Chinese Youth:
Strivers and Global Contributors in the New Era

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Preface

A nation will prosper only when its young people thrive. Chinese youth have always been the vanguard force in realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Looking back over the past century, from the ideological awakening around the May Fourth Movement to the forward charge in the period of the New Democratic Revolution, from the hard work in the period of socialist revolution and construction to the innovative advance and the vanguard stance in the new period of reform, opening up and socialist modernization, Chinese youth have never changed their sincere love for the Party, the country, and the people, or their unwavering commitment to following the Party and its guidance. As socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, Chinese youth have presented a brilliant youthful demeanor and burst forth with heroic youthful passion.

Young Chinese people in the new era have grown up at the historical juncture where China's economic rise is intertwined with an evolving world order. They have benefited from the historical dividends of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and China's growing wealth and strength, while also facing the practical challenges of structural social transformation, rapid technological iteration, and increasingly fierce international competition. Against the complex backdrop of the times, Chinese youth find their footing and fulfill the mission of the era-navigating the confluence of devotion to family and nation with personal ideals, as well as the interplay between national rejuvenation and the future of humanity. In doing so, they demonstrate the distinctive traits of confidence and inclusiveness, rationality and pragmatism, and diversity and openness.

Young people are always entrusted with the historical responsibilities of their era. Young Chinese of today are living in a good time and are entrusted with significant responsibilities. They have an incomparably broad stage on which to display their talents and an incomparably bright future in which to realize their dreams. When the younger generations have ideals and a strong sense of responsibility, humanity will have a bright future, and the noble cause of peace and development will be full of hope. Standing at a new historical juncture, Chinese youth are taking a more open and confident stance to actively integrate into the tide of world development, to write, together with like-minded young people from all over the world, a new chapter of the times featuring peaceful development and win-win cooperation, and to embrace a brighter future for human civilization.

Chapter One
Contemporary Portrait of Chinese Youth

A nation will be full of hope when its younger generations are strong and determined. Young Chinese of today are blessed with a good time. They have an incomparably broad stage on which to display their talents and an incomparably bright future in which to realize their dreams.

— Xi Jinping

By the end of 2024, China had about 376 million young people aged 14 to 35, accounting for 26.7 percent of the total population. What kind of young people constitute this group? They are dedicated people with fire in their hearts and light in their eyes who integrate their personal ideals into the needs of the country and the people; they are climbers in frontier fields with feet on the solid ground and hands reaching for the stars; they are communicators with confidence and openness who engage with the world in an open and graceful manner; they are pioneers with digital dreams and a future-building vision who reshape production and life using digital technologies.

1.1 Dedicated people with fire in their hearts and light in their eyes

On the Qiangtang Plateau in northern Xizang, over 4,500 meters above sea level, wildlife ranger Tsechen Tharchen (Cicheng Taqing) patrols the grasslands day after day on an old motorcycle. Over 16 years, he has traveled more than one million kilometers. The scar on his right hand was left by a snow leopard during a rescue, which he playfully calls a "special kiss". Thanks to his protection, the local Tibetan antelope population has grown from 10,000 to 30,000, with zero poaching recorded for many years. In 2025, this young Tibetan was awarded the title of "National Role Model for Learning from Lei Feng".

Chinese youth in the new era are dedicated people with fire in their hearts and light in their eyes. They do not merely say empty talk, but can rise to challenges and risks at critical moments.

General Secretary Xi Jinping encouraged Chinese youth to "let their youth blossom in fields where the nation needs them most". In a reply letter to volunteers of the "Go West" Program, he called on Chinese youth to dedicate themselves to where the nation

and the people need them most. Actively responding to the call of the Party and the country, many young people have settled in the western regions and local communities. They packed their bags and headed for remote mountains, frontier deserts, and farmlands-writing the story of their youth through years of quiet dedication.

In critical missions and emergency rescue operations, young people never shy away; instead, they run straight into danger. During the severe floods in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region in the summer of 2025, youth rapid-response teams-averaging just 26 years old-waded into villages submerged in waist-deep water. It was they who carried stranded elderly residents on their shoulders and steered rescue boats through the deluge to evacuate affected people. During the Chongqing wildfires in the summer of 2022, braving sweltering heat of over 40 degrees Celsius, post-90s and post-00s motorcyclists raced up steep mountain trails with heavy fire extinguishers strapped to their backs. At the foot of the mountains, armies of young volunteers formed massive human chains to relay relief supplies, forging an indestructible "Great Wall" against the flames.

With the in-depth implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, a growing number of Chinese youth have recognized development opportunities in rural areas and chosen to return to their hometowns to start businesses. Singapore's Lianhe Zaobao notes a rising trend among the new generation of Chinese youth to head for the countryside. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation has observed that daily posts by rural young returnees often garner hundreds of millions of views. In a Yao ethnic village in Luokeng Town of Qujiang District, Shaoguan, Guangdong Province, the returning entrepreneur Zhao Yanjun said, "I came back because I see great potential in local agricultural products-and because I simply love my hometown and couldn't stay away."

Diligence, commitment, self-reliance, and perseverance are ingrained in the Chinese national character. As an old saying goes, "A lazy youth leads to a needy old age." Today's young people echo the vow: "We will live up to our mission, as the Party expects." The fire in their hearts and light in their eyes are the vivid expression of these enduring cultural traits.

