



CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING DELIVERS "IMPORTANT" SPEECH AT SEMINAR FOR LEADING PROVINCIAL AND MINISTERIAL CADRES ATTENDED BY ALL SENIOR CCP AND MILITARY OFFICIALS

On January 16, Chinese President Xi Jinping addressed the opening seminar of a conference for leading cadres at the provincial and ministerial levels to promote high quality development at the Central Party School in Beijing. In a lengthy report Xinhua said Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech 'emphasizing that the path of financial development with Chinese characteristics not only follows the objective laws of modern financial development, but also has distinctive characteristics that are suitable for our country's national conditions and is consistent with the Western financial model. There is an essential difference. We must strengthen our self-confidence and continue to explore and improve in practice to make this road wider and wider'. It said Xi Jinping pointed out that since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 'we have actively explored the laws of financial development in the new era, continuously deepened our understanding of the nature of socialist finance with Chinese characteristics, continuously promoted financial practical innovation, theoretical innovation, and institutional innovation, accumulated valuable experience, and gradually stepped out of the path for financial development with Chinese characteristics, which is: upholding the centralized and unified leadership of the Party Central Committee on financial work, adhering to a people-centered value orientation, adhering to the fundamental purpose of financial services to the real economy, and adhering to risk prevention and control as the basis of financial work'. He emphasized that a financial power should be based on a strong economic foundation, have world-leading economic strength, scientific and technological strength and comprehensive national strength, and also possess a series of key core financial elements, namely: a strong currency, a strong central bank, and strong financial institutions, a strong

international financial center, strong financial supervision, and a strong team of financial talents. Building a financial power requires long-term efforts and long-term success. We must speed up the construction of a modern financial system with Chinese characteristics, establish and improve a scientific and sound financial regulation system, a reasonably structured financial market system, a system of financial institutions with division of labor and cooperation, a complete and effective financial supervision system, and a diversified and professional financial products and service system'. Xi Jinping pointed out that 'efforts should be made to prevent and resolve financial risks, especially systemic risks. Financial supervision must be "thorny" and sharp'. ... All localities must plan for the overall situation based on one region and implement local risk management and stability maintenance responsibilities. In the process of risk management, corruption must be resolutely punished and moral risks must be strictly prevented'. 'Crack down hard on financial crimes'. Xi Jinping emphasized that 'by expanding opening up to the outside world, we must improve the efficiency and ability of our country's financial resource allocation, enhance international competitiveness and the influence of rules, and carefully control the pace and intensity'. It is necessary to promote 'Stability and predictability, standardizing overseas investment and financing activities, and improving financial support for the joint construction of the "Belt and Road". It is necessary to strengthen the interconnection of domestic and overseas financial markets, improve the level of cross-border investment and financing facilitation, and actively participate in international financial regulatory reforms. We must maintain the bottom line of financial security under opening conditions'. Saying cadres should not be eager for quick success, Xi Jinping 'finally emphasized that leading cadres at all levels should enhance their financial thinking and financial work capabilities, adhere to the idea of a game of chess between economics and finance, conscientiously implement the various decisions and arrangements of the Central Financial Work Conference, coordinate the promotion of high-quality economic and financial development, and build a solid foundation for China-style modernization. Comprehensively promote the construction of a strong country and the great cause of national rejuvenation and make new and greater contributions'.

Cai Qi, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, presided over the opening ceremony. Cai Qi pointed out that 'General Secretary Xi Jinping's important speech was profound in thought, broad in vision, incisive in argumentation, and rich in connotation. It was highly political, theoretical, targeted, and instructive and was of great significance to the whole party, especially senior leaders. It is of great significance for

cadres to correctly understand the situation and tasks facing China's financial development, deepen their understanding of the essential laws and development paths of financial work, comprehensively enhance financial work skills and risk response capabilities, and unswervingly follow the path of financial development with Chinese characteristics. We must deeply understand and grasp the rich connotation, essence and practical requirements of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important speech, deeply understand the decisive significance of "two establishments", resolutely achieve "two maintenances", and effectively integrate thoughts and actions into the decision-making and deployment of the Party Central Committee'.

Politburo Standing Committee Members Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Ding Xuexiang, and Li Xi, and Vice President Han Zheng attended the opening ceremony.

Politburo Members, Secretary of the CCP CC Secretariat, Vice Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, State Councilors, President of the Supreme People's Court, Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, Vice Chairman of the CPPCC National Committee and members of the Central Military Commission attended the opening ceremony.

(Comment: The meeting coincided with Chinese Premier Li Qiang's meetings with the global audience in Davos. Xi Jinping told the senior cadres that the "path of China's distinctive financial development...differs fundamentally from Western models". Li Qiang is the most senior Chinese official to speak at Davos since Xi Jinping in 2017.)

CHINA-LEADERSHIP: LATEST ISSUE OF 'QIUSHI' (SEEKING TRUTH) PUBLISHED XI JINPING'S ARTICLE ON UNITED FRONT WORK IN THE NEW ERA

Xinhua (January 15) announced that an article on the Party's united front work in the new era by Xi Jinping would be published on January 16, in this year's second issue (2024/02 dated January 15) of the CCP's theoretical fortnightly Qiushi Journal. It said the article stresses that since the 18th Party Congress in 2012, the Party has made comprehensive plans on the united front work and pushed forward the work to achieve historic progress. The Qiu Shi article summarised 12 points among which are: The Party's work on ethnic affairs should focus on forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation; The principle that religions in

China must be Chinese in orientation should be upheld; United front work in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan and among overseas Chinese should be improved to rally support; and the Party's overall leadership over the united front work should be enhanced. The article calls on the whole Party to fully and faithfully implement the thought.

(Comment: The Qiu Shi article is captioned 'Completely, accurately and comprehensively implement the important thoughts on doing a good job in the party's united front work in the new era'. The speech was originally delivered by Xi Jinping in July 2022.)

CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING'S INSTRUCTIONS TO SECURITY CONFERENCE READ OUT BY CHEN WENQING, SECRETARY PLAC

The state-owned CCTV televised the two-day (January 13-14) conference on security in Beijing where Chinese President Xi Jinping called on institutions involved in the nation's political and legal affairs to resolutely safeguard national security, bolster their political acumen and judgment, and prevent and resolve major security risks. Xi Jinping called on judicial, procuratorial, public security and national security organs as well as justice departments to uphold the absolute leadership of the CCP and faithfully fulfil their duties and responsibilities. He reiterated the need to carry forward the "Fengqiao model" for promoting community-level governance in the new era. The instruction was conveyed by Chen Wenqing, Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the CCP CC, who stressed that they 'must adhere to the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, deeply understand the decisive significance of the "two establishments" and strengthen the "four establishments". consciousness", strengthen the "four self-confidences", achieve "two safeguards", adhere to the party's absolute leadership over political and legal work, and forge a strong political and legal iron army. We must focus on promoting Chinese-style modernization, the biggest political issue, grasp the direction of the times, focus on safeguarding national security, safeguarding social stability, ensuring and promoting social fairness and justice, ensuring high-quality development, and strengthening the political construction of the party in political and legal institutions. Work modernization supports and serves Chinese-style modernization'. The People's Daily (January 14) revealed that Wang Xiaohong, Secretary of the CCP CC Secretariat and Minister of Public Security, presided over the meeting and made a concluding speech. Zhang Jun, President of the Supreme People's

Court, and Ying Yong, Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, attended the meeting.

ii) The People's Daily (January 14) published a Commentary titled 'In the second batch of thematic education, the Ministry of Public Security vigorously carried forward the fine tradition of "going down to the grassroots": Doing practical things with heart and emotion, serving the masses, showing warmth (learning ideas, strengthening party spirit, emphasizing practice and building new merits).

iii) The state-owned CCTV (January 14) telecast a report on the conference.

CHINA-LEADERSHIP: NPC CHAIRMAN AND PBSC MEMBER ZHAO LEJI CONDUCTED A 2-DAY INSPECTION TOUR OF TIANJIN MUNICIPALITY

Politburo Standing Committee member and Chairman of the NPC, Zhao Leji visited Tianjin Municipality on a 2-day inspection on January 15-16, and met the the Standing Committee of the Tianjin Municipal People's Congress when he heard opinions concerning the work report of the Standing Committee of the NPC. He listened to eight representatives from different fields at a seminar on January 15, and said the standing committee attached great importance to the drafting of the work report, with opinions solicited on multiple occasions.

CHINA-LEADERSHIP: CHEN XIANGQUN APPOINTED LIAONING PARTY SECRETARY ON JANUARY 15

Chen Xiangqun was appointed Party Secretary of the Standing Committee of Liaoning Provincial People's Congress on January 15, 2024.

(Comment: Chen Xiangqun was born in November 1962, graduated from Jilin University of Technology in 1983. He has served in the Guangxi-Zhuang Autonomous Region and Liaoning province).

CHINA-SENIOR APPOINTMENTS: CHEN LONG APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF NINGBO CPPCC

Zhejiang Chao News disclosed that the third meeting of the 16th Ningbo Municipal Committee of the CPPCC on January 19, elected Chen Long as Chairman of the CPPCC. He had previously served as secretary of the Ningbo CPPCC Party Leadership Group.

(Comment: Chen Long, of Han nationality, was born in July 1964 in Zhuji, Zhejiang. He joined the CCP in December 1992 and started working in July 1986. He has a postgraduate degree from the Central Party School.)

CHINA-LEADERSHIP: PRESIDENT OF CHINA'S SUPREME PEOPLE'S COURT TELLS CHIEFS OF HIGHER COURTS TO UPHOLD "ABSOLUTE LEADERSHIP" OF CCP

The President of China's Supreme People's Court called for the quality and effective administration of justice at a 2-day national meeting (January 15-16). He told higher court chiefs that it is imperative to uphold the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of China in judicial matters and urged them to handle cases that may seem trivial but bear directly on public support as if they were pursuing charges themselves.

CHINA-SENIOR APPOINTMENTS: STATE COUNCIL APPOINTS HU HAIFENG AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF CIVIL AFFAIRS

The State Council appointed (January 16) Hu Haifeng as Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs; Song Qichao as Assistant Minister of Finance; and Hao Junhui as Political Commissar of the National Fire Rescue Bureau.

CHINA-SENIOR APPOINTMENTS: PENG SHUANGJIE APPOINTED PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY SECRETARY OF PARTY OF CENTRAL CHINA NORMAL UNIVERSITY

The website of China's Ministry of Education on January 18, announced the appointment of 'Comrade' Peng Shuangjie as the President and Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of Central China Normal University.

(Comment: Peng Shuangjie was born in March 1968, is a graduate student, Doctor of Science, member of the Communist Party of China, and Professor. He is an expert with special government allowances from the State Council, winner of the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, and a candidate of the Ministry of Education's "New Century Excellent Talents Support Plan" and Hubei Province's major talent project "High-end Talent Leadership Training Plan.")

CHINA-SENIOR APPOINTMENTS: JIN YAN APPOINTED PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY PARTY SECRETARY OF CHINA UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM

The Ministry of Education and the Party Leadership Group of the Ministry of Education on January 17, announced the appointment of Jin Yan as the President and Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of China University of Petroleum (Beijing).

(Comment: Jin Yan was born in August 1972 and is a graduate student, a Doctor of Engineering, a member of the Communist Party of China, and a Professor. He has been working at China University of Petroleum (Beijing) for a long time. China University of Petroleum (Beijing), formerly known as Beijing Petroleum Institute, was founded in 1953. It laid the foundation for the exploration and development of petroleum higher education in China. Since its establishment, the school has been an industry-leading university under national key construction.)

CHINA-ANTI-CORRUPTION: FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF ANHUI PROVINCE PEOPLE'S CONGRESS EXPELLED FROM CCP

The Anhui Provincial Commission for Discipline Inspection and Supervision after a case review and investigation into Bai Jinming, the former party member and Secretary-General of the Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee, expelled Bai Jinming from the CCP on January 16, for serious violations of discipline and law. The official announcement said 'Bai Jinming, as a party member and leading cadre, lost his ideals and beliefs, betrayed his original intention and mission, had no sense of awe, no bottom line in discipline and law, refused organizational rescue, deliberately resisted organizational review'. Among the various charges it also said he 'does not explain the problem truthfully when organizing conversations and correspondence, and seeks personnel benefits for others in violation of regulations; violate the rules of life' 'openly turns the power granted by the party and the people into a tool to satisfy his own selfish desires, and actively pursues illegal businessmen to "hunt" him'. It said 'He did not restrain himself or stop after the 18th National Congress of the Party. The nature is serious and the impact is bad, so he should be punished'.

