achieve common development. At the same time, it will work with these countries to properly settle trade frictions through consultation and cooperation. China will, on the basis of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, give positive consideration to concluding free trade agreements with Latin American and Caribbean countries or regional integration organizations.

(2) Investment Cooperation

The Chinese Government encourages and supports qualified Chinese companies with good reputation in investing in manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy, mineral resources, infrastructure, and service sector in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote the economic and social development of both sides. The Chinese Government will continue to welcome investment by

Latin American and Caribbean businesses in China.

(3) Financial Cooperation

The Chinese Government supports China's monetary and financial regulatory authorities and financial institutions in stepping up consultation and professional exchanges and cooperation on macroeconomic situation and economic and financial policies with their counterparts in Latin American and Caribbean countries. It encourages Chinese commercial banks to set up branches in Latin America and the Caribbean. It will push for the conclusion of banking regulatory cooperation agreements with Latin American and Caribbean countries as appropriate, and work with them to jointly combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

(4) Agricultural Cooperation

The Chinese Government will promote exchanges and cooperation in agricultural science and technology with Latin American and Caribbean countries through holding agricultural technique training programs and dispatching technicians to the Latin American and Caribbean region. An information exchange mechanism will be established to discuss issues of common interest. Cooperation in flora and fauna inspection will be intensified and agricultural trade will be expanded to jointly uphold food security.

(5) Industrial Cooperation

The Chinese side wishes to strengthen exchanges with Latin American and Caribbean countries in industry. It is desirable to establish and improve relevant cooperation mechanisms, share best practices in each other's industrialization process, and promote and deepen practical cooperation.

(6) Infrastructure Construction

The Chinese side will strengthen practical cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in transport, information and communications, water conservancy and hydropower and other areas of infrastructure development, scale up project contracting in the region, and conduct mutually beneficial cooperation in various ways so as to contribute its share to further infrastructure development in the region.

(7) Resources and Energy Cooperation

The Chinese side wishes to expand and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in resources and energy within bilateral cooperation frameworks.

(8) Customs Cooperation

The Chinese side wishes to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries on customs by increasing exchanges between customs officers of the two sides and promoting trade security and facilitation. Exchanges and consultation will be increased on issues of mutual concern, such as smuggling and business fraud. Negotiations aimed at concluding documents on mutual administrative assistance with customs authorities of relevant countries will be held in due course.

(9) Cooperation on Quality Inspection

The Chinese Government wishes to step up exchanges and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries on quality inspection, technical barriers to trade (WTO/TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (WTO/SPS), and establish and improve consultation mechanisms on quality inspection to ensure product quality and food safety. The two sides will strengthen exchanges and consultation on issues of mutual interest such as product quality, food safety, and quarantine of entry animals and plants, leading to the signing of protocols on quarantine of entry

products. They will also conduct active exchanges and cooperation on measurement and standardization.

(10) Tourism Cooperation

The Chinese side will expand tourism cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples. The Chinese side will make vigorous efforts to promote visits by Chinese tourist groups to Latin American and Caribbean countries. It also welcomes citizens of Latin American and Caribbean countries to visit China.

(11) Debt Reduction and Cancellation

The Chinese Government will, based on its consistent policy on debt reduction and cancellation, discuss with relevant Latin American and Caribbean countries ways to relieve their debts as China's ability permits. The Chinese Government will also continue to call upon the international community, developed countries in particular, to take more concrete steps to reduce and cancel debts owed by Latin American and Caribbean countries.

(12) Economic and Technical Assistance

The Chinese Government will, according to its financial capability and level of economic and social development, continue to provide economic and technical assistance to relevant Latin American and Caribbean countries without attaching any political conditions. The Chinese Government will work within its ability and gradually increase its assistance to Latin American and Caribbean countries to meet their needs.