1.2 Climbers with feet on the solid ground and hands reaching for the stars

Hailed as the world's fastest high-speed train, the CR450 boasts an operational speed of 400 km/h and leads the world in multiple technical indicators. Behind these achievements stands a young team of 210 members covering seven major disciplines at the China Academy of Railway Sciences. Team leader Xu Cong said, "Defining top-level technical indicators is like exploring uncharted territory." To find an optimal formulation for the braking materials, the research team, after spending half a year on research and one year on verification, eventually improved braking performance by more than 20 percent.

The same spirit has also been passed down in the space industry. At the Beijing Aerospace Flight Control Center, the calm and powerful phrase "Beijing, copy" went viral online. It was spoken by a young team composed of nine post-90s members. From Chang'e series lunar probes to the construction of the Tiangong Space Station, from the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System to the Mars mission Tianwen-1, the spirit of the manned space program- "exceptional perseverance, resilience, problem-solving ability, and dedication"-has been passed on from generation to generation of young people.

Chinese youth in the new era are climbers with feet on the solid ground and hands reaching for the stars. In developing cutting-edge frontier technologies and in tackling "stranglehold problems", they dedicate years of efforts, like a blacksmith spending years forging the perfect sword. They excel at teamwork and dare to overcome difficulties. While young scientists are active in frontier research, numerous young skilled workers are delving into precision manufacturing, assembly and debugging, process optimization, and other fields, becoming "Craftsmen of the Nation".

At the 47th WorldSkills Competition held in Lyon, France in 2024, 68 competitors of the Chinese delegation participated in all 59 skill areas, winning 36 gold medals, 9 silver medals, 4 bronze medals, and 8 medallions of excellence, ranking first in both gold and total medal count. Ma Hongda won China's first gold medal in the plastering and drywall systems event, while Li Dexin earned high praise for Chinese traditional craftsmanship for mortise and tenon structure in the cabinetmaking event.

An article in the British magazine The Economist noted that at top AI conferences and events of 2025, the number of research papers from China exceeded that of the United States and that of Europe for the first time. China currently has a large and young cohort of active AI researchers, of whom 47 percent are students. The Chosun Ilbo of the Republic of Korea pointed out that China's post-90s generation has performed strongly in the global AI industry.

These youth are the climbers of the new era who keep feet on the ground to identify problems in practice and aim high to explore bravely in unknown fields. They take the baton from their predecessors, run their leg of the race well, and pass the baton with confidence to those who are younger.

1.3 Communicators embracing the world with confidence

At the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, 21-year-old Zheng Qinwen won the gold medal in women's singles tennis, becoming the first Asian Olympic singles tennis gold medalist. Zheng competed in six matches over seven days, including two tough battles lasting over three hours. Pushing herself to physical exhaustion in great heat, she said after the match, "I know what this game means to China." At the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games, Su Yiming won China's first gold medal on his 22nd birthday. He said, "The most important thing is to let the world see the perseverance of the Chinese people and the spirit of Chinese ice and snow sports." These young athletes have showcased the confidence and vitality of Chinese youth to the world.

Chinese youth in the new era embrace the world with an open mind, feeling neither inferior nor superior. The Global Times' Public Opinion Survey Center has conducted surveys among young people in more than 100 Chinese cities for two consecutive years, and the results show that the proportion of Chinese young people who choose to "view the West on equal terms" has been rising continuously.

Born in an era of rapid national development and having personally experienced the leap in China's comprehensive national strength, this generation of young people has more confidence. They care about fairness and order. They are idealistic yet pragmatic, paying attention to both grand narratives and justice around them, and aspiring to "change the world" while understanding the importance of "doing their own part well first".

In March 2026, Chinese motorcycle manufacturer ZXMOTO won both races at the Portugal round of the FIM Superbike World Championship, ending what analysts describe as decades-long dominance of top-tier motorcycle racing by European, American, and Japanese brands. "I have waited 20 years for this moment," founder Zhang Xue said after the race, adding that he hopes to compete with traditional foreign leading brands in more events in the future.By May 2026, ZXMOTO had claimed five championship titles in total.

Confidence in Chinese culture is the defining trait of Chinese youth in the new era. Short video maker Li Ziqi focuses on folk culture and rural revitalization. A video she released in 2024 focusing on Chengdu lacquerware, a national intangible cultural heritage, garnered over 100 million views within five hours, sparking strong interest in traditional Chinese culture among fans worldwide. With the core creative team mainly made up by post-90s and post-00s, the film Ne Zha: Demon Child Conquers the Sea grossed over 15.9 billion yuan globally after its release in 2025. The film ranked fifth on the list of the highest-grossing films in global box office history, sharing with the world the charm of Chinese animation.

Japan's Nikkei Asia noted that the growing confidence and patriotism of Chinese young people have led the "New Chinese Style" fashion trend. According to Argentina's Buenos Aires Herald, growing up in an era of material abundance, better education, and widespread digital access, the younger generation in China can not only navigate rapid changes with composure but also maintain a strong sense of national identity.

With a global outlook, today's young Chinese are more open and confident. They love Chinese fashion trends, domestic brands, and Chinese animation, while remaining open to excellent foreign cultures. They live by the principle that "each civilization values its own beauty while appreciating the beauty of others, and together they achieve common development."... Such are the Chinese youth of the new era-engaging with the world on equal terms, in their own way.

1.4 Pioneers with digital dreams and a future-building vision

At the 2026 CCTV Spring Festival Gala, Unitree Robotics' humanoid robots per-

formed martial arts and backflips to thunderous applause. During his visit to China, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz toured Unitree Robotics' headquarters, where he interacted with the same model of robots that performed in the Spring Festival Gala just days before. The company's post-90s founder, Wang Xingxing, started by building a simple robot with 200 yuan during his freshman year winter break. He later led the company to become one of Hangzhou's six leading tech giants dubbed the "Six Little Dragons".

