

The 2025 Imperial Springs International Forum kicks off in Guangzhou, calls for the practice of genuine multilateralism

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By Qian Jiayin in Guangzhou



The 2025 Imperial Springs International Forum is held in in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong Province, on December 2, 2025. Photo: Qian Jiayin/GT

The 2025 Imperial Springs International Forum officially opened in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong Province, on Tuesday under the theme of "For Global Cooperation and Solidarity."

In the opening ceremony, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, said that in the face of common global challenges, no country can remain unaffected or enjoy security alone. Only by strengthening unity and cooperation, working together with shared purposes, can the international community move toward a better future. At a time when turbulence and transformation are intensifying, the need to practice genuine multilateralism is greater than ever.

Danilo Türk, former president of Slovenia and currently president of Club de Madrid, said in his speech that no country, no matter how powerful, can successfully address global challenges alone, nor can it lead alone. This simple fact defines what global stability requires today.

"Responsibilities shared across regions and institutions, an understanding of how others interpret strategic realities -- not merely how we would wish them to be -- and a willingness to act with restraint when the system is under tension, these are the requirements of our time," Türk said.

Many participants noted that amid the turbulence of a new round of technological revolution and shifting geopolitics, traditional and nontraditional security threats are increasingly intertwined. Now, more than ever, issues such as global development imbalances, geopolitical conflict risks, AI governance and climate change response are calling for global coordination and joint action.

Petre Roman, former prime minister of Romania, told the Global Times at the sideline of the forum that we are living in an era of uncertainty. The only way to reduce this uncertainty and prevent potential chaos in the world and on the global stage is to truly embrace cooperation.

Roman expressed his appreciation for the China-proposed Global Governance Initiative, saying that "the idea of global governance is a valuable one. Hopefully, piece by piece, we will start to restore a valuable and positive international order."

Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, former president of Chile, said that we are living in a world full of challenges. New frameworks, new environments and new circumstances are constantly emerging, all of which require collective discussion. Moreover, international organizations failing to play their part is another important issue we must confront, because these very organizations are essential platforms for advancing the spirit of cooperation and solidarity.

More than 200 political, academic and business participants from over 30 countries and regions attended the forum, including more than 30 former heads of state, government leaders and heads of international organizations, as well as over 100 renowned Chinese and foreign experts, scholars, international friends and business leaders.

Global governance is one of the key topics of this forum. During a plenary discussion, Xue Lan, dean of Schwarzman College at Tsinghua University, pointed out that the current global governance system is facing challenges from multiple directions. When we talk about the global governance system, the first thing we should consider is how to evolve from the traditional framework toward a more inclusive, diverse and resilient one. Such a system should prioritize strengthening cooperation rather than amplifying uncertainty and risk.

This year's forum also focused on the following topics: Global Security Challenges in Times of Uncertainty; Recalibrating the Global Governance: Pursuit of Greater Stability and Certainty; Understanding, Inclusiveness, and Cooperation in a Diverse

World; Artificial Intelligence: Balancing Innovation, Security and Governance; Countdown to 2030: Delivering on Global Public Goods; The Dynamics of Green and Low-carbon Development; Global Economic Trends Amid Trade and Tariff Conflicts.

Since its launch in 2014, the Imperial Springs International Forum has become a new type of high-end platform for China to conduct in-depth communication with the rest of the world.