

Remembering History and Defending Justice

Great Contributions of the Main Battlefield

in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War

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Introduction

On September 3, 2025, a grand gathering was held in Tian'anmen Square, Beijing, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the gathering.

Eighty years ago, the Chinese people and peoples around the world, fought shoulder to shoulder, defeating the arrogant, ferocious aggressors and thoroughly crushing the fascist and militarist ambitions to dominate the world through warfare. This laid the cornerstone for establishing the post-war international order and paved the way for world peace and development.

Amid the historical panorama of the arduous struggle that secured this great victory, China's nationwide war of resistance, which opened the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-fascist War, held pivotal significance. With the mountains and rivers as canvas and their lives as ink, the Chinese people wove an epic embodying sacred devotion to national independence and liberation of the people, while also demonstrating a profound commitment to preserving human civilization and defending world peace.

When the shadow of fascism first darkened the horizon, it was in China that the earliest flame of resistance was kindled. Following the September 18 Incident, the Chinese people were the first to rise up, raising the banner of resistance against aggression in defense of peace. In the global struggle against fascism, the Chinese people stood as dauntless pioneers, marching at the very forefront.

As fascist aggression intensified, China opened the world's first large-scale anti-fascist battlefield. Following the Lugou Bridge Incident (also referred to as the July 7th Incident) in 1937, the Chinese people launched a courageous nationwide war of resistance. They held the line across 1.6 million square kilometers of war-torn land against the frenzied onslaught of Japanese fascism. As the bastion and banner of the anti-fascist struggle in the East, they inspired people worldwide with the certainty of ultimate victory.

As the claws of fascism reached across the globe, China vigorously promoted strategic cooperation among the Allied nations. By calling for joint resistance and proactively strengthening strategic coordination with its allies, China emerged as a dynamic champion and a driving force behind the international anti-fascist united front, pooling a mighty force to crush the fascist powers.

As fascist forces raged across the globe, China forged the East's most unyielding bastion. With unbreakable resolve and immense national sacrifice, the Chinese people pinned down and battered the bulk of Japanese fascist armies, miring them in a quagmire from which they could never escape. This effort delivered a decisive blow that would ultimately annihilate Japanese fascism, buying the Allied forces in both the European and Pacific theaters precious time and strategic space.

As the first light of victory dawned, China participated in establishing the post-war

international order. Having fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the Allies to final triumph, China translated its outstanding contributions to the anti-fascist war into a co-founding role in the United Nations and one of the five permanent members of its Security Council, infusing Eastern wisdom to consolidate the fruits of victory. From founding the United Nations to proposing the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and onward to promoting a community with a shared future for humanity, China has consistently faced the light, standing unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding world peace and global security.

China is a steadfast pillar in the East standing firm against the storm, its triumphant light reaching every horizon.

The triumph in the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War was a triumph made possible by the Communist Party of China as its bedrock; it was a triumph of the Chinese people and of all the world's peoples. This victory not only reshaped the destiny of the Chinese nation but also profoundly influenced the course of global development. It shall be forever inscribed in the annals of both the Chinese nation and humanity's enduring quest for justice and progress.

Let us remember history and take it as our mirror; let the past inform the present and illuminate the future.

Chapter 1

Remembering History The Chinese Theater as the Main Battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War

The Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression constitutes a significant part of the World Anti-Fascist War. The Chinese people made a major contribution to the salvation of human civilization and the defense of world peace with immense sacrifice in the war.

—Xi Jinping

The World Anti-Fascist War was a unified global struggle, with the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression forming a vital component. In this devastating global conflict, China's resistance started earlier, lasted longer, and demanded greater sacrifices than any other theater. By containing the main forces of Japanese militarism, China not only secured its own national survival but also provided crucial support to resistance forces on other battlefronts, effectively sustaining the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War.

I. Establishing the First Large-Scale World Anti-Fascist Battlefield

The Second World War developed from simultaneous events in the East and West, progressing through a series of localized conflicts. Japan and Germany constituted the two primary centers of fascist aggression and expansion, forming the backbone of the Fascist Axis alliance. China was the foremost target in Japan's expansionist agenda. Consequently, China suffered Japanese aggression earlier and more intensely than any other nation. The Chinese people's resistance was likewise the earliest and most resolute, initiating the World Anti-Fascist War and establishing the world's first large-scale anti-fascist battlefield.

1. Japan: Source of Fascist Aggression in Asia

After the Meiji Restoration, Japan's ambitions expanded as its national strength and military power steadily increased. Japan gradually developed a strategic intent to conquer China, dominate Asia, and rule the world. From the latter half of the 19th century, Japan increasingly embraced militarism. Japan subsequently formed a continental policy targeting China for expansion. In the over 70 years following the Meiji Restoration,

Japan initiated 14 foreign invasions, with 10 directed at China.^① Japan invaded Taiwan in 1874, provoked the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, and occupied Taiwan. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, it joined other imperialist powers in carving up China. In 1904, it launched the Russo-Japanese War, violating the territory and sovereignty of China's northeastern provinces and secured an advantageous position in China's north-eastern region. In 1927, Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka of Japan submitted a memorial to the Emperor, now known as the "Tanaka Memorial," which stated: "To conquer China, we must first conquer Manchuria and Mongolia; to conquer the world, we must first conquer China." Subsequent facts showed that Japan proceeded with its aggression and expansion precisely along these lines.

In the early 1930s, the global economic crisis swept through Japan and devastated its economy. Japanese fascists viewed foreign expansion as their escape from financial turmoil. Their forces expanded rapidly, turning the country into the primary source of conflict in Asia as its Continental Policy was fully implemented. In 1931, Japan orchestrated the September 18th Incident and seized China's three northeastern provinces. In 1935, Japan instigated the North China Incident, with its ambition to devour China intensifying. On July 7, 1937, Japanese troops bombarded the town of Wanping, southwest of Beijing, and attacked the Lugou Bridge, launching a full-scale war of aggression against China.

Japan's aggressive militaristic policy inflicted unprecedented suffering on the Chinese people and other peoples across Asia, marking one of the darkest chapters in the history of human civilization.

2.Unveiling the Prelude to the World Anti-Fascist War

On the night of September 18, 1931, the Japanese Kwantung Army bombed a section of the South Manchuria Railway near Liutiao Lake on the northern outskirts of Shenyang, blamed the Chinese troops for the act, used this as a pretext to attack the Beidaying, where the Chinese Northeast Army was garrisoned, and bombard the city of Shenyang. This is the September 18th Incident, meticulously planned by Japanese militarists as a decisive step toward realizing their scheme of controlling northeast China and ultimately conquering the entire country. By February 1932, Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang had fallen into Japanese hands.

Japanese militarism orchestrated the September 18th Incident, launching a war of aggression against China that shattered the fragile peace established after World War I through the Versailles-Washington system. This act ignited the first flames of global fascist expansion. From then on, China was plunged into an unprecedented national catastrophe.

At this critical life-and-death juncture, the Chinese people who refused to be enslaved resolutely rose up in resistance. The Communist Party of China (CPC) was the

^① Department of Military History Research, Academy of Military Science, *History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Chinese People's Liberation Army Publishing House, 2015), 2.

first to raise the banner of armed resistance against Japanese aggression. The CPC Central Committee and the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic issued multiple declarations and resolutions, calling on the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and oppressed masses to expel invaders through a national revolutionary war. They also actively organized and led armed struggle against the Japanese in the three provinces in northeast China and launched guerrilla warfare. The Northeast Counter-Japanese Guerrilla Forces, established directly by the CPC, waged heroic struggles against the Japanese army, growing stronger through combats and inflicting heavy casualties on Japanese and collaborationist troops.

Following the September 18th Incident, the Chinese people rose up in resistance, representing the earliest direct opposition to fascist expansion worldwide and firing the first shots in the World Anti-Fascist War. This moment marked both the beginning of the Chinese people's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the prelude to the World Anti-Fascist War. China's resistance in the battlefield on the Eastern front pioneered the world anti-fascist cause, preceding the European anti-fascist battlefield by 8 years and the Pacific theater by 10 years.

3.Establishing the First Large-scale Anti-Fascist Battlefield

On July 7, 1937, after orchestrating the Lugou Bridge Incident, Japan launched a full-scale war of aggression against China. In order to secure a swift conclusion through a brief war, Japan dramatically increased its troops in China, rapidly extending the war across the entire country. After the Lugou Bridge Incident, all Chinese soldiers and civilians rose up in resistance, marking the beginning of the whole nation's war of resistance. In an attempt to subjugate China within just three months, Japan concentrated its troops along strategic axes in northern and southern China, seeking to annihilate the main force of the Chinese military and occupy China's political center and the core economic cities. Between early August and late December 1937, Japan mobilized substantial forces from their homeland, the Kwantung Army, and the Korean Army for operations in northern China. On August 31, the Japanese North China Area Army was officially formed with approximately 370,000 troops stationed in northern China. During the Battle of Shanghai from August to November, Japan committed more than 300,000 troops, employing over 30 warships, 500 aircraft, and 300 tanks.^① By the spring of 1938, Japanese forces had largely secured the major transportation lines and large cities in northern China. In October 1938, they had also controlled major cities in eastern, central, and southern China. The flames of war had spread all across the Chinese land.

At this critical moment between survival and extinction, the Communist Party of China's active efforts led to the formal establishment of the nationwide United Front against Japanese aggression, built on cooperation between the Kuomintang and Commu-

^① Compilation Group for "The History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression," *The History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression*. (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2011), 143, 147, 177-78.

nist Party of China. All Chinese people united in the fight for national survival, national rejuvenation, and human justice. The scale of social mobilization, depth of national awakening, tenacity of fighting spirit, and unwavering belief in victory all reached unprecedented heights.^①

China's nationwide war of resistance encompassed most of the country. Almost all provinces, except for a few remote regions, became battlefields under Japanese invasion. Statistics show during stage of Japan's offensive and Chinese defense, the two countries engaged a total of over four million troops in the war and over 400 million Chinese were affected in the war directly or indirectly.

Through this extraordinary nationwide effort, China established the world's first large-scale anti-fascist battlefield.

II. Serving as the Mainstay of Resistance against Japanese Militarism

The Chinese theater effectively pinned down and engaged the main forces of Japanese militarism, impeding both its "northern advance" toward the Soviet Union and its "southern advance" into the Pacific. This strategic containment disrupted coordination between Japanese and German fascist forces, ultimately playing a decisive role in the ultimate defeat of the Japanese invaders.

1. Uniting as One to Resist Japanese Aggression

Faced with the Japanese aggressors' frenzied onslaught, only a united war of resistance could lead to victory. The CPC promoted the establishment of a Chinese united front against Japanese aggression based on cooperation between the Kuomintang and the CPC, which gave rise to the whole nation's war of resistance through the full mobilization of the Chinese people. People of all ethnic groups, social strata, political parties, and social organizations, patriotic people from every sector of society, and all countrymen and women in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, as well as overseas Chinese, committed themselves entirely, without hesitation, to this great struggle for the nation's very survival. A household on the North China Plain captured this spirit with a couplet: "Unity of all people guarantees national independence; unyielding perseverance achieves national liberation," with the horizontal scroll reading "Resist to the end," perfectly embodying the Chinese people's united resolve to fight the war of resistance with all their might.

In terms of strategy, in order to refute the national subjugation theory and the theory of quick victory, the CPC weighed the actual balance of power between China and Japan and proposed the overarching strategy of protracted war in response to evolving circumstance. In May 1938 Mao Zedong delivered his long speech "On Protracted War,

^① *Selected Works of Xi Jinping*, vol. 2 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2023), 336.

" which scientifically analyzed the laws governing war of resistance against Japanese aggression, clarified the path to victory, and answered three decisive questions: why China's war had to be protracted, how to wage it, and why final victory would belong to China. This boosted the nation's confidence and provided theoretical guidance for the entire war effort. "The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people." "The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression is a protracted war, and the final victory will be China's." These firm, powerful strategic judgments were a beacon that lit the Chinese people's road to resistance.