DeepSeek, another of Hangzhou's renowned "Six Little Dragons", has an average team age of just 28. The free large language model it launched is world-class, offering high performance and cost-effectiveness-qualities that have won over users around the globe. Germany's Die Zeit commented, "This is not the first time that China's high-tech industry has conquered the world with innovative products."

Chinese youth in the new era are pioneers with digital dreams and a future-building vision. For them, digital technology is not just a tool, but a new way to understand and transform the world.

China's 2026 Government Work Report calls for "nurturing and scaling up emerging and future industries" and states that young people are becoming the leading force on these new industrial frontiers. In early 2025, 26-year-old Wei Cunxin left his job in Shenzhen and returned to Baiyin, a city in Northwest China's Gansu province, to start his own drone business. All ten of its employees are under 30, and its operations span training, inspection, and plant protection. Inspired by his example, the local government launched free drone training programs for young people, providing a "one-stop service" from professional training to quality employment, thereby helping the low-altitude economy gain rapid momentum.

At the West Bund waterfront in Xuhui District, Shanghai, the "Model Speed Space" large model innovation ecosystem community stands as a further testament to the energy of youth. During an inspection visit in April 2025, general secretary Xi Jinping, remarked: "AI is a nascent industry, and it's also an industry that belongs to young people." In just two years, nearly 400 large-model enterprises have set up operations in and around Model Speed Space. Seven major AI enterprises including Xiyu Technology constitute the Big Dipper Matrix, with their products reaching over 200 countries and regions worldwide.

From deep-tech to creative culture, the stage for creators is equally expansive. The development team at Game Science, with an average age of 32, produced Black Myth: Wukong, which has achieved global sales of over 30 million copies, with overseas markets accounting for more than half of that total. Wuthering Waves, developed by Guangzhou-based Kuro Games, has captivated players across more than 100 countries and regions and won the Players' Voice Award at The Game Awards (TGA) 2025. In the micro-dramas sector, China's overseas micro-drama market generated total revenue exceeding 2.3 billion US dollars in 2025, a more than twofold year-on-year increase, with over 70 percent of industry practitioners under the age of 30.

Growing up deeply digital, China's youth take what they find online and make it happen offline. They are not future-watchers but future-makers-shaping the future through lines of code and sparks of ideas.

Chapter Two
Safeguards for the Development of Chinese Youth

Party committees and governments at all levels, officials at all levels, and society as a whole should fully trust young people, care for them warmly, and hold them to high standards. They should pay attention to young people's aspirations, support their development, and encourage their entrepreneurship, serving as trusted friends of young people, enthusiastic supporters of youth work, and guides for the younger generation.

—Xi Jinping

"A state with an abundance of virtuous and capable people enjoys sound governance." Chinese path to modernization has opened up vast horizons for young people to grow and build their careers. Yet real challenges such as unbalanced and inadequate development, and the ongoing demographic transition also place considerable pressure on today's youth in education, employment, and daily life. In response to this new situation, China has elevated the promotion of high-quality youth development to a strategic priority of the Party and the state, assigning it a more prominent place in the overall work agenda, so as to pool the vast youthful strength for building a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the national rejuvenation at all fronts.

2.1 Building a sound and robust institutional framework

A sound policy framework is the institutional bedrock for addressing the challenges facing youth development and supporting the growth of young people. In response to the diverse development needs of young people, the Chinese government has reinforced policy guidance and improved the policy framework. Building on the significant incorporation of youth-related elements in the 13th and 14th Five-Year plans, the outline of the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) for national economic and social development for the first time included a dedicated section on "Supporting Youth Development". This section outlines how to support young people in becoming pioneers and a vital force in all fields and areas of work, while helping them tackle practical difficulties in areas such as education, employment, innovation and entrepreneurship, marriage and childbearing, housing security, and social integration. In doing so, it weaves youth devel-

opment into the country's overarching blueprint, bringing China's youth development into a new stage where it is deeply integrated with the national modernization process.

In 2017, China issued the Medium and Long-term Youth Development Plan (2016-2025), providing fundamental policy guidance for youth development in the new era. Since its implementation, the joint meeting mechanism of youth work has achieved full coverage at provincial, municipal, and county levels; more than 30,000 youth-friendly policies have been introduced across the country; and over 200 prefecture-level cities have launched initiatives to build youth-development-oriented cities. This has given rise to a youth development policy framework and working mechanism with distinctively Chinese characteristics. Work on formulating a new Medium and Long-term Youth Development Plan has now been initiated. The plan will introduce stronger measures to support young people's growth, enhance their initiative and creativity, strengthen institutional support for youth development, and improve the well-being of young people.

The sustained advancement of law-based governance and the continuous improvement of the system of socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics have provided solid safeguards for youth development. From attending sessions as observers and submitting policy recommendations to helping implement policies, Chinese young people are participating in the people's congress system in multiple ways and at deeper levels. As a result, youth voices are increasingly being incorporated into the full process of the country's democratic political life. Article 46 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates that "the state promotes the all-round development of children and young people, morally, intellectually and physically," providing the basis for establishing a rule-of-law protection system for youth. Among the more than 300 laws and regulations currently in force in China, including those concerning social, civil, criminal, and procedural law, about one third contain provisions related to youth and minors. In addition, many localities have enacted their own legislation to safeguard youth development. For example, cities such as Wenzhou and Guangzhou have introduced regulations to promote youth development and local rules on youth employment and entrepreneurship, making the institutional protection framework more precise and targeted.

