

**Introduction on the Basic Information about the Economic & Social
Development in Xinjiang**

—Speech on Senior Officers Meeting for Central Asia Regional
Economic Cooperation

by

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good afternoon!

First of all, on the behalf of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional Development & Reform Commission, I would like to express warm welcome to you for participating the senior officers meeting for the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation in Urumqi, Xinjiang, China, and sincerely wish you all having a pleasant time. In the following is the brief introduction on the basic information about Xinjiang.

Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, located in the center of Eurasian Continent, and the far northwest of China, with a total area of 1.66 million km² accounting for one sixth of the total terrestrial area of

the whole China, neighboring with 8 countries that are Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India respectively, sharing borderlines totaled 5,600km accounting for one fourth of the total terrestrial borderline of China, is the largest province/autonomous region with the longest terrestrial borderline and the most neighboring countries in China.

The terrain in Xinjiang could be well described as “Three Mountains and Two Basins in Between”, Altai Mountain on the north, Kunlun Mountain on the south, and Tianshan Mountain right across the middle, dividing Xinjiang into South Xinjiang and North Xinjiang. Between Altai Mountain and Kunlun Mountain it is Junggar Basin, and Tianshan Mountain and Kunlun Mountain it is Tarim Basin. Being far from oceans and surrounded by high mountains, the climate in Xinjiang is dry and rare rainfall, belonging to typical continental arid and semiarid climatic region.

Xinjiang is the home of the multiple ethnic groups of people consisting of 47 ethnic groups. By the end of 2005, the total population in Xinjiang is 20.24 million, among them more than 60% are ethnic minorities. The main ethnic groups are Uighur, Han, Kazakh, Hui, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Xibo, Manchu, Tajik, Uzbek, Dawuer, Tartar, and Russian, etc. In administration there are 14 prefectures/cities and 99 counties (cities, districts).

Xinjiang is abundant in both ground and underground resources with great potential for development. It is rich in sunlight, thermal, water, and land, etc., which provide advantaged conditions for the development of characteristic agriculture. Mineral resources are extremely abundant, by now 138 mineral resources have been discovered, the deposits of 43 are listed in the first ten largest in the whole nation. The deposits of petroleum, natural gas, coal, nonferrous metals, gold, and salts are considerably large, and with favorable potentials for development. Xinjiang was the important route-way in ancient “Silk Road” where there are lots of famous places and historic sites, beautiful landscapes, and unique folk-customs and cultures. The development of tourist industry is with bright future.

Since China undertook the reform and open policy, under the strong support from the state and great effort and hard work by all the ethnic peoples in Xinjiang, tremendous changes have been happened, the economic and social development achieved great success. In 2005, GDP reached 268 billion RMB in the whole region that equivalent to 33.46 billion USD, and average GDP per capita reached 13,241RMB that equivalent to 1,653USD. In general, the historic conversion from sufficient food and warm cloth to the better-off has been realized in the whole region. Ever since the new century, we have taken the historic opportunity of the great west development, and actively undertaken the

resources advantage conversion strategy, emphasized on economic restructure, strongly strengthened infrastructure construction, consistently pushed forward reform and open, and substantial economic development achieved and that right on the uprising stage. Agriculture is in good harvest year after year, established the largest cotton production base in China. Industry is continuously developing, established characteristic modern industrial system constituted with petroleum exploitation, petrochemicals as the main, plus steel & iron, nonferrous metals, coal, constructional materials, textile, food, electric power, chemicals, etc. Meanwhile, social development including science & technology, education, culture, and health care is under full-scale development.

This year is the first year for Xinjiang implementing “11th Five Year Plan”, during the period of “11th Five Year Plan” the developing goal is: GDP increase for 9% annually and trying to realize the increment of two digital figures, double average GDP per capita on the basis of 2000, and trying best to realize roundly harmonic and sustainable socioeconomic development, and targeting Xinjiang as a strong economic region in West China and highlight in economic growth by the first twenty years of this century in our country.

In the period of “11th Five Year Plan” the principal strategies for economic and social development in Xinjiang are:

- Focus on One Central Task: focusing on economic construction to enhance the region and enrich the people. To carry out the national great west development strategy, accelerate developing step, try hard for socialist harmonic society to provide a concrete foundation for synchronous establishment of better-off society in whole nation.
- Realize Two Key Breakthroughs: confirmedly following the direction toward the new type of adapted industrialization and making full use of resources advantage for bigger and stronger characteristic mainstay industries to realize exceedingly high speed industrial development and major breakthrough toward new type industrialization; to speedup open step addressing westward as key, insisting on “Joint East for Exporting Westward and Importing Westward forward East” and “Introduce into and Go out”, and making full use of geographical advantage for faster realization of breakthrough in external open.
- Implement Four Strategies: undertaking market oriented advantageous resources conversion strategy, continuously push forward the development of petroleum and natural gas, coal, and cotton as the key advantageous resources and do best to convert the resources advantage into economic advantage; implementing full-scale open strategy, mainly promoting economic cooperation and foreign trade with Central Asia, Western Asia, Southern Asia,

Eastern Europe, and Russia, greatly introducing into giant enterprises and big group companies with strong economic capacity to improve concentration of industry and speedup internal and external open steps; undertaking the strategy of flourishing Xinjiang by science & education and strengthening the region by elites, to promote progress in science & technology and technical innovation, especially the application and extension of practical techniques, introducing and fostering required capable persons, and increasingly improving the quality of staffs and workers; implementing sustainable development strategy to promote resources saving and comprehensive utilization and recycled economy, to protect the ecological environment toward harmonized social and natural development.

- Foster Six Mainstay Industrial Systems: fostering national key energy base, petrochemical, and heavy chemical industry system; national key mineral resources production and processing base, and mineral resources exploration & development system; characteristic agricultural & livestock products production base, textile, and green food processing industry system; new & high technology industry base and relevant research and service system; minority characteristic tourist commodities production base, and characteristic tourist industry system; processing base for exporting westward and

modern shipment industry system.

- Increasingly Promote Eight Standards: mainly promoting industrialization of agriculture; modern industrialization; urbanization; externally open; science & technology and education; materially and culturally living conditions of urban and rural residences; employment and social insurance; social stability and security, and civilization standards.

In the recent years, Xinjiang is energetically undertaking omni-directional open strategy mainly westward, and the cooperation and trading size with Central Asian countries are continuously expanding. In 2004 the import & export trade between Xinjiang and Central Asian countries totally amounted 3,870 million USD, among that 3,290 million USD with Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has become the biggest trading partner with Xinjiang, China since many years. In 2005, Xinjiang overseas investment is 68 million USD. There are extremely bright perspectives for future cooperation between China and Central Asian countries. We truly believe, under the active efforts commonly by the Chinese Government and the governments of Central Asian countries, our economic cooperation will achieve further progress, and Xinjiang surely will play a more important role in the process.

Welcome again for your coming. Best wishes to your health and success. Thank you!