Militarily, China's center stage and backstage battlefields strategically coordinated with each other, shattering the Japanese fascists' attempt to secure a quick victory. The two battlefields attacked the enemy from both sides, plunging them into a quagmire of war. Chinese forces organized several major campaigns in center stage battlefields, including the battles of Shanghai, Taiyuan, Xuzhou, and Wuhan. Concurrently, the Eighth Route Army, New Fourth Army, counter-Japanese guerrilla forces of southern China, and other resistance armed forces under the leadership of the Communist Party of China established effective battlefronts behind enemy lines across northern, central, and southern China, slowing down the Japanese invasion. The Northeast United Resistance Army also waged widespread guerrilla warfare. From the Lugou Bridge Incident in 1937 to the end of the war in 1945, Chinese forces engaged in more than 200 major campaigns and nearly 200,000 battles of various scales, annihilating over 1.5 million Japanese troops and 1.18 million collaborationist troops.^①

In September 1937, the 115th Division of the Eighth Route Army achieved a major victory in the battle of Pingxingguan, shattering the myth that the invading Japanese troops were invincible. During the battle, over 1,000 troops, including the elite 21st Brigade of the 5th Division and the division's logistics units, were annihilated. Moreover, over 100 vehicles and 200 horse-drawn carts were destroyed. Chinese forces also captured significant weaponry: over 1,000 rifles, 20 machine guns, one artillery piece, and large quantities of military supplies. This battle was the Chinese armed forces' first major victory in taking the initiative to bring down the enemy after the nationwide resistance began.

From late March to early April 1938, Chinese armed forces launched a courageous and tenacious resistance against the invading Japanese troops in Tai'ierzhuang. After days of intense fighting, they ultimately defeated the attacking enemy, annihilating over 10,000 Japanese soldiers and achieving the victory of Tai'ierzhuang. This was a major victory for China's center stage battlefields in the early stages of the whole nation's war of resistance. It dealt a heavy blow to the overweening Japanese invaders and boosted the confidence of China's soldiers and civilians to persevere in the war.

Between August 1940 and January 1941, the CPC led the Eighth Route Army in launching a large-scale offensive and campaigns to resist the mopping-up operations in

^① *History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression* (Beijing: Chinese People's Liberation Army Publishing House, 2015), 625.

the enemy's rear areas in northern China. The offensive involved 105 regiments, earning it the name "Hundred-Regiment Campaign." This was the largest and longest-ever strategic offensive campaign launched by the Eight Route Army in northern China after the start of the whole nation's war of resistance. Launched at a critical moment when international fascist aggression was at its zenith and China's war of resistance was under severe strain, the campaign also carried profound strategic significance. The Hundred-Regiment Campaign dealt a heavy blow to the Japanese "prison cage" strategy in northern China, consolidated the resistance bases there, and compelled Japan to divert additional troops from the center stage battlefields to cope with the forces operating behind its lines, demonstrating to the world the unyielding will and strength of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people in their war of resistance.

China's nationwide war of resistance lasted 14 years, witnessing countless moving and heroic figures whose deeds deserve to be forever remembered. Military leaders such as Yang Jingyu, Zhao Shangzhi, Zuo Quan, Peng Xuefeng, Tong Linge, Zhao Dengyu, Zhang Zizhong, and Dai Anlan exemplified this spirit of sacrifice. Heroic groups, including the "Five Heroes of Langya Mountain" of the Eighth Route Army, the "Liulaozhuang Company" of the New Fourth Army, the eight female warriors of the Northeast United Resistance Army, and the "Eight Hundred Heroes" of the Kuomintang army stood out as outstanding representatives of the Chinese people who defied aggression and sacrificed their lives for their country.

Among these heroes, Yang Jingyu (1905-1940) led his men to fight in temperatures of -40°C, battling valiantly against overwhelming enemy forces until he was the last man standing. After his death, Japanese soldiers cut open his abdomen only to find his stomach contained no food—merely undigested grass roots, tree bark, and cotton wadding. His iron will left even his enemies stunned.

In 1941, in the Langya Mountain area of Yixian County, Hebei Province, five soldiers—Ma Baoyu, Hu Delin, Hu Fucai, Song Xueyi, and Ge Zhenlin—from 6th Platoon, 7th Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment of the Eighth Route Army's Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Military Region deliberately drew Japanese and collaborationist troops toward themselves to protect retreating Party officials and civilians. Fearless in battle, they heroically blocked the enemy advance. After exhausting their ammunition, they fought with rocks while retreating to a steep cliff where they continued resisting. Refusing to surrender to the approaching enemy, they destroyed their weapons and leapt from the towering cliff.

China's war of resistance received invaluable assistance and support from peace- and justice-loving countries and peoples around the world and from international organizations and other anti-fascist forces. The Soviet Union provided China with substantial material aid and, in the later stage of the war, sent troops directly to northeastern China. In the mid and later stages of the war, the United States provided China with assistance through the Lend-Lease Act and credit loans, formed the "Flying Tigers," and risked everything to establish the Hump air route. Chinese and American forces also

conducted joint operations in the Yunnan and Burma battlefields and the Chinese theater. After China's war of resistance entered a stage of stalemate, Britain and other nations likewise extended aid to China. A host of anti-fascist fighters from Korea, Vietnam, Canada, India, New Zealand, Poland, Denmark, and Germany, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, and Japan threw themselves into China's war of resistance. Dr. Norman Bethune of Canada and Dr. Kotnis of India traveled vast distances to treat the wounded and save the dying in China; French physician Dr. Bussière established a "bicycle Hump Route" to ferry medicines; German John Rabe and Dane Bernhard Sindberg labored tirelessly to protect Chinese civilians during the Nanjing Massacre; British journalist Michael Lindsay and internationalist reporter Hans Shippe reported on and publicized China's heroic struggle. Standing shoulder to shoulder with the Chinese people, they left behind deeply moving stories of joint resistance.

2.Tying Down and Resisting the Majority of Japanese Military Forces

During World War II, Japan was an imperialist nation and industrial powerhouse with first-rate military strength, economic power, and political capability in the East. This established Japan as one of the world's leading imperialist powers. From 1931 to 1937, Japan's industrial growth averaged 9.9% annually, outpacing Western powers. By 1937, Japan had achieved impressive production levels: 5.8 million metric tons of steel, 2.39 million metric tons of pig iron, and 1.69 million metric tons of petroleum. Its industrial output approached \$6 billion, representing 80% of its gross domestic product (GDP). Japan's military industry annually manufactured 1,580 aircraft, 744 artillery pieces, 330 tanks, and over 9,500 vehicles, with a shipbuilding capacity exceeding 400,000 tons.

At that time, China was a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country—an impoverished and underdeveloped nation significantly weaker than Japan in military, economic, and political capabilities. In 1937, China's GDP was only 1.36 billion yuan, less than one-quarter of Japan's, and the country lacked the industrial capacity to produce even a single aircraft, tank, or automobile.^①

Despite the enormous difficulties of fighting Japan, China's soldiers and civilians, sustained by extraordinary willpower and organized strength, carried the war of resistance through to the end, tenaciously resisting the Japanese aggressors. Serving as the main battlefield in the East for the World Anti-Fascist War, China pinned down and fought back against the main Japanese ground forces as well as part of its naval and air power, hastening the collapse of Japanese fascism. From the Lugou Bridge Incident to Japan's surrender, Chinese forces annihilated more than 1.5 million Japanese troops, accounting for over 70% of Japan's total military casualties in World War II.

From the Lugou Bridge Incident in July 1937 through the end of that year, Japan de-

^① "Wartime Military," in *History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression*, vol. 2 (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2019), 9-10.

ployed 16 divisions, approximately 600,000 troops, to the Chinese theater (excluding northeastern China), representing about two-thirds of Japan's entire army at the time. By 1938, Japan had committed 24 divisions with over one million troops to China, leaving only a single division stationed in Japan's homeland. By the end of the Battle of Wuhan in October 1938, 32 out of the 34 divisions of the Japanese Army were deployed for operations in China, accounting for 94% of its total divisions. By the winter of 1939, Japan had committed 34 divisions to the war in China, representing 83% of its total divisions. By the end of 1940, the number of Japanese divisions deployed in China had reached 38, making up 78% of its total divisions.

After the European war erupted in September 1939, Japan explicitly declared it would not intervene in the European theater primarily because its main forces were firmly tied down in China. During the early stage of the Soviet-German War, which broke out in June 1941, the Soviet Union suffered heavy losses on the western front. Despite facing both a rare opportunity to advance northward and Germany's strong demands to do so, Japan found itself willing but unable to act, admitting that "the forces deployed in China are too substantial, making it practically impossible to launch a northern offensive against the Soviet Union."

When the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, the majority of Japan's land forces remained tied down in China. The number of Japanese troops engaged in the Chinese theater far exceeded the total number of Japanese troops deployed in the Pacific theater. Statistical records show that at the end of 1941, China confronted 35 Japanese divisions totaling 1.38 million troops, representing 65% of Japan's entire army. By December 1943, while Japan had increased its Southeast Asian presence from 10 to 23 divisions in response to growing resistance in the region, China still fought against 39 Japanese divisions (approximately 1.28 million troops), accounting for 55% of all Japanese divisions.^①

Resistance armed forces under the leadership of the Communist Party of China made significant contributions to containing and eliminating Japanese troops. By the time of Japan's surrender, its military had been severely weakened from prolonged warfare and combat losses, with troops suffering from low morale and severe supply difficulties. Throughout the war, the Eighth Route Army, New Fourth Army, and the people's counter-Japanese guerrilla forces in southern China engaged in more than 125,000 battles, wiping out over 1,714,000 Japanese and collaborationist troops (including 527,000 Japanese soldiers). They captured more than 680,000 rifles and pistols, over 11,000 machine guns, and 1,800 artillery pieces. Additionally, the Northeast United Resistance Army and other units fought independently for 14 years, annihilating more than 200,000 Japanese and collaborationist troops.^②

^① Party History Research Office, Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. *History of the Communist Party of China*, vol. 1. (Beijing: CPC Party History Publishing House, 2002), 579-80.

^② 100 Years of the Communist Party of China (*The New-Democratic Revolution*), (Central Party History Publishing House, 2022), 261.

3. Making Enormous Sacrifice to Defeat Japanese Fascism

The Chinese people made enormous national sacrifices to achieve the complete defeat of Japanese fascism. Japan's full-scale aggression, launched after prolonged preparation, meticulous planning, and comprehensive mobilization, inflicted immeasurable and tremendous damage upon China. Calculated at 1937 values, China suffered direct economic losses exceeding \$100 billion and indirect economic losses of over \$500 billion. According to incomplete statistics, roughly 400 million Chinese were drawn into the war directly or indirectly. Chinese military and civilian casualties during the war exceeded 35 million, including 21 million deaths. The armed forces alone suffered 3.8 million casualties. Large swaths of China's territory were occupied, and its cities, factories, and farmland were severely devastated. Japan's aggression also inflicted a cataclysm on Chinese culture, causing immeasurable losses. During the nationwide war of resistance, more than 80% of China's institutions at or above the junior college level were destroyed or damaged, over 2.75 million library volumes were lost, and 3.6 million cultural relics were looted or ruined.

Japanese invaders brutally ravaged China's beautiful landscapes, massacred soldiers and civilians, forcibly seized laborers, assaulted women, and conducted biological and chemical warfare. Their actions constituted a series of inhuman atrocities and heinous crimes.

During the horrific Nanjing Massacre, 300,000 Chinese compatriots were slaughtered, countless women were violated, children were killed, buildings were demolished, and property was looted. Lasting six weeks, the Nanjing Massacre stands as one of World War II's "three major atrocities," a shocking crime against humanity and one of the darkest chapters in human history.