In the new era, the multi-party cooperation and political consultation system under the leadership of the Communist Party of China has been upheld and further improved. Within the sector framework of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), dedicated sectors are established for the Communist Youth League of China and the All-China Youth Federation. CPPCC organizations and members at all levels have focused on the most pressing concerns of young people including youth employment and entrepreneurship, and housing, conducting in-depth investigations and actively submitting proposals and recommendations. A large number of high-quality proposals have been translated into youth-friendly policy measures. A youth work mechanism that is vertically connected across levels and horizontally coordinated has taken shape, and a policy system for youth development with Chinese characteris-

tics has been established.

2.2 Expanding space for youth development

A stable economic and social environment is the cornerstone for Chinese youth, giving them the confidence to explore and take on challenges. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China more than 70 years ago-and especially in the more than 40 years since reform and opening-up-China has achieved rapid economic growth and long-term social stability, often referred to as the "two miracles". This stable environment has allowed young people to develop their abilities and build careers.

——**Sustained and sound economic development gives young people the courage to forge ahead.** China's economy, featuring a solid foundation, abundant advantages, strong resilience, and great potential, has firmly held its position as the world's second largest. Amid global economic fluctuations and a complex external environment, China's economy presses on despite headwinds and moves toward innovation-driven, higher-quality development. Leveraging the world's most comprehensive industrial system, a vast domestic market, and a steadily upgrading industrial ecosystem, China now boasts increasingly diverse industrial sectors-from traditional manufacturing and the digital economy to cutting-edge innovation and cultural exchanges-offering young people a wider range of career choices.

In 2026, the number of college graduates in China is expected to reach 12.7 million, hitting a record high. During this year's "Spring Breeze Action", a total of 32,000 recruitment events were held across the country, offering 23 million job openings. Strong labor demand is seen in industries such as new energy, information technology, intelligent manufacturing, and modern services.

——**A long-term stable social environment allows youth to grow with peace of mind.** China's governance efficiency has improved significantly, and society as a whole remains harmonious and stable. In 2025, the national public safety index stood at 98.23 percent, staying above 98 percent for six consecutive years. The number of criminal cases nationwide fell by 12.8 percent year on year, reaching its lowest level since the beginning of the century. A Gallup survey of over 145,000 adults across 144 countries and regions shows that China ranks third globally in terms of residents' sense of safety.

China is actively promoting youth-friendly cities by integrating youth development into urban planning, construction, and governance. It works to create a better environment for youth growth across urban space, industry, culture, ecology, and public safety, while strengthening policies and project support for youth development. A stable social environment and sustained policy support give young people the confidence to plan for the future and commit to long-term goals.

2.3 Building a reliable social security net

Social security provides a solid safeguard for young people against risks and supports

their development. China has built the world's largest social security system. Through efficient digital governance and well-targeted public services, it effectively addresses the real needs of young people in education, employment, entrepreneurship, housing, marriage, and childbearing.

——**Access to quality education.** Education is the cornerstone of youth development and national prosperity. China has promoted high-quality and balanced compulsory education as well as high-quality, inclusive preschool education. It has expanded upper secondary education resources and implemented an action plan to revitalize county-level high schools. In higher education, China has improved quality, expanded enrollment-including in quality undergraduate and graduate programs-and steadily increased the proportion of doctoral students. To keep pace with digital transformation, China has built a system to cultivate young people's digital literacy and skills. Through its "AI+" initiative, the country actively provides skills training to enhance young people's digital adaptability and creativity. In 2024, the average years of schooling among new entrants to the workforce reached 14 years. The gross enrollment rate in higher education exceeded 60 percent, and young people's scientific literacy and innovation capacity improved significantly.

——**Access to quality employment.** General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that employment for college graduates and young people as a whole must be a top priority. China is fully implementing an employment-first strategy. It increases youth job supply by leveraging the digital transformation of manufacturing, the expansion and quality improvement of the service sector, and the large-scale development of emerging industries. The government encourages both state-owned and private enterprises to hire more young people, enhances the job-creation capacity of county economies, and promotes the healthy growth of flexible and new forms of employment. In terms of employment services, China lowers cross-regional job-seeking costs through the "Youth Community" initiative and provides targeted support for disadvantaged college graduates, unemployed graduates, and unemployed urban youth. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, as of February this year, the unemployment rate for people aged 16 to 24 has declined for six consecutive months.

——**Access to new careers.** The rapid evolution of new technologies, consumer patterns, and business models is constantly creating new occupations. The 15th Five-Year Plan calls for cultivating new types of jobs and occupations, identifying 109 major projects across six areas that will generate new forms of employment characterized by high technical sophistication, specialized expertise, and broad regional reach. Between 2019 and 2025, the Chinese government released seven rounds of new occupations, totaling 110, covering fields such as the digital economy, modern services, and intelligent manufacturing. In 2022, China published a white paper titled Youth of China in the New Era, which noted that since 2014, the number of college-educated entrepreneurs among newly registered market entities has surpassed five million. In industries driven by innovation and creativity, such as information technology services, cultural, sports,

and entertainment industries, and the science and technology services sector, young people account for over 50 percent of the workforce. A large number of youth-led "unicorn" enterprises have also emerged.