CHINA-ANTI-CORRUPTION: GUIZHOU REVEALS ITS BIGGEST ANTI-CORRUPTION CASE INVOLVES FORMER DEPUTY SECRETARY OF POLITICAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Guizhou Provincial Commission for Discipline Inspection and Supervision telecast a film on January 18 highlighting the case of Liu Wenxin, former Deputy Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the Guizhou Provincial Committee, as a bad example of "top leaders" who abuse their power and take the lead in violating political disciplines and rules, taking the lead in corruption, and integrating political degeneration, economic greed, and life corruption. It said it is the largest case involving the largest amount of money ever investigated by the Guizhou Provincial Discipline Inspection and Supervision Bureau. It said Liu Wenxin has never truly established his ideals and beliefs, his political ambitions are inflated, his political quality is bad, and he has been practicing "two-facedness" and "pseudo-loyalty" for a long time.

CHINA-CCP: PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTARY ON "SOCIAL REVOLUTION"

People's Daily (January 17) Commentary captioned 'To lead a great social revolution as the fundamental purpose (people's perspective) ——Firmly grasp the practical requirements of the “nine ones” and further promote the party's self-revolution' said 'The courage to self-revolution is a distinctive sign that distinguishes our party from other political parties. It is the secret to the party's success in breaking out of the historical cycle of the rise and fall of chaos and becoming more dynamic after a hundred years of vicissitudes.' It said 'Self-revolution and social revolution are organically unified and mutually reinforcing. The Party's self-revolution is the necessary prerequisite and important guarantee for the social revolution led by the Party, and the social revolution led by the Party is the value pursuit and goal orientation of the Party's self-revolution. Looking back at the century-old history of the Party, the key to the reason why our Party has endured many hardships and thrived is that it has always insisted on the Party's need to supervise the Party, never slackened on its strict self-governance in an all-round way...'

CHINA-CCP: GUANGMING DAILY PUBLISHED ARTICLE ON CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING'S SPEECH ON MAO'S 130TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

The Guangming Daily (January 17) published an article by Liu Jianhui, researcher at the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and former Deputy Director of education at the Central Party School, captioned 'The contemporary value of Mao Zedong Thought and its practical significance——Learn the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important speech at the symposium commemorating the 130th anniversary of the birth of Comrade Mao Zedong'. It said 'Mao Zedong Thought has been continuously enriched and developed in conjunction with new realities. It has become the spiritual pillar and spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation. It has a long-term guiding role and is something we must hold high'. It added 'General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that Mao Zedong Thought is the precious spiritual wealth of our party and will guide our actions in the long term.'

CHINA-CCP: PEOPLE'S DAILY PUBLISHED ARTICLE ON DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

The People's Daily (January 15) published an article by Chen Jiagang, Professor at the School of Party History and Party Building at Renmin University of China, captioned 'Continuously

deepen our understanding of the whole process of people's democracy' where he quoted Chinese President Xi Jinping pointing out in the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China: "The whole-process people's democracy is the essential attribute of socialist democratic politics, and it is the broadest, most authentic and most effective democracy." Chen Jiagang added in the article that 'The whole-process people's democracy is not water without a source. It has no roots, but is a great creation of our party uniting and leading the people to pursue, develop and realize democracy. It is a major achievement made by continuously deepening the understanding of the development laws of democratic politics and promoting innovation in the practice of democratic politics'. He says 'Since the new era, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core has based itself on the new historical position. In the process of promoting socialist modernization, it has put forward the major concept of people's democracy throughout the process, improved the system of people being the masters of the country, expanded democratic channels, and enriched democratic Form, promote the whole process of people's democracy to achieve historic achievements, and become a landmark achievement of great innovative significance in the field of democratic politics in my country in the new era'.

CHINA-CCP: PEOPLE'S DAILY PUBLISHED A COMMENTARY ON INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION

The People's Daily (January 14) published a Commentator's article titled 'Build an iron army of discipline inspection and supervision that reassures the Party Central Committee and satisfies the people—On studying and implementing the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important speech at the third plenary session of the 20th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

CHINA-CCP: ARTICLE BY NDRC PARTY GROUP PUBLISHED BY PEOPLE'S DAILY ASSESSES RISKS AS INCLUDING INTENSIFICATION OF GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS AND COMPETITION BETWEEN MAJOR POWERS

The People's Daily (January 17) published an article by the National Development and Reform Commission Party Group under the caption 'Deeply grasp the overall requirements and policy orientation to consolidate and enhance the positive trend of economic recovery (in-depth study and implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a

New Era)'. Referring to the Central Economic Work Conference held at the end of last year, it urged careful study of 'General Secretary Xi Jinping comprehensive' summary of the economic work in 2023 for doing a good job in the current and future economic work. It said 'Since last year, under the strong leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, we have adhered to the general tone of seeking progress while maintaining stability, withstood external pressure, overcome internal difficulties, focused on expanding domestic demand, optimizing structure, boosting confidence, and preventing and defusing risks.' It assessed: 'From the perspective of risk challenges, major changes in the world that have not been seen in a century are accelerating. The balance of international power has been profoundly adjusted. The game between major powers has become more intense. Geopolitical conflicts have intensified. Under the constraints of high inflation, high debt, and high interest rates, the growth momentum of the world economy has weakened, risks and challenges have increased, and the adverse impact of the external environment on my development has increased. At the same time, domestic effective demand is insufficient, some industries have overcapacity, social expectations are weak, and there are still many risks and hidden dangers, all of which we need to work hard to solve in our development. From the perspective of development opportunities, pursuing peace and development is still the common aspiration of people of all countries. Economic globalization is still the general trend. A new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation are reshaping the world economic structure. The adjustment of the global political and economic pattern contains new opportunities. my country is the main power source and stabilizer of global growth.'

CHINA-S&T: CHINA IS DEVELOPING SPACE PROGRAMME WITH STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

An article in the Diplomat (January 12) highlighted that China's Shenlong (Divine Dragon) military spaceplane programme has major strategic implications. The Shenlong craft was designed by the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT) with Chinese media previously identifying applications for the Shenlong as astronaut transport, space station resupply, space tourism, and satellite deployment. Observing that CASC's Shenlong is not the only Chinese spaceplane initiative, the article said the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC) is developing a concept called Tengyun (Cloud Rider) where a Shenlong-similar spaceplane is launched from an air-breathing first stage. It said CASIC is also

working on a commercial spaceplane, to be launched by 2030. CASC has released a concept for a reusable “Mars express” spaceplane for regular transit from Earth to Mars and back.

