

The International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: a vector of global influence of the CCP

CONTEXT

«The Party is the key to almost everything, and everything can be adjusted except the Party. Mao said that to make a revolution there must be a revolutionary party; Deng Xiaoping maintained that to preserve stability during the process of change, it must necessarily be led by the Party. There are other parties in China, but only the Communist Party is the Party» (...) From its Central Committee, the threads of the country's life, even the most unlikely ones, are pulled.»¹.

This definition by Mr. Xulio Ríos, one of Spain's most reputed sinologists, makes abundantly clear the enormous weight of the Communist Party (CCP), the central pillar of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Of the three main power structures of the PRC — the State, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and the CCP — it is the latter that leads the other two. At the apex stands the Politburo Standing Committee (PSC), traditionally composed of an odd number of members. At its head is the General Secretary and President of the PRC, Xi Jinping².

Below that is the Politburo, in which senior Party and State leaders participate. Next comes the Central Committee, composed of 205 full members and 171 alternate members, which meets annually and renews its composition every five years at the National Congress of the Party. Its delegates are selected from the various CCP cells distributed throughout the country³. The CCP had (figures from late 2024) 100.271 million members (approximately 10.2% of the adult population of the PRC at that time)⁴.

¹Ríos, Xulio: «China en 88 preguntas», Ed. Catarata, Madrid (2010). Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

²*Op.cit.*

³ FUNDACIÓN CONSEJO ESPAÑA-CHINA: «El centenario: 100 años del Partido Comunista Chino», available at: https://spain-china-foundation.org/100-anos-pcc/#elementor-toc_heading-anchor-2 . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁴BIELSA, Carlos: «El Partido Comunista de China supera los 100 millones de miembros en su 104º aniversario», 21 July 2025, available at: <https://mundoglobal.org/el-partido-comunista-de-china-supera-los-100-millones-de-miembros-en-su-104o-aniversario/> .Last accessed: 23.06.2026.



Fig1.- Power structure of the PRC. Source: own elaboration (AI).

Following the official changes arising from the 20th Congress (2022), the Central Committee oversees, among others, sections such as the General Office, the Organization Department, the Propaganda Department, the United Front Work Department (UFWD), the Policy Research Office, and the International Department⁵.

⁵ LAWRENCE, Susan A.: «China Primer: China's Political System», 27 April 2026, available at: <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12505> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

The latter, whose official name is the «International Department of the Central Committee of the CCP» (hereinafter IDCPC), has its core functions organized around three areas:

The implementation of the principles and guidelines established by the Central Committee regarding the Party's external activities.

The analytical monitoring of developments in the international environment and of major global issues. This task is carried out through research activities aimed at producing reports and formulating policy proposals for the Central Committee.

According to the IDCPC itself⁶, the conduct of exchanges and communication with foreign political parties and organizations by mandate of the Central Committee. Also the coordination of the management of international exchanges of the departments directly subordinate to it and of Party committees at the provincial level, autonomous regions, and municipalities under direct central government jurisdiction⁷.

To understand its origins, it is necessary to go back to the early 1950s.

The IDCPC under Mao Zedong's Leadership (Formation).

In January 1951, following Mao's rise to power (1949) and within the bipolar framework of the Cold War, the IDCPC was established. It was an expression of the PRC leadership's determination to consolidate its international position by strengthening ties with the socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union⁸.

Unlike the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the IDCPC was designed as a strictly party organ oriented toward managing relations both with other communist parties and with politically like-minded organizations⁹.

⁶ Due to its particular nature, the DICC suffers from limited independent coverage of its activities; therefore, some references are drawn exclusively from official statements issued by the aforementioned body. Only the data contained therein (events, locations, individuals, etc.) are used, avoiding any form of narrative (*Facta non verba*)

⁷ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: «Department Profile», 8 August 2023, available at: <https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/zlbj/jgsz/>. Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁸*Op.cit.*

⁹*Op.cit.*

Under the leadership of Wang Jiaxiang, a prominent figure in the revolutionary command and closely tied to Mao, the IDCPC was structured to reinforce the ideological dimension of Chinese foreign policy in an international context marked by bipolarity. Combining ideological loyalty with strategic skill, Wang made a decisive contribution to defining the principles that would govern the CCP's party-to-party diplomacy¹⁰.