During their aggression against China, Japanese invaders carried out tens of thousands of massacres of Chinese civilians, of which more than 200 were large-scale atrocities in which over a thousand people were slaughtered at a time, acts of appalling brutality that were utterly devoid of humanity. Japanese troops conducted brutal "mopping up," "pacification," and "gnawing-away" operations against resistance base areas behind enemy lines, implementing the "Three Alls" policy--"burn all, kill all, loot all." Along the Great Wall, stretching from Shanhaiguan in the east to Gubeikou in the west, Japanese troops created a no-man's land spanning over 350 kilometers east-west and more than 40 kilometers north-south. They systematically burned houses and villages, forcing civilians into what amounted to "concentration zones." The "Three Alls" policy inflicted devastating losses on the resistance bases. According to preliminary statistics in seven liberated areas, during 1937-45, 3.18 million Chinese people were killed, tortured to death, or died from injuries and illness; 2.76 million people were taken away; 19.52 million houses were burned down; and 57.45 million metric tons of grain, 6.31 million draft animals, 48 million pigs and sheep, 222.7 million pieces of farm tools

and furniture, and 229 million pieces of bedding and clothing were lost.^①

Even more horrifying, the Japanese military established biochemical units in China that conducted cruel biological and chemical warfare. They used large numbers of Chinese people as subjects for bacterial experiments and poison gas tests. Japan's germ warfare unleashed devastating epidemics of plague, cholera, and other diseases across China, exposing countless civilians to lethal pathogens. Between 1940 and 1945, the infamous Japanese Unit 731 alone used at least 3,000 people for live dissection experiments. Japanese troops also released poison gas against innocent Chinese civilians and poisoned rivers, lakes, and wells. In an experiment in September 1940, 16 victims were first subjected to poison-gas shelling and then injected with toxic agents. They all died in agony. According to incomplete statistics, the Japanese troops used chemical weapons more than 2,000 times, causing massive casualties among Chinese soldiers and civilians.

Japanese troops systematically abducted vast numbers of Chinese laborers and forcibly conscripted women from occupied territories to serve as "comfort women." From 1931 to 1945, Japanese invaders captured over 10 million Chinese laborers, forcing them into military engineering, road construction, mining, land reclamation, and other forms of hard labor. These workers endured inhumane treatment, with countless dying from freezing, starvation, disease, exhaustion, or execution. During World War II, at least 200,000 Chinese women were forced into sexual slavery as "comfort women." Many were tortured to death by Japanese troops, and most of the survivors were left with lifelong disabilities and permanent psychological trauma.

III. Providing Important Strategic Support for the World Anti-Fascist War

After the outbreak of the war in Europe and the Pacific War, more than 20 countries and regions across Europe, Asia, and Africa fell to the fascist invasion. China, however, withstood the relentless attacks of Japanese invaders. Not only did China thwart Japan's attempts to subjugate it, but it also provided crucial strategic support to the Allied war effort and coordinated with strategic actions in both the European and Pacific theaters. China also served as a vital rear base for Allied operations against Japan in the Asia-Pacific region, supplying essential strategic materials and military intelligence to the Allies, directly supporting to their operations and securing a critical buffer of time for Allied forces.

1. Becoming the Center and Standard-bearer of Anti-Fascist Forces in the East

Japan was the main force behind fascist aggression in the East and the common enemy of all Asian peoples. China emerged as the dominant resistance force against Japa-

^① *The History of China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression*. (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2011), 495.

nese troops in the main battlefield on the eastern front, serving as a crucial mainstay.

China provided steadfast support to struggles of resistance throughout Asia, serving as a stronghold for the region's anti-fascist resistance. The Chinese Expeditionary Force engaged Japanese forces in Burma, providing crucial support to British-Burmese forces and inflicting heavy casualties on Japanese troops. Burma was a critical strategic objective in Japan's Pacific War campaign. Despite having large portions of its territory occupied and facing an extremely difficult strategic stalemate, China still dispatched elite troops to form the Expeditionary Force to meet the strategic needs of the international anti-fascist alliance. In April 1942, when British forces faced a crisis at Yenangyaung in Burma, the main force of the newly formed 38th Division from the Chinese Expeditionary Force's 66th Army rushed to provide reinforcements and engaged in fierce battles with Japanese troops. More than 7,000 British soldiers and over 500 British and American missionaries and journalists were rescued. Later, in October 1943 and May 1944, the Chinese Army in India and the Expeditionary Force launched counteroffensives against Japanese forces in northern Burma and western Yunnan, China respectively. By March 1945, they had successfully completed these operations, effectively thwarting Japan's attempts to cut off international aid routes to China. These victories reopened the China-Burma international transportation line, recovered over 50 towns in northern Burma, reclaimed 83,000 square kilometers of territory in western Yunnan, and eliminated more than 49,000 Japanese troops. The success of these campaigns not only relieved pressure on Southeast Asian resistance movements and bolstered regional confidence in ultimate victory but also provided crucial support to Allied operations against Japan in the India-Burma region and Pacific theater—accomplishments of tremendous strategic significance.

As a crucial rear base for Allied operations against Japan, China provided multiple air bases in Chengdu, Kunming, Liuzhou, Zhijiang, and other locations, along with frontline airfields and substantial ground crew personnel to support the Allied war effort. During the War of Resistance, Chinese military forces and civilians repeatedly rescued American pilots. Hundreds of American airmen were rescued by those operating behind enemy lines in northern, central, and southern China alone. A notable example occurred in April 1942, when Chinese forces and civilians rescued 64 members of the Doolittle Raiders following their bombing mission over Japan.

China also made all-out efforts to support resistance movements throughout Asia. In March 1942, China drafted the "Outline Plan for Mobilizing Vietnam" to guide the growth of China-based Vietnamese resistance forces. For Korean freedom fighters, China implemented the "Guidance Program for Assisting the Korean National Restoration Movement" in December 1942, offering both economic and political support. Similarly, China aided members of the "Free Thai Movement" in returning to Thailand to join resistance efforts. Beyond these targeted initiatives, China actively encouraged overseas Chinese communities to join the anti-fascist struggle, which led to enthusiastic participation from overseas Chinese in the Philippines, Burma, Vietnam, and other regions.

China emerged as a standard-bearer not only in military resistance but also in providing theoretical guidance for the Eastern battlefield. Despite an underdeveloped economy and limited resources, China coped with the aggressive Japanese fascist offensive with innovative strategies. The Communist Party of China developed the theory of protracted war, implemented people's warfare, and carried out extensive guerrilla wars to address key challenges: fighting effectively from a disadvantaged position, overcoming challenges, and ultimately winning the war. These strategic theories and tactical approaches—developed through practical experience in the main battlefield in the East—provided guidance not only for China's eventual victory in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, but also offered theoretical frameworks for other oppressed Asian nations seeking to resist foreign invasion and achieve national independence and liberation.

The heroic resistance on the Chinese theater inspired Asian independence movements militarily, theoretically, and spiritually, rightfully establishing China as the center and standard-bearer of anti-fascist forces in the East.

2.Promoting the Establishment of an International Anti-Fascist United Front

Fascism and militarism were common enemies of people worldwide, and establishing a broad international anti-fascist united front became a crucial guarantee for defeating the German, Italian, and Japanese fascist aggressors. As one of the earliest victims of fascist aggression, China emerged as both an active advocate and powerful promoter of the international anti-fascist united front.

In February 1938, shortly after Japan's full-scale invasion of China, Mao Zedong proposed three anti-aggression united fronts: the Chinese united front, the world united front, and the Japanese people's united front. Just one day after the outbreak of the Soviet-German War in June 1941, the Communist Party of China reaffirmed its commitment to an international anti-fascist united front: "For Communists throughout the world, the task now is to mobilize the people of all countries and organize an international united front to fight fascism." "In foreign relations, unite against the common foe with everybody in Britain, the United States, and other countries who is opposed to the fascist rulers of Germany, Italy, and Japan."^①

Uniting Asian peoples against a common enemy was a crucial component in establishing the international anti-fascist united front. In October 1941, the Communist Party of China organized the Anti-Fascist Congress of Eastern Peoples in Yan'an, which brought together more than 130 delegates from Japan, India, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, Malaya, and other countries and regions. With the aim of "jointly defeating the fascist aggressors and striving for the freedom, equality, and liberation of Eastern nations," the conference decided to establish the Yan'an Anti-Fascist League of

^① *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 806.

Eastern Peoples. The Eastern anti-fascist congress and the resulting League created both the political and organizational foundation for unity among Eastern peoples, propelling the anti-fascist struggle and liberation movements of Eastern nations into a new historical stage. Under the Communist Party of China's policy of the united front for resistance, organizations such as the "League of Awakened Japanese in China" (Awakening League) and the "Japanese Anti-War Alliance in China" (Anti-War Alliance) were established in resistance base areas. The "Awakening League" and the "Anti-War Alliance" later merged to form the Northern China Federation of Anti-War Alliances of Japanese Nationals in China. Some captured Japanese soldiers eventually joined the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army, becoming valiant fighters in the anti-fascist war.

China's proactive engagement in securing the participation of Britain, the United States, and other nations was a critical step in establishing an international anti-fascist united front. When Japan launched the Pacific War in 1941 and World War II expanded globally, China proactively strengthened its connections with the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, and other countries, facilitating the formation of the international anti-fascist united front. In December 1941, the Communist Party of China issued a declaration concerning the Pacific War, emphasizing that "it has already become clear that all countries and nations around the world have been divided into the fascist front, which wages wars of aggression and the anti-fascist front, which wages wars of liberation"^① and called for "the establishment of a military alliances of China, Britain, the United States, and all other countries fighting against Japanese aggression."^② On New Year's Day 1942, 26 countries led by China, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union jointly signed the Declaration by the United Nations, formally establishing the international anti-fascist alliance. This development demonstrated the justice and progressive nature of the World Anti-Fascist War, fundamentally shifted the balance of power between the anti-fascist and fascist camps, and accelerated progress toward victory.

Mao Zedong emphasized: "The great Chinese War of Resistance is not only China's affair, or an Eastern affair, but also a world affair."^③ The victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression represented a tremendous achievement won through the collaboration between the Chinese people and the anti-fascist Allies and peoples from around the world. During this war, the Chinese united with nations worldwide to defeat fascism, demonstrating a global mindset of compassion and solidarity.

3. Providing Strong Coordination and Support for Other World Battlefields

The Soviet-German War and Pacific War that erupted in 1941 fundamentally altered

^① Central Party Literature Research Office and Central Archives, eds. *Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of the Party (1921-1949)*, vol. 18 (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 2011), 729.

^② Central Party Literature Research Office and Central Archives, eds. *Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of the Party (1921-1949)*, vol. 18 (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 2011), 730.

^③ *Collected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 2, (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1993), 145.

the dynamics of World War II and significantly impacted China's resistance against Japanese aggression. Following the formation of the international anti-fascist alliance, the Allies launched coordinated campaigns against the Axis powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan. China emerged as a key ally within the global anti-fascist coalition. Recognizing the strategic importance of the Chinese theater in the broader conflict, the Allies established the Chinese Theater of Operations in January 1942, alongside the Supreme Allied Command against the Axis powers and headquarters for the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA).

China's nationwide resistance pinned down Japanese forces, disrupted direct coordination among German, Italian, and Japanese fascists, thwarted Japan's ambitions for global domination alongside Germany and Italy, and provided crucial support to anti-fascist struggles on other battlefronts. The "Northern Advance" and "Southern Advance" were the Axis powers' strategic plans for the East. When the Soviet-German War broke out in June 1941, the Chinese theater immobilized about 70% of Japan's 2.74 million overseas troops. This prevented Japan from executing its "northern advance" strategy against Siberia and delayed the formation of the German-Japanese alliance, sparing the Soviet Union from fighting on two fronts. The Chinese Theater also tied down and delayed Japan's "southern advance" into Southeast Asia. The "southern advance" strategy was primarily targeted at the United States, Britain, and France, and its delay bought valuable time for these nations to make strategic preparations. As Franklin Roosevelt remarked: "Without China, or if China had been defeated, many more Japanese divisions would have been deployed to other areas, and they would have been able to occupy Australia and India immediately without any trouble, and then push to the Middle East."

