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El Gran Juego de China: el camino hacia un nuevo imperio

China invierte en el exterior sus excedentes de capital. Con la Nueva Ruta de la Seda compensará la sobre inversión interna y extenderá su influencia en Asia y en zonas propias que tienen grandes reservas de minerales y gas. La expansión puede generar tensiones en áreas de China y poner en cuestión su política de no involucrarse en temas de seguridad afuera de su territorio.

[China's Great Game: Road to a new empire](#)

By Charles Clover and Lucy Hornby

Financial Times - 12/10/2015

“The granaries in all the towns are brimming with reserves, and the coffers are full with treasures and gold, worth trillions,” wrote Sima Qian, a Chinese historian living in the 1st century BC. “There is so much money that the ropes used to string coins together rot and break, an innumerable amount. The granaries in the capital overflow and the grain goes bad and cannot be eaten.”

He was describing the legendary surpluses of the Han dynasty, an age characterised by the first Chinese expansion to the west and south, and the establishment of trade routes later known as the Silk Road, which stretched from the old capital Xi’an as far as ancient Rome.

Fast forward a millennia or two, and the same talk of expansion comes as China’s surpluses grow again. There are no ropes to hold its \$4tn in foreign currency reserves – the world’s largest – and in addition to overflowing granaries China has massive surpluses of real estate, cement and steel.

After two decades of rapid growth, Beijing is again looking beyond its borders for investment opportunities and trade, and to do that it is reaching back to its former imperial greatness for the familiar “Silk Road” metaphor. Creating a modern version of the ancient trade route has emerged as China’s signature foreign policy initiative under President Xi Jinping.

“It is one of the few terms that people remember from history classes that does not involve hard power . . . and it’s precisely those positive associations that the Chinese want to emphasise,” says Valerie Hansen, professor of Chinese history at Yale University.

Xi’s big idea

If the sum total of China’s commitments are taken at face value, the new Silk Road is set to become the largest programme of economic diplomacy since the US-led Marshall Plan for postwar

reconstruction in Europe, covering dozens of countries with a total population of over 3bn people. The scale demonstrates huge ambition. But against the backdrop of a faltering economy and the rising strength of its military, the project has taken on huge significance as a way of defining China's place in the world and its relations – sometimes tense – with its neighbours.

Economically, diplomatically and militarily Beijing will use the project to assert regional leadership in Asia, say experts. For some, it spells out a desire to establish a new sphere of influence, a modern-day version of the 19th century Great Game, where Britain and Russia battled for control in central Asia.

“The Silk Road has been part of Chinese history, dating back to the Han and Tang dynasties, two of the greatest Chinese empires,” says Friedrich Wu, a professor at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore. “The initiative is a timely reminder that China under the Communist party is building a new empire.”

According to former officials, the grand vision for a new Silk Road began life modestly in the bowels of China's commerce ministry. Seeking a way to deal with serious overcapacity in the steel and manufacturing sectors, commerce officials began to hatch a plan to export more. In 2013, the programme received its first top-level endorsement when Mr Xi announced the “New Silk Road” during a visit to Kazakhstan.

Since the president devoted a second major speech to the plan in March – as concerns over the economic slowdown mounted – it has snowballed into a significant policy and acquired a clunkier name: “One Belt, One Road”. The belt refers to the land trade route linking central Asia, Russia and Europe. The road, oddly, is a reference to a maritime route via the western Pacific and Indian Ocean.

In some countries Beijing is pushing at an open door. Trade between China and the five central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – has grown dramatically since 2000, hitting \$50bn in 2013, according to the International Monetary Fund. China now wants to build the roads and pipelines needed to smooth access to the resources it needs to continue its development.

Mr Xi started to offer more details about the scheme earlier this year with an announcement of \$46bn in investments and credit lines in a planned China-Pakistan economic corridor, ending at the Arabian Sea port of Gwadar. In April, Beijing announced plans to inject \$62bn of its foreign exchange reserves into the three state-owned policy banks that will finance the expansion of the new Silk Road. Some projects, already on the drawing board, seem to have been co-opted into the new scheme by bureaucrats and businesspeople scrambling to peg their plans to Mr Xi's policy.

