

Speech at an Event to Celebrate the “May 1st” International Labor Day

By: Xi Jinping

Fellow countrymen:

We are gathered here today to mark the arrival of the “May 1st” International Labor Day, the grand celebration of working classes and working people around the world. Today, by honoring model workers and exemplary individuals from around the country, we aim to uphold the spirit of model workers, promote the value of work, and celebrate the great character of our country’s working class and working people.

First, on behalf of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, I would like to extend holiday congratulations to workers, farmers, intellectuals, and working people of other social strata from all of China’s ethnic groups; to all members of the People’s Liberation Army, the People’s Armed Police Force, and the public security police; to compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan; and to all Chinese residing overseas. At the same time, I would like to offer my highest salutations to all model workers and exemplary individuals who have made exceptional contributions towards China’s reform, opening up, and socialist modernization.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend sincere greetings to working classes and working people around the world on behalf of the working class and working people in China.

The “May 1st” International Labor Day is a holiday for all working people around the world. A full 125 years has passed since the Second International, founded under the leadership of Friedrich Engels, named May 1st, 1890 as the first International Labor Day. Through its observation of the “May 1st” holiday, the Communist Party of

China (CPC) has long sought to awaken, inform, and guide ordinary working people, rallying them in a concerted struggle to bring about the independence and liberation of the nation, the prosperity and strength of the country, and the wellbeing of the people. With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the working class emerged as the leading class in China, and ordinary working people assumed their role as masters of the country. This gave new meaning to our observation of the "May 1st" International Labor Day.

We live in a great and inspiring time, and we are engaged in a great and unprecedented cause. The cause that we are currently advancing, socialism with Chinese characteristics, is a cause for all Chinese people. The effort to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and in turn establish China as a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious, ultimately depends on our hard work and on working people. Therefore, regardless of how the times change, we must always treat work and working people with reverence and respect, and we must always attach significance to the leading role of the working class and working people. This is why it is so important that we observe the "May 1st" International Labor Day.

Fellow countrymen:

Since the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC held in 2012 the CPC Central Committee, guided by its commitment to upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics, has proposed and formulated a comprehensive strategic plan that consists of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, comprehensively deepening reform, comprehensively advancing the rule of law, and comprehensively governing our Party with strict discipline. This strategic plan, together with a set of strategic goals and measures for the work of our Party and the state under new conditions, has provided us with a theoretical and practical guideline for realizing the "Two Centenary Goals" and bringing about the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation.

History has entrusted the working class and working people with a great and arduous mission. Today, the working class and working people are being called upon to open

up a splendid new chapter in history. Assuming their position as masters of our country, China's working class and working people must devote themselves to the development of our economy and society, making renewed contributions to the good life and bright future that we are building together.

On the road ahead, we must remain committed to upholding the spirit of model workers and promoting the value of work, so as to gather an enormous positive force for the development of China's economy and society. Work is an activity that human beings engage in by nature. Over the ages, work and creative activities have been important drivers of human progress. As the saying goes, "Poverty is a stranger to industry." The Chinese are known as a hardworking and inventive people. Just as work and creative activities were responsible for the glorious achievements of our past, they have also been responsible for everything we have achieved today.

Like a tower, the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics has been built one brick at a time. Likewise, the happy life that the people now enjoy has been created gradually. Model workers and exemplary individuals have shown people what it means to uphold the Chinese path, foster the Chinese spirit, and gather Chinese strength. With a strong awareness of their responsibility as masters of the country, they have set an example for all Chinese people to follow through their fine work, creations, and selfless devotion. The spirit of model workers – loving one's job and striving for excellence, working hard and boldly innovating, not seeking fame and wealth, and being willing to make sacrifices – represents a vivid expression of our core socialist values. This spirit is a valuable treasure, and an enormous source of inner strength. Those who are being honored as model workers and progressive individuals today are the most outstanding representatives of millions upon millions of working Chinese. The CPC and the people thank you! And our whole society will follow your example.