Under his leadership, the IDCPC wove a transnational network of contacts aimed at reinforcing the PRC's international position, operating through discreet and flexible channels. This allowed it to act, unlike conventional state diplomacy, as a complementary—and sometimes alternative—instrument to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following the Sino-Soviet split, the configuration designed by Wang Jiaxiang facilitated the transformation of the IDCPC into a central element in the global projection of Maoism¹¹.

Following the deterioration caused by the «Cultural Revolution», the IDCPC underwent a significant internal restructuring. Civil cadres and veterans of the party apparatus gradually reappeared, at the expense of military representation¹².

The architect of this new phase was Geng Biao, who returned to Beijing after his posting as ambassador to Albania and was appointed Head of the IDCPC in 1971. His arrival marked a turning point, consolidating a more stable, more visible leadership that was better connected to the CCP's top echelons. From that point on, the IDCPC gained prestige, increased its presence at public events, and even began to precede the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in certain protocol contexts¹³.

The IDCPC under Deng Xiaoping's Leadership (Consolidation).

Within the framework of the reforms driven by Deng Xiaoping, the IDCPC underwent a significant transformation. It gradually began to move away from the Maoist era, in which

¹⁰ XIA, Yafeng: «International Liaison Department of the CCP», American Journal of Chinese Studies Vol. 16, No. 2 (OCTOBER 2009), pp. 137-155 Publicado por American Association for Chinese Studies, available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44288907> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

¹¹ *Op.cit.*

¹² C.I.A., DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE: «The International Liaison Department of the Chinese Communist Party», available at: <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001000010043-9.pdf> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

¹³ *Op.cit.*

its activity was centered primarily on ideological and organizational support for communist parties and like-minded movements¹⁴.

Coinciding with the launch of the opening-up and reform policies, the IDCPC's functions were gradually redefined, orienting toward national economic development. This new perspective reflected the CCP's need to adapt its international political instruments in a world increasingly shaped by economic and diplomatic cooperation rather than ideological confrontation¹⁵.

The 12th National Congress of the CCP (1982) marked for the IDCPC the official consolidation of a set of guiding principles: independence, complete equality, mutual respect, and non-interference in internal affairs as the basis for relations between the CCP and other political formations. For the IDCPC, these principles represented in practice the culmination of an evolution that had begun after the Sino-Soviet split and the progressive abandonment of the rigid ideological frameworks characteristic of earlier decades. They equally represented a shift toward functional cooperation, political pragmatism, and international stability¹⁶, which translated, in the 1980s, into the establishment of ties with political formations of varied ideological orientations¹⁷.

Within the broader process of Chinese policy aimed at fostering an environment favorable to its global integration and economic agenda, the IDCPC began to operate as a channel performing functions complementary to PRC diplomacy, providing less rigid avenues than strictly official ones. This evolution developed alongside the normalization of relations between the PRC and the USSR, driven primarily by security and strategic factors¹⁸.

¹⁴ HUANG, Kristin: «Explainer | Communist Party's little-known department gives China 'extra hand' in foreign relations», 4 June 2021, available at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3135839/communist-partys-little-known-department-gives-china-extra> . Last accessed: 20.06.2026.

¹⁵ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: «The Principles of the Party-to-party Relations of the CPC », 2 November 2014, available at: <https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/tjzl/cpcqjgx/principles/> . Last accessed: 03.06.2026.

¹⁶ CHUNG, Jae Ho: « China's Reforms at Twenty-five: Challenges for the New Leadership», 1 March 2003, available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/chinas-reforms-at-twenty-five-challenges-for-the-new-leadership/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

¹⁷ HUANG, Kristin

¹⁸ SHAMBAUGH, David L.: «China's "Quiet Diplomacy": The International Department of the Chinese Communist Party», 1 March 2007, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265952679_China's_Quiet_Diplomacy_The_International_Department_of_t

The IDCPC under Xi Jinping's Leadership (Expansion).

In 2012, Xi Jinping assumed the position of General Secretary of the CCP. In 2017, following the 19th Party Congress, Xi promoted a «new model of party-to-party relations», with the aim of reinforcing the CCP's global presence through non-state political channels¹⁹.

The IDCPC's expansion continued to develop across political formations of varying orientations, resulting in the establishment of ties, of varying depth, with different international interlocutors — more than six hundred according to Chinese sources. For these, the IDCPC organizes seminars, study visits, and training programs²⁰.