——**Access to housing.** The 2026 Government Work Report proposed, for the first time, strengthening housing support for newlyweds and first-child families, as well as improving housing conditions for families with multiple children. To address the housing difficulties faced by young people, China continues to build a multi-tiered housing security system that addresses stage-specific housing difficulties for young people. It has improved the housing system to support both renting and buying, optimized the supply of affordable housing, regulated the rental market, and increased assistance for young people in renting or purchasing homes. Over the past five years, Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen-cities with large youth populations-have provided nearly two million affordable housing units. Many regions have introduced targeted measures such as youth apartments, talent apartments, rental subsidies, and home-buying support, ensuring that young people have a stable and secure place to live.

——**Support for childbirth and childcare.** China continues to refine its childbirth support policies and build a pro-childbirth society. This includes expanding maternity insurance coverage, providing childbirth and childcare support for working women, encouraging employers to offer flexible and remote work arrangements for parents of infants, and developing inclusive childcare services as well as integrated nursery and childcare programs. By the end of 2025, China had 126,000 childcare facilities with 6.66 million places-equivalent to 4.73 places per 1,000 people-exceeding the target set in the 14th Five-Year Plan. Local governments have widely introduced public matchmaking services, promoted reforms in wedding customs, offered family development support, and rolled out practical measures such as childcare subsidies, reductions in education fees, and additional individual income tax deductions. These end-to-end supports give young people greater confidence to marry, have children, and start families.

The Chinese government continues to address young people's most urgent practical needs at every stage-from earning a degree and finding a job to securing an apartment and starting a family-so that they can build their lives with confidence, enjoy a higher quality of life, and look to the future with hope.

2.4 Providing thoughtful care

Youth organizations are confidants, supporters and guides for young people. By the end of 2024, the number of Party members aged 35 and below reached 23.036 million, and members of the Communist Youth League numbered 75.318 million. Tens of millions of young Party members and League members are active in all sectors of economic and social development, becoming the backbone of Chinese modernization.

As an organization of vanguard young people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Communist Youth League always puts safeguarding young people's development rights and interests first. It promotes a youth-first development ap-

proach, mobilizes social resources through its organizational strengths, and advocates for policies that address young people's needs. It also goes all out to solve their practical problems and create a favorable environment for their growth and development.

As one of the people's organizations under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the All-China Youth Federation always upholds and safeguards the legitimate rights and interests of young people of all ethnic groups and sectors, guides young people to participate in social life in an active and healthy way, and strives to serve their healthy growth and development. As a united organization composed of college student unions, graduate student unions and secondary school student unions under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the All-China Students' Federation expresses and safeguards the specific interests of young students in accordance with laws and regulations, and serves their growth and development through beneficial and diverse extracurricular activities and social services.

Chapter Three
The Glorious Mission of Chinese Youth

Youth is the most active and energetic element among all forces in society. You are the hope and future of our country. Today, in the most promising period of the Chinese nation, young Chinese are endowed with rare opportunities to achieve things, and the mission to shoulder great responsibilities.

—Xi Jinping

A nation will be full of hope and a country will have a brilliant future when its younger generations have ideals, abilities, and a strong sense of responsibility. From the hard struggles of the revolutionary years, to the arduous efforts of national construction, and then to the pioneering progress of reform and opening up, Chinese youth have always stood at the forefront of the times and remained closely connected with the destiny of the country. Today, as China advances on its new journey toward a great modern socialist country, members of the younger generation are not only sharing in the opportunities of the times, but also taking up the baton and showing the world the youthful strength of confidence, openness, and pragmatism.

3.1 Rising to the challenge in major tasks

Chinese modernization is the modernization of material and cultural- ethical advancement, and the modernization of peaceful development. To advance Chinese modernization, China must respond to serious challenges in major projects, scientific and technological exploration, disaster prevention and mitigation, and national defense and security among others. In the face of urgent, difficult, dangerous and demanding tasks, it is particularly important for the younger generation to step forward and shoulder responsibility.

The implementation of major national strategies, the response to emergencies, and the defense of border areas all require young people to stand at the forefront with the courage to take on responsibility when they are needed most. This calls on young people to heighten their awareness of potential risks, strengthen their capacity for emergency response and crisis management, and build experience and resilience through major tasks. Only by integrating personal ideals into national needs can they prove themselves in times of crisis, shoulder key responsibilities in critical fields, and become dependable

pillars of the country and the nation.

Chinese youth have shown strong ability to take action in major national projects. During the construction of the Hong Kong- Zhuhai- Macao Bridge, an engineering team with an average age of only 28 overcame a number of key technical difficulties. In the construction of Beijing Daxing International Airport, young engineers helped ensure that the project entered service on schedule. In cutting-edge science, the core team behind the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System had an average age in their 30s, while young researchers formed the main body of the R&D team for FAST, the Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope. In national defense, young officers and soldiers have long served on the front lines in cold and high-altitude border areas, contributing to the defense of national sovereignty and security. By rising to the challenge in major tasks, these young people have demonstrated the sense of responsibility and fighting spirit of Chinese youth in the new era.

3.2 Building careers and making contributions on the front lines

Chinese modernization is the modernization of a huge population and of common prosperity for all. This process depends on the quiet dedication of ordinary workers in ordinary posts, and on the younger generation taking root and devoting themselves at the front lines.

The grassroots form the foundation of society, and every post can be a platform for endeavor. The new era calls on young people to develop a view of career choice that values achievement and contribution in every field and at every post, integrating their personal growth into national development and social improvements. Whether they work as industrial workers, new-type farmers, delivery couriers or community workers, young people in ordinary posts constitute the cornerstone of Chinese modernization. Only by working at the grassroots level and serving the grassroots can they gain a real understanding of national conditions and people's needs, temper their abilities, and realize their value in helping address the pressing difficulties and problems that concern the people most. Working in ordinary posts and engaging in grassroots- level practice is both a necessary path for young people to grow and an important mission entrusted to them by the times.

