

China Development Forum 2026

China in its 15th Five-Year Plan Period: Advancing High-Quality Development and Creating New Opportunities Together

Symposium on Healthy China 2030 and Big Health Industry Development (Panel Discussion II)

The China Development Forum 2026, hosted by the Development Research Centre of the State Council and organized by the China Development Research Foundation, was held on March 22-23, 2026 at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing. On the afternoon of March 22, the Symposium on Healthy China 2030 and Big Health Industry Development took place. The panelists for Panel Discussion II were Severin Schwan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Roche Group; ZHAO Peng, President of The People's Insurance Company (Group) of China Ltd.; Pascal Soriot, CEO of AstraZeneca; LIU Chunxi, CEO of Inner Mongolia Yili Industrial Group Co., Ltd.; Bernd Montag, CEO of Siemens Healthineers; and LI Daokui, Director of the Academic Center for Chinese Economic Practice and Thinking (ACCEPT) at Tsinghua University. The session was chaired by ZHUO Xian, Director-General of the Department of Social and Cultural Development Research at the Development Research Centre of the State Council.

Centering on the theme of the symposium, **Severin Schwan** noted that the pharmaceutical and life sciences industries have become key drivers of China's high-quality development. He pointed out that China has made tremendous progress in healthcare and life sciences, establishing itself as a major global hub in the field. This success can be attributed to two main factors. One is the investment across the entire ecosystem of science, education, and talent. The other is the continuous improvement of the regulatory system. Schwan also analyzed the development trajectory and current challenges facing the life sciences and pharmaceutical industries in Europe, noting that China faces similar issues. He emphasized that with a solid foundation in commercial health insurance, China should seize this window of opportunity to vigorously develop its commercial insurance system, diversify financing channels, and promote the sustainable growth of the life sciences industry.

ZHAO Peng focused on the pivotal role of insurance in building a Healthy China. A Healthy China is not only a key component of Chinese-style modernization, but also a shared aspiration of the people. As a major participant in building Healthy China, insurance plays a critical role in ensuring public access to medical care, coverage for medications, and support for healthy living.

He put forward three suggestions. First, vigorously develop commercial health insurance to strengthen the health protection net for the people. As a market-driven pillar of a multi-tiered healthcare system, commercial health insurance can enhance overall efficiency by participating in the management of basic medical insurance. It can also expand coverage and increase the reimbursement rate, thereby reducing the financial burden of medical care on the people.

Second, establish market-based payment mechanisms to serve as a “catalyst” for the health industry. Commercial health insurance can cover

breakthrough therapies, rare disease medications, and advanced medical devices. This would stabilize market expectations for pharmaceutical companies, incentivizing greater R&D investment, and ultimately improving the accessibility and affordability of innovative drugs.

Third, strengthen full-cycle health management to serve as the “gatekeeper” of public health. As market entities, insurance companies aim to reduce disease incidence and claims costs through proactive health management. Going forward, the integration of health insurance with health management should be deepened, shifting from traditional post-claim reimbursement to a full-cycle model encompassing prevention, intervention, and compensation.

Pascal Soriot stated that China has become a key leader in global technological development and will play an even greater role in the future. Today, around 25% of global clinical trials are conducted in China. This has been made possible by the country’s significant progress in scientific investment, regulatory efficiency, and intellectual property protection.

Looking ahead, AstraZeneca plans to further expand its investment in China.

First, it will pursue broader collaborations with governments, hospitals, and academic institutions, with a focus on advancing early disease diagnosis and the application of digital tools, improving multi-tiered payment systems, and enhancing patient access.

Second, it will strengthen competitiveness across the full life sciences value chain—from “drug discovery, manufacturing, clinical development to commercialization.”

Third, it will promote the development of innovation hubs, enhance its R&D centers in Shanghai and Beijing, help local innovation go global, and foster collaborations between Chinese and UK universities and clinical institutions.

LIU Chunxi shared Yili's innovative practices on how enterprises can deeply integrate into national strategies and inject momentum into the high-quality development of the big health industry. On one hand, by aligning with national strategies and plans, Yili has expanded the boundaries of the health industry through precision nutrition, supported by superior quality, vertical upgrading, and horizontal expansion. On the other hand, with a focus on the needs of “the elderly and children,” Yili has built a comprehensive health framework that covers the entire consumer lifecycle. During the 15th Five-Year Plan Period, the company will continue to drive industrial innovation through technological innovation, actively support the health-prioritized development strategy and the national nutrition plan, and lay a solid foundation for improving public nutrition and health. Building on the strength of China's dairy industry, Yili will contribute to building a Healthy China and promoting high-quality development of the big health industry.

Bernd Montag shared insights from Siemens Healthineers' experience in China, noting that the company's operations are built on intelligent infrastructure. At the business level, Siemens Healthineers focuses on public health, actively engaging in chronic disease prevention, research on rare diseases, and the empowerment of primary healthcare. The company has leveraged AI technology to improve the treatment of conditions such as fatty liver disease and rare diseases, and has applied 5G technology to bridge the medical knowledge gap between urban and rural areas by providing remote medical support. Montag noted that both the global and Chinese healthcare sectors are poised for significant growth, with the sector's focus increasingly shifting toward chronic disease management, full-lifecycle care, and precision medicine.

LI Daokui observed that the 15th Five-Year Plan conveys two key messages for the big health industry, particularly the biopharmaceutical

sector. First, it clarifies the industry's positioning, designating biopharmaceuticals as a strategic emerging industry. Second, it brings tangible benefits. For the biopharmaceutical industry, this means faster approval of innovative drugs and deeper collaboration between domestic and foreign enterprises. In response to evolving policies and regulations, Li suggested that companies should proactively adapt, boldly propose innovative initiatives and policy proposals, and seize strategic development opportunities.

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— Background Information —

The China Development Forum (CDF) is hosted by the Development Research Centre of the State Council and organized by the China Development Research Foundation. Since its inception in 2000, the Forum has been dedicated to the mission of “engaging with the world for common prosperity.” It has served as an important platform for high-level, professional dialogue among China’s senior government officials, global business leaders, representatives from international organizations, as well as scholars from both China and around the world.



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