

2nd Belt and Road Forum – Beijing

Dear President Xi Jinping

Dear colleagues

Allow me to begin by thanking the People's Republic of China and its President Xi for organising and hosting this summit.

The Belt and Road initiative is China going out to the world. But it is also China welcoming the world. It is China taking its responsibilities in the community of nations. We took good note of President Xi Jingsings remarks this morning.

I am very glad to be here in Beijing among the states that welcome China opening up.

The Belt and Road Initiative creates great hope around the world.

This hope is based on five principles:

- We need private capital for private initiatives
- Debt must be sustainable
- We take social responsibility
- We consider green criteria
- And all of this must be done in a transparent way.

Europe used to be part of the old silk road.

History saw different development between the East and the West. Today again we are building stronger bridges and roads between our societies and economies.

The focus on infrastructure and connectivity is a priority of our time.

Switzerland was among the first European countries to welcome China in the world community of states.

And now it stands ready to engage in the Belt and Road Initiative with China and all other countries and organizations involved.

Switzerland, as a neutral State with a long humanitarian tradition, as a home for the United Nations and many international organizations, is ideally placed to help contribute to this great idea.

Excellencies,

We live in times of great changes.

Globalization and digital transformation bring winners, but also losers.

For this reason, it is very important to work together.

We must create the future that we want.

This cooperation must lead to a sustainable and inclusive result.

Switzerland is the best example, how international cooperation creates wealth and prosperity.

It is based on mutual respect, international standards and a common vision.

Let me explain:

Mutual respect focusus on the similarities, not the differences.

We are all different. But we are also similar. We are dedicated, passionate, hardworking and innovative.

We should focus on what we have in common and respect our differences.

International standards: We have come a long way in establishing international standards to organize social and economic cooperation.

Without international standards, trade and investment will not be sustainable. The dignity of the individual person is at the core of what we are doing.

Justice, the rule of law, market competition, high social and labor standards, sustainability and people's participation are very important principles to that end.

We call on the countries cooperating under the Belt and Road Initiative to draw inspiration from them.

Common vision sets the compass for the actions, also of those engaged in the Belt and Road Initiative.

With the United Nations, the Bretton Woods Organizations and the World Trade Organization, the nations of this world had a common vision of peace, security, social progress and better standards of life in freedom.

I believe this is still the common vision today and guides the cooperation under the Belt and Road initiative.

Excellencies

Today is the start of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. It is a great opportunity to look back to what we have together. And also to look ahead what we need to work on.

In this Forum, I invite you to work together at equal level: based on mutual respect, international standards and a common vision to build bridges and roads between our nations.

Thank you.