Stronger Cooperation through Difficult Times

Remarks by Long Guoqiang, Vice President of the Development Research Center of the State Council

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The sudden outbreak of COVID-19, unseen in a century, has taken a heavy toll on social and economic development and people’s life and health. In response, governments have adopted various measures according to the severity of the epidemic and their national conditions. China and many countries have managed to bring the epidemic under control and get economies and societies back to normal, while the epidemic is still raging in some countries and regions, and shows signs of resurgence after containment measures are eased. As we speak, we are not sure whether COVID-19 will come back, because it’s a new virus that we have little knowledge of. This means stakes are high around the world, and calls for robust international cooperation for countries to emerge from difficulties.

China was one of the first countries to be hit by COVID-19 earlier this year. In response, the Chinese government has taken the most active and rigorous measures fitting for China’s realities. We enforced early detection, reporting, quarantine, and treatment. We admitted patients in severe conditions to designated facilities and committed best resources and professionals to treat them. We established a comprehensive containment system across the country with broad public participation. We employed digital technologies and big data to track high-risk groups in a targeted manner. Thanks to these efforts, we managed to stem the transmission of the virus and curbed its fast spread within a relatively short time. Since April, most areas in China, including Wuhan, have not found any new cases for several months in a row, except for some imported cases and regional sporadic cases that were quickly contained.

The economy cannot reopen unless and until coronavirus is under control. Since March this year, the Chinese government has pressed ahead with COVID-19

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containment and economy reopening hand in hand. We used different strategies to manage regions with different risk exposure. In high-risk regions, the priority is epidemic control, while in medium and low-risk regions, work and production must be resumed orderly. In this way, we both controlled the epidemic and realized economic recovery. After a sharp decline of 6.8% in Q1, the Chinese economy grew by 3.2% in Q2, and the industrial value-added has rebounded from -25.87% in February to 5.6% in August.

COVID-19 is the common woe of mankind. In a deeply integrated world, no country can stay immune and be self-reliant in the fight against coronavirus. The pandemic has caused the biggest economic recession since the Second World War, and is likely to leave a long scar. Our common challenge is to prevent the comeback and spread of the epidemic, while restarting the economy as soon as possible. To achieve this, countries must work together and make collective response. With autumn and winter approaching, many infectious diseases are likely to strike, and epidemic control should be made part of our daily routine. All countries must be committed to preventing the virus from recurring and spreading. In addition, we should step up exchanges and cooperation in epidemic containment, including information sharing and close cooperation in treatment, medication, especially vaccine research and development, as the ultimate weapons to defeat the virus can only be found in technologies. Countries should also stand united against trade protectionism, ensure secure global industrial chains and value chains, and work for an early recovery of the world economy.

Thank you.