

Speech by Minister Liu Kun at the
21st CAREC Ministerial Meeting

**Your excellencies, Ministers of Member States.
President Masatsugu Asakawa of the Asian Development Bank.
Dear Colleagues.
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a pleasure to meet with you all in the clouds. China is the Chair of the 21st Ministerial Meeting of the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC). On behalf of the Chinese government, I would like to warmly welcome the Ministers of the Member States, the President of the Asian Development Bank, Mr. Masatsugu Asakawa, and all the distinguished guests! My sincere thanks go out to ADB for the extensive preparation for this meeting.

Since its establishment, CAREC has actively promoted the process of regional cooperation and integration and made essential contributions to the promotion of connectivity and prosperity in Central Asia. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, CAREC countries have strengthened cooperation and achieved good results in public health, the digital economy, and other areas. The Chinese government highly appreciates and commends this effort.

The pandemic is still protracting; the world economy is sluggishly recovering, the global issues are exacerbating, and the North-South development divide is further widening. However, the new round of technological revolution and industrial changes have brought unprecedented opportunities. The promotion of global development has become an important topic of study facing humanity. To this end, Chinese President Xi Jinping has proposed the Global Development Initiative, emphasizing the need to accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and jointly promote a new phase of balanced, coordinated and inclusive global development. Strengthening regional cooperation is an important means to achieve joint development. CAREC member countries should uphold genuine multilateralism, enhance mutual trust, build consensus and deepen cooperation, and work together with ADB, the CAREC Institute and other development partners to promote green, sustainable and inclusive post-pandemic recovery and development in the region. To this end, I would like to make three suggestions to deepen CAREC cooperation further.

First, strengthen policy coordination and promote regional economic recovery. We should strengthen macroeconomic policy dialogue and coordination, accelerate trade and investment facilitation, enhance the resilience of the regional industrial chain and supply chain, maintain the stability of the regional financial system, and promote stable economic recovery and sustainable development.

Second, deepen pragmatic cooperation and enhance regional growth momentum. We should focus on the urgent needs of member countries and strengthen cooperation in

key areas such as agriculture and food security, green energy and climate change. We should accelerate the construction of economic corridors, promote the connectivity of traditional infrastructures such as railways, ports and pipeline networks, and focus on solving development bottlenecks. We should strengthen cooperation in innovative areas such as big data, cross-border e-commerce and intelligent manufacturing, accelerate digital transformation and build up new drivers for economic growth.

Thirdly, we should promote strategic synergies and form regional development synergies. We should strengthen the alignment of CAREC strategies with national development strategies and support member countries' development priorities and focus. CAREC should be encouraged to work with global and regional initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative to promote synergistic development. Cooperation with development partners such as ADB, WB and the private sector should be strengthened to mobilize more resources. Global and regional think tanks such as the CAREC Institute should be given full play to provide intellectual support for regional cooperation.

Dear Colleagues.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has been held. We will adhere to the basic policy of opening up, firmly pursue an open strategy to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results, continuously provide new opportunities for the world with China's new development and promote the building of an open world economy to better benefit all peoples. Standing at a new historical starting point and facing new challenges and opportunities, China is willing to work side by side with CAREC member countries to jointly promote a green, sustainable and inclusive post-pandemic economic recovery in the CAREC region and the world.

Thank you all!