“They are just putting a new slogan on stuff they’ve wanted to do for a long time,” says one western diplomat.

“It’s like a Christmas tree,” says Scott Kennedy, deputy director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “You can hang a lot of policy goals on it, but no one has done a proper economic analysis. The government money they are putting in is not enough; they hope to bring in private capital, but would private capital want to invest? Will it make money?”

As well as offering a glimpse of China’s ambition, the new Silk Road presents a window into how macroeconomic policy is made in Beijing – often on the hoof, with bureaucrats scurrying to flesh out vague and sometimes contradictory statements from on high. “Part of this is top down, part of this is bottom up, but there is nothing in the middle so far,” says a former Chinese official.

“The rest of the bureaucracy is trying to catch up to where Xi has planted the flag,” says Paul Haenle, director of the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center in Beijing. “This is something that Xi announces and then the bureaucracy has to make something of it. They have to put meat on the bones.”

Some clues emerged in March when the powerful National Development and Reform Commission, China’s central planning body, published a clunky document, “Visions and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-century Maritime Silk Road”. It provides a great deal of detail in some places – such as which book fairs will be held – but is patchy in others, like which countries are included. Peru, Sri Lanka and even the UK are included in some versions of semi-official maps but left out of others.

A complete list appears to exist, however. On April 28 the commerce ministry announced that Silk Road countries account for 26 per cent of China’s foreign trade, a remarkably precise statistic. However, a request from the Financial Times for more specific details on the list of nations went unanswered.

There is also no indication yet of how it will be run – through its own bureaucracy, or as separate departments in different ministries and policy banks. With foreign governments and multinational banks eagerly following the Delphic utterances from Beijing to understand what it means, the vagueness and confusion has not gone unnoticed.

“If we want to talk to the Silk Road,” says a diplomat from a neighbouring state, “we don’t know who to call.”

As the country’s economic interests expand abroad, its massive security apparatus and military will probably be pulled into a greater regional role. China has no foreign military bases and

steadfastly insists that it does not interfere in the domestic politics of any country. But a draft antiterrorism law for the first time legalises the posting of Chinese soldiers on foreign soil, with the consent of the host nation.

China's military is also eager to get its share of the political and fiscal largesse that accompanies the new Silk Road push. One former US official says he was told by senior generals in the People's Liberation Army that the One Belt, One Road strategy would have a "security component".

Projects in unstable areas will inevitably test China's policy of avoiding security entanglements abroad. Pakistan has assigned 10,000 troops to protect Chinese investment projects, while in Afghanistan, US troops have so far protected a Chinese-invested copper mine.

Port construction in countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan has led some analysts to question whether China's ultimate aim is dual-use naval logistics facilities that could be put into service controlling sea lanes, a strategy dubbed the "String of Pearls".

Achieving the trust of wary neighbours including Vietnam, Russia and India is not a given, and is consistently being undermined by sustained muscle flexing by China elsewhere. In the South China Sea, for example, naval confrontations have increased in the face of aggressive maritime claims by Beijing.

Exporting overcapacity

Lenin's theory that imperialism is driven by capitalist surpluses seems to hold true, oddly, in one of the last (ostensibly) Leninist countries in the world. It is no coincidence that the Silk Road strategy coincides with the aftermath of an investment boom that has left vast overcapacity and a need to find new markets abroad.

"Construction growth is slowing and China doesn't need to build many new expressways, railways and ports, so they have to find other countries that do," says Tom Miller of Beijing consultancy Gavekal Dragonomics. "One of the clear objectives is to get more contracts for Chinese construction companies overseas."

Like the Marshall Plan, the new Silk Road initiative looks designed to use economic treats as a way to address other vulnerabilities. China's western frontiers and its central Asian neighbours are home to vast reserves of oil and gas. The Xinjiang region, sitting on some of China's largest energy reserves and crucial to the Silk Road project, is also home to a restive Muslim Uighur population that is culturally Turkish, far poorer than the citizens of coastal China and seeking a break with Beijing. The region has been the scene of serious outbreaks of violence in recent years.

A push into central Asia will partly fill the vacuum left by the retreat of Moscow after the cold war, followed by Washington's military pullback from Afghanistan next year. With Beijing saying it is facing a rising terrorist threat, stabilising the wider region is a priority.

