

**Statement by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister
On “Nepal China Relations: Prospects on Growth and
Prosperity”
At Beijing Foreign Studies University
26 March 2017**

**President of the University Mr. Peng Long
Professors
Scholars and Academicians
Dear Students
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I feel honoured to address this gathering of learned scholars, youthful students and friends of Nepal. I would like to extend my gratitude to President Mr. Peng Long for extending kind invitation to join you all at this university.

I feel overwhelmed to attend today’s programme at this university, the university which has an illustrious history and legacy; whose roots are deeply imbedded with the very dawn of new China.

Since its establishment in 1941, this University has been a pioneer in language studies, international affairs and country specific studies. It is a matter of distinguished pleasure to be here at this institution that has been rightly called as a Cradle of Diplomats.

Today, we inaugurated the Centre for Nepali Studies at this University. I believe that, in the University’s mission to “introduce China to the world and introduce the world to China”, opening of the Center is another remarkable milestone.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our nations have a long history of harmonious relations. The relationship dates back to antiquity, rooted in our histories that have co-existed together.

We are connected by geography, civilization linkage; by trade and people-to-people exchanges.

The influence of Buddha's teachings is evident in the cultural values of our countries. There is this thread of similarity that runs through history; that runs across the Himalayas.

In early 5th century, Nepali monk and scholar Buddhahadra visited China. In first half of the 7th century Princess Bhrikuti of Nepal was married to Tibetan King. In the second half of 13th century Arniko visited China and contributed in art and archaeology.

Similarly, early visits of Chinese monks and scholars like Monk Fa Hsian and Monk Xuan Zang to Nepal are etched strongly in our history.

Building on the rich tradition, our visionary leaders laid down foundations for everlasting friendship and good neighbourliness.

Along the course of time, our countries have witnessed change. The economic miracle of China is remarkable.

Similarly, Nepal has gone through monumental changes. We have crossed many political milestones.

Regardless of the political changes, our relations have remained unshaken. This is the constant of our relations. This is also the uniqueness of our relationship.

No matter who leads the government in Nepal, our friendship with government and people of China is robust and resolute. This is the enduring feature of our relations.

Irrespective of the changes in global milieu, Nepal-China relations is the one of continued peaceful coexistence.

Our relations have been firmly fortified on the foundations of Panchasheel. Principle of sovereign equality, non-interference and respect for each other's sensitivities have guided our strong friendship.

Nepal adheres to one-China policy. We are committed to not allowing hostile activities against China on our soil.

We have cooperated with each other on many areas and at various levels -bilateral, regional and global.

China has been our reliable and trusted partner for development. Our partnership goes beyond the economic and social spheres. The spontaneous assistance rendered by Chinese government and people in the immediate aftermath of earthquake in 2015, won the hearts of Nepali people.

The generous pledge made by China for Nepal's post-disaster reconstruction testifies to our cordial friendship.

I would like to thank the Government and People of China for their generous assistance and support.

Dear Friends

Vision of Chinese leadership and diligence of Chinese people have made China a global economic powerhouse. This has elevated the stature of China in world affairs.

The success story of China has been a source of inspiration for developing world. The growth performance of China has been a key driver of global growth.

While China makes incredible progress in every sphere, we, as a country with least developed economy, suffer from several bottlenecks. In our pursuit to dismantle those hurdles, we have begun with consolidation of political progress and now, our focus is on economic development. Our country, endowed as it is with both human and natural resources, has tremendous potentials for development.

In Nepal, we have put our commitment and resolve together to unleash our potentials.

China's support and goodwill in helping the development pursuits of Nepal has been outstanding.

The generous assistance extended by China in the field of infrastructure development has been instrumental in our pursuits for prosperity.

Not only geography, markets have connected us.

Not only history, destiny has connected us.

Not only our past, the prospect of prosperous future has connected us.

Dear Friends

In realizing the prospects for shared prosperity, we have already set the beginning. Our partnership can change the economic landscape of Nepal.

China's One Belt One Road Initiative offers tremendous opportunities for collaboration and partnership. I would like to thank President Xi Jinping for this initiative.

Looking back, some of you may be aware, Nepal used to be an important thoroughfare in the ancient silk route. It was a vibrant trade entrépot that connected parts of Central Asia with South Asia.

It is not a surprise –in that period of history, Asia was a pioneer in global trade and economy. It was a hub of innovation, a land of prosperity.

We can build on that legacy, and create a modern success story. Success story of connectivity; of development; of mobility; and of shared prosperity.

Nepal has already signed an MOU on Belt and Road Initiative in 2014, we are in the final stage of concluding the extended MOU.

Nepal and China have multiple avenues for partnership. We remain committed to fully implementing the agreements and understandings reached in the past.