It also contributes to the promotion of the «Belt and Road Initiative» in forums such as the Belt and Road Initiative High-End Think Tank Forum (2019). At that meeting, organized by the IDCPC, representatives from universities, think tanks, and foreign governments attended, among others²¹.

Similarly, the IDCPC participates in the promotion of the «Global Civilization Initiative» (2023). On that occasion, as on similar ones, through dialogue with think tanks and political formations of varying degrees of affinity, the IDCPC reinforces narratives aligned with Beijing's interests²².

As an illustration, the «Fourth Dialogue between Chinese and Arab Political Parties», held in Yinchuan (2023), may be cited. The IDCPC collaborated, together with various Chinese institutions, in the organization of that event, at which a declaration on the implementation of the «Global Civilization Initiative» was adopted²³.

[he Chinese Communist Party](#) . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

¹⁹ ALLEN-EBRAHIMIAN, Bethany: « The rise of China's shadow diplomacy», 3 January 2024, available at <https://www.axios.com/2024/01/30/china-foreign-policy-liu-jianchao> . Last accessed :23.06.2026.

²⁰ CHINA GLOBAL SOUTH PROJECT: «Top-Level Leadership Change In CPC's International Outreach Body», 1 October 2025, available at <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/2025/10/01/cpc-international-department-leadership-change/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

²¹ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC:«The IDCPC Holds the BRI High-End Think Tank Forum and the Fifth Meeting of the Council of the BRI TTCA». 22 December 2019, available at : https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/bzhd/202001/t20200113_160647.html . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

²² LAWRENCE, Susan A.

²³ CHINA.ORG:«China-Arab States Political Parties Dialogue held in NW China», 14 July 2023, available at http://www.china.org.cn/china/2023-07/14/content_92248951.htm . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

These exchanges, while serving as transfers of political knowledge, are also an element of projection of the PRC's governance model, emphasizing China's developmental experience as a reference model, particularly for developing countries²⁴. As these exchanges are maintained systematically, owing to their characteristic adaptability, the IDCPC's operational advantage grows²⁵.

Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the CCP, and by extension the IDCPC, reinforced its control over decision-making spheres, placing the Party in a position of primacy over the state apparatus in the implementation and formulation of international relations. In this way, the IDCPC assumes the role of a parallel channel for external engagement, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reconfigures its role toward more operational functions²⁶.

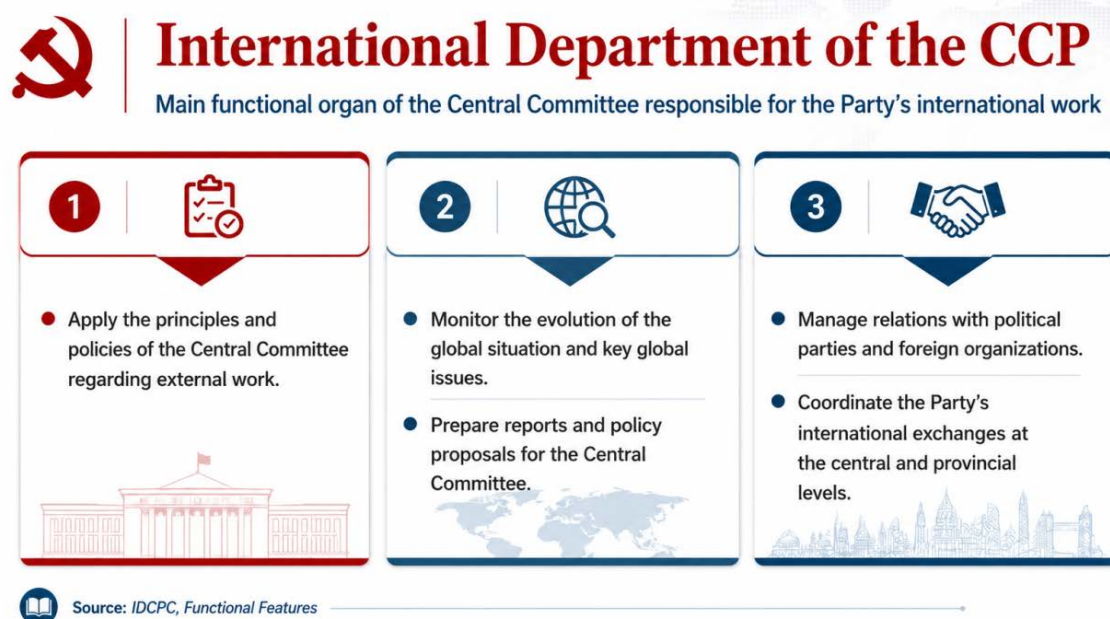


Fig. 2.- Functions of the IDCPC. Source: own elaboration (AI).