China's protracted war provided vital support to other anti-fascist nations such as the Soviet Union, United States, and Britain. It brought them precious time to prepare for war while delivering significant material assistance, supporting Allied efforts with human resources, supplies, and financial aid. China furnished the Allies with strategic materials urgently needed for the war effort, including tung oil, tungsten, antimony, and tin, along with agricultural products and vital military intelligence. During the most critical phase of the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War, Yan Baohang, known as the "Richard Sorge of the East" and an exceptional underground operative of the Communist Party of China, provided primary-source intelligence to Soviet forces. Meanwhile, American forces set up radio stations in resistance base areas behind enemy lines to gather Japanese military intelligence and weather data. These contributions from China were instrumental in enabling the Allies' grand strategy of "Europe first, Asia second." The "Europe First" strategy required the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union to concentrate their main forces in Europe. Had the Chinese theater not tied down a million Japanese troops, the Allies would have been forced to divert substantial forces to fight Japan, making the "Europe first" strategy unworkable. While the "Europe first, Asia second" strategy served the collective interests of the Allied nations, it also meant

China continued to shoulder the primary burden of resisting Japanese fascism.

China was fighting not only to save herself but also to carry out its great duty in the world anti-fascist front. China's strategic coordination, military support, and material assistance provided selflessly to other battlefields around the world fully prove this point.

4. Declaring the Ultimate Triumph of the World Anti-Fascist War

As early as March 1937, in a conversation with Agnes Smedley, Mao Zedong declared: "The outcome of Japan's war against China will not be Japan's victory, but rather the collapse of Japan's finances, economy, and regime. This truth is recognized not only by the Japanese people but also by far-sighted individuals within Japan's bourgeoisie, though the Japanese military leadership steadfastly refuses to acknowledge it."^① This great prediction became reality eight years later.

Through an arduous and protracted resistance spanning three strategic phases—defense, stalemate, and counteroffensive—the Chinese people ultimately achieved complete victory over the Japanese invaders, marking the final triumph in the World Anti-Fascist War.

After the defeat of German and Italian fascism in May 1945, the European war concluded, leaving Japan as the Allies' only major enemy. China and other Allied nations jointly launched a full-scale counteroffensive against Japan. On August 15, the Japanese emperor broadcasted the Imperial Rescript on the Termination of the War. Japan surrendered unconditionally. On September 2, aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japanese Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru and Army Chief of Staff Umezu Yoshijiro signed the instrument of surrender. With Japanese forces surrendering to China, the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression ended victoriously.

September 3, the day after Japan signed the surrender document, was designated as the Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

Beginning with the September 18th Incident in 1931, the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression spanned 14 years. From a temporal perspective, this conflict coincided with the entire timeline of the World Anti-Fascist War. Through unwavering resilience and resistance, the Chinese people secured victory against Japanese aggression. This great victory represented both the inevitable outcome of historical momentum built through the Chinese people's grueling 14-year resistance and the triumphant result of the international anti-fascist alliance's unified struggle against fascism. This milestone marked the ultimate triumph of the World Anti-Fascist War.

^① *Collected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 1 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1993), 487.

Chapter 2

Enshrined in History The Unshakable Global Significance of the Main Battlefield in the East

The great Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression established the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War, making indelible contributions to national salvation, independence, people's liberation, and the pursuit of world peace.

— Xi Jinping

The Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression was an extraordinarily arduous and great war. Under extremely difficult circumstances, the Chinese people, through immense national sacrifice, sustained the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War. This great victory on the battlefield in the East was a triumph not only for the Chinese people but also for people worldwide, fundamentally altering the historical trajectory of China while profoundly shaping the course of modern world history.

I. Propelling the Chinese Nation toward Great Rejuvenation

The great victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression marked the first complete triumph against foreign invasion in modern Chinese history. It created a magnificent epic of the Chinese nation's unyielding resistance against foreign invasion, significantly boosted national self-confidence and pride, and created crucial conditions for the Chinese people to forge the right path toward national rejuvenation under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.

1. Reestablishing China's Major-Country Status in the World

After the Opium War of 1840, China was gradually reduced to a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. The nation was humiliated, its people suffered, and its civilization was tarnished. The Chinese nation endured unprecedented calamities, and the Chinese people lived under the constant threat of foreign invasions: Nearly all capitalist and imperialist powers participated in the aggression and plunder of China. As foreign powers continuously eroded China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the nation's suffering deepened, creating an existential crisis that threatened its very survival. Although generations of individuals with lofty ideas fought against these conditions, their struggles in-

variably ended in failure.

The great victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression reversed this historical decline.

This victory thwarted Japanese militarist ambitions to colonize and enslave China. Japan was forced to return territories it had stolen from China during and after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, including northeast China, Taiwan, and the Penghu Islands. The Chinese people successfully defended their national sovereignty and territorial integrity, thoroughly washing away the century-long humiliation of repeated defeats against foreign aggression in modern times.

This victory created conditions for China to achieve an independent and equal status on the world stage. The unequal treaties forced upon China by imperial powers since modern times, numbering in the hundreds, had severely damaged its sovereignty and became a humiliating symbol of its semi-colonial status. After the victory in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the Communist Party of China led the Chinese people to overthrow the reactionary regime and establish the People's Republic of China. They abolished the imperialist unequal treaties, eliminated foreign privileges in China, and reclaimed customs autonomy and territorial waters sovereignty—rights that had been lost for over a century. The Chinese people truly stood up.

This victory significantly elevated China's international standing. Having made historic contributions to the World Anti-Fascist War, China participated in establishing the United Nations and secured a position as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, reestablishing its status as a major country in the world. The Chinese people earned the respect of peace-loving people worldwide, and the Chinese nation gained a noble international reputation.

2. Forging a Strong Leadership through the War

The complex situation of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression tested and tempered the Communist Party of China. With tenacious fighting spirit and superior combat skills, the Party effectively fought against Japanese militarist aggression, successfully responded to major challenges, achieved the historical feat of defeating a stronger enemy with inferior forces, and opened a new chapter in the Chinese revolution.

Politically, the Communist Party of China was the earliest advocate, mobilizer, and organizer of the Chinese resistance against Japanese militarist aggression. The Party actively promoted, established, and maintained the united front against Japanese aggression, becoming the strong political leadership core that united the nation's resistance forces.

Strategically, the Party formulated and implemented the line of all-out resistance against Japanese aggression by the whole nation and the underlying strategy of a protracted war. From the outset, it mobilized, organized, and armed the masses extensively, implementing an all-out resistance approach where all citizens participated in and supported the resistance effort, clearly charting the correct path to victory.

In terms of struggle principles, the Party led widespread guerrilla warfare against Japanese aggression, elevating these operations to a strategic level. It commanded the people's army to conduct offensive operations within defensive warfare, quick battles within a protracted war, and external operations within internal lines in an active, flexible, and planned manner, developing a flexible and effective operational system.

In action, the Party led the people's army in the most active, resolute, and courageous resistance against Japanese aggression. Throughout the war, Party members consistently advanced to the resistance frontlines and ventured into occupied territories. They fought at the vanguard of the resistance, becoming national heroes bravely battling the invaders.

In 1945, as final victory approached, the 7th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was convened, systematically evaluating the Party's contributions during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. During the conference, Mao Zedong declared: "Now our Party has become the center of gravity of the Chinese people's struggle to resist Japan and save the nation, the center of gravity of their struggle for liberation and of their struggle to defeat the aggressors and build a new China. China's center of gravity lies right here where we are and nowhere else."^①

Through the crucible of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, especially after the Yan'an Rectification Movement (1942-1945) and the 7th National Congress, the Communist Party of China established Mao Zedong Thought as its guiding ideology. The Party formed a battle-tested group of politicians championing Mao Zedong Thought, developed sound Marxist ideological, political, and organizational principles, and achieved unprecedented Party unity in thought, politics, and organization.

During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, an increasingly broad segment of the population came to know, understand, and trust the Communist Party of China. In 1940, Chen Jiageng, a prominent patriotic overseas Chinese leader, led a fact-finding and solidarity delegation to China. After witnessing the stark contrast between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China, Chen concluded: "China's hope lies in Yan'an." The Communist Party of China won recognition from China's workers, peasants, and intellectuals. Young intellectuals endured arduous journeys, traveling vast distances from all over the country and even from overseas to reach Yan'an. "Going to Yan'an" became the rallying cry for all who aspired to peace and democracy.

The Communist Party of China, having matured through the harsh trials of the war of resistance, emerged as the strong leadership core that united and led people of all ethnic groups across the country toward national rejuvenation. Following the war's victory, the Party guided the people in alignment with historical trends, swiftly achieving victory in the New Democratic Revolution and establishing the People's Republic of China, ultimately fulfilling the historical mission of national independence and people's liberation. This achievement wiped away a century of humiliation, created the funda-

^① *Selected Works of Ma Zedong*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1027.

mental social conditions for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and ushered in a new era in China's development.

3. Inspiring the Great Awakening of the Chinese People

In early modern China, accumulated poverty and weakness led Western powers to label the country with the humiliating title the "Sick Man of East Asia." The nation was fragmented, its people "scattered without unity, like grains of sand easily swept away," and the national spirit nearly suffocated under the dual oppression of imperialism and feudalism. Victory in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression awakened the Chinese national consciousness, transforming a once-disparaged people into an indomitable force, shifting them from a state of self-deprecation and foreign worship toward one of self-confidence and self-reliance. As Mao Zedong noted, "It has awakened and united the Chinese people to a greater degree than all their great struggles in the last hundred years."^①

National identity and consciousness were strengthened as never before. Confronted with the profound crisis of national extinction, the Chinese people deepened their understanding of their nation through their struggle against imperialism and feudalism. The concept of a unified "Chinese nation" was strengthened dramatically, with national "reunification" and "independence" becoming shared beliefs that transcended all differences. From laborers to elites, from mainland residents to overseas Chinese, all were deeply invested in the nation's survival and actively contributed to the resistance efforts. Throughout the country—north and south of the Yangtze River, inside and outside the Great Wall—the Chinese people confronted the national crisis together despite enemy bombardment. Countless patriotic soldiers fought heroically without fear of death, while citizens from all walks of life stood united in their resistance, achieving a heroic victory against Japanese aggression that inspired the entire nation.

The public's awareness of their role as the primary force grew significantly. In this great struggle, resistance was no longer merely a government or military endeavor. Ordinary citizens actively participated in saving the nation, contributing manpower, labor, and money to the resistance—many sacrificing their lives without hesitation. The people themselves emerged as the true protagonists of the war of resistance. In remote Xinjiang, far from the resistance front lines, people of all ethnicities eagerly donated money and goods under the rallying cries "Everything for victory against Japanese aggression" and "Contribute money if you have money." Many workers saved from their meager living expenses, accumulating donations bit by bit to send to the National Salvation Association. During the donation campaign in Dihua (now Urumqi) in November 1938, two large banners with slogans flanked the donation platform: "Concentrate individual financial resources to drive the Japanese invaders out of China!" and "Contribute money if you have money, and contribute strength if you have strength: let's unite to drive

^① *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1032.

the Japanese invaders out of China!"^①

During this period, the Chinese people developed a deeper understanding of China's path and leadership. The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression allowed for direct comparisons of different political forces' strategies and capabilities. The Communist Party of China implemented an all-out resistance approach firmly rooted in and supported by ordinary citizens. Their strategy of a protracted war provided clear direction to both military and civilian populations, while their New Democratic vision inspired hope for post-war China. Through these experiences, the Chinese people recognized that the path of new democracy was the correct choice for achieving national independence and liberation, and that the Communist Party of China was the trustworthy leadership needed to guide China toward a promising future.

The Chinese national spirit of self-confidence and self-reliance was reshaped. The victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, which was China's first complete triumph against foreign invasion in modern times, fundamentally renewed the nation's sense of self-confidence and self-reliance. When Chinese people from all social classes and regions united in defense of their homeland, they discovered their collective power. More than a military success, this war marked the rebirth of China's national spirit. It helped the Chinese people overcome the humiliation and fragmentation they had endured since the early modern era. With this awakened consciousness, the nation resolutely embarked on the journey of pursuing independence, freedom, and liberation, creating both the popular foundation and spiritual strength essential for the subsequent founding of New China.