(13) Multilateral Cooperation

The Chinese Government is ready to strengthen consultation and coordination with Latin American and Caribbean countries in multilateral trade and financial institutions and regimes, with a view to promoting South-South cooperation, bringing about a more just and equitable multilateral trading regime and ensuring a bigger say and greater role in decision-making for developing countries in international trade and financial affairs.

(14) Chamber-of-Commerce Cooperation

The Chinese side will deepen its cooperation with chambers of commerce of Latin America and the Caribbean and push forward exchanges between business communities of the two sides through the China-Latin America Entrepreneur Summit, China-Caribbean Entrepreneurs Meeting and other mechanisms, in an effort to achieve win-win results.

3. In the Cultural and Social Aspects

(1) Cultural and Sports Exchanges

The Chinese Government will work actively to follow up on cultural cooperation agreements and relevant implementation programs signed with Latin American and Caribbean countries, maintain regular exchange of visits between cultural authorities of the two sides, and strengthen interaction and cooperation between cultural and art institutions and professionals of the two sides. To meet the needs for cultural exchange and market demand, the two sides will provide guidance for and push forward a variety of cultural exchange programs among various communities of the two sides.

The Chinese side will keep the momentum of exchanges between the sports authorities and national Olympic committees, and encourage direct contacts between sports associations of the two sides. Guidance and encouragement will also be given to bilateral sports exchanges in various forms.

(2) Cooperation in Science, Technology and Education

The Chinese side is ready to enhance scientific and technological exchanges with Latin American and Caribbean countries through the mixed committee on bilateral science and technology cooperation and high-level coordinating mechanism. The Chinese side will also strengthen cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean in aeronautics and astronautics, bio-fuel, resources and environment technology, marine technology and other areas of shared interest. The Chinese side will promote wider application of Chinese technologies on energy-conservation, digital medical treatment, small hydropower and other results of scientific research and advanced applied techniques in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Chinese side will provide Latin American and Caribbean countries with technical training, services and demonstration, and step up cooperation and exchanges on the educational front with Latin American and Caribbean countries through bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms. The Chinese side will work for the conclusion of the agreement on mutual recognition of diplomas and academic degrees, and increase the number of Chinese government scholarships for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

(3) Cooperation in Medical and Health Care

The Chinese Government will vigorously promote exchanges and cooperation in the medical and health care sector with Latin American and Caribbean countries, and share experience and carry out cooperation in such areas as disease control, response to public health emergencies, and control of HIV/AIDS and bird flu. The Chinese Government will continue to send medical contingents equipped with necessary medicines and medical equipments to relevant countries to help improve local medical facilities and train local medical professionals.

(4) Consular Cooperation and Personnel Exchanges

The Chinese Government will develop and deepen consular relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries, and strengthen and expand exchanges and cooperation between the consular departments of the two sides. The Chinese Government will carry out bilateral or multilateral friendly discussions with Latin American and Caribbean countries on consular issues of shared interest to address each other's concerns through the establishment of a consular consultation mechanism. The Chinese Government will take effective measures to promote and safeguard regular personnel exchanges between the two sides, facilitate normal trade, investment and business activities and uphold the lawful rights and interests of people of the two sides.

(5) Media Cooperation

The Chinese Government encourages and actively promotes exchanges and cooperation between the media of the two sides at multiple levels and in various forms to increase mutual understanding and ensure comprehensive and unbiased reports of each other. It will work to increase communication and cooperation between government information departments of the two sides and provide convenience for media interaction and cooperation between the two sides.

(6) People-to-People Exchanges

The Chinese Government encourages exchanges between non-governmental organizations and academic institutions of the two sides and gives full play to the role of the mechanism for people-to-people friendly interaction in advancing friendly relations between China and Latin American and Caribbean countries. It will strengthen interaction with youth organizations and institutions of Latin American and Caribbean countries, and deepen friendly cooperation with women's organizations at the national, regional and non-governmental levels in Latin American and Caribbean countries, so as to build up mutual understanding and mutual trust and work together for gender equality and the advancement of women.

