

China Politics Weekly

Issue No. 122 – January 24, 2017



Dear friends and colleagues,

The last few weeks have seen a spate of annual meetings for ministries and local governments as official attempt to complete important work before the New Year's holiday, which starts Friday. The newsletter will not come out next week, but will resume on Monday February 6.

I will be in Beijing from February 8-24. If you are around and would like to meet, let me know. I look forward to hearing from you!

Your comments and feedback are always welcome. Old issues are always available at www.chinapoliticsweekly.com. Sign up or unsubscribe by sending an email to info@chinapoliticsweekly.com.

A changing of the guard?

The past week may come to be seen as a historical turning point. It will perhaps be regarded as the beginning of the "Asian century", the moment when America abandoned its role as global leader and China stepped in to take up the baton.

Looking every bit the impressive statesman, Xi Jinping's keynote address at Davos championed globalization, free trade and the human spirit. While he acknowledged that globalization brings challenges, he also said that it "powered global growth" and must be "invigorated". He struck an optimistic, affirmative tone, saying "The history of mankind tells us that problems are not to be feared."

Donald Trump's inaugural address, in contrast, was full of scary images. He spoke of "American carnage" and a country populated by "children trapped in poverty... rusted-out factories...[and] crime and gangs and drugs". Much of these problems, according to Trump, were rooted in the very globalization that Xi was championing.

Trump's answer to all of this is "protection", a word that he used seven times in his speech. He struck a confrontational tone, promising an "America First" foreign policy that would be at the expense of other countries.

Xi, on the other hand, positioned China as a partner, and a leader, for the world, saying: "We will open our arms to the people of other countries and welcome them aboard the express train of China's development."

Not yet

Yet for all of Xi's lofty rhetoric, China's actions hardly look like those of a country ready to assume the mantle of global leader. While he was championing "open, transparent" trade in Davos, back at home officials were taking measures to further isolate China from the world by further tightening (already tight) capital controls, issuing new restrictions on overseas investment and strengthening information controls.

Let's hope at some point Xi follows up his flowery words with concrete actions. For now it's all empty talk.

PBSC Week in Review

Xi Jinping

Party General
Secretary; PRC

President;
Chairman of
Central Military
Commission

Jan 24

Xi inspected an impoverished village and a dairy company, and listened to local officials briefing on the local economy while touring Zhangjiakou, Hebei.

Jan 23

Xi inspected preparation for the 2022 Winter Olympics in Zhangjiakou City, Hebei Province.

Jan 22

Xi chaired a meeting of the Politburo.

The meeting decided to appoint Xi as the head of a new central commission for integrated military and civilian development. The meeting also heard a work report on the work of leading Party groups of the Standing Committee of the NPC, the State Council, the CPPCC National Committee, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the Secretariat of the CCP Central Committee.

Xi chaired and spoke at a Politburo Study Session.

The session focused on supply-side structural reform. Chen Dongqi, a researcher with the Academy of Macroeconomic Research under the National Development and Reform Commission, delivered a lecture.

Xi attended a gathering with people from non-Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and those without party affiliation and extended Lunar New Year greetings.

Jan 19

Xi returned to Beijing.

Xi sent a congratulatory message to the closing ceremony of the 2016 China-Egyptian Culture Year.

Jan 18

Xi delivered a keynote speech at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland.

Full text of his speech (in Chinese).

Xi met with Peter Thomson, president of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in Geneva, Switzerland.

Xi met with World Health Organization Director-General Margaret Chan in Geneva, Switzerland.

Xi sent condolences to Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev over a deadly

cargo plane crash in Kyrgyzstan.

Jan 17 **Xi attended and spoke at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.**
Full text of his remarks (in Chinese). And [in English](#).

Xi met with United States Vice President Joe Biden in Davos, Switzerland.

Xi met with World Economic Forum founder Klaus Schwab in Davos, Switzerland.

Xi met with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko in Davos, Switzerland.

