

Book Launch cum Seminar - The New Era in Today's China November 25, 2022

Speech by Koh King Kee Chairman, Centre for New Inclusive Asia

Tan Sri Ong Tee Keat, Chairman of the Centre for New Inclusive Asia,
Dato' Majid Khan, President of Malaysia-China Friendship Association, Dato-Dato,
Distinguished speakers, Media friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good afternoon to everyone and thank you Dr Julia for your kind introduction.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you for taking time to attend this book launch cum seminar: *The New Era in Today's China*. Thank you all for your kind support.

I would also like to sincerely thank Mr Chong Tong Sin, Managing Director of Gerakbudaya Enterprise, the publisher of this book, for his understanding, support and cooperation in the publication of this book.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife, Shook Kheng, who has been the first reader of all my articles and speeches, for her inputs and suggestions and for meticulously editing all my articles and speeches.

Ladies and Gentlemen

China's rise is undoubtedly the most important phenomenon of the 21st century. It has changed the global power dynamics and will rewrite the history of the world.

China is now the second largest economy in the world, the world's manufacturing powerhouse, the top trading nation with more than 140 countries and regions as its major trading partners. It is the growth engine of the world, and its economic success has provided the impetus for the rise of Asia.

Nevertheless, despite its economic success and contributions to the world, China remains a very much misunderstood, if not the most misunderstood country in the world.

The intent of my book is to provide the readers with a better understanding of China in the New Era, that is, China under president Xi Jinping's administration, which is commonly referred to as the New Era. This is how the title of my book came about.

This book is a collection of my articles published in the Chinese media, speeches delivered at international forums and selected media interviews over the past four years in my capacity as President of CNIA.

There are five parts in the book:

Part 1. *China and the World* covers China's world view, how the West look at China, China's concept of global governance, and how China fought to contain the outbreak of COVID-19.

Part 2. *China and ASEAN* explains China-ASEAN relations amidst heightened geostrategic competitions between China and the US.

Part 3. *China's Rise* discusses the economic and political developments of China under the Communist Party of China.

Part 4 focuses on China's success in poverty alleviation, and why and how common prosperity should be achieved under the Chinese-style modernisation.

Part 5 provides an overall review of the Belt and Road Initiative and a strong rebuttal of Debt Trap Diplomacy as alleged by the West.

The New Era in Today's China is easy-reading and easy to understand, and hopefully it will help to clarify misinformation and disinformation about China often found in international media's narrative of China, overtly or covertly.

China has picked a development path untraversed by other countries and has successfully transformed itself from an economic backwater to become the world's second largest economy in 30 years. Its per capita GDP of USD12,556 in 2021 has even exceeded the World Bank threshold for a high-income country. China's development experiences are, therefore, worthy lessons for developing countries.

China-US relations are the most important and complex bilateral relations in the world that shape the global geopolitical landscape. Unquestionably, a rising China that accounts for more than 18% of world GDP, one that has contributed 30% annually to global growth in the last 10 years, would want to have a bigger say in shaping the global order.

China sees inequities and unfairness tinted with historical prejudice in the current global order. Nevertheless, China has benefited and realised its development within the current world order, and it has no intention of destroying it, much less supplanting it.

China and ASEAN are close neighbours with long historical ties. Since China became ASEAN's first dialogue partner in 1991, trade between China and ASEAN has skyrocketed from USD8.36 billion to USD878.2 billion in 2021, an increase by more than 100 times in 30 years!

China and ASEAN are now the largest trading partners of each other. The total trade between China and ASEAN is projected to reach USD one trillion this year, a record high and indeed a milestone in China-ASEAN trade relations.

ASEAN is now the battle ground of big power rivalry. However, with its strategic position, geographically and geopolitically, and its increasing economic weight as a bloc, ASEAN is well placed to act as a bridge in a world fragmented by intense geopolitical competition. To act as a bridge, ASEAN must have a good grasp of China's world view and what China's rise means to the world, now and beyond.

Thank you.