Chinese youth in the new era have carried forward the tradition of striving for excellence. In industrial manufacturing, modern agriculture, the service economy, and comprehensive rural revitalization, they have turned the ordinary into the extraordinary and made the seemingly impossible possible. In the manufacturing sector, young skilled workers have become an important force supporting industrial upgrading. At CRRC, for example, a group of highly skilled workers born in the 1990s has participated in the R&D and assembly of core components for high-speed trains, keeping product errors within the micrometer range. China now has more than 200 million skilled workers, with the share of young workers among them continuing to rise.

In the agricultural sector, by February 2025, more than 12 million people nationwide had returned to or moved to rural areas to start businesses, with young people becoming a fresh force in comprehensive rural revitalization. In major grain-producing regions such as Heilongjiang and Jiangsu, young "new farmers" have increased output by using technologies such as drone-based plant protection and smart irrigation. In urban development, new employment groups mainly composed of young people, such as delivery couriers and food delivery riders, have expanded rapidly, supporting a courier sector that handled more than 200 billion parcels in 2025.

At the same time, front line work has become an important platform for young people to temper their abilities. Over the 23 years since the launch of the "College Student Volunteer Service Western Program", nearly 600,000 college graduates have been selected and sent to serve in central and western regions. By the end of 2024, the "Three Supports and One Assistance" program had selected and sent more than 600,000 people in total; after completing their service terms, more than 80 percent chose to stay and continue working at the community level. Through hard work in ordinary posts and on the front lines, these young people have written extraordinary chapters of the times.

3.3 Unlocking potential in frontier exploration

Scientific and technological modernization is a core pillar of Chinese modernization. As a new round of global scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation gathers pace, competition is becoming increasingly intense in such fields as artificial intelligence, aerospace technology, biomedicine and new energy. To achieve high-level self-reliance and strength in science and technology, and to move from a major manufacturing country to a strong country in intelligent manufacturing, China needs to draw on the innovative potential and creativity of the younger generation.

Young people are among the most imaginative and pioneering groups in society, and they have long stood at the forefront of industrial transformation. The mission of the times calls on them to challenge the unknown, venture into uncharted technological territory, and translate laboratory achievements into real-world productive capacity. Only through continuous breakthroughs in key and core technologies, new forms of business and future industries can Chinese modernization gain sustained momentum and take the initiative in global competition.

In response to the global scientific and technological revolution, Chinese youth have actively engaged in the innovation-driven development strategy. In aerospace, many young researchers have participated in the R&D of core systems for space station construction. In deep-sea exploration, young technicians have played an important role in the R&D team of Jiaolong, China's deep-sea manned submersible. In artificial intelligence, a number of youth-led startup teams have made breakthroughs in algorithms and large AI models.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics show that China trains more than three million science and engineering graduates every year, steadily strengthening the talent pool for scientific and technological innovation. By unlocking their potential at the industrial frontier, these young people are turning the "engineer dividend" into a tangible "innovation dividend", becoming a strong driving force for Chinese modernization.

3.4 Helping shape cultural and ethical progress

Chinese modernization emphasizes well-rounded human development and all-around social progress. Young people are not only a vital force driving economic development, but also important participants and leaders in shaping social values, advancing public culture, and presenting China's image to the world.

At present, the mission of young people in cultural and ethical progress has become more prominent. On the one hand, young people are called on to take concrete action in public-interest undertakings such as volunteer service, community governance and ecological protection, and to spread positive and constructive values. On the other hand, they are expected to present a confident, open and inclusive image of China in international engagement and cultural exchanges. The times call on young people to be firm practitioners of core socialist values, innovative communicators of fine traditional Chinese culture, and active voices for positive energy in cyberspace.

China's volunteer service system has continued to improve, becoming an important channel for young people to participate in social affairs. Since the launch of the Chinese Young Volunteers Action in 1993, its scope has continued to expand, covering basic education, public health, rural revitalization, social governance, and service in border defense. Data show that China has more than 230 million registered volunteers under the real-name system, most of whom are young people. At major international events such as the Beijing Winter Olympics, the Hangzhou Asian Games and the Chengdu World Games, young volunteers provided services including language support and event operations, winning broad recognition from the international community.

From community governance and ecological protection to cultural inheritance and international exchanges, young people, as leaders of civilization, are helping shape sound social values and trends. Through their active participation, they are bringing warm and lasting moral strength to the advancement of Chinese modernization.

Contemporary Chinese youth benefit from the opportunities created by China's economic and social development, while also contributing to national development through concrete actions. With stronger overall competence, greater innovative capacity, and a deeper sense of social responsibility, they have become an important force in advancing Chinese modernization. Looking ahead, in the face of complex and changing global challenges, Chinese youth in the new era are shouldering their mission and joining, with vigor and resolve, the great endeavor of national rejuvenation and the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

Chapter Four
Chinese Youth and Their Global Contributions

China always views young people as an important force in driving social development and encourages them to contribute to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

—Xi Jinping

Contemporary Chinese youth have a global vision and a strong sense of responsibility for the wider world. They actively participate in international cooperation in scientific and technological innovation, people-to-people exchanges, and global governance, bringing fresh momentum to the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Governance Initiative across multiple fields. Through concrete actions, Chinese youth are helping break down prejudice and build consensus. In promoting global sustainable development and exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, they present to the world an image of Chinese youth marked by confidence, openness, a sense of responsibility, and readiness to act, while adding their voices to the pursuit of common development and peace.

