

Interview: Life in Xinjiang is getting better and better -- French writer



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Local residents prepare food at home in Kashgar, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Sept. 23, 2015. (Xinhua/Jiang Wenyaoyao)

PARIS, Oct. 2 (Xinhua) -- "I saw people's life (in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region) was getting better and better. I believe it will be more beautiful in the future," French writer Sonia Bressler has said.

Bressler, who has just concluded a three-week trip to Xinjiang, said in a recent interview with Xinhua that she knew almost nothing about her destination before leaving for Xinjiang.

"We have many stories about the ancient Silk Road, such as The Travels of Marco Polo, but we don't have any information on the role of today's Xinjiang," Bressler said.

But this has not hindered her steps into Xinjiang. "As far as I know, Xinjiang is an important place for not only the ancient Silk Road but also the current Silk Road Economic Belt. So I'd like to visit there," Bressler said.

The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road was an initiative put forward by Chinese President [Xi Jinping](#) in 2013 to revive the ancient trade routes that span Asia, Africa and Europe.

Bressler, who has read the book "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China," is very interested in the Belt and Road initiative and was wondering how the initiative could become a reality.

Contrary to her imagination about Urumqi, capital of the autonomous region, she "arrived in a well-developed city with commercial districts and traditional neighborhoods."

In her several-thousand-km journey in south Xinjiang, Bressler, accompanied by an interpreter and local drivers and guides, met with many locals. "I did 45 or 46 interviews, and all these stories impressed me," she said.

Some of the stories, in the eyes of the French writer, were very "beautiful." What impressed her most was a family in Turpan, a prefecture-level city in Xinjiang, whose members supported each other in combining traditional and modern technologies of grape production to pursue a better life.

"The living conditions of local people especially the Uygurs are being improved. New villages are being rebuilt according to the model of old ones while locals can have access to water, electricity and so on," Bressler said. "This is very good and all these are out of my expectation."

For Bressler, building the new Silk Road is very significant for the economy and technology, among others, as it is not only an "extraordinary" road that "effectively allows circulation," but also a platform that allows neighboring countries to carry out many projects on the basis of win-win cooperation.

"China has a good system. China should be proud of herself," concluded Bressler, who is going to write a book about her trip to Xinjiang.



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