CHINA-ECONOMY: CHINA BECOMES WORLD'S LARGEST AUTO EXPORTER

The China Passenger Car Association on January 9 estimated that 5.26 million made-in-China vehicles were sold overseas last year and said that would likely be almost a million more than exports of made-in-Japan cars.

CHINA-ECONOMY: SHANGHAI AND SHENZHEN STOCK EXCHANGES REGISTER A THREE AND A HALF YEAR LOW

The Economic Observer (January 17) reported that the Shanghai Stock Exchange Index fell more than 2% and hit a three-and-a-half-year low. It said more than 5,000 stocks in Shanghai and Shenzhen cities fell, while less than 300 stocks rose. The paper quoted a person from a Beijing-based fund company who observed that under the current market conditions, the sentiment of domestic and foreign investors is relatively low. At the same time, the high yield on U.S. debt has prompted low enthusiasm for foreign capital allocation, which will lead to a trend of further outflows of foreign capital. It added that facing the current market conditions, a private equity founder has chosen to "lay down" and wait for the market to reverse.

CHINA-ECONOMY: NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS CLAIMS CHINA SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE OF 5.2 PER CENT LAST YEAR BUT PAPER ACKNOWLEDGES THAT STOCK MARKET AND REAL ESTATE MARKET CONTINUE TO DECLINE

At a press conference held by the State Council Information Office on January 17, on the performance of the national economy in 2023, Kang Yi, Director of China's National Bureau of Statistics, said that overall, the main expected goals have been successfully achieved. China's economic growth rate of 5.2% in 2023 is not only higher than the global expected growth rate of about 3%, but also ranks among the best among the world's major economies. He added that China's economy is expected to contribute more than 30% to world economic growth in 2023, making it the largest engine of world economic growth. At the same time the Economic

Observer (January 17) quoted Chang Haizhong, Executive Director of Fitch Industrial and Commercial Enterprise Department, saying that residents' savings have continued to grow rapidly since 2022, and there are currently no signs of significant conversion into consumption and investment, indicating that residents generally adopt cautious and defensive household financial planning. In addition, in recent years, prices in the stock market and real estate market have continued to decline, and the negative wealth effect has an inhibitory effect on consumption.

ii) Separately, the Financial Times (January 17) reported that Beijing issued private instructions telling some institutional investors not to sell and preventing them from being net sellers on certain days.

CHINA-ECONOMY: APPROX. 9 PERCENT INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE LEVEL FOR JIANGSU AND ZHEJIANG PROVINCES FROM JANUARY 1, 2024

Effective from Jan. 1, 2024, the provincial minimum wage levels in the rich eastern provinces of Jiangsu and Zhejiang will be increased by approximately 9%.

CHINA-SECURITY: MOSS WARNS IT WILL VIGOROUSLY COUNTER "TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE SEPARATIST ACTS AND EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE"

The official WeChat account of the Ministry of State Security (MoSS) on January 17, posted an article titled "The National Security Agency Resolutely Opposes "Taiwan Independence," Separatist Acts and External Interference." It said "if the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces and external interfering forces dare to provoke, the National Security Agency will vigorously counter them in strict accordance with the decisions and arrangements of the Central Committee of the Party. The article stated that the results of this election cannot change the fundamental structure and development direction of cross-strait relations, cannot change the common desire of compatriots on both sides to get closer and develop closer ties, and cannot obstruct the overall trend that the motherland will eventually be unified. The article emphasizes that in the face of the Taiwan Strait situation after two elections in the Taiwan region, the Ministry of State Security will thoroughly implement the decisions and arrangements of the Central Committee of the Party. It will serve the overall work on Taiwan by the central

government, precisely strike and contain the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces, firmly counteract external forces interfering in the Taiwan Strait issue, and will never allow any person or force to violate and split China's sacred territory. The article also states that since the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) took office, the Taiwan intelligence agencies have actively served as the "vanguard" and "frontline" for the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces, intensifying intelligence infiltration into the mainland.

CHINA-SECURITY: CHINA'S MOSS UNCOVERS ESPIONAGE CASE INVOLVING BRITAIN'S MI6

The Ministry of State Security on January 10 disclosed a significant espionage case involving the UK's Secret Intelligence Service, MI6. The revelation centers on MI6's establishment of an "intelligence cooperative relationship with a foreign national named Huang, who led a consulting firm abroad. Despite not disclosing Huang's nationality, the Ministry revealed that, acting on MI6 instructions, he entered China multiple times, gathering intelligence and identifying targets for MI6's counterespionage efforts. It said MI6 provided Huang with professional intelligence training and specialized spy equipment. A comprehensive investigation uncovered evidence of Huang's espionage activities, prompting China to take legal measures against him. Huang reportedly supplied MI6 with 14 classified pieces of information and three intelligence reports.

CHINA-PLA: GUANGMING DAILY PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTING THE 5 POINTS OF ARMY BUILDING IN THE 'NEW ERA'

The 'Research Center for Xi Jinping Thought on Strengthening the Military' published an article captioned 'Understand the scientific system of Xi Jinping's thoughts on strengthening the military from an academic perspective' in the Guangming Daily on January 14. The article said 'Political army building is the primary and fundamental issue in the construction and development of the people's army. Since the new era, President Xi Jinping has clearly stated that "political army building is the foundation of our army." He has led the convening of the Gutian Army Political Work Conference, the Central Military Commission Party Building Conference, and the Army's Ideological and Political Education Work Conference, etc'. It listed the five points of political thought on army building in the new era, namely: (i) 'the political point of view is to first look at the politics of army building. The Party's absolute leadership

over the military is an essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics, an important political advantage of the Party and the country, and the foundation of the people's military and the soul of a strong military. We must talk politics with a clear-cut stand and stick to this most fundamental issue'. (ii) 'is the political stance of implementing the Chairman Responsibility System of the Military Commission with higher standards and stricter requirements. The Chairman's Responsibility System of the Military Commission is the fundamental system and fundamental realization form that upholds the Party's absolute leadership over the military. It solves the issue of the supreme leadership and command authority of our military. It must be observed as the highest political requirement and maintained by the highest political discipline'. (iii) 'is to improve the political design of the party-led military system. Upholding the party's absolute leadership over the military is guaranteed by a complete set of systems. The party committee system, the dual-chief system, the political committee system, etc. are an institutional arrangement and a political design that must be consistently adhered to'. (iv) 'the key is to meet the political standard of "absolute". Our army is armed with guns, and its loyalty to the party must be sole, complete, unconditional, unadulterated, and without any moisture'. And (v) 'is the political determination to promote political rectification in the spirit of rectification. Political discipline and political rules must be strict and solid, and the four fundamental things of ideals and beliefs, party spirit principles, combat effectiveness standards, and political work prestige must be firmly established in the entire military. The construction of party style and clean government and the fight against corruption are always on the road. Promote the normalization and long-term effectiveness of style construction'.