4.1Contributing wisdom to global development

Faced with serious challenges such as imbalances in global development, Chinese youth are contributing to the resolution of global issues through concrete actions. They have led or participated in a number of international big science programs and major scientific research cooperation projects, and have actively built platforms for scientific collaboration among young people. They have also helped improve infrastructure in less-developed regions and shared advanced agricultural technologies to support local agricultural production.

The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project is jointly implemented by China, the European Union, and other parties. The Institute of Plasma Physics under the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences is one of the major institutions undertaking China's tasks for ITER. Richard Pitts, head of ITER's Experiments and Plasma Operation Section, said, "What I really enjoy here is that a large number of young people are involved in the project, which is exactly what fusion research needs."

In April 2024, the first in-orbit scientific images captured by the Einstein Probe satellite were officially released. Developed under the leadership of the Chinese Academy

of Sciences with the participation of multiple international teams, the space science satellite successfully captured fleeting cosmic "fireworks". The National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, where the chief scientist of the Einstein Probe is based, has a research team mainly composed of researchers born in the 1980s and 1990s. They played a key role in the development of the satellite payloads and scientific application systems.

Beyond their participation in specific projects and R&D, a growing number of Chinese youth have taken the initiative to serve as organizers and coordinators of scientific and technological cooperation. By building transnational academic networks and regular exchange mechanisms, they have created space for dialogue and collaboration among young scientists around the world. In recent years, platforms such as the World Young Scientists Summit, in which Chinese youth have been deeply involved or have played a leading role, have remained active. They have brought together researchers from many countries and regions to discuss cooperation among research institutions, the commercialization of scientific and technological achievements, and the cultivation of young talent, highlighting the convening and leading role of Chinese youth in international scientific and technological cooperation.

In the face of imbalanced global development, improving infrastructure is often the first step toward breaking the cycle of poverty. Many young people in China have brought the country's development experience and technologies overseas, helping improve daily life for local communities. In the summer of 2025, more than 100 teachers and students from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University worked in villages in Gisagara District, Southern Province, Rwanda, installing solar panels and indoor lighting systems for local residents. Since 2013, the team has installed more than 2,000 solar power systems for rural households in Rwanda's Eastern and Southern provinces. Groups of young Chinese agricultural researchers and technical experts have also gone abroad and worked in the fields, helping local farmers increase agricultural output and improve their livelihoods. In Thailand, China Agricultural University has maintained close cooperation with Kasetsart University. The two sides have established a joint innovation center, a training and maintenance center for Chinese agricultural machinery, and a China-Thailand joint center for intelligent agricultural equipment and smart agriculture technologies, where young researchers from both countries carry out joint technological R&D.

4.2 Upholding global security with a sense of responsibility

Guided by the Global Security Initiative, Chinese youth are contributing to global security through peacekeeping operations, overseas medical assistance, and voices for peace. They are putting the vision of a community with a shared future for humanity into practice on patrol routes in UN mission areas, through medical consultations in foreign-aid services, and in cross-border youth initiatives for peace. With a strong sense of

responsibility, they are bringing a measure of stability to a turbulent world.

On the front lines of peacekeeping, Chinese peacekeepers contribute to peace with dedication, undertaking tasks ranging from ceasefire monitoring and security protection to humanitarian assistance. In 2025, the 11th Chinese Peacekeeping Infantry Battalion to South Sudan (Juba), consisting of 700 officers and soldiers, completed 308 days of guard duties and 586 authorized missions to a high standard. The battalion also carried out humanitarian activities, including free medical consultations, donations, and water supply services, and was awarded the UN Peace Medal. Since 1990, China has dispatched more than 49,000 peacekeepers, making it the largest troop contributor among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. At present, more than 1,800 Chinese peacekeepers are serving in eight mission areas. Every deployment and every medal reflect Chinese youth's firm commitment to world peace.

In overseas medical assistance, young Chinese professionals are providing care with expertise and commitment. In 2025, the 13th China (Shanghai) Youth Volunteer Service Team to Laos provided more than 7,000 hours of service. Young doctors on the team offered free traditional Chinese medicine consultations and taught local colleagues how to locate acupoints and apply relevant techniques, helping traditional Chinese medicine take root abroad and sowing seeds of friendship and hope. Over more than six decades, China has sent 31,000 medical workers to 77 countries and regions, treated nearly 300 million patients, and trained more than 100,000 local medical personnel.

Chinese youth are also speaking up for peace. Under the framework of the Chinese Youth Global Partnership, China has established exchange and cooperation ties with more than 300 international organizations and foreign youth groups. In July 2025, the World Youth Conference for Peace, co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the All-China Youth Federation, was held in Beijing. Young delegates from more than 130 countries jointly issued the World Youth Initiative for Peace in multiple languages. Participants said that young people from different countries had voiced the same call in different languages, demonstrating their shared aspiration for peace. They expressed confidence that, through the joint efforts of successive generations, lasting peace and prosperity in the world can be achieved.

4.3 Promoting exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations through creativity

As the most active and creative groups in cultural exchanges, Chinese youth are increasingly becoming an important link between China and the world. Through language, innovation and culture, they are building bridges of understanding and respect among different civilizations.

