

Chinese Foreign Minister Outlines ‘Major-Power Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics’

by William Jones, from *EIR*’s European Alert Service

March 10—Speaking March 8 on the sidelines of the National People’s Congress, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi gave an indication of China’s new policy of major-power diplomacy “with Chinese characteristics.” This year’s Congress is the first to follow the 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party of China last year, in which President Xi Jinping laid out a broad policy for China in this “new era,” an era in which China intends to play a greater role in world politics, and to introduce new ideas of governance based on new and old traditions in Chinese culture.

In response to a question on the content of this new style of diplomacy, Foreign Minister Wang said: “In this concept, we will work for the well-being of the Chinese people and the progress of humanity. We will forge a new type of international relations that features mutual respect, fairness, justice and ‘win-win’ cooperation, and build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” Wang said, “We will stand for equality between all countries, and will oppose the strong oppressing the weak.” This was also indicated, he noted, in the development of Xi Jinping’s Belt and Road Initiative, which was designed to utilize Chinese economic and technical expertise to help the neighboring countries, and indeed, countries far from China, in Africa and Latin America, in their economic development.

At the same time, Wang Yi emphasized that China was not trying to “replace” the United States as some Western pundits are claiming. He noted that the two countries had “broad interests and a common responsi-



China Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Xinhua/Li Xin

bility” and that cooperation was “the main thrust of the U.S.-China relationship.” “If there is any competition between us,” Wang said, “it has to be healthy and positive. But competition aside, we don’t have to be rivals. The two countries should strive to become partners in cooperation.” He emphasized that China’s path toward rejuvenation was “unstoppable,” “but those who feel that China

wants to replace the United States are wrong. China is on its long march toward modernization. It has no need or intention to displace America.” China’s relationship to Russia was particularly important—“unshakeable as a mountain” is how he put it—and he said that going forward in that relationship, “the sky is the limit.”

Wang Yi was particularly emphatic with regard to China’s concern for Africa, saying that China and Africa had been “friends in adversity,” and that China-Africa friendship was therefore “unbreakable.” He also announced that China is prepared to mediate in “flash-points” on the African continent, and help the African nations in dealing with new unconventional threats such as terrorism. An indication of this concern is the fact that in September, China will be hosting the heads of state of African countries at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, as one of the four major diplomatic conferences on China’s agenda this year. The three other major diplomatic events hosted by China this year, he announced, will be the Boao Forum for Asia in April, which President Xi will personally address, the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in June in Qingdao, and the Shanghai Import Expo in Shanghai in December.