Our engagement in the Asian Infrastructure Bank is a case in point. Similarly Nepal has become a Dialogue Partner of Shanghai Cooperation Organization since last year.

And, most importantly, our bilateral engagement and business linkage is the major platform to harness the prospects for growth and prosperity.

Recently, on 2nd and 3rd of this month, we concluded the Nepal Investment Summit. It saw investors and business persons from

different parts of the world. And of total investment pledges more than 60 percent came from Chinese investors.

In terms of FDI flows, China tops the chart.

The flow of Chinese tourists to Nepal is another important façade of our relations.

The flow of Chinese tourists has a contributing role in our economic growth. And more importantly, this provides an important bridge for our cultures, for our peoples.

Government of Nepal has waived visa fee for Chinese tourists as a token of friendship. We need to join hands to promote the tourism potentials of Nepal among the Chinese visitors. Tourist arrival from China has important bearing on Nepal's tourism industry.

I would like to welcome the great Chinese people, to make a visit to Nepal –the birth place of Shakyamuni Buddha, the land of Everest. Our natural beauty and cultural mosaic will enthrall you and make you long for more.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Last year we signed Agreement on Transit Transport. This is an agreement of paramount importance for making landlocked Nepal a land-linked nation. Early conclusion of Protocol is in our priority.

Connectivity remains our key priority. Connectivity of infrastructures as well as ideas, connectivity of markets as well as minds. This can be a true propeller in our pursuit for prosperity.

Connectivity of roads, railways, airways and web links can unleash the potential for shared prosperity.

We need to resume the Tatopani/Zhangmu border point at the earliest. In our annals of partnership, this port has a historical significance. Similarly opening of more border points between our countries can strengthen our cross-border connectivity.

Similarly, we have to focus on expanding aviation sector. More flights and direct air links between Kathmandu and major cities of China can be rewarding to both the countries.

The richness of water resources in Nepal is tremendous. This resource can be utilized for creating green and sustainable energy, for creating a very base for growth.

Investment in mega hydropower projects can be beneficial to Nepal as well as Chinese investors.

Energy security is a key for economic development. We can cooperate to diversify and develop our energy mix by investing in solar power, bio energy and other alternative sources.

There exist tremendous opportunity for cooperation on urban infrastructures, cross border transmission lines, telecommunication and ICT.

China has established itself a key hub of innovation in railways, agriculture, electronics, computing and smart technology. Its development experience is unparalleled treasure to learn from.

To drive our growth, transfer of technology can be a key sector.

Transfer of technology –which is affordable.

–which is reliable. –which is transformative.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nepal has a vibrant and energetic youth population –full of energy, aspiration and potential. However, we have not been able to retain their energy at home.

Partnership between Nepal and China in terms of investment can be instrumental to create jobs for them and utilize their energy.

The location of Nepal provides a unique opportunity for connecting China with South Asia. Harnessing of this potential can bear fruits for China and Nepal as well as the region.

It can be a vital framework to pursue collaborative development projects, which can be mutually beneficial for all the countries in the region.

Dear Students

As I said earlier, you are in one of the pioneer universities in China. It is a great opportunity as well as a matter of pride for you.

I also see some faces from Nepal here. And some Chinese students who are studying Nepali language.

I am overwhelmed to share that China is increasingly becoming one of the most preferred foreign destinations for Nepali students. The very rigor of Chinese universities can contribute to develop our human resources, and ultimately help create a robust workforce that will pedal the forces of development.

Similarly, the number of Chinese students studying in various institutes and universities of Nepal is growing.

I am also keen to promote enhanced collaboration between Beijing Foreign Studies University and universities in Nepal for joint academic ventures and academic exchanges.

Academic exchanges and interaction among the scholars from our countries can spark new ideas, can connect the minds. With connected minds, we can aspire for miracles.

It makes me believe that our future is in the safe hands of our youths –whose creativity, innovativeness and diligence will be the driving force for our growth and prosperity.

As it is said, this century belongs to Asia. And undoubtedly, China has an important role to play in making this a century a century of growth.

Responsibility lies on us, on our collective wisdom to make an Asian century, a century of growth as well as development.

A century of prosperity as well as accommodativeness.

A century where winner won't take all but all will be winners.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I said earlier, Nepal has passed through political changes of historic proportions.

Now our priority is on economic prosperity. We are aspiring to reach middle-income status by 2030.

We count on China's continued support in our economic transformation. And it is my belief that a prosperous Nepal is also in the interest of our friend China.

Saying this, allow me to thank Mr. Peng Long for this platform for exchanging our views on Nepal China Relations and sharing our ideas for harnessing the prospects of growth and prosperity.

I thank You all!