

# Bangladesh reassures Chinese FM of one-China principle

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**The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk:** Bangladesh has conveyed to China that it maintains a balanced foreign policy and walks together with all the countries while reassuring Dhaka's support to Beijing. "We believe in one-China principle. We maintain a balanced foreign policy. This is our principle. We will extend our support (to China) time to time," Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen told reporters on Tuesday as conveyed to his Chinese counterpart. Newly appointed Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang had a brief stopover at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport early Tuesday. Foreign Minister Momen received his Chinese counterpart upon his arrival at around 1:58am, a senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told UNB.

The two Foreign Ministers had brief meeting at the VIP Lounge of the airport and discussed issues of mutual interest.

While briefing the media at the airport early Tuesday, Momen said he raised the huge trade gap issue with China. He said though there was a decision of duty free and quota free facilities for Bangladeshi exports, it has not been implemented yet fully. Businesses are yet to take advantage of the DFQF facilities in the Chinese market, Momen mentioned, seeking measures from the Chinese side. Momen described the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Bangladesh in 2016 as a milestone but mentioned that many decisions in terms of investment are yet to be implemented.

The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh also mentioned China's involvement in a number of important development projects including rail link of Padma Bridge. He also thanked the Chinese government for its support to Bangladesh during Covid-19 pandemic. The Chinese Foreign Minister invited Momen to visit Beijing at a mutually convenient time. In reply, Momen also invited his Chinese counterpart to come again for a longer stay. Foreign Minister Momen saw off his Chinese counterpart at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 2:50 am on Tuesday. Earlier, Momen told UNB that it was not an official visit to Bangladesh, but the Chinese foreign minister would make a stopover here on his way to another destination.

Qin Gang, who until recently was ambassador to the US, has started his term with a weeklong trip to five African countries. To "deepen the China-Africa comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership" and boost friendly cooperation between China and Africa, Foreign Minister Qin Gang will visit Ethiopia, Gabon, Angola, Benin, Egypt, the African Union Headquarters and the League of Arab States Headquarters upon invitation, from January 9 to 16, 2023," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily media briefing on Monday. This is the 33rd consecutive year that Africa has been the destination of the Chinese foreign ministers' annual first overseas visit, he added.