CHINA-PLA: PLA DAILY ARTICLE URGES PLA OFFICERS TO DEVELOP SENSE OF URGENCY AS "100-YEAR GOAL OF FOUNDING THE ARMY ENTERS PERIOD OF STRENUOUS STRUGGLE"

On January 17, the PLA Daily published an article by a PLA officer Luo Jiale (Unit 94106) captioned: 'There is a ticking sound in my heart'. It recalled that in the past China had worked hard and with urgency. When Mao instructed that hydrogen bombs must be rapidly developed, it said "From the explosion of the first atomic bomb to the successful test of the first hydrogen bomb, it took the United States more than seven years, while our country only took two years and eight months." It said that again "the realization of the 100-year goal of the founding of the army has entered a period of strenuous struggle and a sprint period of increasing pressure. At

this moment, the vast majority of officers and soldiers can let the ticking sound ring in their hearts all the time, striving to be the "vanguard" of high-level war preparation, high-efficiency struggle, and high-quality development". But, the article regretted, "there are still some officers and soldiers who are unwilling to push, take their time, and either go with the flow, stepping on the watermelon rind and sliding wherever they go." It stressed that the sense of urgency comes from a sense of mission, from a sense of responsibility and from a sense of crisis. In conclusion it exhorted "we must realize that the tighter the time, the less likely it is that everything will be smooth sailing, and the less likely we are to blindly meet deadlines. When charging towards realizing the centenary goal of the founding of the army as scheduled, we must grasp the dialectics of "urgent" and "not urgent", properly handle the relationship between "urgent" and "success", and prevent "three steps from becoming two". You must be careful not to lose your pace while "running blindly without looking at the road ahead". A distinction should be made. If the work is "haste makes waste", the work will be advanced steadily; if the work is "late and slow," the work will be accelerated. Only in this way can we reach the destination safely with steady steps."

(Comment: PLA Unit 94106 has been identified as: Air Force 107th Regiment of the 36th Bomber Division of the Central Theater Air Force (Unit 94106)

CHINA-PLA: CMC GENERAL OFFICE ISSUES MEASURES FOR RECRUITMENT OF SOLDIER CADETS IN MILITARY ACADEMIES

The Guangming Daily (January 18) reported that the CMC General Office has issued the "Measures for Recruiting Soldiers as Students in Military Academies" and these will be implemented from February 1, 2024. The Measures 'adhere to Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as guidance, thoroughly implement Xi Jinping's thinking on strengthening the military, and deeply carry out the military education policy of the new era'. It focuses on preparing for war, follows the basic laws of talent growth, closely addresses new changes in soldiers' cultural levels and developmental needs. The document systematically outlines the conditions for enlisting soldiers as students in military academies, including registration procedures, physical examinations, examination organization, policy scoring, admission allocation, enrolment re-examination, etc., in accordance with the guiding principles of Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era and the new requirements of military education in the new era. The Measures consist of 11 chapters

and 62 articles: Following the principles of war preparedness, emphasizing grassroots involvement, comprehensive assessment, and the principle of increasing the proportion of military literacy assessment, it strengthens the orientation of military training. The document introduces the integration of enlisting officers and non-commissioned officers for vocational and technical education, broadening the channels for outstanding soldiers' growth and development. It refines the criteria for merit awards, adds points for candidates from challenging and remote areas, motivating a large number of soldiers to serve diligently and strive for excellence. The document specifies the organization of exams in special circumstances, improves the mechanisms for exam scores and physical re-examinations, safeguards the legitimate rights and interests of candidates, and enhances the management of key stages such as exams and admissions.

CHINA-PLA: PLA EXERCISES AND NEW EQUIPMENT IN WESTERN THEATRE COMMAND

Huaxia (January 10) reported that on January 2, the Lhasa Garrison District in Tibet hosted a dynamic live-fire shooting competition for its officers and soldiers, emphasizing precision marksmanship and tactical expertise. The event aimed to enhance combat readiness and marksmanship skills, with participants showcasing their proficiency in handling firearms under realistic conditions. The rigorous training focused on refining accuracy, speed, and tactical decision-making capabilities, highlighting the district's commitment to maintaining a highly skilled and prepared military force.

ii) A report by Jianjianshuo Technology from Guangdong in Baidu on January 10 claimed that a border defence regiment of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has unveiled innovative rechargeable heating boots to combat the harsh cold in plateau and alpine regions. The rechargeable boots, equipped with electric heating chips and lithium batteries, maintain a temperature of around 40 degrees, effectively preventing frostbite and significantly improving the comfort and efficiency of the troops. PLA has also upgraded the patrol equipment of border guards, including the introduction of portable oxygen concentrators weighing only 3 kgs, aiming to enhance overall efficiency and safety during demanding tasks in harsh natural conditions. The report said the Indian media "said that the physical fitness of Chinese soldiers has surpassed that of the Indian army, while the Indian military said that it is developing similar equipment to narrow the gap with China. These comments fully illustrate the improvement of

China's combat effectiveness in high-altitude areas and also reflect China's leading position in the high-tech field." It added that microbaric oxygen chambers, only the size of a small cabin and which can accommodate 4 to 6 officers and soldiers, have been provided to posts located at very high altitudes. These can be transported and installed at any place and time, providing more flexible and timely oxygen support for plateau posts. The report disclosed that to provide real-time intelligence a series of high-tech equipment in reconnaissance, surveillance, communications and other aspects, providing strong support for the combat capabilities of the border defense forces had been deployed. These include new drones, intelligent surveillance systems and high-performance communications equipment. It expressed the "hope that these high-tech equipment will make border guards even more powerful, better able to defeat natural and military enemies, and make greater contributions to safeguarding national sovereignty and security and promoting regional peace and stability".

CHINA-BEIJING: BEIJING'S PPCC SESSION OPENS ON JANUARY 20

The second session of the 14th Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference opens on January 20.

