

The Silk Road Dynamic Opens Up New Opportunities for Germany

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A strategic transformation has taken place in the past two weeks—although unnoticed or deliberately suppressed by the mass media in Germany—that at long last gives rise to the justifiable hope that positive solutions for the most serious problems of our time will be found. A series of summits in Vladivostok, Beijing, and Vientiane has brought about a complete reorientation of the relations among the majority of nations in the world. This new strategic situation gives us here in Germany both the opportunity and the challenge to productively achieve the economic and cultural potential of our country .

At the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, on September 2-3, the integration of the Eurasian Economic Union and China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative was advanced. That is a huge step toward a potential common economic space from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe spoke for the 3,000 participants of the conference in emphasizing the intention to develop the Russian Far East as an export hub for the entire Asia-Pacific region.

A very important secondary aspect of this conference was the progress that President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Abe were able to achieve with respect to the Russo-Japanese relationship, which is to be consolidated in December when Putin makes a state visit to Japan. They specifically discussed, among other issues, a peace treaty between the two nations. That enhances the environment for Germany to request that the next



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Russia President Vladimir Putin looks on as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President of the Republic of Korea Park Geun-hye greet each other on Sept. 3 at the Eastern Economic Forum plenary session.

U.S. President accept a peace treaty between the United States and Germany.

The G-20 Summit in Hangzhou on September 4-5, which China had carefully prepared for more than a year with many pre-conferences, signalled a complete realignment of relations among the countries of Asia and beyond—in stark contrast to what is being reported in the Western press. President Xi Jinping's intention to transform the G-20 Summit from an association dealing with crisis management, into an alliance that permanently guides the fate of humanity for the benefit of all, took a great step forward. As President Putin rightfully commented, the results of the G-20 summit are not legally binding, but they constitute a trend for the community of nations, and any state that is working against them will be noticed.

The new trend, established at Hangzhou, is for innovation as the basis of global economic growth, and



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In the wake of the Vladivostok, G-20, and ASEAN Plus China conferences, Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte (left) announced Sept. 13 that he has cancelled the joint U.S.-Philippines patrols in the South China Sea, calling them needless provocations.

that means, above all, promoting the development of developing countries through their optimal participation in scientific advances. That is an aim of China, as reflected in the much larger number of developing countries invited to the G-20 summit as guests than ever before. Xi Jinping underscored China's commitment to realize the industrialization of Africa as a priority, and other government spokesmen welcomed increased investment in Africa by India and Japan. Given the longstanding problems, Xi has long called for the immediate implementation of a new global financial architecture that would serve an innovation-driven growth strategy and bring productivity to the highest possible level.

Asia Rebuffs Obama, Opts for New Silk Road

The ASEAN Plus China Summit, which followed the G-20, handed President Obama a devastating rebuff when he tried to show that “the United States makes the rules, and not China.” The ASEAN nations did not support Obama's attempt to recognize as binding, the recently issued ruling of the International Court of Arbitration in The Hague on the territorial conflicts in the South China Sea. On the contrary, the ASEAN members supported China's position, that all future conflicts should be solved by friendly negotiations and diplomacy, as provided for in the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention of 1982. Even the Philippines, whose previous government had filed the case at The Hague, is

distancing itself from this ruling and has opted for peaceful dialogue with China.

And rather than endorsing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade zone as demanded by Obama, they committed to collaborating with China in the Regional Comprehensive Economy Partnership (RECEP) and with the institutions of the Silk Road Economic Belt such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the New Development Bank (NDB), and the Silk Road Fund. And just in time for the Summit, Canada

announced its membership in the AIIB, which Obama had wanted to prevent.

International media such as *Forbes* and *Time* magazine reported Obama's complete diplomatic isolation. In fact, the Asian nations rejected Obama's confrontation policy and made it unmistakably clear that they prefer China's proposal that they adopt the Chinese economic model and cooperate in the international projects of the New Silk Road.

As for Obama's “last option” for imposing the rules—through passage of the two U.S.-dominated free trade agreements, TPP and Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)—it is gone: The leaders of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, Mitch McConnell and Paul Ryan, have meanwhile declared, for tactical electoral reasons, that these two proposals will no longer be on the legislative agenda this year, and both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump have come out against them.

But that's not the only bad news for Obama: On Sept. 9, and thus immediately before the 15th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the House of Representatives unanimously passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA), which allows American citizens to sue Saudi Arabia for its role in the 9/11 attacks. It had already been passed in the Senate unanimously. Thus Obama, as *The Hill* stated, finds himself in a dilemma: whether to draw on himself the wrath of the 9/11 victims' families and many other Americans by a

veto or a pocket veto, or to be investigated in the course of any judicial inquiry into Saudi Arabia's role because—in the best tradition of Bush and Cheney—he covered up this monstrous scandal throughout his entire presidency.

Germany Has New Options

What is the significance of this transformed strategic constellation, which includes optimism for a successful the cease-fire agreement in Syria and military cooperation between the United States and Russia, which has just been agreed to between Secretary of State John Kerry and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and which allows hope for an end to the war in Syria? Since the Russian intervention in Syria, and China's and India's diplomatic and economic engagement in Syria, there is also hope for economic reconstruction as part of the building of the New Silk Road in this region.

This dramatically changed strategic situation means that Germany has completely new political options—namely, to cooperate with China and the other Asian nations in the economic development of Southern Europe, the Mideast, and Africa, and by doing so, to seize the means to solve the refugee crisis—and at the same time, to dry out the breeding grounds for terrorism.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has apparently recognized the signs of the times, as he presented precisely this perspective in an interview with the Chinese television network CCTV, saying that Italy—in the tradition of Marco Polo and Matteo Ricci—will collaborate comprehensively with China on the New Silk Road, not least in the development of Africa.

Against that backdrop, the speech of German Development Minister Gerd Müller in the most recent budget debate in the Bundestag was highly significant. He compared the horrendous situation in Africa with the impoverishment of broad sections of the population in the early phase of capitalism, and demanded a large-scale Marshall Plan for that continent and other developing countries. This is only possible if German, Italy, and the other European nations, together with China,



CCTV screen grab

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, in an interview with China's CCTV Sept. 3, announced that Italy will collaborate comprehensively with China on the New Silk Road, not least in the development of Africa.

India, Japan, and other countries develop the New Silk Road into the World Land-Bridge, as the BüSo has demanded for so long. Ms. Merkel's fortunes are sinking, the EU finds itself in a continuous process of dissolution after Brexit, and right-populist to right extremist parties are gaining strength in many European countries. None of this would be happening if the people of Europe could see a perspective for the future. The Alternative für Deutschland would not have beaten the CDU in Mecklenburg-Pomerania if Ms. Merkel had said: "We can do this, together with China and the nations of Asia; we can carry out a new Marshall Plan with the building of the New Silk Road into the Mideast and Africa." But we are saying that. We cannot lose this great historic opportunity to create a new and just world economic order, in the way we lost the great historic opportunity of 1989. At that time, Britain, the United States, and France forced the euro on us as the price for German reunification. Today even a fool can see that the euro is a failed experiment, with negative interest rates, laughable 0.3% growth in the Eurozone, and bankrupt banks all over Europe.

Today Britain is out, the United States is isolated, and France is economically finished. Germany could do them—and itself—the greatest favor by replacing the old "no longer sustainable model," as Xi Jinping called it, with a win-win perspective for the development of all. It is high time that Germany looked to its own interests.