But, in doing so, China will inherit the same chicken and egg problem that has plagued the US in its “nation building” attempts – having to ask whether security and stability is a pre-requisite for economic development, or whether, as Beijing appears to believe, it can pacify local conflicts with a sea of investment and infrastructure spending.

Combating radical Islam

If this approach does not work, China will be faced with some grim alternatives – either turn tail and leave, or risk getting bogged down in security commitments and local politics. It has made clear that it does not want to replace the US in Afghanistan nor does it see itself as a regional policeman. “China will not fall into the same mistakes,” says Jia Jinjing, a specialist on south Asia at Beijing’s Renmin University.

Economic development, strategists in Beijing argue, will remove the appeal of radical Islam in China and Pakistan, Afghanistan and central Asia. But critics note that culturally insensitive policies, an enormous security presence and economic strategies that benefit Chinese communities at the expense of locals have so far only escalated tensions in Xinjiang, the desert region that has 22 per cent of China’s domestic oil reserves and 40 per cent of its coal deposits.

Roads and pipelines across Pakistan and Myanmar will ultimately allow China to avoid another strategic vulnerability – the chokepoint of the Strait of Malacca, through which about 75 per cent of its oil imports pass. Already, half of China’s natural gas arrives overland from central Asia, thanks to an expensive strategy by Mr Xi’s predecessors to cut dependence on seaborne imports.

While some neighbours will welcome the investment, it is less clear they will want China’s overcapacity. Many have unemployment and underperforming steel mills of their own, or ambitions to develop their own industry rather than import someone else’s.

Large-scale investment could also trigger concerns about opening the floodgates to Chinese economic dominance – as it has done in Myanmar and Sri Lanka – and, by extension, political influence. But China is hoping the lure of massive spending will prove too great an incentive for its neighbours to resist.

“They [Beijing] don’t have much soft power, because few countries trust them,” says Mr Miller. “They either can’t or don’t want to use military power. What they have is huge amounts of money.”

¿Qué está empujando a las inversiones japonesas a salir de China?

Las inversiones japonesas en China están decreciendo y algunas firmas dejan el país. Pero China ha dejado de ser “la fábrica del mundo” para convertirse en “el mercado del mundo”. Las relaciones Japón-China son complicadas políticamente pero buenas en lo económico: un caso sin precedentes.

[What's pushing Japanese firms out of China?](#)

By Rumi Aoyama

EastAsiaForum - 21/10/2015

In early 2015, Japanese companies, Panasonic and Toshiba, announced that they would stop producing television sets in China. As Japan continues to decrease its investment in China, the two multinational corporations' partial exit seemed to underscore an overall trend of Japanese firms withdrawing from China. On 23 February 2015, Nikkei News reported that Citizen Watch Company had suddenly closed down its parts factory in Guangzhou, laying off all 1000 employees there.

The Sino-Japanese relationship has hit its worst downturn since normalisation of diplomatic ties. High-level dialogues, including summit talks, have been suspended since the Japanese government nationalised the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in September 2012 and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013. With its One Belt One Road strategy in 2013, Beijing launched its own diplomatic offensive to improve ties with neighbouring states, resuming intergovernmental contacts with Japan as well. But China has not shown any sign of compromise on the history or the Senkaku/Diaoyu issues. Meanwhile, Japan is moving toward its alliance relationship with the United States and has been developing a new collective security regime. There remains a deep-rooted mistrust between the two sides in both political and security areas.

It was against this backdrop that Japanese firms began to leave China. Despite the political predicament, its conditions in the labour market that have been the most important factor affecting these developments in the economic relationship between the two countries. Since large- and medium-sized corporations alike still yield profit in the market, the withdrawal of Japanese firms from China does not indicate dwindling business opportunities for all Japanese companies in the mainland.

Japanese firms entered China ahead of other countries after Beijing's reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s. According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, by the end of 2012, 23,094 Japanese firms had set up in China. The current Chinese Ambassador to Japan, Cheng Yonghua, evaluates these firms' investment activities in China highly, stating that 'by May 2015 Japanese accumulated investment in China had reached US\$100.4 billion, making it the first country to surpass US\$100 billion'.