Language is a key to exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. By the end of 2025, international Chinese language education had reached 212 countries and regions, and more than 500 Confucius Institutes had been jointly established in 164

countries and regions. Since 2004, Xiamen University's "Flowers of Hanyu Bloom" (Blooms Across the World) volunteer service team has sent nearly 800 volunteers, helping support 14 Confucius Institutes in 12 countries across five continents and sowing seeds of cultural exchange. At the Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, young volunteer Gao Yan teaches a Level 1 Chinese course to about 30 local young people. Since the evening classes teaching Chinese were launched in 2013, the institute has trained about 5,000 learners. Mabelo, a 24-year-old man from South Africa, first encountered the Chinese language at a Confucius Classroom eight years ago and later studied in China. He now works at China COSCO Shipping Corporation Limited's Durban branch. He said, "Learning Chinese not only enables me to communicate smoothly with my Chinese colleagues, but also helps me better understand and integrate into the company's culture."

From language classrooms to art venues, and from digital communication to transnational entrepreneurship, Chinese youth are contributing in increasingly diverse ways to friendship and common prosperity between China and other countries. In cross-cultural communication in the digital age, young Chinese creators use innovative forms of expression to bring renewed vitality to Chinese culture on overseas social media platforms. In the Belt and Road Generation Z "Film Heritage, Share Stories" activity for exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, young creators from more than 50 universities in China and abroad submitted nearly 1,000 works. Using a first-person perspective, they told authentic and multidimensional stories about China, helping Chinese culture reach a wider global audience.

4.4 Contributing to global governance through dedication

With growing confidence, Chinese youth are stepping onto global multilateral platforms and becoming indispensable participants and contributors in global governance.

Every year, the All-China Youth Federation sends Chinese youth delegations to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum. It also hosts events in China, including the World Youth Development Forum, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Youth Forum, and the BRICS Youth Summit, building important platforms for youth participation in global governance. The 2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum was held at UN Headquarters in New York. Hao Shuang, a young representative from a Chinese enterprise, shared her experience in global energy governance and in working with other countries to explore new paths for sustainable energy development, drawing on her practice in power project construction in Uganda, Laos and other countries. Deng Wenhao, a technology entrepreneur, presented a new technology that captures carbon dioxide from flue gas at power plants and injects it into saline-alkali land, achieving a win-win outcome of carbon reduction and higher grain yields. Through candid sharing and in-depth dialogue, the voices of Chinese youth are being heard by more people on multilateral platforms for global governance.

Universities in China are cultivating young talent with global competence by offering courses on international organizations, setting up elite programs for international organization studies, holding training camps and programs for young talent, establishing cooperation mechanisms with relevant international organizations, and founding specialized schools of international organizations. As a result, the professional capacity of Chinese youth to work in international organizations has continued to improve. At the United Nations Department of Global Communications in New York, Zou Heyi, a young professional born in the 1980s, tells UN stories in Chinese and works to report on complex international events and regional conflicts from an objective and impartial perspective. In 2025, three students from Shanghai International Studies University were selected for the Chinese Youth Volunteer Overseas Volunteering Programme (UN Volunteers). As UN volunteers, they told the international stories of Chinese youth in Laos, Egypt, and other places.

While Chinese youth are increasingly going global, China is also taking the initiative to build platforms for youth dialogue and exchange. Through platforms such as the World Youth Development Forum, Chinese and foreign youth jointly issued the International Youth Initiative on Unleashing Youth Potential for Global Development. Focusing on areas such as scientific and technological innovation, green development and cultural exchanges, they shared views and experiences, called on young people around the world to contribute to global development, advocated joint global efforts to promote youth development, and pooled the wisdom and strength of youth for the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, the Global Governance Initiative, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Conclusion

Youth are the future of a country and the hope of the world. In China, this generation of young people is stepping onto a broader global stage with an open mind, pragmatic action and a strong sense of responsibility. They are not only builders and witnesses of their own country's development, but also an increasingly active youthful force in global governance.

From participating in international scientific research cooperation to promoting the development of the digital economy, from spreading Chinese culture to engaging in peacekeeping and humanitarian causes, Chinese youth are responding in their own way to the most pressing question of our time: how different civilizations can respect each other and how different countries can move forward together. They do not indulge in empty fantasies or chase after empty rhetoric. Instead, through every volunteer service activity, every cross-cultural exchange and every international project, they see and understand the world, and in turn are seen and understood by the world.

Looking ahead, the challenges facing humanity will not disappear on their own, but the possibilities embodied by youth will always be the light that illuminates the path forward. China is ready to work with all countries to build more platforms for young people's growth and create more opportunities for young people to make their voices heard, so that the younger generation can play a greater role in addressing global issues such as climate change, bridging the digital divide, promoting peace and security, and other global issues.

Youth knows no borders, and dreams are shared by all. As more and more Chinese youth engage with the world with confidence, humility and a sense of responsibility, they bring not only personal growth, but also the vitality of mutual learning among civilizations and the hope for humanity's common progress. This is a gift from young people, and also China's most sincere contribution to the world.

Notes on Compilation

The research team for the think tank report Chinese Youth: Strivers and Global Contributors in the New Era is headed by Fu Hua, president of Xinhua News Agency and chair of the Academic Committee of Xinhua Institute. Lyu Yansong, editor-in-chief of Xinhua News Agency, serves as deputy head, and Ren Weidong, deputy editor-in-chief of Xinhua News Agency, serves as executive deputy head. Members of the research team include Liu Gang, Cui Feng, Fu Yan, Qin Yanyang, He Xiaofan, Dou Shuqi, Wang Mingyu, Liu Chang, Yang Siqi, Hou Weiyi, Zhou Xinyi, Wei Yijun, Wu Jianfeng, and others.The English version of the report was proofread by Wang Yongkang, Guo Ying, Tian Sulei, Li Jianqing, Yuan Ye, Ma Xiaoran, Zhang Yiyi and Shi Yifei.

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