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## China and Russia Celebrates 2024 as their Year of Culture



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China and Russia are celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations this year and therefore the commencement of the China-Russia Years of Culture, 2024 is on the way as the Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin declared. New year greetings mark the



beginning of the celebration activities, intensify high-level exchanges, promote the in-depth development of bilateral practical cooperation, advance people-to-people exchanges in various fields, and further consolidate the public support and social foundation for bilateral relations. President Xi Jinping paid official visit to Russia in 2023 which has been received positively. Putin also came to China for attending the Belt and Road forum the same year. The past year, under the strategic guidance of two leaders, the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era has begun and now running on high gear.

The nature of relationship between China and Russia today, and how extensively will the two countries keep cooperating in the future has been the concern of international relations' experts lately. China and Russia do not have an alliance in the traditional sense of international relations but yet, both maintained an alignment more durable than any traditional "Alliance". This alliance is based on mutual interests and sharing the perspective



of fostering dialogue and cooperation among regional stakeholders and striving for and championing international peace and security with more determination. This relationship has been evolving and the two world powers have been constantly looking for avenues to align themselves.

The primacy of partnership into the various fields and interdependence between China and Russia has been a concern of priority for Chinese and Russian counterparts in the recent years. What makes this partnership more durable is that despite certain foreign policy fall outs like Ukraine where China remained neutral, both maintained an approach to advocate equal partnership relations among nations, with the United Nations assuming the central coordinating role in regulating international relations.

Among various other common links, economic interest, is the most worked on as China gets 19 percent of its oil and 25 percent of its coal from Russia; with coal accounting for about half of China's energy consumption, those import levels are very significant. Indeed, while Russia is only China's 10th-largest trade partner, behind Malaysia, its role as an energy supplier gives it a crucial role in the Chinese economy. During 2023, the bilateral trade between China and Russia surpassed \$200 billion in the first 11 months of the year which shows the seriousness of commitment, strong resilience and broad prospects for cooperation articulated by President Xi and Russian counterpart Putin in 2019.

In the political arena, both the leaders believe that they should give full play to the advantages of political mutual trust, and deepen cooperation on economy, trade,

energy and connectivity. This has been evident in the wake of Chinese reaction towards Ukrainian War as China firmly believes that Russia will be able to successfully complete its important domestic political agenda, and maintain national stability and development. Russia also firmly adheres to the one-China principle and President Putin appreciates the concepts and initiatives put forward by President Xi Jinping as highly relevant and significant to a multipolar world that is taking shape today.



One of the significant aspects of China-Russia comprehensive strategic

partnership has been the roles both President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin envisions for themselves as potential mediators in the Middle East diplomacy. Both China and Russia envision to be a potential mediator in Middle East conflicts, particularly in the Palestinian issue. President Putin and Middle Eastern leaders emphasized the need to implement international resolutions related to the two-state solution for peaceful coexistence, economic development, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. This stance solidifies Russia's position as a diplomatic force working towards lasting solutions in the region. Both China and Russia should continue to beef up communication and coordination, and urge for an immediate ceasefire and cessation of hostilities in the

Palestinian-Israeli conflict, ensure smooth delivery of humanitarian relief, and make joint efforts for restarting the two-state solution.

At the recent Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs, President Xi Jinping comprehensively reviewed China's major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era. New strategic plans were made for the next steps, particularly elucidating the profound connotations of the scientific system of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and advocated an equal and orderly multipolar world, as well as an inclusive economic globalization that benefits all, which conforms to the trend of development and progress of the times and resonates with the common aspirations of most countries.

Noting that Russia-China relations have yielded fruitful results in 2023, China and Russia stand ready to work with each other to maintain high-level exchanges,



strengthen bilateral cooperation in such areas as economy, trade and investment, deepen people-to-people exchanges in the fields of sports and culture, hold successful China-Russia Years of Culture, advance communication and coordination in international affairs, and join hands to push for new achievements in bilateral relations. Both China and Russia





also exchanged views on BRICS cooperation as China fully supports Russia, which assumes BRICS chairmanship this year, in hosting a successful BRICS summit, and stands ready to make joint efforts with Russia to enhance the international influence of BRICS and lift BRICS cooperation to a new level.

As two responsible major countries, China and Russia should strengthen strategic communication, build more strategic consensuses and carry out more strategic cooperation on the future of mankind and the world, through high-quality strategic coordination, the two sides have not only well managed the affairs of their respective countries, but also played mainstay roles in the international arena and maintained global strategic stability.