But recently circumstances have changed for many Japanese firms, which have been in the Chinese mainland market for nearly four decades. Annual Japanese investment in China has decreased since 2012, when it peaked at US\$7 billion. The amount in 2014 was US\$4.3 billion, 38.8 per cent lower than the previous year. The business model in China has also started to

change. Previously, foreign firms produced goods in China using abundant and cheap local labour, and sold their products to foreign markets. But increases in labour costs (particularly as a result of the 2008 labour contract law) have affected the profitability of firms seeking good returns. A survey conducted by Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) shows that 83.9 per cent of Japanese firms believe that wage increases are a significant problem for their business activities in China.

On the other hand, expectations for China as a consumer market have been rising steadily among Japanese firms as Chinese purchasing power has increased dramatically in tandem with its booming economy. In 2014 the Japan Bank for International Cooperation raised its yearly evaluation of China from the fourth to third most promising destination for business activities in the mid-term (approximately three years in the future). Expectations for local market growth and current local market size were the top two reasons for the high ranking. Income growth has inevitably increased running costs, but at the same time, Japanese firms also see such growth as a positive factor for market expansion.

So while the amount of new investment from Japanese firms is decreasing, the Chinese market remains attractive.

Regardless of the political downturn, Japanese firms fare relatively well in the Chinese market. The Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry notes that the total amount of sales by Japanese companies in China reached 36.4 trillion yen (approximately US\$300 billion) in 2013 (over 44 trillion yen if Hong Kong is included) only one year after the nationalisation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

Japan's core businesses are gaining footholds in China. Sales volumes in 2013 for automobiles, data communication and electronic industries were 9.4 trillion, 3.9 trillion and 2.2 trillion yen (approximately US\$80 billion, US\$30 billion and US\$20 billion) respectively. Japan's multinational corporations, such as Toyota, Nissan, Honda, Hitachi and Panasonic, sell products valued at more than 1 trillion yen in this market, and they only expect that to grow.

Most importantly, Japanese firms believe that the Chinese market will continue to expand, and they are confident about generating profits there. In JETRO's yearly survey in 2014, 64.1 per cent of Japanese firms replied that they expected profit from sales, an increase from 60.7 per cent of firms on the year before.

The idea that all Japanese firms are on the way out of China is a myth. For Japanese companies, China's role has changed from 'the factory of the world' to 'the market of the world', as Chinese wages and consumption trend up.

China's rise has forced structural change within the international community, and with it a deteriorating political and security relationship with Japan. Realists argue that Sino-Japanese con-

frontation in the political and security realms will likely adversely affect their economic ties as well. In contrast, liberalists predict that mutual economic dependence between the two will eventually contribute to stability in their political relationship.

It is true that the politics of the bilateral relationship have not always been positive for Japanese firms operating in China. Yet Sino-Japan relations are not easily described by either the realist or liberalist paradigms. The relationship, characterised by 'cold politics, hot economics', is an interesting case study in international relations in an era of globalisation, the nature of which is unprecedented. For now, confrontation in the political and security sphere continues to appear compatible with deep interdependence in the economic sphere.

Presidente chino destaca urgencia de reformar gobernación global

Spanish.xinhuanet.com - Beijing - 13/10/2015

El presidente chino, Xi Jinping, destacó hoy la urgencia de fortalecer la gobernación global y reformar el sistema de gobernación global en el contexto de los crecientes desafíos globales.

La reforma debe consistir en "el establecimiento de reglas para el orden internacional y para los mecanismos internacionales" y sobre "decidir en qué dirección avanzará el mundo", dijo Xi en una sesión de estudio del Buró Político del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de China.

"No es simplemente una cuestión de competir por una posición de ventaja en materia de desarrollo económico, sino de qué roles y funciones desempeñarán las naciones en la disposición sistémica a largo plazo del orden internacional", dijo Xi.

La emergencia de los países en vías de desarrollo ha traído "cambios revolucionarios" al orden mundial. Durante siglos, los países fuertes se dividieron el mundo y compitieron por los beneficios y el poder a través de las guerras y la colonización, pero eso ha sido reemplazado en el mundo de hoy por el establecimiento de reglas y mecanismos para equilibrar los intereses, dijo el presidente chino.