4. Tempering a Heroic People's Army

Forged in the crucible of the war of resistance, the people's army grew stronger and more capable. It gradually transformed into a heroic force that loyally follows the Party's command and serves the country with unwavering dedication and as the backbone supporting China's national rejuvenation.

The political character of the people's army became increasingly resolute. It firmly upheld the core principle that the Party commands the gun—a fundamental guarantee that the army truly emerges from and serves the people. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the Party steadily refined its military leadership system by establishing comprehensive organizational structures and political education frameworks. These improvements created a solid foundation for enhancing combat effectiveness and sustaining the resistance effort.

The military forces grew substantially stronger during this period. The people's army implemented the underlying strategy of a protracted war alongside comprehensive people's war tactics. They widely employed ambushes, sabotage operations, landmine warfare, and tunnel warfare and other methods to annihilate the enemy, developing tactical

^① Yu Zuo, "Donation Campaigns in Dihua," *Xinjiang Daily News*, November 30, 1938.

methods that greatly enhanced their combat effectiveness. Under the Party's leadership, the army created innovative solutions to critical wartime challenges involving survival, development, construction, and combat operations. By the end of the war of resistance, CPC-led main forces and local armies had grown from roughly 110,000 troops at the beginning of the war to approximately 1.32 million, supported by an additional 2.6 million militia members. They established 19 resistance bases that provided stable rear support. Throughout this period, the people's army saw significant improvements in numbers, equipment, and material support.

The army's exceptional work ethic continued to improve throughout the conflict. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the people's army reinforced its willpower and deepened its commitment to serving the people wholeheartedly. Both the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army strictly adhered to the "Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention," protecting civilian property and assisting with agricultural production. This created a unique "fish-water relationship" between soldiers and civilians. Military-civilian integration and collaborative operations became standard practice during the war. The resistance base areas produced numerous exemplary figures, including "Ma Dingfu's Model Company of Loving the People" and "Rong Guanxiu, Mother of the Soldiers." Stories like that of the Liulaozhuang Company illustrated the profound bond where the military cherishes the people, and the people support the military. Through their loyalty and sacrifice, the people's army earned the widespread trust and support of the masses. In 1945, Mao Zedong observed: "...this army has an indomitable spirit and is determined to vanquish all enemies and never to yield. No matter what the difficulties and hardships, so long as a single man remains, he will fight on."^①

5.Nurturing the Great Spirit of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression

The Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression transcended a mere contest of military and economic strength to become a profound test of national will and spiritual strength. This conflict chronicles the Chinese nation's indomitable spirit and its determination to emerge stronger in the face of potential destruction. Through this ordeal, the Chinese people cultivated a great spirit of the War of Resistance that restored their national confidence and dignity.

The war of resistance fostered a patriotic spirit that instilled in every citizen a responsibility for the nation's fate. When Japanese invaders trampled Chinese soil, the cry that "the Chinese nation faces its most perilous moment" echoed throughout the country. The previously fragmented Chinese people united with unprecedented solidarity, driven by a powerful sense of national identity. Together, they confronted the national crisis and eagerly joined the momentous struggle to save their homeland. A newspaper

^① *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1039.

editorial captured this spirit: "On battlefields north and south, people vie with one another to sacrifice themselves because of their absolute conviction that their deaths will secure independence and freedom for generations to come—a goal they are certain will be achieved." In Miyun, Beijing, a woman named Deng Yufen sent her husband and all five children to the front lines, where they all perished in battle. She declared: "We may lack money and weapons, but we have our family members. If we cannot contribute money, we can offer our lives. When it comes to fighting the Japanese invaders, there can be no half measures."

The war of resistance forged a national spirit of unflinching courage and steadfast defiance. When facing invaders with vastly superior weapons and equipment, the Chinese people refused to surrender in humiliation. Instead, they upheld their national dignity with the resolute determination that "it is better to be a shattered jade than an intact tile." Zhao Yiman, political commissar of the 2nd Regiment of the 3rd Army of the Northeast United Resistance Army, exemplified this spirit. In 1935, she was wounded and captured during a battle against Japanese forces. Despite enduring brutal torture, Zhao remained unwaveringly loyal. Before her execution, she wrote her final words in prison: "For my nation, I offer my mortal head willingly; with my warm blood, I shall nourish China's soil freely." She faced death calmly, embodying the spirit of fearless sacrifice. Countless Chinese citizens stood firm amid gunfire and remained true to their convictions despite cruel torture, etching their unyielding integrity into the monuments of history.

The war of resistance forged a heroic spirit of fearlessness and determination to fight to the bitter end. Under extremely harsh conditions, the Chinese people refused to be intimidated by their ruthless enemy. Instead, they maintained unwavering resolve to resist until the very end, confronting the invaders with ultimate sacrifice. The victory at Pingxingguan shattered the myth that the invading Japanese troops army was invincible. The Battle of Tai'erzhuang, which annihilated over ten thousand enemy troops, showcased the extraordinary valor of Chinese soldiers. The Hundred Regiments Offensive dealt a heavy blow to the "prison cage" policy of Japan and revitalized national morale. Meanwhile, the Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army penetrated deep behind enemy lines, causing invaders to become engulfed in the vast ocean of people's war. From frontline battlefields to enemy-occupied territories, Chinese military forces and civilians engaged powerful enemies with unyielding determination. They constructed a human Great Wall with their bodies and faced national crisis through successive waves of sacrifice. With the heroic conviction to "fight on until the last man remains," they repeatedly crushed enemy offensives. This created an epic story of the underdog triumphing over the mighty and demonstrated the indomitable courage and strength of the Chinese people.

The war of resistance forged an indomitable and persevering belief in ultimate victory. During the early stages of the war, Japanese forces quickly occupied vast territories with their superior military power, creating a drastically imbalanced power dynamic.

However, the Chinese people steadfastly refused to surrender. With tenacious willpower, they maintained hope for victory even in the bleakest circumstances. The Chinese people firmly believed that while Japanese invaders might temporarily occupy large areas of land, they could never conquer the Chinese spirit—victory would ultimately belong to China. This unwavering conviction in victory and the resolute determination to "fight to the end, never surrender" sustained the Chinese people through their darkest moments, eventually leading to the dawn of victory in the War of Resistance.

The great spirit of the War of Resistance not only led the Chinese people to defeat the Japanese invaders but also inspired the Communist Party of China to lead the people to victory in the New Democratic Revolution and establish New China after the war. An elderly person, comparing the spiritual outlook of people in New and Old China, remarked with deep emotion: "In the past, all I saw were walking corpses—people physically alive but spiritually dead." "Today is different. Wherever I go, I see people working diligently at their posts, laboring with enthusiasm, encouraging one another, and collaborating effectively." "This transformation from death to life, this resurrection, can only be attributed to the leadership of the Communist Party of China."^①

The great spirit of the War of Resistance forged during the war represents an invaluable spiritual heritage of the Chinese people. As a crucial element of the Communist Party of China's spiritual lineage, which stems from the Party's founding principles, this spirit continues to inspire the Chinese people to overcome all challenges and obstacles in their pursuit of national rejuvenation.

II.Supporting World National Liberation Movement

Evil fascist forces provoked war in their quest for global domination, intensifying their exploitation of colonial and semi-colonial countries. The progression of the World Anti-Fascist War paralleled the development of national liberation movement. The Chinese people's victory in the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War and the New Democratic Revolution powerfully catalyzed the rise of liberation movement worldwide and accelerated their historical development.

1.Catalyzing World National Liberation Movement

Mao Zedong once pointed out: "If the October Revolution opened up wide possibilities for the emancipation of the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world and opened up realistic paths towards it, then the victory of the anti-fascist Second World War has opened up still wider possibilities for the emancipation of the working class and has opened up still more realistic paths towards it "^②

Before World War II broke out, more than half the world's population lived under colonial control. The global struggle for national liberation remained daunting. Resis-

^① Liang Shuming, "An Honest Talk on National Day," *People's Daily*, October 2, 1950.

^② *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 4 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1357-58.

tance movements by oppressed nations often ended in failure. The Chinese victory in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression not only laid a solid foundation for China's own liberation but also profoundly inspired freedom struggles throughout oppressed nations and colonial and semi-colonial territories.

As the world's largest semi-colonial country, China overthrew the oppression of imperialism and colonialism through the arduous War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the War of Liberation. The establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 definitively ended a century of national humiliation. History has shown that even economically and culturally disadvantaged colonial and semi-colonial countries can defeat powerful enemies by uniting their national strength and choosing paths suited to their specific circumstances. China's victory demonstrated to oppressed nations and colonial and semi-colonial territories worldwide that resistance against aggression and the pursuit of national independence was not a distant dream but an achievable reality with solid practical foundations.

The independence and liberation of the Chinese nation became a prominent example of the powerful national liberation movement that emerged worldwide after World War II. China's success provided an inspiring model for colonial and semi-colonial countries, motivating them to wage just liberation struggles against unjust aggression, and to fight for both national independence and the liberation of their people. The triumph of the Chinese revolution not only advanced the liberation of oppressed nations globally but also made historic contributions to humanity's pursuit of peace, democracy, justice, and progress. Countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and Egypt learned from China's revolutionary experience and subsequently achieved their own national independence and liberation.

2.Setting an Example for National Liberation

The victory of the Chinese people's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression inspired confidence and courage in oppressed colonial and semi-colonial countries worldwide to fight for national independence and liberation. The vast power imbalance represented the foremost challenge in world national liberation movement. The Chinese people, united by their shared hatred of the enemy and indomitable spirit, defeated an adversary with vastly superior weapons and equipment using inferior weapons and equipment. They achieved the remarkable feat of a semi-colonial weak nation defeating an imperialist power, demonstrating how an economically and militarily disadvantaged country could overcome a powerful imperialist aggressor. This victory established a viable, concrete path for oppressed nations and territories under colonial rule to pursue independence and liberation. This historical triumph served as both an inspiration and a practical roadmap for liberation movement across the globe.

The revolutionary theories and practices developed by the Communist Party of China during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression offered viable liberation strategies for oppressed nations worldwide. Theoretically, the Party integrated Marxist

principles with China's revolutionary context. Through careful analysis of the power imbalance between enemy and self, and the varying resistance attitudes across social classes, they developed revolutionary theories with distinct Chinese characteristics, including protracted war theory and united front strategy, providing strategic guidance for weaker nations confronting stronger adversaries. In practice, the Party pioneered a struggle approach that relied on popular support and rural encirclement of cities. Their flexible tactics, such as guerrilla warfare in the rear, demonstrated how weaker forces could defeat stronger enemies, offering operational models for under-equipped liberation movement. By establishing base areas as foundations, implementing land reform to secure peasants' support, and developing production to sustain war efforts, they effectively mobilized the masses. This successful "people's war" approach demonstrated to nations across Asia, Africa, and Latin America that national independence could be achieved through grassroots mobilization.

3. Accelerating the Collapse of the World Colonial System

Following the great geographical discoveries and the Industrial Revolution in Europe, Western powers gradually established a global colonial system through political control, economic exploitation, and military conquest. Numerous countries and regions across Asia, Africa, and Latin America were reduced to their colonies, semi-colonies, or dependencies. Statistics show that in 1914, of the world's approximately 1.8 billion people, more than 500 million lived under direct Western colonial rule, with an even greater number inhabiting semi-colonies.

The Chinese people's resolute resistance against Japanese fascism dealt a heavy blow to the world colonial system established by traditional imperialist powers. The victory in the World Anti-Fascist War decisively defeated the reactionary forces of German, Italian, and Japanese fascism, thwarted their ambitions to dominate the world through war, and thoroughly discredited all forms of aggression, expansion, and colonialism. After World War II, the world colonial system rapidly collapsed. Fascism has since been condemned as humanity's common enemy, while the desire for, pursuit of, cherishing of, and defense of peace have emerged as shared aspirations of people throughout the world.