CHINA-GUANGDONG: SUN ZHIYANG ELECTED MAYOR OF GUANGZHOU ON JANUARY 18

On January 18, the fourth meeting of the 16th Guangzhou Municipal People's Congress elected Sun Zhiyang as mayor of the Guangzhou Municipal People's Government. Sun Zhiyang served as Deputy Governor of Guangdong Province, responsible for civil affairs, natural resources, oceans, housing and urban-rural development, retired military personnel, and geology.

(Comment: Sun Zhiyang was born in May 1974 and is an old "FAW man". He graduated from Jilin University of Technology majoring in automobiles and tractors and received a bachelor's degree in engineering. Afterwards, Sun Zhiyang studied business administration at Jilin University and received a master's degree in business administration and became a senior engineer.)

CHINA-SHANGHAI: MS. XU HUILI APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF SHANGHAI MUNICIPALITY DATA BUREAU

The 10th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 16th Shanghai Municipal People's Congress on January 18 appointed Ms. Xu Huili as the Director of the Municipal Data Bureau.

(Comment: Ms. Xu Huili, a Han, was born in August 1975 and is a native of Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. She has a degree of Bachelor of Laws, started working in July 1997, and joined the Communist Party of China in January 1995.)

CHINA-SHANXI: SHANXI PROVINCE HOLDS POVERTY ALLEVIATION MEETING

The Shanxi Daily reported that on January 14, the 2023 provincial work meeting for the assessment and evaluation of the effective connection between consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization was held in Taiyuan. Zeng Yichun, leader of the National Assessment and Evaluation Comprehensive Verification Team and former deputy director of the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, delivered a speech. Shanxi Party Secretary Tang Dengjie presided over the meeting and delivered a speech. Jin Xiangjun, Deputy Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee and Governor, reported on the work of the province. Deputy Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee Zhang Chunlin, provincial leaders Chen Anli and Yang Qinrong, deputy leader of the National Assessment and Evaluation Comprehensive Verification Team Wang Shenglin and members attended the meeting. Zeng Yichun pointed out in his speech that carrying out assessment and evaluation of the effective connection between consolidating and expanding the results of poverty alleviation and rural revitalization is an important institutional arrangement during the transition period. General Secretary Xi Jinping attaches great importance to it and has delivered important speeches and issued important instructions many times, pointing out the direction for continuing to deepen, consolidate and expand the results of poverty alleviation, and also providing fundamental guidance for the assessment and evaluation work. He hoped that Shanxi Province will fully understand the importance of doing a good job in assessment and evaluation from a political perspective and ensure the completion of the assessment with high quality Evaluate each task. He assured the province will work hard in exchanges and discussions, household surveys, on-site inspections, etc. to find out the real

situation, identify shortcomings, ensure the authenticity, objectivity and accuracy of the assessment and assessment, and jointly complete various assessment and assessment tasks and submit a satisfactory answer sheet to the Party Central Committee and the State Council. On behalf of the Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Government, Tang Dengjie welcomed the National Assessment and Evaluation Comprehensive Verification Team and said that consolidating and expanding the results of poverty alleviation and ensuring that no large-scale return to poverty occurs is the "biggest task in the country".

CHINA-SHANDONG: SHANDONG PARTY COMMITTEE HOLDS PROVINCE'S INSTITUTIONAL REFORM MOBILISATION AND DEPLOYMENT MEETING

"Dazhong Daily" (January 12) reported that the province's institutional reform mobilization and deployment meeting was held in Jinan on January 12, to approve the "Shandong Provincial Institutional Reform Plan". Provincial Party Secretary Lin Wu attended the meeting and delivered a speech, emphasizing the need to adhere to the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, thoroughly study and implement the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important expositions and instructions on deepening the reform of party and state institutions, and complete the institution with high quality Reform various tasks to provide strong institutional guarantees for the practice of Chinese-style modernization in Shandong. Zhou Naixiang, Deputy Secretary of the Shandong Provincial Party Committee and governor of Shandong Province, presided over the meeting. Dazhong Daily said Members of the Standing Committee of the Provincial Party Committee and relevant provincial leaders, main responsible comrades of relevant provincial departments (units), heads of the Organization Department and Directors of the Organization Department of each municipal party committee attended the meeting at the main venue. There are branch venues in each city.

CHINA-JIANGXI: JIANGXI PROVINCE APPOINTS ZHANG ZHIPING (f) AS DIRECTOR OF XINYU MUNICIPAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

Jiangxi "Xinyu Release" news reported on January 11, that the fourth session of the 10th People's Congress of Xinyu City, elected Zhang Zhiping as Director of the Standing Committee of the Xinyu Municipal People's Congress. Zhang Zhiping had earlier served as Party Secretary of the Standing Committee of the Xinyu Municipal People's Congress. "China Organization

and Personnel News" reported that when she was the Secretary of the Suichuan County Party Committee (August 2016), Zhang Zhiping was called an "iron lady" who dared to break out and do things. In June 2021, during her tenure as Suichuan County Party Committee Secretary, Zhang Zhiping was awarded the title of "National Outstanding County Party Committee Secretary" by the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

(Comment: The write-up indicates she is on a fast track for promotion. Zhang Zhiping, female, is of Han nationality. Born in December 1967, she is a member of the CCP and a graduate of the Central Party School.)

CHINA-TIBET: LI JIANGXIN APPOINTED MEMBER OF STANDING COMMITTEE OF LHASA MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE ON JANUARY 12

On January 12, Li Jiangxin, the Mayor of Qinhuai District in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, was appointed as a member of the Standing Committee of the Lhasa Municipal Party Committee in Tibet. Born in February 1975, he is a doctoral candidate and a member of the Communist Party of China.

CHINA-XINJIANG-UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION: REVISED REGULATIONS ON RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS FOR XINJIANG TO TAKE EFFECT FROM FEBRUARY 1, 2024

The Xinjiang Daily (January 4) announced the 'Regulations on Religious Affairs of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region' (Adopted at the 11th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th People's Congress of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on November 28, 2014, and revised at the 7th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 14th People's Congress of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on December 22, 2023). The new Regulations will come into effect on February 1, 2024. The Regulations have 78 Articles. A number of Articles impose punitive measures on persons violating sections of the Regulations, which also impose restrictions on building religious places or religious teaching etc. For example, Article 47 stipulates: No organization or individual may promote, disseminate, or disseminate religious extremist ideas, may not participate in religious extremist activities, may not use appearance, clothing, signs, logos, etc. to exaggerate religious fanaticism, and may not coerce or force

others to wear religious extremist clothing or clothing. Religious extreme symbols, logos. No organization or individual may use religious activities or interfere with normal production and business activities, cultural and entertainment activities, as well as weddings, funerals and other ethnic customs and living habits in the name of religion, and may not hold religious ceremonies for marriages that have not been registered in accordance with the law. Violation of these provisions entails that 'the illegal gains shall be confiscated and a fine of not more than 10,000 yuan shall be imposed'.