A great cause requires a great spirit, and a great spirit comes from a great people. It is of great importance that we promote the spirit of model workers and the value of work throughout our entire society. Through major efforts to make the exploits of model workers and other exemplary individuals known, we must guide the general

public in recognizing the value of hard, honest, and creative work; establish the glory of work and greatness of creative activities as powerful themes of our times; and foster a social atmosphere in which work is considered great, glorious, and beautiful. At the same time, we must impart a love of work and creative activities in our children from an early age, teaching them that work and creative activities will not only empower them to sow the seeds of hope and reap the fruits of their endeavors, but will also temper their will and make them better people.

Our roots are in the working people. In a socialist country such as ours, all work, be it manual or intellectual; and all creativity, be it individual or collective, deserve to be respected and encouraged. The whole of society should observe the principles of respecting work, knowledge, talent, and creative activities, regarding hard work as something honorable and laziness as something shameful. Under no circumstances should anyone, at any time, look down on ordinary working people or attempt to gain a free ride.

Accolades provide us with the motivation we need to keep on forging ahead. Model workers and exemplary individuals should cherish the accolades that they have received and redouble their efforts. Guided by a love of their job and a desire to be the best, they should draw on the fine character and exemplary actions of the working class to guide and inspire the people as a whole, going on to make new contributions and achievements. CPC committees, government authorities, and trade unions at all levels should do more to exert the exemplary role of model workers by managing them effectively, serving them well, and creating sound conditions for them to work and do business.

On the road ahead, we must remain committed to upholding the position of the people as the principal actors in the country, so as to fully unleash the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of the working class and working people. The people are the creators of history. They are the fundamental force behind and key foundation of China's economic and social development. In seeking to advance the "Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy," it is imperative that we maximize the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of the people.

We must develop socialist democracy in an effort to substantially guarantee and constantly further the democratic rights of the working class and working people. On the basis of maintaining an organic balance between the leadership of the CPC, the position of the people as masters of the country, and the rule of law, and with a commitment to preserving the position of the working class as the leading class in our country, we must accelerate the establishment of socialist democracy in accordance with well-defined institutions, standards, and procedures; uphold and improve the system of people's congresses; advance the extensive, multi-level, and institutionalized development of consultative democracy; and promote the broad and orderly participation of the people in the administration of national, social, economic, and cultural affairs in accordance with the law. We also need to advance the development of democracy at the community level. In particular, we need to improve our system for the democratic management of enterprises and government-affiliated institutions – which is primarily manifested in the form of employee congresses – in order to more effectively guarantee the rights of employees to know about, participate in, express views on, and monitor the affairs of the organizations in which they are employed. At the same time, by showing respect for the creativity of the people and being willing to learn from them, we should attempt to harness the unlimited creativity that lays hidden away among the working class and working people and channel their wisdom and strength into our various causes.

China's working class and working people should cultivate a stronger awareness of their historic mission and responsibility. Bearing in mind the bigger picture as they are carrying out their duties, they should integrate their life aspirations and pursuit of family happiness into the great cause of China's strength, prosperity, and national rejuvenation; tie their own personal dreams closely to the Chinese Dream; and assimilate the developmental goals set by the Party and the state as their own conscious actions.

On the road ahead, we must remain committed to realizing, safeguarding, and developing the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, so as to ensure that all people can benefit more fairly and more thoroughly from the

fruits of development. The people yearn for a better life, and our goal is to help them achieve it. Working wholeheartedly to further the interests of the working class and working people is the fundamental requirement of our country's socialist system, a sacred obligation of the Party and the state, and the most important foundation initiative for exerting the leading role of the working class and working people.

The development of the country is a common cause of the people and a process from which all people stand to benefit. Adapting to new conditions in reform, opening up, and the development of the socialist market economy, we must adopt a range of political, economic, social, cultural, legal, and administrative measures to advance social fairness and justice and ensure that the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people are effectively realized, safeguarded, and developed. It is of particular importance that we realize, safeguard, and develop the fundamental interests of ordinary working people.