"Hoy en día, más que en cualquier momento anterior, los países necesitan de la negociación. Las fronteras no limitan los problemas y ningún país puede manejar los desafíos por sí solo", apuntó el presidente en la reunión.

Como ejemplos de los intereses comunes, Xi citó la coordinación de China del comercio regional y la red de infraestructuras de la Franja y la Ruta, y su propuesta de un modo nuevo y más cooperativo de relaciones entre los países principales.

Xi pidió establecer mecanismos y reglas nuevos para la cooperación económica y financiera internacional y para la cooperación regional, y reformar los "arreglos injustos e inapropiados en el sistema de gobernación mundial".

El presidente indicó que las organizaciones económicas y financieras internacionales, incluidos el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) y el Banco Mundial, deben avanzar para "reflejar los cambios en el escenario internacional".

En particular, deben elevar la representación y las voces de las economías emergentes y de los países en desarrollo.

También defendió que las reglas democráticas y basadas en la ley guíen la gobernación global, a fin de que el sistema de gobernación mundial represente la voluntad e intereses de una mayoría de países en una forma más equilibrada, agregó.

La comunidad internacional también necesita construir capacidad para enfrentar los desafíos mundiales en sectores que van desde energía, alimentos, internet y seguridad de la información, hasta cambio climático mundial, terrorismo y control de epidemias, agregó Xi.

El presidente exhortó a "salvaguardar firmemente" el orden internacional y un sistema centrado en los principios de la Carta de la ONU, así como a "salvaguardar y consolidar" los beneficios resultado de la victoria en la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

"Los propósitos y principios de la Carta de la ONU no son obsoletos", afirmó Xi, quien agregó que el hecho de que no hayan sido implementados efectivamente es culpa de las rivalidades e injusticias actuales.

El mandatario también pidió mantener un régimen económico mundial abierto y "asumir una postura clara contra" el proteccionismo del comercio y la inversión.

Además, Xi dijo que China debe defender sus propios intereses, así como los intereses comunes de los países en desarrollo, y enfocarse no sólo en sus necesidades conforme se desarrolla, sino también en las expectativas que la comunidad internacional tiene con respecto a China.

El mandatario pidió esfuerzos para construir una "comunidad de destino compartido" y promover la gobernación mundial caracterizada por las consultas, esfuerzos y compartimiento mutuos.

Presidente chino pide nuevas reglas económicas y financieras internacionales

Spanish.xinhuanet.com - Beijing - 13/10/2015

El presidente de China, Xi Jinping, ha hecho un llamamiento a que se establezcan nuevos mecanismos y reglas para la cooperación económica y financiera internacional y la cooperación regional, según un comunicado de prensa publicado hoy martes.

En una sesión de estudio celebrada el lunes a la que asistieron miembros del Buró Político del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de China y cuyo tema era la gobernación global, Xi hizo hincapié en la reforma de "los arreglos injustos e impropios en el sistema de gobernación global".

Xi dijo que las organizaciones económicas y financieras internacionales, incluyendo el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) y el Banco Mundial, deben actualizarse para "reflejar los cambios en el panorama internacional".

En particular, deben impulsar la representación y las voces de las economías emergentes y las naciones en vías de desarrollo en sus sistemas.

Además, el mandatario chino abogó por reglas democráticas y basadas en la ley que sirvan de guía de la gobernanza global, de manera que su sistema represente la voluntad y los intereses de la mayoría de los países de una forma más equilibrada.

La reducción de la pobreza, alta prioridad de la agenda oficial china 2016-2020

China hizo notables progresos en la reducción de la pobreza pero todavía tiene 70 millones de personas pobres en el campo.

[Poverty relief high on China's 2016-2020 gov't agenda: official](#)

Xinhua - Beijing - 13/10/2015

Poverty alleviation will be a major task in China's 2016-2020 development plan, an official said at a press conference ahead of the 23rd International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on Saturday, which also marked China's second National Poverty Relief Day.

Poverty relief remains a top priority for China and related work will be a major issue for a key meeting later this month to set the course for China's development over the next five years (2016-2020), said Hong Tianyun, deputy director of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China.

Beijing will host the Global Poverty Reduction and Development Forum on Friday, during which around 300 representatives will gather to share their experience in combating poverty.