CHINA-TAIWAN: CHINA ASSERTS THAT UNIFICATION IS AN IRREVERSIBLE TREND AND THAT DPP HAS LOST DIPLOMATIC ALLIES

An article in Beijing Daily (January 17) captioned 'How Far is Taiwan's Authorities from "Zero Diplomatic Relations"?' appreciated Nauru's decision "to open a new chapter in bilateral relations with Nauru based on the One-China principle" and asserted that "Today, the balance of power across the Taiwan Strait has fundamentally changed. Under the rule of the DPP, the island's economy and people's livelihoods have deteriorated, and "Dollar diplomacy" has long been unsustainable. Some media bluntly stated that the Taiwan authorities have no chips left, and "zero diplomatic relations" is only a matter of time". Stating that China is the only legitimate government, it said "for the Taiwan authorities, challenging the bottom line and intensifying confrontation is destined to be a dead-end and a fatal path". It added "The Taiwan issue arose due to the weakness and chaos of the nation and will be resolved as the nation rejuvenates. As the mainland's influence on Taiwan's society continues to grow, the traction and dominance in the development of cross-strait relations will also increase. The complete reunification of the motherland is an inevitable and unstoppable trend. In the end, China must be united, and it will definitely be united. This is not subject to the will of some stubborn anti-China forces, let alone the delusions of the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces. Taiwan has never been a country, not in the past, and certainly not in the future. "Taiwan independence" has never been possible, not in the past, and even less possible in the future. The overall situation cannot be violated, and playing with fire will lead to self-destruction. The common wish and firm will of more than 1.4 billion Chinese people are the source of our confidence and strength to achieve the complete reunification of the motherland”.

(Comment: Other Chinese media article have pointed to the opposition parties gaining 60 percent of the votes as a drop in the DPP's popularity. Similarly, they have noted that Lai Ching-te won 5.6 million votes on January 14 while Tsai Ing-wen secured 8.1 million votes in 2020.)

ii) Xinhua (January 14) and People's Daily (January 17) reported that Zhang Ming, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), remarking on January 14 on the result of the Taiwan leadership election, said "the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory. The Taiwan question falls within China's internal affairs". He said, "the SCO will continue to firmly support Chinese government's stance on the Taiwan question, adhere to the one-China principle and oppose "Taiwan independence" secession in any form".

CHINA-TAIWAN: CHINA'S ATTEMPTS TO SPREAD DISINFORMATION AND PROPAGANDA DURING TAIWAN'S ELECTIONS DETECTED BY ASPI

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI - January 18) reported it had identified multiple attempts by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to manipulate Taiwanese voters by spreading disinformation and propaganda across social media. These influence operations primarily sought to undermine Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) presidential and legislative candidates but are assessed to have had minimal impact on the integrity of the election results due to the resilience of Taiwan's civil society. ASPI said partial credit must also go to the Taiwanese government for its efforts to raise public awareness of electoral interference, and a crackdown on other illicit activities, such as the spreading of fake polls. ASPI observed at least two China-originated threat actors seeking to interfere in this election. One is likely linked to the CCP's largest network of inauthentic social media accounts known as Spamouflage or Dragonbridge. This network evolved its online influence capabilities by utilising AI-generated avatars and amplified the contents of a document it called 'The Secret History of (outgoing president) Tsai Ing-wen'. Another China-based actor is likely linked to the first coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) network identified in Meta's 2023 third quarter adversarial threat report. This second threat actor conducted more sophisticated cyber-influence operations, including disseminating what it claimed were leaked Taiwanese government documents, and a fake DNA paternity test. Other politicians targeted by the network included Lin Feifan, the

former Deputy Secretary-General of the DPP, and Taiwan's Foreign Minister, Joseph Wu, who Spamouflage accounts accused of sexually harassing female colleagues and having affairs.

CHINA-PAKISTAN: CHINA AND PAKISTAN LAUNCH NEW AIR CARGO ROUTE

SF Airlines, the biggest air cargo carrier in China, inaugurated a new air cargo route connecting Ezhou Huahu Airport in China's Hubei Province, to Lahore in Pakistan on January 13. SF Airlines plans three weekly round-trip air cargo flights from Ezhou to Lahore, and according to SF Airlines, the route is anticipated to improve logistics between China and Pakistan by offering effective and reliable air transport services, with an estimated 300 tonnes of air express capacity each week.

CHINA-MALDIVES: CHINESE MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED DURING MALDIVES PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO CHINA

Xinhua published a report on Maldives President Muizzu's visit (January 8-12) to China, which it said also marked the 10th anniversary of Chinese President Xi Jinping's historic state visit to the Maldives in 2014. Noting the both leaders said that bilateral relations would be upgraded to a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, it said China-Maldives friendship goes back a long way and that in the Ming Dynasty, the Chinese navigator Zheng He, with fleets of ships, made it to the Maldives twice. Maldivian King Yusof also sent envoys to China on three different occasions. It stressed that over the past "52 years the two countries have always respected and supported each other, setting a model for large and small countries to treat each other on an equal footing for mutual benefit and win-win results". It said they will "jointly build a China-Maldives community with a shared future", adding that while "Muizzu re-emphasized that the Maldivian government firmly adheres to the one-China policy and supports the Chinese side in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, China expressed its respect and support for the Maldives in exploring the development path that suits its national conditions". It noted completion of the China-Maldives Friendship Bridge and the Hulhumale housing project undertaken by China under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It mentioned that cooperation documents were signed during Muizzu's visit to China, covering such areas as joint BRI cooperation, economic and technological development, the blue economy, the digital economy, green development, infrastructure and livelihood assistance and that in 2024, the number of Chinese tourists is expected to return to the top of the list. China said it would add

more direct flights between the two countries and accommodate more outstanding Maldivian students to study in China, and the Maldivian side welcomed such positive measures to promote people-to-people exchanges and expects more Chinese tourists to visit the Maldives.

