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Afghans eye China to help bring peace, stabilize economy

By Abdul Haleem - Zhang Jianhua

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KABUL - "Keeping in mind China's rapid economic development and influence in the region, she can play effective role in bringing about peace and strengthening economy in Afghanistan," an intellectual Afghan who introduced himself only Hamid opined.

Attending the 62nd celebration of the founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China in Tuesday evening in Chinese embassy to Kabul, Hamid said that "since our neighbor China has significant influence over the south and central Asian countries, it can influence them to help end instability in Afghanistan."

Corroborating his notion, another Afghan Assadullah Mohaqiq, an official with the Education Ministry in open chat with friends described China as a wonderful country, saying China had made unprecedented promotion in all fields including economy.

To rebuild Afghanistan, it was essential for Afghans to learn from China's experience, he observed.

In the simple but impressive banquet attended by Kabul-based diplomats and Afghans almost from all walks of life, China's ambassador to Afghanistan Xu Feihong in his remarks highlighted the progress China has achieved.

"In 1949, China's GDP was merely 18 billion U.S. dollars. Whereas the GDP reached 5.88 trillion in 2010, which made China rank the second largest economy in the world," Ambassador Xu Feihong said in part of his remarks.

Briefing the guests on the improving of living standards in China, the ambassador went on to say that in 1949 China had the population of 450 million, 370 million of whom lived below the poverty line, while in 2010 the population exceeded 1.3 billion while the number of people in poverty was reduced to 150 million.

"The aim of China's development is to work together with other countries to build a harmonious world of durable peace and common prosperity," the ambassador added in his speech.

Highlighting China's part in the world economic growth, Ambassador Xu Feihong said that "China has contributed over 10 percent to world economic growth every year in recent years. In 2010, this proportion exceeded 25 percent."

Like other Afghans, government's senior Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala also expressed his happiness over the development that China has achieved over the past decades.

"I have visited China several times and each time the progress that China had made was tangible and spectacular," Arsala said in his speech to congratulate China's National Day.

Likewise other Afghans, Minister Arsala also believed that China could use its influence it has over the nations in the region in bringing about peace in Afghanistan and reviving economy through investment in the war-battered nation.

"We hope China to use its influence in bringing about peace and security in Afghanistan," Minister Arsala noted in his speech, saying China's investment like in cooper mine, and other fields would also help Afghans to stabilize their economy.