President Xi Jinping will deliver a keynote speech at the forum, Hong said.

China has made remarkable progress in poverty relief. It was the first developing country to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target of reducing the population living in poverty by half ahead of the 2015 deadline.

In the past 15 years, China has lifted more than 600 million people out of poverty, accounting for about 70 percent of those brought out of poverty worldwide.

Despite this, China still had 70.17 million people in the countryside living below the country's poverty line of 2,300 yuan (\$376) in annual income at the end of last year.

Hong said it will be challenging for China to achieve its goal of lifting all people out of poverty by 2020.

He said the government will come up with a string of more effective and targeted measures to achieve the goal, including launching education campaigns, encouraging financial support and building public platforms to mobilize more people to join the fight.

While striving to reduce poverty domestically, China has also supported other developing countries in the cause.

Speaking to a United Nations summit last month, President Xi pledged an initial \$2 billion to establish an assistance fund to help developing nations reach the target.

Desde la modernización a grandes relaciones de poder en Asia

Ambos países deben adaptarse a los cambios de relaciones de fuerza, debido al ascenso del poder de China frente a su antiguo invasor.

[From modernisation to great power relations in Asia](#)

By Zhang Yunling

East Asia Forum - 19/10/2015

Asia is changing.

After World War II and the end of Japanese military expansion, many countries fought for and won their independence in Asia. In 1949 China ended its internal disorder by establishing the People's Republic of China. But Asia was divided because of the Cold War, and these divisions continued until the Soviet Union collapsed. As Asian countries embarked on their own development processes, and they began to reshape the region. Economic integration based on market forces gradually extended to more and more economies. Normal state-to-state relations between Asian countries developed only gradually after the Cold War, but multi-layered sub-regional cooperation mechanisms have continued to bring Asian countries closer.

Japan's modernisation started after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, and it recovered in the post-World War II era. For South Korea and many Southeast Asian countries, the modernisation process is quite new. A key feature of China's new modernisation, after reform began in 1978, has been participation in regional and global production market networks, which now makes China an integrated part of the regional and global community. Asian countries, despite political differences, share a common interest in open markets and a stable, secure environment for continuing modernisation.

The Asian miracle has been based on open policies that permitted integration into the global trade system. The key has been to create a coordinated link between business and government which allows a market network to develop among different economies. In the flying geese model, with Japan as the leading goose, the 'Four Dragons' – Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea – followed and then so did the other economies like ASEAN members and China.

Although Japan was defeated in World War II, it was able to rebuild by drawing on the foundations of its early industrialisation and modernisation, including technological expertise, an educated population and organisational skill. The United States forced Japan to change its political system, but it also supported Japan's economic recovery and further modernisation.

The Four Dragons, or Tiger economies, closely watched what happened in Japan and tried to learn from it. They opened their markets, tried hard to attract investments from the outside – especially from Japan and the United States – and targeted Western markets. These East Asian countries started from a lower level, but they upgraded their technology in order to catch-up. As more and more economies joined the production chains created by foreign direct investment, a network based on a changing division of labour developed in Asia.

The rise of Asia's economies has brought new challenges to the world. China and India alone account for almost 40 per cent of the world's population. Their modernisation has significantly increased demand for food, water, energy and natural resources, and will continue to do so. The catch-up model has added to pollution and global climate change. This creates new challenges and issues of sustainability that all countries will need to address.

Considering the size of Asia's population and speed of its modernisation, the challenge of social transition is very serious. The West has experienced industrialisation and modernisation for 200 years. In Asia, the process is moving too fast. How do we manage the demands and pressure from people who want things to improve as quickly as possible? Individual governments will have to find something new, rather than just following existing patterns. New technology helps people to live new lives, but it is not an easy solution. For instance, China now consumes 40 per cent of the world's cement just for construction and this demand continues to rise. Similar demand pressures exist in other Asian countries.

China's economic rise has brought both benefits and challenges. While all countries are benefiting from the fillip that China's fast economic growth has provided to the global economy, countries are also working on how to deal with competition from China. But as the country develops and the old growth model becomes unworkable, China will not stand still by using the advantage of cheap labour. It will upgrade its technology and invest abroad. This will create opportunities elsewhere.