Through the implementation of a proactive employment policy, the Party and the state must work to create more jobs, improve the employment environment, raise the quality of employment, and increase the salaries of working people, especially those engaged in the front lines of production. To do this, we will need to establish sound CPC- and government-led mechanisms for protecting the rights and interests of members of the public. Focusing on a range of issues involving work, employment, training, income distribution, social safety nets, and health and safety, we should afford more attention to the needs of particular groups, such as workers on the front lines of production, migrant workers from rural areas, and employed people in difficulty; improve systems and remove barriers that are hindering working people from participating in and benefiting from development; and work to ensure that working people can work with dignity and enjoy all-round development. We also need to take more direct, considerate, and effective action in our interactions with the public. Showing genuine concern for the people's wellbeing, we must be there to extend a helping hand and relieve people of difficulty when they are most in need. We must take solid steps to address the issues that concern people most directly in

everyday life, and resolve the problems that cause them the most difficulty, trouble, and anxiety.

Labor relations are among the most fundamental of all social relations. By maximizing the factors that contribute to social harmony, and minimizing the ones that undermine it, we need to establish and develop harmonious labor relations and promote overall social harmony. This means lawfully safeguarding the rights and interests of employees, improving mechanisms for the coordination of labor relations, and addressing labor disputes in a prompt and proper manner. Continuing their fine tradition of seeing the bigger picture and considering the overall situation, China's working class and working people should view the rebalancing of interests owing to reform and development in the correct light; find the middle ground between personal and collective interests, partial and overall interests, and short-term and long-term interests; and foster a strong understanding of the rule of law and the awareness of the law, with a view to consciously preserving social harmony and stability.

On the road ahead, we must remain committed to raising the overall quality of our workforce, so as to cultivate a massive contingent of highly competent workers. The quality of the working population is a matter of extreme importance for a country and nation. This is because workers who are knowledgeable and talented are more likely to be creative. The effort to raise the qualifications of the entire people, including the quality of the workforce, is a long-term endeavor of utmost importance for the development of our nation. In the face of increasingly intense international competition, whether or not a country can seize the initiative and gain the upper hand in development is increasingly being decided by the qualifications of that country's population, and in particular its workforce. Therefore, it is important that we launch a major campaign to raise the level of the workforce, with the aim of cultivating a massive contingent of knowledgeable, skilled, and creative workers.

It is essential that we continue to implement our strategies of reinvigorating the country through science and education, empowering it with talent, and driving development with innovation. Focusing on the strategic task of raising the overall level of our workforce, we must aid working people in gaining new knowledge,

acquiring new skills, and developing new abilities; provide them with broader prospects for career development; and urge them to make a commitment to lifelong learning, with a view to constantly raising their overall level of moral, scientific, and cultural attainment. We must continue to impart people with the ideals of Chinese socialism; cultivate and practice core socialist values; and carry forward China's fine traditional culture. At the same time, we should promote awareness of social codes of conduct, professional ethics, family virtues, and individual integrity, laying a particular emphasis on professional ethics; continue to carry out the "Chinese Dream – Beauty of Work" publicity campaign; and constantly urge the general public to enhance their confidence in the path, theories, and system of Chinese socialisms. Adopting new approaches to political work, we also need to provide working people with greater care and psychological guidance; foster a healthy, civilized, and positive employee culture; and enrich workers' cultural lives, so as to meet the non-material needs of the working population.

As an old saying goes, every trade has its master. To gain a strong foothold in the strong tide of competition, claim the advantage in an ultra-competitive environment in which the weak are left behind, and make a difference through a lifetime of serving the motherland and people, workers must rely on tireless learning and an enduring commitment to work. Any worker who is willing to learn, to do, and to probe, and who can master a set of genuine abilities and skills, will surely excel in their position of work. Through their work, these people can broaden their horizons, prove their worth, demonstrate their charm, and find their joy.

