

China proposes a global science and technology partnership to promote sustainable development



1st WORLD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Experts from more than 18 countries and regions attending a forum this past week in Beijing called for stepping up sci-tech cooperation to promote sustainable development, contributing to the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

Xinhua reports that more than 400 academicians, Nobel laureates, university presidents and entrepreneurs held in-depth discussions at the two-day First World Science and Technology Development Forum, addressing sci-tech challenges critical to sustainable development.

The role of science and technology in solving global issues, especially the challenges in sustainable development, cannot be ignored, said Daya Reddy, president of the International Science Council (ISC) at the forum, noting that the global scientific community is in a period of consensus and co-development.

Reddy noted China had proposed to build a global science and technology innovation partnership in an open, inclusive and cooperative way and to promote innovation-driven sustainable development.

He said the proposal should be shared with the whole world and the ISC is looking forward to participating in such a global partnership.

Bai Chunli, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), pointed out at the forum that the world is still facing a series of challenges including climate change, energy resources shortage, food insecurity, cybersecurity threats, environmental pollution, major natural disasters, infectious diseases and poverty.

"No country can undertake these complicated and uncertain challenges on its own and countries must form a closer cooperation mechanism with the full cooperation of the sci-tech communities of all countries," he noted.

Jules Hoffmann, who shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2011 with two other scientists, told reporters all parties should pursue the common and harmonious development of the whole world.

In the past five decades, most of the world's sci-tech innovation and progress has come from Western countries and research institutions, but the situation has changed, Hoffmann said. China is quite open in its sci-tech development and he hoped Chinese researchers would engage in more cooperation with their Western counterparts.

China has made substantial strides in international cooperation to tackle global challenges. The CAS has provided over 1.8 billion yuan (about 268 million U.S. dollars) for science and technology projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) since 2013.

As of this April, nine overseas science and education centers have been built in BRI countries and regions. Bai said the overseas centers have become significant platforms to carry out projects of scientific collaboration and help resolve livelihood issues.

Li Xiaohong, president of the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE), said the CAE has forged close bonds with more than 40 national engineering academies and international sci-tech organizations in engineering and built a framework for cooperation in engineering science and technology among BRI countries.

According to the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), more than 2,700 sci-tech workers from BRI countries have received training in CAST projects since 2016, and 23,600 Chinese researchers were trained in projects co-organized by the CAST and BRI countries.

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