In Asia, through the united struggle of the Chinese people alongside other nations, Japanese invaders were decisively defeated, and Japan's colonial empire quickly collapsed, removing a major obstacle to Asian liberation movement. China supported resistance fighters and revolutionaries from Korea, Vietnam, and other countries, enabling them to establish their own resistance forces in China or join existing Chinese resistance groups. Additionally, China trained these individuals to become key leaders in both the resistance struggle and their subsequent fights for national liberation. In 1945, the Korean people overthrew more than 30 years of Japanese colonial rule; Vietnam established the Democratic Republic under Communist Party leadership; and Indonesia launched its August Revolution, declaring independence as the Republic of Indonesia.

The victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War undermined the foundation of world colonialism, accelerated the struggles for national independence and liberation in colonies and dependencies, and created a clear path for flourishing national liberation movements worldwide. Major colonial powers like Britain, France, and the Netherlands were significantly weakened during the war, paving the way for their colonies to pursue national independence and liberation. Since World War II ended, over 100 countries have achieved national independence and liberation, freeing billions of people from the shackles of colonialism.

III.Promoting the Building of a New International Order

During the later stages of the World Anti-Fascist War, China took an active role in founding the United Nations and shaping a new post-war world order, achieving significant results. This post-war international order serves as the cornerstone of today's global peace and stability, with China consistently acting as both its key builder and defender.

1.Crushing Japan's Plans for Global Domination

The "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," meticulously crafted by Japanese militarism, was essentially a blueprint for a colonial empire founded on aggression and expansion. This plan positioned Japan as the "leader" and sought to bring East Asia, Southeast Asia, and parts of the Pacific region under its control through military occupation, economic exploitation, and cultural subjugation. The Chinese people's victorious War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression shattered this arrogant delusion through the harsh reality of blood and sacrifice.

Throughout China's 14-year bloody struggle, it consistently pinned down Japan's main forces, undermining the military foundation of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." When the Soviet-German War erupted in 1941, the Chinese theater was immobilizing the vast majority of Japan's overseas military forces. Even after the Pacific War began, most of Japan's army remained trapped on the Chinese theater. This continuous strategic containment forced Japan into a two-front war predicament. Unable to concentrate their strength, Japanese forces had to repeatedly delay their planned "southern advance" into Southeast Asia, South Asia, and other regions. To maintain offensive operations in China, Japan depleted its military budget, resources, and manpower, severely weakening its overall war potential. The defensive line forged by Chinese military and civilians—at the cost of their flesh and blood—served as an unbreakable chain that firmly halted Japan's aggression and fundamentally undermined the military foundation of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."

China's struggle against Japanese militarism was not merely a fight for the Chinese

nation's survival—it was intimately connected to preserving peace across Asia and the rest of the world. The Chinese people's victory in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression defended their national sovereignty and dignity while making an irreplaceable contribution by shattering Japan's fantasy of dominating the world. This triumph represented an outstanding contribution to peace throughout Asia and the entire world.

2. Carrying out Joint Consultation on the Establishment of the United Nations

As the World Anti-Fascist War drew to a close, the international community made the important decision to establish the United Nations. China participated throughout the entire founding process: from co-signing the "Declaration by United Nations" (which strengthened global anti-fascist forces and created the organizational foundation for the UN), to issuing the "Declaration of the Four Nations on General Security" (which "recognize the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states")^①, to adopting the "Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization" (which defined the UN's purposes, principles, membership qualifications, and institutional structure and functions).

The United Nations Conference on International Organization was held in San Francisco from April 25 to June 26, 1945. On the final day, the "Charter of the United Nations" was adopted. The Chinese delegation attended the conference, and Dong Biwu, a representative of the Communist Party of China, signed the Charter as a member of the delegation. The United Nations officially came into existence on October 24, 1945, when the Charter took effect. Under Article 23 of the Charter, five nations—China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States—were designated as permanent members of the Security Council.

China played a significant role in the creation of the United Nations, contributing to numerous critical decisions. At the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944, China advocated that international dispute resolution should be grounded in justice and international legal principles. China also proposed that the General Assembly should lead research and recommendations for developing and revising international law, and that the Economic and Social Council should advance educational and cultural cooperation.^② All three proposals were adopted, with the first being incorporated into Article I of the UN Charter, becoming a fundamental part of its purposes. At the conference held in San Francisco, China emphasized that the ultimate goal of trusteeship should be to

^① "Declaration on Universal Security by the Four Nations of China, Soviet Union, United States, and United Kingdom," in Wang Jianglang and Hou Zhongjun, eds., *The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the Transformation of China's International Status*, (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2022), 180.

^② Wang Zhen: *The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and China's Major Country Status*, (Beijing: Unity Press, 2015), 151.

guide territories toward self-governance and independence.^① This principle was subsequently included in the UN Charter, embodying the values of national equality and self-determination.

The United Nations, which China helped establish, stands as the most universal, representative, and authoritative international organization. It embodies humanity's renewed vision and has ushered in a new era of global cooperation. The UN Charter, which China helped formulate, has established the cornerstone of modern international order and defined the basic norms governing contemporary international relations.

3.Participating in Building the Post-War World Order

The righteous nature of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War is unquestionable and incontestable. Standing alongside people from countries worldwide, the Chinese people firmly defended these hard-won victories, played a pivotal role in building the post-war world order, and made an indelible contribution to upholding world peace and justice.

Through international legal documents such as the Cairo Declaration and the Potsdam Proclamation, China actively advocated for fair and reasonable territorial arrangements in the post-war world. In December 1943, China, the United States, and the United Kingdom jointly issued the Cairo Declaration. During the drafting process, China firmly maintained its stance of "stopping and punishing Japanese aggression," insisted that "all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese shall be restored to the Republic of China," and resolutely opposed all forms of territorial occupation. This position received recognition from the United States, Britain, and other countries, establishing a crucial foundation for the declaration's final formulation. In July 1945, the United States, Britain, and China issued the Potsdam Proclamation to force Japan's surrender, stating clearly: "The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and such minor islands as we determine." As a key participant in the proclamations, China reaffirmed its firm position on the sovereignty of Taiwan and other territories. The recognition of China's territorial sovereignty in these legally binding international documents directly resulted from China's tremendous sacrifices and persistent efforts during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. China's steadfast position ensured a just and reasonable resolution of post-war territorial issues, establishing historical and legal facts that remain indisputable and unassailable.

Through the Tokyo Trial and the reformation of defeated nations, a comprehensive institutional framework was established to punish war criminals, strip defeated nations of their war capabilities and power, and legally restrict their political and military ambitions. According to the Potsdam Declaration's provision that "stern justice shall be met-

^① Wang Zhen: *The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and China's Major Country Status*, (Beijing: Unity Press, 2015), 159.

ed out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners," the International Military Tribunal for the Far East was established in Tokyo on January 19, 1946. China was among the 11 nations that appointed judges to this tribunal. Chinese judicial representatives, steadfastly upholding justice, participated extensively in prosecuting and trying 28 principal war criminals, significantly contributing to the November 1948 guilty verdicts of 25 Class A war criminals. China actively advocated for the tribunal to confirm that aggressive warfare constitutes a crime under international law, establishing clear definitions for Class A war criminals as those who planned, prepared, initiated, or conducted acts of aggression. This judgment reflected the shared commitment of China and peace-loving people worldwide to punish war criminals and preserve peace. China's active involvement in these proceedings served not merely to commemorate its wartime suffering but also to strengthen the foundation of global peace.

The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence injected powerful momentum into post-war peace and development. In the 1950s, amid the complex international situation, China proposed and promoted together with India and Myanmar these principles: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. These principles emerged from China's profound reflection on the suffering caused by war and its earnest desire for peace, becoming both a cornerstone of Chinese foreign policy and a groundbreaking initiative in international relations. The Five Principles transcended ideological and political differences, providing fundamental guidelines for interstate relations. They gained widespread international recognition and evolved into universal diplomatic principles. By fostering cooperation, reducing global tensions, and creating a framework for post-war stability and growth, these principles demonstrated China's unwavering commitment to global peace and common development. Today, these Five Principles are incorporated in numerous international documents, including the UN Charter, providing essential foundations for dispute resolution and global governance while contributing Chinese insight to the ongoing evolution of the international order.

Chapter 3

Learning from History Staying the Path of Peaceful Development and Common Prosperity

History reminds us that humanity's future is closely linked. Only by treating one another as equals, living in harmony, and supporting each other can nations and peoples safeguard common security, eliminate the roots of war, and prevent the tragedies of the past from happening again.

—Xi Jinping

Eighty years ago, the Chinese people, together with people around the world, forged a historical monument through blood and fire, symbolizing the triumph of justice over evil, light over darkness, and progress over reaction. Today, as global risks and challenges intensify and intertwine, we commemorate the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War to honor history, safeguard achievements, cherish peace, and create a better future. We must maintain the correct historical view, firmly uphold the post-war world order, steadfastly defend international fairness and justice, resolutely pursue peaceful development, and collaboratively build a community with a shared future for humanity. History reminds us that humanity's future is closely linked. Only by treating one another as equals, living in harmony, and supporting each other can nations and peoples safeguard common security, eliminate the roots of war, and prevent the tragedies of the past from happening again.

I.Upholding and Promoting a Correct Historical View of World War II

Uncovering historical truth is the prerequisite for building a better future. A correct historical view of World War II forms the foundation for a sound understanding of this period. Currently, some erroneous views of historical nihilism persist regarding World War II. Only by respecting history and maintaining an objective, fair stance can we truly comprehend its significance, draw profound lessons from it, learn from the past, and create a better future.

1.Opposing Attempts to Glorify Aggression and Distort History

Japanese militarism's inhumane aggression, horrifying massacres, and savage plundering brought catastrophic disasters to the Chinese people and peoples across Asia. How-

ever, since World War II ended, these atrocities have not been adequately addressed or acknowledged. Numerous Japanese politicians and right-wing groups continue to deny established facts, glorify their aggressive past, and evade responsibility for wartime actions. Such historical distortion persists today, with ongoing attempts to absolve Japanese militarism of its crimes. They persistently deny and even glorify their history of aggression, putting forth absurd arguments and distorted narratives, including those justifying the so-called "Greater East Asia War," portraying colonial rule as beneficial, claiming aggression was legitimate or exempt from accountability, and challenging the legitimacy of the Tokyo Trials, in an attempt to distort history and mislead the public.

Politically, certain individuals continue to deny the aggressive nature of Japan's wars against other nations. They distort the invasion of China as "self-defense" and glorify war criminals as "heroes." They push to revise the peace constitution, attempting to circumvent constitutional restrictions on military expansion. They tamper with historical textbooks and deny well-documented atrocities like the Nanjing Massacre and the "comfort women" issue. Some politicians make repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where Class A war criminals are enshrined. These actions have deeply hurt the feelings of people across Asia, including China.

Academically, erroneous historical perspectives such as the "Imperial History View" and the "Liberal History View" frequently appear in Japanese publications. Certain scholars, under the guise of "theoretical research" and "academic study," publish works that glorify aggression and colonial rule. They spread distorted narratives about World War II, creating misleading historical accounts. Through increasingly deceptive and harmful methods, these individuals attempt to subvert historical facts and completely deny the aggressive nature of Japan's war against China.

In recent years, some Japanese individuals have downplayed Japan's role as the initial aggressor while emphasizing its status as a "nuclear bomb victim" to control the World War II historical narrative and shape public opinion. To hide Japan's military atrocities, they have created the concept of a "history war," arguing that discussions about "comfort women" are no longer historical matters but "a form of warfare." This approach shows both a serious disregard for historical truth and a deliberate effort to maintain a distorted view of World War II.

History serves as a mirror for reality. These distorted notions reveal both the irresponsibility and subjective bias of some Japanese people toward their past and, more significantly, their misunderstanding of Japan's future direction and worrying deviation from the righteous path. Any attitude that disregards the history of aggressive war or rhetoric that glorifies such aggression—no matter how often it is repeated or how eloquently it is phrased—undermines human peace and justice. These erroneous words and actions show contempt for historical facts and international justice while challenging human conscience. All who value peace and justice must remain vigilant and firmly oppose such distortions.