²⁴ CHAUDHURY, Shantanu-Roy: « The Chinese Communist Party's Strategic Engagement in South Asia», available at: <https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/chinese-communist-partys-strategic-engagement-south-asia> : Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

²⁵Op. Cit.

²⁶ CHINA GLOBAL SOUTH PROJECT.

Organizational Chart of the IDCPC.

The IDCPC is structurally organized combining high-level political leadership with an internal architecture specialized in regional areas, analysis, protocol, communications, and inter-institutional coordination. These cover virtually every region of the world, as detailed below²⁷:

General Office: Responsible for coordinating the department's daily work, including documentation, internal communications, security, logistics, finances, and asset management.

Research Office: Conducts studies on the international situation, the evolution of foreign political parties, and global strategic issues, providing analytical support for decision-making.

Regional Offices

First Office: Manages relations with political parties and organizations in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Second Office: Handles ties with parties and organizations in Northeast Asia and Indochina.

Third Office: Responsible for relations with West Asia and North Africa.

Fourth Office: Manages relations with parties and organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Fifth Office: Covers Latin America and the Caribbean.

Sixth Office: Responsible for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Seventh Office: Manages relations with North America, Oceania, the Nordic countries, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Malta.

Eighth Office: Covers Western Europe.

²⁷ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: «Office Lineup», 8 August 2023, available at <https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/zlbj/wbjj/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

Foreign Affairs Coordination Office: Coordinates the international activities of the various organs of the Communist Party of China and provincial committees related to foreign affairs.

Public Information and Communications Office: Manages relations with the media, the international dissemination of information, and external communications projects.

Protocol Office: Organizes and coordinates official visits, receptions, and protocol activities with foreign delegations.

Personnel Office: Manages human resources, including recruitment, training, evaluation, and professional development of staff.

Party Affairs Office: Handles internal discipline, the organizational development of the Party, and the coordination of trade union, youth, and women's organizations within the department.

Information Centre: Collects, processes, and manages information on foreign political parties and international affairs to support the department's work²⁸.

²⁸ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC.



INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA

The organ responsible for the Communist Party of China's international relations. Its mission is to develop ties with political parties and foreign organizations, coordinate party diplomacy, conduct political research on international issues, and promote the Party's external communication.



Fig. 3.- Structure of the IDCPC. Source: own elaboration (AI).

Heading the leadership, which combines diplomatic, political, and technical profiles, is Liu Haixing, who holds the position of Head of the IDCPC (with ministerial rank). A career diplomat specializing in European affairs and a French speaker, he joined the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs in 1985, served as assistant vice-minister, and subsequently held senior positions within the party's national security structure. He is also a member of the CCP Central Committee²⁹.

Alongside him are several Deputy Heads (with vice-ministerial rank): Chen Zhou, born in August 1966, with a background in Economics; Sun Haiyan, born in April 1972, with a doctorate in Law; Lu Kang, born in 1968, with a background in Public Administration; Ma Hui, born in 1968, with a background in Science; and Jin Xin, born in 1971, with a doctorate in Law³⁰.

²⁹*Op. Cit.*

³⁰*Op. Cit.*



Fig. 4.- Structure of the IDCPC. Source: own elaboration (AI).

Activity in Asia/Oceania.

With the aim of strengthening direct ties with ruling parties, parliamentary leaders, and emerging figures, the PRC, through the IDCPC, progressively approached the political

elites of the Indo-Pacific through political exchanges, training programs, and permanent mechanisms for political dialogue³¹.

Regarding them as key political actors and strategic spaces in the region, the PRC maintains stable relations with countries such as Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Kiribati, and the Solomon Islands³².

A flagship element of this policy is the «China–Pacific Island Countries Political Leadership Dialogue». Organized periodically by the IDCPC since 2021, the forum serves to strengthen personal ties, and thereby the capacity for influence, with political elites in the Pacific region³³.