CHINA-IRAN: IRANIAN POLICE CHIEF SIGNS MOU WITH CHINA'S MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SECURITY AND VISITS PSB'S TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

South China Morning Post (January 17) reported that China's Minister for Public Security Wang Xiaohong and the visiting Iranian police chief Ahmad Reza Radan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for “law enforcement cooperation” during a meeting in Beijing on January 16. According to IRNA, the Iran-Russia MOU calls for “the expansion of security and law enforcement cooperation between the two sides and the exchange of experiences in dealing with factors that foment insecurity”. IRNA also said that in his meeting with Wang Xiaohong, Radan expressed Iran’s willingness to further cooperation on potential technology for use by the two countries’ police forces. The first day of Radan’s visit to China included a tour of the public security ministry’s technology centre, where he was informed of “the latest scientific, technical and technological developments” aligned with police missions in China. Radan told IRNA that “This centre has been successful in using modern equipment to make the police’s capabilities scientific and operational and to improve them,” and that the centre “is able to defeat sanctions by benefiting from science and technology.” According to IRNA, he announced the Iranian police force’s “readiness ... to form a joint scientific team in the field of bilateral cooperation with [China]”.

CHINA-PHILIPPINES: CHINA WARNS PHILIPPINES NOT TO PLAY WITH FIRE IN TAIWAN ISSUE

On January 16, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning, at the regular press conference, stated that Philippine President Marcos' post the previous day 'on social media to congratulate Lai Ching-te on his election as Taiwan’s “president” seriously violated the one-China principle and the communiqué on the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Philippines, seriously violated the political commitments made by the Philippines to China, and grossly interfered in China’s internal affairs. China is strongly dissatisfied and firmly opposed to this, and has reported it to the Philippines as soon as possible. Strong protest was made. This morning, the Assistant Minister of Agriculture and Financial

Industry summoned the Philippine Ambassador to China to lodge solemn representations and urged the Philippines to give China a responsible explanation. She repeated that the election results in Taiwan cannot change the basic pattern and development direction of cross-Strait relations, nor can it stop the general trend of China's eventual and inevitable reunification. We solemnly tell the Philippines not to play with fire on the Taiwan issue ... and stop sending any wrong signals to the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces. We recommend that President Marcos read more books to correctly understand the ins and outs of the Taiwan issue and draw correct conclusions'.

(Comment: Nearly 50 countries have congratulated Lai Ching-te on his success in the Presidential elections and China has reacted strongly to each of them!")

CHINA-UZBEKISTAN: UZBEKISTAN'S PRESIDENT TO VISIT CHINA

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying announced (January 18) that the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev will pay a state visit to China from January 23 to 25, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

CHINA-AUSTRALIA: CHINESE AMBASSADOR WARNS THAT RELATIONS WITH CHINA WOULD BE PUSHED OVER AN ABYSS IF IT CONSORTS WITH TAIWANESE SEPARATIST FORCES

The Australian (January 12) disclosed that just hours prior to Taiwan's national elections the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Xiao Qian said the DPP and its Presidential candidate Lai had adopting a "separatist stance" and had "colluded with external forces in successive provocative actions" during President Tsai Ing-wen's eight years in power. He said "They are the culprit of changing the status quo across the Straits." Xiao Qian threatened "It is illogical and harmful to link China's internal affairs with Australia's security and -safety." "If Australia is tied to the chariot of Taiwan separatist forces, the Australian people would be pushed over the edge of an abyss" adding that Canberra's relations with Taipei could "undoubtedly undermine" Australia's relations with China. "There should not be any miscalculation on this."

CHINA-AUSTRALIA: AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY FUNDING RESEARCH FOR CHINA'S MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

According to a reliable report if restrictions on S&T were to be applied in Australia, it would have serious implications for the Torch Innovation Precinct at UNSW. The latter's reporting indicates that it has a government funded endowment of about \$200m and conducts advanced tech research into priorities identified by China's Ministry of Commerce, and commercialises the results mainly in China.

CHINA-UK: BRITISH DEFENCE SECRETARY SHAPPS WARNS OF WARS WITH CHINA, RUSSIA AND IRAN IN NEXT 5 YEARS

In his first speech as UK's Defence Secretary, Grant Shapps has warned that Britain should prepare for further wars involving China, Russia, Iran and North Korea in the next five years. Shapps presented a dark picture of a "pre-war world" in which old and new enemies have redrawn battle lines against Britain and the West.

CHINA-US: CHINA CRITICISES U.S. FOR CONGRATULATING CHENG LI-TE ON WINNING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

China (January 15) said the US is "gravely wrong" to congratulate Taiwan's newly elected democratic leader, William Lai, claiming the congratulatory message was a violation of Washington's commitment to maintain only unofficial ties with Taiwan.

CHINA-US: MEMBERS OF US CONGRESS ARE QUESTIONING HOW A CHINESE SCIENTIST RECEIVED US\$30 MILLION IN FUNDING WHEN HE WAS SHARING RESEARCH WITH CHINA

Newsweek (January 17) reported that the Chairs of two House committees and three subcommittees asked the National Science Foundation (NSF), which is a federal government agency, and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) why they failed to pay attention to "concerning signs" over the Chinese-born scientist Song-Chun Zhu, in similarly worded letters sent to all three institutions on Wednesday. Newsweek revealed in November 2023 that Song-Chun Zhu had received over \$30 million in U.S. grants to lead research into the most

advanced artificial intelligence that could have major military implications. The chairs of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and of the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) wrote in a letter addressed to the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd J. Austin III that "U.S. federal grant providing agencies ignored numerous concerning signs while granting Mr. Zhu \$30 million in grants."

CHINA-US: US SECRETARY OF STATE BLINKEN MET CCP CC ILD CHIEF LIU JIANCHAO IN WASHINGTON ON JANUARY 12

AFP (January 12) reported that US Secretary of State Blinken met CCP CC ILD Chief Liu Jianchao in Washington on January 12. The AFP report noted that speaking Tuesday at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York on January 9, Liu Jianchao took a conciliatory tone with little criticism of the United States. He also declined to say how China would respond to Taiwan's elections and said Beijing noted US statements that it does not back Taiwanese independence. Liu Jianchao met earlier with Jon Finer, the Deputy National Security Advisor, at the White House.

(Comment: Liu Jianchao is widely viewed as China's next Foreign Minister and is believed to have the confidence of the Chinese President Xi Jinping. As ILD Chief, he has been active in meeting Heads of State and other foreign dignitaries.)