2. Presenting a Complete Picture of the World Anti-Fascist War

To uphold a correct historical view of World War II, we must firmly oppose both the distortion that whitewashes aggressive wars and the subjective, one-sided approach that irresponsibly fragments and selectively portrays only parts of the complete war narrative.

The World Anti-Fascist War represents a comprehensive victory that united righteous forces from across the globe in a just cause pursued collectively by people worldwide. This conflict combined the direct combat operations of the anti-fascist alliance with resistance movements from various nations across battlefields that emerged at different times and locations. The Asian, European, Pacific, and other theaters all formed inseparable components of this global struggle. The conflict transformed from localized skirmishes into a worldwide war, gradually evolving into a global conflict as hostilities intensified. These represent undeniable historical facts about the World Anti-Fascist War. We must maintain a materialist historical perspective to properly understand the comprehensive and interconnected nature of this worldwide conflict.

For decades, the battlefield in the East has been marginalized in Western academic narratives of World War II. Many historical works acknowledge only the war's European origins while neglecting its Asian beginnings. The "six-year war theory" narrowly defines World War II as starting with Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939. In reality, Japan, Germany, and Italy formed the Axis powers within the broader context of rising global fascism. The September 18th Incident orchestrated by Japan and its subsequent invasion of northeast China represented an event of global significance—not merely a localized Sino-Japanese conflict. Japanese fascist aggression trampled justice and challenged the foundations of human civilization, attempting to monopolize Asia and dominate the world. This aggression profoundly shaped international relations and world history. The Chinese people's resistance against Japanese fascism, which began in 1931, effectively marked the opening chapter of the World Anti-Fascist War. Starting from 1937, the Chinese people launched the whole-of-nation resistance across their vast territory, establishing the main battlefield in the East of this global conflict. China's 14-year tenacious struggle became an essential component of the World Anti-Fascist War.

3. Understanding the Historical Contributions of the Chinese People and Peoples around the World

To uphold a correct historical view of World War II, we must have a sound understanding of the war's nature, origins, and the key factors that determined its outcome. Various forms of historical nihilism regarding World War II only blur and distort these essential truths.

We must have a correct understanding of the war's nature. The Japanese, German, and Italian fascist forces were the instigators of this catastrophe that inflicted profound

suffering on humanity. People worldwide waged a just war against fascism's pursuit of global domination, territorial expansion, and terroristic dictatorial rule—a struggle that was anti-aggression and anti-fascist in essence. We must recognize the evil of the fascist aggression and the justice of the anti-fascist struggle, rather than reducing World War II to merely a conflict over "living space" or a redivision of spheres of influence.

We must recognize that people are the true creators of history. The story of the World Anti-Fascist War is fundamentally one of world people exercising their historical agency. During this brutal conflict, the world's population paid an unprecedentedly heavy price for victory, with casualties exceeding 100 million. It was the courageous resistance of world people that ultimately determined the war's outcome. We must never diminish their central role or overlook their historical contributions. We should avoid exaggerating the importance of a few prominent historical figures or their intentions and not reduce the World Anti-Fascist War to merely a contest between powerful nations or the result of decisions made by a handful of leaders.

It is essential to properly acknowledge the significant role and contributions of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in the World Anti-Fascist War. For extended periods, the world has remained largely unfamiliar with China's resistance against Japanese aggression. This struggle has not received adequate attention or fair evaluation, with China often mislabeled as merely a "victim of the Axis powers" or "a failed nation dependent on Allied rescue." This flawed historical perspective, which diminishes, belittles, and devalues the Chinese people's enormous contributions and sacrifices, both disregards historical truth and abandons rigorous academic standards. We must remain vigilant against such mischaracterizations. China served as the backbone in resisting Japanese militarism, and the major contributions, pivotal role, and tremendous sacrifices of the Chinese people must not be denied, ignored, or distorted.

II. Safeguarding the Post–War International Order

World War II profoundly reshaped the global landscape and altered the course of human history. Confronting the war's devastating consequences, people worldwide implemented various measures to prevent future conflicts and safeguard peace. Nations collaborated to establish collective security frameworks and strengthen international cooperation. This led to the creation of international organizations and mechanisms centered around the United Nations. The resulting core principles for international relations have played a crucial role in maintaining overall peace during the eight decades since the war's conclusion.

1. Safeguarding the UN-centered International System

The post-war international order centered on the United Nations embodies the victory of World War II, secured through the blood and lives of people from countries worldwide. Over eight decades, the UN has played a crucial role in mediating regional

conflicts, fostering global cooperation, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian assistance, and promoting educational and cultural exchanges. This international system, with the UN at its core, underpins global stability and prosperity, maintains the framework for worldwide peace, and drives significant advances in human civilization.

The world is experiencing accelerating changes unseen in a century, with the international order facing unprecedented challenges. Hegemonic behaviors, including bullying weaker nations, resource plundering, and zero-sum mentalities, are inflicting serious damage. Growing deficits in peace, development, security, and governance have placed human society at a critical juncture with challenges of historic proportions.

Global confrontations and injustices persist not because the UN Charter's purposes and principles are outdated, but because these purposes and principles have not been effectively implemented. As the international landscape becomes increasingly complex and volatile, we must strengthen our commitment to upholding the authority of the United Nations and firmly protect the UN-centered international system, the international order based on international law, and the basic norms governing international relations embodied in the UN Charter's principles and purposes.

International rules must be established collectively by all 193 United Nations member states, not determined by a certain country or bloc. These rules should be observed universally, without exception. All nations should respect the United Nations, cherish and safeguarding this global family, rather than selectively engaging with it based on convenience. This consistent commitment will enable the UN to play a more effective role in advancing the noble cause of human peace and development.

Taiwan's return to China represents a significant component of World War II's victory and the post-war international order. China's sovereignty over Taiwan is an undeniable historical and legal fact, and the authority of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 remains incontestable. Regardless of changes in Taiwan's internal situation or interference from external forces, the historical inevitability of China's reunification cannot be impeded.

2.Promoting Equal and Orderly World Multipolarity

Looking toward the future, we should consider these questions: In what direction should the post-war international order develop? What direction aligns with contemporary trends, serves the world's greatest interests, and contributes to humanity's bright future? China has clearly articulated two major propositions: "equal and orderly world multipolarity" and "universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization," and has been continuously promoting them in practice.

Equal multipolarity embodies equality of rights, opportunities, and rules for all countries. We can no longer permit a certain or a few major powers to monopolize international affairs, nor allow countries to be ranked according to their strength. We can no longer accept that those with greater power dictate terms, nor allow some countries to be seated at the table while others merely appear on the menu. We must ensure that

all nations, regardless of size or strength, have equal opportunities, enjoy their rights, and play meaningful roles in a multipolar world.

Orderly multipolarity requires jointly upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and adhering to universally recognized basic norms governing international relations. Multipolarity is not about forming camps or creating fragmentation and disorder. Rather, all countries must operate within the UN-centered international system and cooperate in global governance processes.

Equal and orderly world multipolarity reveals the rich meaning and contemporary characteristics of global power distribution. It reflects the international community's shared pursuit of fairness and justice, meets the practical needs for maintaining world peace and development, and will guide the international order and system toward a more just and reasonable future.

3.Promoting Universally Beneficial and Inclusive Economic Globalization

World War II fundamentally transformed the global economic order. A healthy, well-functioning economic system is essential for preventing future conflicts and fostering lasting peace. Since the late 20th century, economic globalization has driven remarkable trade growth, streamlined investment processes, increased human mobility, and accelerated technological innovation, all of which have significantly contributed to global economic development. Despite encountering numerous "countercurrents" and "reverse waves," economic globalization remains the prevailing trend in world economic development. To guide this process toward sustainable growth that benefits people across all nations, China advocates for and actively promotes universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization.

Universally beneficial economic globalization seeks to expand the benefits of economic development and distribute them equitably. This approach enables diverse countries, social classes, and population groups to actively participate in and benefit from economic and social progress. By effectively addressing development imbalances between and within nations, it promotes common development and prosperity.

Inclusive economic globalization empowers each country to pursue a development path aligned with its unique national conditions, rather than imposing a standardized development model. It stands against self-serving unilateralism and protectionism while ensuring global industrial and supply chains remain stable and efficient. This approach preserves both the vitality and momentum essential for sustainable global economic growth.

Facing changes unseen in a century, China actively champions and steadily advances "equal and orderly world multipolarity" and "universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization." These initiatives represent China's vision for the world at a historic crossroads and provide practical solutions for building a more just and reasonable international political and economic order.

III. Defending International Fairness and Justice

As light advances, darkness retreats. Commemorating the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War and condemning the aggressors' brutality is not about perpetuating hatred. Rather, it illuminates the future, awakens in people a longing for and commitment to peace, and calls on all nations to firmly defend international fairness and justice, ensuring people worldwide can forever enjoy peace and tranquility.

1. Remaining Vigilant against the Resurgence of Fascism

Peace and development have become the themes of our time, yet the sword of Damocles of war still hangs over humanity. Today, some countries attempt to rewrite World War II outcomes to seek hegemony and self-interest. Anti-human Nazi ideology and racial superiority concepts risk making a comeback. We still witness acts glorifying Nazis and their accomplices, alongside various forms of racism, discrimination, and xenophobia.

A certain country prioritizes its own interests above all else, engaging in power politics and bullying while abusing its hegemony across political, military, economic, financial, technological, and cultural domains. It attempts to replace multilateralism with unilateralism and substitute the UN Charter's purposes and principles with a so-called "rules-based international order." Through hegemonic practices and power politics, it hinders the evolution of international order toward greater justice and fairness. Growing evidence indicates that the root causes of conflict remain unresolved, making lasting peace an ongoing challenge.

The painful lessons of World War II teach us that the law of the jungle and survival of the fittest cannot be ways for humanity to coexist. Militarism and power monopolies do not create peace. Winner-takes-all approaches and zero-sum games lead nowhere for human development. Peace instead of war, cooperation rather than confrontation, and win-win outcomes instead of zero-sum thinking—these represent the enduring themes of peace, progress, and development for human society. All peace-loving and justice-upholding people worldwide must stand firmly united, remain vigilant against the resurgence of fascism and militarism in any form, and resolutely oppose dragging humanity into the tragedy of war once again.

2. Practicing True Multilateralism

World War II history demonstrates that global issues, regional conflicts, and international tensions cannot be resolved through military force, power politics, or hegemonic approaches. Addressing complex international disputes effectively requires true multilateralism. In April 2021, President Xi Jinping introduced the concept of "true multilateralism." This principle holds that international affairs should be managed through joint

consultation, with all nations collectively determining the world's future. It opposes the imposition of rules created by one or a few countries and prevents a certain country's unilateral actions from dictating global direction.

In international politics, unilateralism, regression, and power politics disguise themselves with moral justifications to appear "righteous." Unilateralists create "small circles" to mask their bullying as "multilateral actions." These deceptions take various forms: "small-circle multilateralism" merely creates political factions, "country-first multilateralism" reflects unilateral thinking, and "selective multilateralism" applies double standards. Such pseudo-multilateralism exploits multilateral rhetoric while practicing unilateralism—ignoring legitimate concerns of others while advancing small-group interests and preserving hegemonic positions. The world requires fairness, not hegemony. We must champion true multilateralism and reject all forms of unilateralism and pseudo-multilateralism.

True multilateralism represents humanity's inevitable choice to deal with global challenges, reflecting the shared aspiration of people worldwide for peace and development. China both advocates for and implements true multilateralism, clarifying its principles, upholding international justice, and driving improvements in the international order and global governance system.

3.Promoting a More Just and Equitable Global Governance System

After World War II, a UN-centered global governance system was established, encompassing most countries worldwide across various domains and marking a major advancement in global governance. However, as global challenges continue to emerge, reforming the global governance system has become an increasingly urgent issue for today's world. President Xi Jinping noted: "The international community widely recognizes that the reform of the global governance system has reached at a historical turning point."