There is also a security dimension to all this. People are talking about China's rising power and its future behaviour. While China is rising to big-power status, it has many unsolved problems with its neighbours.

China's transition process is still very long. Peace and development will be needed for a very long time. If anything happens now – not just on a large scale, but even if there is a smaller confrontation with a neighbour – it would seriously damage the whole process. China's leaders need to think about the country's vital priorities and the costs of war. Many problems are emerging. In the past they could be easily managed, but they could become more difficult in the future. Generally, the top leaders are aware of the situation and know how to manage it. The danger is that if something should happen suddenly and social pressure became too strong, leaders may struggle to find a balance.

The dispute with Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands is one example. In September 2010 – when the crew of a Chinese fishing vessel were detained after colliding with the Japanese Coast Guard outside of China’s agreed fishing area – what made the Chinese angry was that the Japanese government announced it would use domestic law to punish the Chinese fishermen. The implication was that Japan totally refused to recognise the existence of a dispute over the islands and treated the incident as a Japanese internal matter.

Japan generally handled the fishing boats carefully and released the fishermen quietly. But, during the election, Japanese politicians used the issue to garner more domestic support, holding the fishermen until after the election. In the face of a rapidly developing diplomatic crisis, Chinese leaders were also under great domestic pressure to respond strongly. If the Japanese had released the fishermen earlier and not announced that they would be punished under domestic law, the result would have been quite different.

China was in fact very restrained. An early morning summons of the Japanese ambassador reflected, to some extent, Chinese culture: in time of an urgent crisis we should not let you sleep well. It shows soft pressure. But there was very high pressure on the Chinese leader to ensure a quick solution. A delay of one day more would have increased pressure on China. In the end, the crisis was managed well enough to allow a leaders’ meeting during the Asia–Europe Meeting summit in October that year.

The real challenge for Sino–Japanese relations now is how to manage the historical reversal of the power balance between the two countries. In modern history, Japan used to be stronger than China. A strong Japan invaded China and many other Asian countries. But now China’s economic size is much larger than Japan, and the gap will continue to widen. For Japan, it is necessary to adopt a policy of living with a rising China. At the same time, China needs to accept Japan as what Ichiro Osawa would call a ‘normal country’ – with all the instruments of foreign policy at its disposal, including a modern and independent Self-Defense Force. Moving forward, Sino–Japanese relations must be based on mutual understanding and cooperation.

While history issues need more time to be solved, China and Japan can and should continue to cooperate on both bilateral and regional economic cooperation, which is beneficial to both sides for generating new growth. The two nations should sit down to discuss the sensitive and risky challenges caused by their disputes and establish risk management schemes. Such open dialogue on challenges in both traditional and non-traditional security areas is critical to the prosperity of both countries.

Krugman dice que la crisis China no es suficiente para una crisis global

Infolatam - 26/10/2015

La reciente desaceleración económica de China no será “tan grande” como para generar una crisis global, afirmó el premio Nobel de economía Paul Krugman en el marco de la XIII Cumbre de Negocios que se celebra en Guadalajara, en el estado mexicano de Jalisco.

“El problema en China es lo suficiente para dar miedo, puede ser difícil, pero no es probablemente suficiente como para hacer una crisis a escala como la del 2008, ni la que pasó en Europa en 2010”, afirmó en una conferencia Krugman.

El ganador del nobel en 2008 explicó que aunque ahora el país asiático es considerada la segunda economía a nivel global, en los últimos años sus importaciones representan solo el 2% de lo que el resto del mundo produce.

El Banco Popular de China anunció el viernes un recorte de 0,25 puntos en los tipos de interés, que quedan en el 4,35 % para los créditos a un año.

La tasa de depósitos a un año también fue reducida en 25 puntos básicos hasta el 1,50 por ciento.

Esta es la sexta vez desde noviembre que el Gobierno chino reduce sus tasas de interés, generando preocupación en los mercados mundiales.

El profesor de la Universidad de Princetown, Estados Unidos, dijo que los chinos tienen un modelo de crecimiento que ha sido exitoso en las últimas décadas, pero que ya no es sustentable.

“Ahora los están golpeando contra la pared y no parecen ser capaces de encontrar un camino nuevo”, sentenció.

