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**CHINA DAILY: BULGARIA ESTABLISHES NATIONAL BELT AND ROAD ASSOCIATION**

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A national association "One Belt One Road" was established on Tuesday to boost Bulgaria's involvement in China's Belt and Road Initiative and strengthen the ties between Bulgaria and China, China Daily writes.

Several leading figures from society signed the founding documents. Prof Zahari Zahariev, elected chairman of the One Belt One Road association, said that its creation was extremely important for two reasons.

"First, it showed the commitment of Bulgaria to the objective processes of dynamic civilization change in the modern world. At the same time, it indicated that Bulgaria has always considered the relationship with China as a priority in its foreign policy," Zahariev said.

Chinese Ambassador to Bulgaria Zhang Haizhou, who also attended the event, said the Belt and Road Initiative enjoyed increasingly broad and positive response, and more than 100 countries and international organizations already participated in it.

Central and Eastern Europe was one of China's priorities within the Belt and Road Initiative, Zhang said.

With regard in particular to Bulgaria, Zhang said that Chinese and Bulgarian governments, local authorities and businesses had a strong desire to further develop bilateral cooperation, and against this background, the establishment of the Bulgarian national association came just in time.

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<http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2017/04/12/418119/china-daily-bulgaria-establishes-national-belt-and-road-association.html>

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