

## Sofia Celebrates UN Chinese Language Day Events



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SOFIA, April 18— The Confucius Institute in Sofia marked United Nations Chinese Language Day with a cultural program featuring a Chinese singing contest and inauguration of a peony culture center, highlighting growing ties between China and Bulgaria.

Chinese Ambassador to Bulgaria Dai Qingli said the occasion also marks the 20th anniversary of

the Confucius Institute. She noted the institute has played a key role in introducing Chinese culture to Bulgarian students and strengthening cultural exchange and mutual understanding between both countries.

She described the singing contest as a symbol of Chinese language education in Bulgaria, reflecting rising interest among young learners.

The event featured the seventh “Rose Melodies” contest, with 16 solo performers and 10 groups from across Bulgaria. “Scarlet Sorghum” from Stara Zagora won the group category, while 15-year-old Katerina Hristova from Blagoevgrad secured first place in the solo category.

Hristova, who has studied Chinese for one year, said the language fascinates her and called the award a milestone marking new beginnings.

Officials from the Confucius Institute, including Chinese director Chen Ying and Bulgarian director Aksiniya Koleva, said the contest has boosted interest in Chinese language learning while promoting Chinese culture.

Earlier, an International Communication Office for Peony Culture was inaugurated at the institute’s library, jointly supported by China’s Heze Municipality and Bulgaria’s Bozhurishte Municipality to enhance cooperation.