Fellow countrymen:

The working class represents the CPC's strongest and most reliable class foundation. China's working class has a glorious tradition of standing at the forefront of the times and bearing the burden of duty. Historically speaking, the workers' movement in China has always been tied closely to the core tasks of the CPC. In today's China, the working class and working people continue to be the fundamental force for advancing economic and social development and preserving social stability and unity. Despite this, however, some people have failed to acknowledge the growth and progress of

our country's working class, showing no regard for their role as the leading force in the country and believing that their importance is diminishing with the advancement of science and technology. These views are wrong, and they are harmful. Regardless of how the times change and how our society evolves, the CPC must never forget its fundamental principle of relying wholeheartedly on the working class, and it must never allow this commitment to fade. The status and role of the working class in China can never be compromised or neglected.

Relying wholeheartedly on the working class is not only a matter of perception; it is also a matter of practice. CPC committees and government authorities at all levels are required to integrate the fundamental principle of fully relying on the working class into all work involving the economy, politics, culture, society, ecological progress, and Party strengthening; into all policy-making and initiatives of the Party and the state; and into all aspects of production and operation in companies. By fostering conditions, building platforms, opening channels, and adopting new approaches, we need to create more opportunities for ordinary working people to nurture their talents, secure employment, launch business ventures, repay the motherland, and serve society; and we need to provide broader channels for them to participate in the democratic management of companies and government-affiliated institutions, and get involved in national and social governance.

Fellow countrymen:

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the founding of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). Under the leadership of the CPC, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, together with its various affiliated organizations, has made a major contribution to China's revolution, development, and reform over the past 90 years. On behalf of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to union veterans who have made outstanding contributions to the CPC-led workers' movement; to trade union organizations and their staff throughout the country; and to all workers and people actively involved in trade unions.

Trade unions are a bridge linking the CPC with ordinary working people. Their work represents an important part of the CPC's interactions with popular organizations and the public, constituting a routine and foundation initiative in the CPC's governance of the country. Under new conditions, the role of trade unions can only be strengthened, not weakened; and their initiatives can only be carried forward, not left behind. I hope that trade union organizations at all levels, together with their staff members, can remain committed to China's socialist approach to the development of trade unions, uphold the key areas of trade union work, focus on the priority tasks of trade unions, set an example in carrying out the political responsibilities of trade unions, and better exert the organizational role of trade unions. Continuing their fine tradition of consciously adhering to CPC leadership, and with a firm grasp of the correct political orientation and the contemporary theme of the workers' movement, trade unions must lead millions upon millions of working people in resolutely following the CPC. Trade unions must perform their basic function of safeguarding the lawful rights and interests of working people. Seeing it as their fundamental purpose and ultimate goal to serve working people with sincerity, they should aid ordinary employees in lawfully expressing their demands through proper channels, and allow working people to feel the care of the CPC and the government, thereby winning their trust and support. Trade unions need to regard working for the people as both the lifeline and the fundamental approach to their mission. Placing the focus of their efforts on ordinary working people, they need to enhance their services, raise their capacity to safeguard rights and interests, improve their style of work, discard all bureaucratic practices, and resolutely resist the tendencies to behave like government departments and become divorced from the public, so as to ensure that working people genuinely see trade unions as a "home for workers" and view union staff as their most trusted "family members." Trade unions should also draw on the spirit of reform to plan and advance their various initiatives, adopting new organizational models, operating mechanisms, activity methods, and working approaches in order to take their work to a new level. Lastly, by making use of their advantage in people-to-people diplomacy, trade unions should advance friendly exchanges between China's working class and

those in other countries, develop ties with various national, international, and regional trade unions, and make a larger contribution to the preservation of world peace and the promotion of common development.

CPC committees at all levels should strengthen and improve their leadership over trade unions. With a view to better exerting the role of trade unions, they should make improvements to organizational systems and working mechanisms; step up the support they provide to trade unions; promptly resolve major problems in the work of trade unions; pay more attention to trade union staff by expecting more of them and emphasizing their professional development; and create more favorable conditions for the operation of trade unions.

Dear colleagues:

A great cause calls us, and a solemn mission spurs us on. Rallying around the CPC Central Committee, China's working class and working people, through their hard work, enterprising spirit, and daring creativity, must now strive to make new achievements as we press ahead on our journey to realize the "Two Centenary Goals." Ultimately, the Chinese Dream will be built on the foundation of their hard work.