(7) Cooperation in Environmental Protection

The Chinese side will strengthen exchanges with Latin American and Caribbean countries in laws,

regulations and policies related to environmental protection and promote cooperation in personnel training, education and capacity building in the fields of biodiversity conservation, as well as prevention and treatment of pollution and desertification.

(8) Cooperation in Combating Climate Change

The Chinese Government highly values its cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in combating climate change and is ready to develop and consolidate bilateral cooperation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other relevant mechanisms. It will actively promote consultation and communication between the two sides on combating climate change and cooperation in related projects.

(9) Cooperation in Human Resources and Social Security

The Chinese side will strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in employment promotion, establishment of good labor relations, improvement of the social security system, human resources development and reform of the civil service system. It will, through the signing and implementation of memoranda of understanding on bilateral cooperation, deepen and expand bilateral exchanges in social aspects, and enhance coordination and cooperation between the two sides in international organizations such as the International Labor Organization.

(10) Disaster Reduction, Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance

The Chinese Government will enhance information sharing, experience exchanges and technological cooperation in disaster reduction and relief with Latin American and Caribbean countries and facilitate the establishment of regular bilateral and multilateral meeting mechanisms between relevant departments of the two sides. It will continue to respond positively to the need for urgent humanitarian assistance of Latin American and Caribbean countries. It will encourage non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross Society of China to conduct exchanges and cooperation with relevant Latin American and Caribbean organizations in this regard.

(11) Cooperation in Poverty Alleviation

The Chinese Government will strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in reducing poverty and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor, and will encourage poverty alleviation institutions of the two sides to establish broad cooperative relations to share information and conduct joint research. More training programs designed for poverty alleviation personnel in Latin American and Caribbean countries will be launched, while more interaction on poverty reduction with inter-state or regional organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean will be strengthened. The two sides will also enhance exchange of visits and mutual participation in conferences and for a on poverty alleviation held by the other side.

4. On Peace, Security and Judicial Affairs

(1) Military Exchanges and Cooperation

The Chinese side will actively carry out military exchanges and defense dialogue and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries. Mutual visits by defense and military officials of the two sides as well as personnel exchanges will be enhanced. Professional exchanges in military training, personnel training and peacekeeping will be deepened. Practical cooperation in the non-traditional security field will be expanded. The Chinese side will, as its ability permits, continue to provide assistance for the development of the army in Latin American and Caribbean countries.

(2) Cooperation in Judicial and Police Affairs

The Chinese side will steadily expand its cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries

in judicial affairs, judicial assistance in criminal and civil matters and extradition in particular. Cooperation in information sharing, penalty enforcement and legal services will be strengthened. Concerted efforts in law enforcement involving the interior and police departments of relevant countries will be stepped up to jointly combat transnational organized crimes including drug crimes and economic crimes. Intelligence and technological exchanges will be strengthened, with bilateral and multilateral exchange mechanisms put in place, so as to share information on illegal immigration and improve the capacity for its prevention.

(3) Non-traditional Security Issues

The Chinese Government will further its exchanges and cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries on non-traditional security issues by increasing information sharing and personnel exchanges and explore effective ways to deepen cooperation on non-traditional security issues such as combating terrorism, so as to jointly improve the capacity to respond to non-traditional security threats.

V. China's Relations with Latin American and Caribbean Regional Organizations

The Chinese Government appreciates the important role of Latin American and Caribbean regional and sub-regional organizations in safeguarding peace and stability in the region, and promoting regional solidarity, development and integration. It supports these organizations in exerting their influence in regional and international affairs. The Chinese side will continue to strengthen communication, consultation and cooperation with relevant organizations in various fields.

Copyright © 2003, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

Contact us Address: No. 2, Chaoyangmen Nandajie, Chaoyang District, Beijing, 100701 Tel: 86-10-65961114