In South Asia, the IDCPC's strategy involves maintaining simultaneous relations with both ruling and opposition parties in countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives. This approach follows a logic of strategic risk management in the face of uncertainty stemming from electoral volatility³⁴.

In this context, the IDCPC's initiatives, aimed at consolidating long-term ties, function as a complementary instrument to security agreements and economic support³⁵.

Activity in Africa.

On the African continent, the IDCPC maintains relations with both ruling and opposition parties. A flagship element of this policy is the «Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School», inaugurated in Tanzania in 2022. The centre, modelled on the CCP's cadre schools, is a permanent instrument for disseminating experience relating to economic

³¹ WALLIS, Joanne y TUBILEWICZ Czeslaw: «The Pacific Islands and Chinese power as presence, influence, and interference», 4 November 2024, available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-journal-of-international-security/article/pacific-islands-and-chinese-power-as-presence-influence-and-interference/CA4520557916FC25A36C0126FBF5F29F>. Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

³² SORA, Mihai, COLLINS, Jessica y KEEN, Meg: «The Great Game in the Pacific Island», August 2024, available at <https://interactives.lowyinstitute.org/features/great-game-in-the-pacific-islands/>. Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

³³ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: «Pacific Island Countries-China Political Leadership Dialogue», 28 May 2021, available at https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/bzhd/202105/t20210531_160418.html. Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

³⁴ CHAUDHURY, Shantanu-Roy.

³⁵ WADE, Geoff: «Twin track diplomacy': The Chinese Communist Party's International Department steps up activities in the Pacific region», 31 May 2024, available at https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_departments/Parliamentary_Library/Research/FlagPost/2024/May/TwinTrackDiplomacy. Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

development, governance, and party organization. The school trains cadres from the ruling parties of Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania, and South Africa³⁶.

In 2026, on the occasion of the «Year of China-Africa People's Exchanges», the IDCPC intensified contacts with African political groups. An example of this is the meeting held on 30 March between the Head of the IDCPC, Liu Haixing, and Ayib Daffé, Secretary-General of the Senegalese political party PASTEF (Patriotes Africains du Sénégal pour le Travail, l'Unité et la Fraternité)³⁷.

These actions in Africa also have a flip side, which may be extrapolated to other regions. Some sources indicate that the political training provided by the CCP to party cadres could lead to authoritarian governance practices as well as greater influence for Beijing³⁸.

Others, along the same lines, suggest that these practices may result in growing CCP influence over present or future ruling elites on the continent, which could lead to a reduction in political pluralism³⁹.

Activity in the Americas.

In February 2026, Liu Haixing held a meeting in Beijing with Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Cuba and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both sides, regarded as strategic partners, highlighted party-to-party ties as a central element of bilateral relations. They also agreed to strengthen exchanges in areas such as governance models and the training of political cadres⁴⁰.

³⁶ SHINN, David H.: «The Communist Party of China Reaches Out to Africa», 1 April 2026, available at: <https://www.e-ir.info/2026/04/01/the-communist-party-of-china-reaches-out-to-africa/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

³⁷ *Op.cit.*

³⁸ NANTULYA, Paul: «China Escalates Its Political Party Training in Africa», AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, 29 July 2024, available at: <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/china-escalates-its-political-party-training-in-africa/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

³⁹ VV.AA. « A Party with China: Political Party Affiliation and Perceptions of China in African Countries», CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 24 January 2025, available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-modern-african-studies/article/abs/party-with-china-political-party-affiliation-and-perceptions-of-china-in-african-countries/90C728A5570BFE74D514BC9A2AC661E7> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁴⁰ REUTERS; «China backs Cuba against 'external interference' as foreign minister visits Beijing», 5 February 2026, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-backs-cuba-against-external-interference-foreign-minister-visits-beijing-2026-02-05/> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

Liu himself held a meeting on 15 May 2026 with Marcos Galvão, Brazil's Ambassador to the PRC. Following the meeting, held in Beijing, both emphasized that contacts between political parties constitute an essential component of Sino-Brazilian relations. They also underlined the strategic importance of deepening the exchange of experiences and agreed on the need to broaden contacts between the various political and social actors of both countries, as well as to strengthen cooperation linked to economic development⁴¹.

