

Xi, Sanchez vow closer ties

China and Spain pledge joint efforts to uphold multilateralism as leaders meet in Beijing

By ZHOU JIN and ZHAO JIA

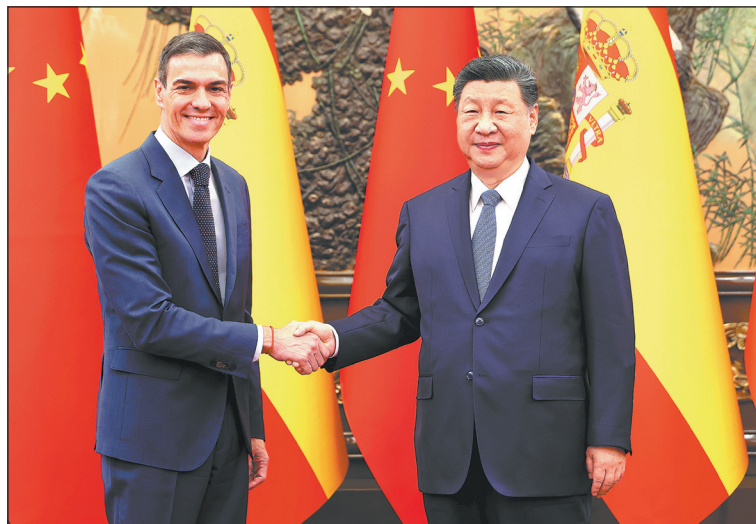
China and Spain expressed their commitment to advancing their ties with strategic resolve and vowed to work together to uphold multilateralism amid threats to the world order.

The pledges were made on April 14 during talks between President Xi Jinping and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, who was on a five-day official visit to Beijing — his fourth visit to China in four consecutive years. Sanchez wrapped up his tour on April 15.

Noting that today's turbulent world faces the struggle between right and might, Xi called on both China and Spain, as countries that value principle and moral integrity, to enhance communication, consolidate mutual trust, and strengthen cooperation to oppose the world's regression to the "law of the jungle", and jointly uphold true multilateralism.

How a country approaches international law, and the international order, reflects its worldview, its conception of order and values, and its sense of responsibility, he said.

He emphasized that both China and Spain should safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core, as well as the global order based on international law.



President Xi Jinping meets with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on April 14.

FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

They should also promote an equal and orderly multipolar world and universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and advance the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, he said.

Regarding bilateral relations, Xi said that an important lesson from the steadily growing bilateral ties is that both sides have made the right decisions based on shared interests.

Facts have proved that deepening cooperation serves the interests of both peoples, and enhances the strength and confidence of both

sides in pursuing a path of independence and self-reliance, he said.

Xi called for Beijing and Madrid to place the development of bilateral relations in an important position in their respective foreign policies and support each other in defending sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He also called on the two countries to seize opportunities and seek innovation-driven development, enhance cooperation in fields such as trade, new energy, and the intelligent economy, and encourage exchanges in culture, education, scientific research, and sports.

Sanchez expressed willingness to communicate and coordinate with China to jointly address challenges such as international geopolitics, trade protectionism, and climate change.

Spain opposes a new Cold War and attempts to decouple and sever supply chains, he said, adding that the country supports Europe and China in enhancing their communication, mutual understanding, and cooperation.

The sound development of European Union-China relations serves the common interests of both sides and contributes to global peace and stability, he said.

Miguel Otero-Iglesias, a professor of practice of international political economy at Spain's IE University, said that Spain has always been pro-engagement and believes in openness, which is why it has been pushing back against decoupling from China.

Decoupling from China and containing China is a "strategic mistake", said Otero-Iglesias, who is also a senior analyst of international political economy at Elcano Royal Institute in Madrid.

In a meeting with Premier Li Qiang on April 14, Sanchez said that Spain supports enhanced dialogue and communication between the EU and China, proper handling of economic and trade differences, and greater cooperation in trade and

investment, and the country is willing to play an active role to this end.

Li expressed China's readiness to work with Spain to expand and upgrade bilateral trade in a more balanced manner and strengthen cooperation in areas such as new energy vehicles and transportation.

China is willing to work with Spain to promote the high-quality development of the China-Europe Railway Express, and jointly build international green shipping corridors, Li added.

After the meeting, Li and Sanchez witnessed the signing of several cooperation documents, covering aspects including trade, education, and science and technology.

Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee Zhao Leji, China's top legislator, also met with Sanchez on April 14.

At a news conference that day, Sanchez said that bilateral political dialogue had been elevated to the highest level in 53 years.

He said the visit is also aimed at advancing a new, multipolar, and more stable international order in which relations are built on mutual respect, pragmatism, and a shared vision of prosperity.

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Stronger Sino-Russian strategic unity urged

At meeting with Lavrov in Beijing, President Xi stresses need to deepen all-round ties

By ZHAO JIA

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President Xi Jinping said on April 15 that the stability and certainty of China-Russia relations are truly valuable in a changing and turbulent world, and he called on the two countries to maintain close and effective strategic coordination.

Xi made the remarks in Beijing during a meeting with visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Noting that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the China-Russia strategic partnership of coordination and the 25th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, Xi said the treaty's strong vitality and exemplary role have become more significant.

Xi said that both sides should

fully implement the important consensus reached between him and Russian President Vladimir Putin, strengthen strategic communication and enhance diplomatic coordination, so that the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination will reach new heights, grow more steadily and advance further.

Xi also said the two sides should maintain strategic resolve, trust and support each other, pursue common development, and manage their own affairs well.

He stressed the need for the two countries to fully leverage the advantages of proximity and complementarity to deepen all-round cooperation and enhance the resilience of their respective development.

Facing changes unseen in a century, Xi emphasized that China and Russia should firmly safeguard

their legitimate interests, uphold solidarity among Global South countries, and demonstrate a sense of responsibility as major countries and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

He called on the two countries to strengthen multilateral coordination, firmly uphold and practice multilateralism, work together to revitalize the authority and dynamism of the UN, engage in closer coordination and cooperation within frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, and promote a more just and equitable international order.

Lavrov said that Russia-China relations have shown a high degree of resilience amid a complex external environment, and that Moscow stands ready to work with Beijing to take bilateral ties to a higher level and make a greater contribution to

world peace and stability.

The China-Russia ties have maintained high-level development with fruitful cooperation across a wide range of fields. Xi and Putin have met more than 40 times since 2013. In February this year, they held a video meeting.

China has remained Russia's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching \$228.1 billion in 2025, marking the third consecutive year that it exceeded the \$200 billion mark.

People-to-people exchanges have also grown closer. The two countries now grant reciprocal visa-free access to holders of ordinary passports, and 2026 and 2027 have been designated as the China-Russia Years of Education.

On April 14, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Lavrov compared notes on the preparations for the meeting between the two heads

of state within the year. Reports said that Lavrov told journalists on April 15 that President Putin will visit China in the first half of this year.

The two ministers also exchanged views on major international and regional issues of common concern, including the United States-Iran conflict, the situation in the Asia-Pacific and the Ukraine crisis.

Li Ziguang, director of the Department for European-Central Asian Studies at the China Institute of International Studies, said that China-Russia ties have reached their current level because the two countries have consistently adhered to mutual respect, good-neighborliness and win-win cooperation, while steadily strengthening economic, trade and people-to-people links and building political and security trust to an unprecedented level.