Global governance fundamentally involves the international community working together to address global risks and challenges. However, some countries today cling to ideological biases, hegemonic mindsets, and Cold War mentality. These nations measure global governance reform by its alignment with Western concepts, models, and hegemony, which deepens the global governance deficit. China, acknowledging the interdependence among nations, focuses on humanity's future and people's welfare while guiding global governance reform through principles of fairness and justice. On September 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Governance Initiative at the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" Meeting, calling on all countries to work together for a more just and equitable global governance system. This offers more Chinese insight and Chinese input for improving global governance. The essence of the initiative is fully aligned with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. It aims to firmly support the UN's central role in international affairs and to encourage all countries to use the UN and other multilateral mechanisms to participate in reforming and improving the

global governance system. This will ensure that the system keeps pace with the times and responds more effectively to the challenges of the era.

Guiding global governance system reform through fairness and justice requires a vision based on extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. Global affairs should be managed through inclusive consultation among all nations, while promoting democratized governance rules. We must strengthen global economic governance by actively adapting to and guiding economic globalization, advocating for equality, openness, cooperation, and shared benefits. Security governance likewise needs enhancement through a common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable approach, with stronger international collaboration and advancement of common security principles. Cyberspace governance requires transformation toward a multilateral, democratic, and transparent international internet system. Finally, we must improve environmental governance by establishing fair, reasonable, and mutually beneficial frameworks that nurture a community of harmony between humanity and nature.

IV.Promoting the Building of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity

Eighty years ago, the Chinese people's victory on the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War made a historic contribution to global peace. Today, to address new global challenges and answer the crucial question of "where humanity is heading," China has proposed a new solution: building a community with a shared future for humanity.

Building a community with a shared future requires strategic guidance from the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative. Peace, material abundance, and spiritual fulfillment represent humanity's fundamental aspirations. Development forms the material foundation for security and civilization; security provides the essential prerequisite for development and civilization; and civilization offers spiritual support for development and security. Through these three complementary initiatives, China charts a path forward for human society across the dimensions of development, security, and civilization.

1.Building a World of Universal Security

Security issues directly impact the well-being of people worldwide and the future of humanity. Creating a world of universal security represents a crucial goal in building a community with a shared future for humanity. Today's international landscape is far from peaceful. Regional security hotspots emerge continuously, localized conflicts and instability occur frequently, and various traditional and non-traditional security threats overlap and intensify. People in several countries and regions continue to live in war-torn environments, struggling for survival and enduring tremendous suffering—clearly illustrating the growing global security deficit.

On April 21, 2022, at the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual Conference opening ceremony, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Security Initiative, focusing on humanity's security and wellbeing. He emphasized that humanity forms an indivisible security community and advocated for a new security approach based on dialogue rather than confrontation, partnership instead of alliance, and win-win cooperation over zero-sum competition. The Global Security Initiative embraces a common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security vision. It respects all countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity, upholds UN Charter principles and purposes, addresses the legitimate security concerns of all nations, resolves international disputes peacefully through dialogue, and coordinates security efforts across both traditional and non-traditional domains. This initiative offers fresh approaches to international security challenges, enhances global security governance, and provides solutions to humanity's security dilemmas.

Implementing the Global Security Initiative and building a world of universal security requires abandoning the pursuit of absolute security in favor of shared security. There is no perfect security utopia. A nation's security cannot be built on another's instability, and threats to others often become challenges to oneself. When neighbors face difficulties, rather than simply fortifying one's own defenses, one should extend help. In confronting today's complex international security threats, unilateral approaches fail; cooperative and common security frameworks provide the viable solution. Nations must work together to build a global security community and create a world where universal security replaces fear.

2. Building a Global Development Community

Development is humanity's eternal theme and the master key to solving many challenges facing mankind. President Xi Jinping states: "Development holds the key to people's well-being." He proposed the Global Development Initiative to build consensus on global development, generate new growth momentum, and promote common progress among all countries worldwide.

The global development deficit continues to widen. Economic globalization faces mounting resistance as unilateralism and protectionism gain ground. Some nations build "small yards with high fences" and actively push for decoupling and disrupting supply chains, heightening international instability and uncertainty. The world economy struggles with sluggish recovery and insufficient development momentum. According to the UN's "2024 Sustainable Development Report," global progress is severely lacking, with projections indicating that only 17% of the sustainable development goals under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be achieved. Development imbalances have intensified, with growing wealth disparities and an expanding North-South divide. Most developing countries remain marginalized in the global economy, falling increasingly behind developed nations that hold advantages in capital and technology.

The primary goal of the Global Development Initiative is to accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At its core, it maintains a people-centered approach while promoting a global development partnership built on solidarity, equality, balance, and inclusiveness. The initiative emphasizes action-oriented measures and addresses critical questions about development: who it serves, who drives it, what forms it should take, and how to achieve it. By fostering stronger, greener, and healthier global development, it builds a global development community and charts a clear path forward for humanity's progress.

3. Creating a Garden Where World Cultures Flourish Together

Cultural diversity forms the true essence of our world. With more than 200 countries and regions and over 2,500 ethnic groups globally, humanity's tapestry is rich and varied. Distinct histories, national conditions, ethnicities, and customs have nurtured unique civilizations across the planet. When these civilizations meet, they don't merely coexist—they enrich one another, fueling humanity's development and prosperity. Together, they create a vibrant garden of human achievement and compose a brilliant narrative of harmony, exchange, and mutual learning.

Addressing common challenges and building a better future demands not only economic and technological capabilities but also cultural and civilizational resources. In March 2023, President Xi Jinping introduced the Global Civilization Initiative, articulating China's vision for promoting inclusive coexistence and mutual learning among diverse civilizations. This initiative serves as a heartfelt call for enhanced dialogue between civilizations and the advancement of human progress through inclusiveness and mutual exchange, providing spiritual impetus for efforts to build a community with a shared future for humanity.

The Global Civilization Initiative champions respect for the world's diverse civilizations while fostering equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness. It promotes universal values shared by all humanity: peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom. The initiative balances cultural preservation with innovation, drawing contemporary relevance from each nation's historical traditions. It strengthens international cultural exchanges and cooperation while developing a global network for civilizational dialogue. This approach aligns with current global trends and has gained widespread recognition internationally. As Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly, observed that the Global Civilization Initiative of China helps countries bridge divides, rebuild trust, and build a truly inclusive and peaceful world through the diversity of civilizations.^①

Implementing the Global Civilization Initiative requires collective effort from countries worldwide. Only when nations collaborate to actively foster cultural exchanges and mutual learning, continuously advancing human civilization, can we create a harmoni-

^① "Building a Beautiful Garden of World Civilizations for All to Share," *People's Daily Overseas Edition*, April 2, 2025

ous garden of world civilizations where diverse cultures flourish together.

The three global initiatives address the core challenges of today's world: development, security, and civilization, offering clear concepts, practical approaches, and concrete action plans. Since their introduction, these initiatives have garnered positive responses and support from over 100 countries, regions, and international organizations. What started as China's proposals have increasingly evolved into international consensus, transforming cooperative concepts into coordinated global action.

Reflecting on history since the World Anti-Fascist War, we have gained a profound insight: humanity must unite with shared purpose and move toward collective action to implement the three global initiatives. We must pass the torch of security to future generations, sustain growth momentum, let civilization's light shine brilliantly, and steadfastly build a community with a shared future for humanity. Only through these efforts can we create a world of lasting peace.

Conclusion

Though the dust of history has settled, the river of memory continues to flow, and the lessons from war remain relevant through the ages.

As the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War, the victory on the Chinese theater resulted from the Chinese people's unity and tenacious fighting spirit, demonstrating the Chinese nation's powerful commitment to upholding humanity's cause of justice.

We commemorate history by honoring the significant sacrifices and historic contributions made on the Chinese theater in defending peace and resisting fascism. We celebrate the national spirit of the Chinese people who fearlessly confronted brutal fascist invaders and stood firm against aggression. We honor the values that have been ingrained in the Chinese nation for thousands of years: a love of peace and the principle of using military force only to end violence.

We learn from history by recognizing the unshakable global significance of the main battlefield in the East, understanding how the Communist Party of China withstood severe tests to become the strong leadership core for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and valuing the experience of solidarity with all nations suffering from invasion and oppression in resisting hegemony, tyranny, and bullying while defending independence and sovereignty.

History serves as our mirror, revealing the crucial lesson that we must stay the path of peaceful development and common prosperity. As President Xi Jinping eloquently stated: "The most valuable lesson from the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War is that we must unswervingly pursue peaceful development." China is the only major country to enshrine peaceful development within both its constitution and ruling Party charter, elevating it to a fundamental national commitment. We must cherish this hard-won victory, uphold a correct historical view of World War II, safeguard the post-war international order, and defend international fairness and justice. We can never allow the resurgence of fascism or the repetition of historical tragedies. This stance serves as both the best commemoration of the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War and a shared responsibility that all nations must embrace.

Looking toward the future, we recognize more deeply that the tide of world history is powerful and irresistible. Those who follow it will prosper, while those who resist it will falter. In this era of unprecedented changes accelerating around us, the only sensible choice is to embrace these trends, commit to building a community with a shared future for humanity, and collaborate on addressing global challenges. The Chinese people will stand firmly on the right side of history and on the side of human progress, stay committed to the path of peaceful development, and work together with all peoples to build a community with a shared future for humanity. China will continue contributing to world peace and security, common development, and cultural exchanges between civi-

lizations. China stands ready to partner with all countries as guardians of historical memory, companions in development and revitalization, and defenders of international fairness and justice—together creating a more prosperous and beautiful future for humanity.

The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is unstoppable! The noble cause of peace and development for humanity is bound to triumph!

Notes on Compilation and Acknowledgments

The think tank research group for the report "Remembering History and Defending Justice: Great Contributions of the Main Battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War" is co-chaired by: Qu Qingshan, President of the Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee and Chairman of the institute's National High-Level Think Tank Council, and Fu Hua, President of Xinhua News Agency and Chairman of the academic committee of Xinhua Institute. Lyu Yansong, Editor-in-Chief of Xinhua News Agency, serves as Deputy Leader, while Wang Junwei, Chairman of the Academic and Editorial Committee of the Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee (Vice Minister Rank), and Ren Weidong, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Xinhua News Agency, serve as Executive Deputy Leaders. The research group includes members from both institutions. From the Institute of Party History and Literature: Li Zhen, Liu Minru, Sun Yanling, Mao Wenting, Fang Wenhao, Zhang Xiaofei, Yu Shuaibiao, Dong Xiaotong, Wang Guangxin, Sang Tian, and Wang Yali. From Xinhua News Agency: Liu Gang, Cui Feng, Yang Liu, Du Yuanjiang, Wu Xiaoyang, Hao Weiwei, Bai Xu, Xu Xiaoqing, Wu Guangyu, Wang Nannan, and Liu Mingxia. The English translation team included Liu Liang, Jiang Rui, Luo Zhongwu (China Foreign Affairs University), Zhong Xiaohui, and Robert Shea Duerler (USA), with proofreading by Hu Lyujie, Tian Ying, Sun Wenji, Fang Ning, Ma Yujie, Qiang Lijing, Jiang Wenqian, and Rong Jiaojiao.

The research project, launched in February 2025, took over six months to complete, including interviews, research, writing, revisions, and proofreading.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the experts and scholars who provided valuable guidance throughout the writing and publication process: Xu Lan, Honorary Senior Professor at Capital Normal University; Peng Yulong, Former Researcher at the Research Center for PLA Party and Military History, the Armed Forces Political Work Research Institute of the PLA Academy of Military Sciences; Zhang Yuebin, Researcher at the Institute of World History of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and Chair of the Department of Japanese and Eastern Asian History; Meng Zhongjie, Vice Chair of the University Council of the East China Normal University, Professor of the Department of History, and Vice Chairman of the Chinese Association for the History of the World War II; Fan Yongpeng, Vice Director of the China Institute of Fudan University and Professor of Political Studies; Jiang Jie, Professor at the School of Humanities of Shanghai Normal University and Deputy Secretary-General of the Research Association for the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and World Anti-Fascist War (Shanghai); and Zhou Yong, Vice President of the Society for the Study of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.