The arrest of Nicolás Maduro in January 2026 introduced an element of uncertainty into relations between the CCP and Venezuela's United Socialist Party (PSUV). To date (as of late June 2026, prior to the earthquakes that affected Venezuela), the IDCPC has not issued any communiqué that could document high-level meetings with Venezuelan representatives. The last on record was the meeting between Liu Haixing and Venezuela's Ambassador to the PRC, Remigio Ceballos, in November 2025⁴².

Activity in Europe.

The IDCPC maintains contacts in virtually all European countries, with German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese organizations being the most frequent interlocutors. In Central and Eastern Europe, engagement is channeled primarily through the «16+1» format, created in 2012. This format has, according to some sources, raised concern among European policymakers, as it is perceived as a mechanism for fragmenting the EU's common position⁴³.

In January 2026, according to Chinese official sources, Deputy Head Ma Hui travelled to Italy. During the visit, he highlighted the CCP's role as a driver of political trust, practical cooperation, and multilateralism during the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026–2030).⁴⁴

⁴¹ CHINA-CELAC FORUM: «Liu Haixing Meets with Marcos Galvao, Brazilian Ambassador to China», available at https://www.chinacelacforum.org/eng/zgtlmjlbqjgx_1/202605/t20260525_11917346.htm . Last accessed : 23.06.2026. INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: "Liu Haixing Meets with Remigio Ceballos, Venezuelan Ambassador to China", 28 November 2025, available at https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/bzhd/202511/t20251128_168324.html . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁴³BADER, Julia y HACKENESCH, Christine: «The many faces of the Chinese Communist Party's outreach in Europe», 20 September 2025, available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10308-025-00754-z> . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁴⁴ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: «Ma Hui Leads an IDCPC Delegation to Visit Italy», 29 January 2026, available at https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/lldt/202601/t20260129_168653.html . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

In February 2026, Deputy Head Lu Kang likewise used a meeting with representatives from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Iceland to highlight the strengthening of ties between political parties, the exchange of governance experiences, and the consolidation of the China-Nordic Young Politicians Dialogue⁴⁵.

Finally, in March 2026, Liu Haixing met with Finland's Ambassador to the PRC, Mikko Kinnunen. Liu Haixing used the occasion to present 76 years of Sino-Finnish diplomatic relations as a model of coexistence between countries with notable institutional differences⁴⁶.



Fig. 5.- On 28 April 2026, the IDCPC held in Beijing the «Generation Z and New Hopes» forum. In addition to Chinese representatives, more than 120 people from fourteen countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe participated.

Source: https://www.idcpc.org.cn/bzhd/wshd/202604/t20260428_169229.html

Conclusion

Having now surpassed 75 years of operation, the IDCPC has undergone a level of sophistication and development equivalent to that of the PRC as a whole. In this process, the IDCPC should be regarded not merely as a department of a party, but as a robust

⁴⁵ INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPC: « Lu Kang Holds 2026 Chinese New Year Exchange Event with Diplomatic Envoys of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Iceland to China», 14 February 2026, available at https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/lldt/202602/t20260214_168720.html . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

⁴⁶ «Liu Haixing Meets with Mikko Kinnunen, Finnish Ambassador to China», 20 March 2026, available at https://www.idcpc.org.cn/english2023/bzhd/202603/t20260320_168880.html . Last accessed: 23.06.2026.

instrument of external projection of *the* Party. Evidence of this is its direct participation at the core of the CCP, the principal decision-making body of Chinese politics.

Its *modus operandi* does not follow the logic of conventional political exchange, but rather corresponds to a complete architecture of influence. As it does not constitute, *stricto sensu*, conventional diplomacy, but precisely because of its flexible and unorthodox nature, it is able to pursue objectives that are difficult to achieve through conventional diplomatic channels.

It could be said that, in combination with official diplomacy, it operates in «mirror mode»: a faithful reflection of the PRC's foreign policy, but without the constraints that official channels sometimes entail.

This defining characteristic makes it possible to view the IDCPC not as an isolated element, but rather as a skilfully positioned vector that forms a symbiotic part of a larger ecosystem. At the head of this ecosystem stands the CCP, to which it is inextricably linked and with which it shares identical interests.

Consequently, it would not be amiss to regard the IDCPC as a complement, and potential force multiplier, of the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two organs combined form a kind of «system of systems» structured not in a linear or bureaucratic manner, but in a networked or reticular one, in which state diplomacy and the interests of the Party converge in the service of the same strategic objectives.

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