

duced up to this point, in order then to create something new and superior out of that rich heritage. Thus, the pathway to the future is also clear for us today.

We simply have to take the best of what Chinese, European, and other cultures contributed to universal history, and let our own culture, enriched though the genius of the others, come back to us and inspire us to contribute to a new golden age of mankind.

Xia Geng

The eastern terminal of the Land-Bridge

Xia Geng is the Mayor of Lianyungang. This speech was presented in Beijing on Oct. 27. Its full title is "Constructing the Eastern Terminal of the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge, Propelling the Land-Bridge Economy Forward."

In this fascinating golden autumn, we are very happy to be here discussing issues of Eurasian relations in economy and trade, and the economic development of the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge (NECL). This conference is another important meeting after the 1996 Beijing New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge Conference, which attracted worldwide attention. I am convinced that this meeting will give a fresh impetus to Eurasian economic development in the future. On this occasion, on behalf of the Lianyungang Municipal Government and the Lianyungang people, I wish the conference every success, and I also want to extend a cordial welcome to the representatives who will visit our city.

In order to strengthen economic cooperation and exchanges with East Asia, Central Asia, and Europe, and promote the economic development of the provinces of China along the Land-Bridge, the Chinese government attaches great importance to the construction of the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge, and has taken concrete measures to speed up the Land-Bridge economy. In 1992, the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge was formally put into operation. In 1993, the Chinese government decided to open up and develop the segment of the Land-Bridge inside China. In 1994, the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge was included in the list of priority projects in "China's 21st Century Agenda." In 1995, the Fourth Meeting of the Eighth People's Congress passed "the Ninth Five-Year Plan for National Economy and Social Development," and the Long-Range Program for the Year 2010." It lists the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge (NECL) inside China as a key develop-

ment area. All these measures have enhanced Eurasian economic exchanges and cooperation and promoted the economic development of the nations along the NECL.

This conference will focus on "how to build a new Eurasian economic partnership with the linkage of NECL," "thoughts about the development of the NECL," and "the fields, channels, and ways for Eurasian cooperation and economic exchanges." I believe that this meeting will further promote Eurasian economic and trade cooperation. According to the arrangements of the conference, permit me to give you a brief introduction about Lianyungang, which is the eastern terminal of the NECL:

Situated at the midpoint of the long coastline of China, Lianyungang is one of the first in a series of 14 coastal cities opened up by the central government of China. "China's 21st Century Agenda" points out that Lianyungang will be built into a regional international trade center, a beautiful tourism center, a modern transportation hub, and an international port city. Centering on this aim, with the support of the central government, and insisting on the strategy of "the prosperity of the city is based on the port," Lianyungang will make great efforts to speed up the construction of the eastern terminal and propel the land-bridge economy.

1. *Organizing international container transport via the NECL.* With the opening up of NECL, we have cooperated with concerned departments of state government to successfully organize the first international container train from Lianyungang to Uzbekistan, and established "Five Fixed-Scheduled Trains" to the Ala Mountain Pass. We also have provided assistance to research on Land-Bridge transportation and Land-Bridge management. Our city has sent several delegations to concerned nations and regions in Asia and Europe to study advanced methods of transportation management. We have contacted over ten agencies in Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. We have established relations with some big foreign companies. All these measures have played an important role in maintaining and enlarging the Land-Bridge transportation volume.

The Lianyungang Port has opened six international container lines, and the number of regular ship arrivals has reached 50 every month. The number of the containers shipped by Lianyungang port via the NECL to different destinations has reached 30,016 in 1997, comparing with 1995's figure of only 257. At present, Lianyungang has 95% of the total container transportation volume through NECL.

2. *Devoting major efforts to develop economic cooperation along NECL.* Based on the principles of "serve the Land-Bridge, exploit mutual advantages and develop cooperation," Lianyungang has devoted major efforts to develop economic and trade relations with countries along NECL. In 1995, Jiangsu Province held the first "China 1995 Jiangsu New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge Trade Fair." More than 1,000 foreign businessmen from 35 countries and regions and 5,000



At the headquarters of the Port of Lianyungang, the director of the Port Authority (right) briefs conference participants on plans for expanding the port to meet the growing needs of the Eurasian Land-Bridge.

domestic businessmen from 10 provinces and autonomous regions took part in the fair; 423 contracts for utilizing foreign investment of the fair have been concluded, with total investment of US\$1 billion. The total domestic investment of the fair is 1.67 billion renminbi (RMB). Every year, Lianyungang will invite businessmen from countries and regions along NECL to the fair. . . .

3. *Setting up the International Information Center for the Land-Bridge.* With the guide of concerned departments of the state, Lianyungang has successfully founded the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge Information Center. On April 6, 1998, the information center was formally put into operation. The information center has initial linkages with 40 countries and regions along the Land-Bridge. . . . At the same time, we are planning to build an information superhighway along NECL. *Land-Bridge Economy*, published by Lianyungang, is regarded as the working magazine by the China NECL Leading Committee. All of this has played an important role in spreading information concerning the economy of NECL, publicizing the development trends of the Land-Bridge, and promoting politics, economy, technology, and culture along NECL.

4. *Enlarging exchanges with nations and regions along NECL.* In recent years, Lianyungang has strengthened its relations with overseas media and news agencies. An American TV station has begun a new program about NECL. "Travel Notes along the New Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge," filmed by the Central TV Station of China, has gained world-

wide attention. This TV report is mainly about the economy and natural scenery along the Land-Bridge, from Rotterdam to Lianyungang. With the support of the News Office of the State Council and the Xinhua News Agency, *Lianyungang Daily* has organized a "Trip along the NECL." It took about 130,000 km, reported 47 cities along the Longhai Railway, Lanxin Railway, and reached Middle [Central] Asia, East Asia, West Asia, and Europe. . . .

5. *Strengthening the basic construction of the eastern terminal.* The state government and Jiangsu Province pay much attention to the construction and development of Lianyungang. At present, the Lianyungang Port has 31 berths, and 22 of them are 10,000 ton berths. The total annual handling capacity of the port has reached 2.5 million tons. The state government has permitted Lianyungang Port to build the Miao Ling

Third Phase Project, which has a total investment of RMB 628 million. With completion of this project, the container handling capacity of the port will be increased rapidly. Lianyungang has also expanded its airport, and . . . completed the first-class highway from Lianyungang to Nanjing. . . . The double track of the Eastern Longhai Railway will open this year. In the course of constructing a modern communications system, Lianyungang has completed the construction of North Coastal Optical Fiber Cable Project and the Lianyungang sector of the Xuzhou-Lianyungang Optical Fiber Cable Project.

Taking a broad view of the world situation, we find that the world economy is undergoing challenges from globalization. Profound changes have taken place in economic cooperation; however, frictions have intensified. Therefore, promotion of cooperation and exchanges along the Land-Bridge and giving full play to the mutual economic benefit of NECL will play an important role in the development of Eurasian economy. To this end, the urgent tasks are to strengthen coordination of concerned countries and regions, set up a coordination system, and provide support for Land-Bridge transportation and economic development.

In the future, in the course of promoting the economy along the Land-Bridge, our city will speed up the construction of the Lianyungang Port, provide good services, and contribute our efforts to establish the Eurasian economic partnership in the 21st century.

Thank you!