Afirmó que China sufre la tendencia global de la depreciación de las monedas frente al dólar estadounidense y la disminución del crecimiento y los precios de los productos básicos, aunado a la caída de los mercados emergentes.

Estas tendencias, en particular el aumento del valor del dólar, deja en desventaja a los países emergentes que tienden a endeudarse en dólares, lo que los hace vulnerables en tiempos de crisis.

Krugman definió a la economía mexicana como alentadora, aunque agregó que no ha logrado consolidar el crecimiento que se esperaba en las últimas dos décadas.

Aseguró que la nación está más cerca de parecerse a Canadá que a Brasil, pues ha implementado las reformas estructurales que podrán impulsar su crecimiento.

“México parece ser capaz de seguir con esto y es una historia relativamente buena (...) Se está beneficiando de Estados Unidos y aunque no está excelente lo ha hecho mejor que los países del primer mundo”.

Resaltó que México ya no es el país de antaño, que cada seis años tenía crisis económicas, sino que se ha transformado al tener la exportación más diversificada e integrada con la economía mundial.

La XIII Cumbre de Negocios se lleva a cabo desde hoy y hasta el 27 de octubre con el tema de la innovación como eje de las discusiones y grupos de trabajo.

La cumbre reúne a líderes empresariales con especialistas, políticos y representantes de gobierno, con la intención, entre otros temas, de discutir las perspectivas de México en el marco de las reformas estructurales y su integración con la Alianza del Pacífico.

Latinoamérica busca inversión china en energía, infraestructura y agricultura

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América Latina busca inversión china para poner en marcha proyectos energéticos, de infraestructuras y agrícolas, dijeron representantes de la región en una feria sectorial celebrada en Pekín.

Argentina, Brasil, Colombia, Cuba, México y Uruguay participan en la 7ª Feria de Inversión Extranjera de China, donde también están presentes algunas de las mayores empresas del gigante asiático, el inversor que más se ha expandido en América Latina en los últimos años.

“América Latina se ha convertido en el destino de inversión que más crece para China y tenemos muchas oportunidades de desarrollo”, afirmó Wu Hongliang, vicepresidente del departamento de inversión extranjera de la Comisión Nacional de Reforma y Desarrollo de China, en un foro de la feria.

Wu destacó el proyecto de corredor ferroviario transoceánico, que uniría la costa del Pacífico de Perú con la del Atlántico de Brasil, como proyecto emblemático de la presencia china en la región, que supone ya alrededor de un 12 % de las inversiones exteriores de la segunda economía mundial.

Pese a que el volumen de inversión de China y la región es muy inferior al de comercio, la segunda economía mundial invirtió en los países latinoamericanos 9.264 millones de dólares en 2013, según la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL).

“Es bastante natural que las empresas chinas al principio busquen el comercio y que haya más que, a medida que te van conociendo, tengan interés en desarrollar otro tipo de proyectos instalados allí”, señaló a Efe Daniel Cadenazzi, secretario de primera de la Embajada de Uruguay en Pekín.

La mayoría de los representantes latinoamericanos coincidieron en que hay margen para una mayor inversión y en señalar las oportunidades de negocio que presentan para las firmas chinas los sectores energético, agrícola y de infraestructuras.

“Energía y transporte son los dos pilares”, indicó a Efe Julián Pérez, tercer secretario de la Embajada argentina en China, quien también subrayó la emergencia de la fabricación de equipamiento hospitalario y mencionó los servicios financieros y los deportes.

Felipe de Jesús García Aguayo, consejero comercial de la agencia gubernamental ProMéxico en Pekín, explicó a Efe que su país también dispone de atractivos en áreas “con valor agregado” como la automotriz, electrónica o las tecnologías de la información.

Cadenazzi admitió que algunas compañías chinas “tienen alguna dificultad de conocer más América Latina y de conocer la diversidad cultural, idiomática y de forma de proceder en los negocios”, pero auguró que cada vez les va a ser más familiar el mercado regional.

García Aguayo reconoció también la necesidad de trabajar para que los empresarios conozcan el ambiente de negocios de cada país y sus ventajas competitivas y aseguró que los chinos “están muy interesados por invertir en el extranjero” y que cada día se acercan más a Latinoamérica.

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