Xi met with King Philippe of Belgium in Davos, Switzerland.

Xi and Swiss President Doris Leuthard attended the launching ceremony of the China-Switzerland Year of Tourism in Davos, Switzerland.

Xi met with International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Jan 16 **Xi held talks with Swiss President Doris Leuthard in Bern, Switzerland.**

Xi and Swiss President Doris Leuthard met with Swiss business leaders in Bern, Switzerland.

Xi met with the heads of the two chambers of the Swiss parliament Jurg Stahl, president of the National Council, and Ivo Bischofberger, president of the Council of States in Bern, Switzerland.

Li Keqiang
Premier

Jan 20 **Li met with foreign experts working in China prior to the Lunar Chinese New Year.**

Jan 19 **Li chaired a seminar to solicit opinions from representatives of non-Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and persons without party affiliation on the draft government work report.**

Jan 18 **Li chaired a plenary meeting of the State Council.**
The meeting discussed a draft version of the government work report.

Li chaired an executive meeting of the State Council.
The meeting passed an employment promotion plan for the 13th Five-Year Plan period and decided to make further efforts to ensure a basic living for people in poverty.

Jan 16 **Li chaired a seminar to solicit opinions from representatives of education, science and technology, culture, health, sports sectors and of common people on the draft government work report.**

Li issued a written instruction on the future of shantytown renovations.

Zhang Dejiang

*Chair of the
National People's
Congress*

Jan 20

Zhang attended a seminar to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of Wu Jieping.

He also met Wu's relatives.

Yu Zhengsheng

*Chair of the
Chinese People's
Political
Consultative
Conference*

Jan 22

Yu attended a gathering with people from non-Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and those without party affiliation and extended Lunar New Year greetings.

Jan 20

Yu presided over a CPPCC National Committee chairpersons' meeting.

The meeting reviewed and approved drafts of the schedule and agenda of the CPPCC Annual Session. The meeting also deliberated and adopted other drafts of reports related to the work of the CPPCC National Committee.

Yu spoke at an annual meeting of central and local officials in charge of Taiwan-related affairs.

Jan 16-18

Yu made an inspection tour in Xinjiang Province.

Jan 16

Yu attended a nationwide conference on United Front work.

Liu Yunshan

*Head of Party
Secretariat; Head
of Propaganda*

Jan 20

Liu chaired the plenary meeting of the Central Commission for Guiding Ethic and Cultural Progress.

Jan 18

Liu spoke at a meeting on Party building and selecting officials.

The meeting was attended by leading officials of the Party's organization departments from across the country.

Jan 16

Liu paid visits to prominent cultural workers ahead of Spring Festival.

He visited journalist Luo Kaifu.

Liu visited Chinese mathematician Wu Wenjun and missile and rocket expert Wang Yongzhi ahead of Spring Festival.

Liu wrote to People's Daily to congratulate the 20th anniversary of their founding.

Wang Qishan

*Secretary of the
Central
Commission for
Discipline
Inspection*

Zhang Gaoli

*Executive Vice
Premier*

Jan 22

Zhang attended a gathering with people from non-Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and those without party affiliation and extended Lunar New Year greetings.

Jan 16

Zhang attended a seminar to solicit opinions from representatives of education, science and technology, culture, health, sports sectors and of common people on the draft government work report.

About CPW

China Politics Weekly aims to keep business leaders, investors, diplomats, scholars and other China hands up to date on important trends in China. It is produced by Trey McArver, a London-based consultant providing advice and intelligence to firms and investors engaged in China and the region. You can find out more about Trey and CPW in [this interview](#).

Want to help? Please tell us how we can make this newsletter more useful to you. Feedback on both form and content are always welcome, as are suggestions for topics to be covered. Please contact us at info@chinapoliticsweekly.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Want more? We offer tailored briefings and research reports for senior management who need to know more about China. Our network of analysts and associates have experience across a range of sectors. Please email us to discuss your needs and get a quote.