

# China and International Development Cooperation in a Time of Profound Global Changes

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The shift in the global balance of power is an important feature of the epochal changes we are witnessing in our time. This process is mainly determined by the rise of China's overall strength. Since the 2008 global financial crisis, the impact of China's economic growth on the international development paradigm and development cooperation has become a frequent topic of discussion in international politics and academic circles. At the academic level, the debate mainly focuses on China's economic development model and related geopolitical and geo-economic research, whereas on the practical level it concentrates largely on China's poverty reduction experience, foreign aid in the agricultural field, participation in global economic governance, and international cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

How has China shaped international development cooperation, and what profound impact will it generate on the fabric of the international order? The year 2020 marked the 70th anniversary of China's foreign aid. At the beginning of 2021, the Information Office of the State Council of China released a white paper called "China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era," which defines China's international development as the multilateral and bilateral international cooperation China has conducted in economic and social development under the framework of South-South cooperation through foreign aid and other

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means, including humanitarian aid.<sup>1</sup>

From the perspective of international interaction, this article defines international development cooperation in broad terms as a series of practices oriented towards poverty alleviation and economic growth in accordance with local conditions by relevant international agents who cooperate as equal partners. The article elaborates on China's recent innovations and contributions for international development cooperation in the four fields of aid and cooperation, knowledge and paradigm, institution and practice, and security and order. Against the background of the rise of the global South, China has introduced its own development experience into the realm of international development cooperation, and is committed to building a new type of development partnership based on equality and mutually beneficial cooperation. The article also emphasizes the positive role China has played in facilitating an improved global system of international development cooperation and development-security interaction.

## Aid and Cooperation

In international politics, the terms “foreign aid,” “development assistance,” and “development cooperation” are often used interchangeably. Although the three terms refer to similar international practices, their meanings and emphases are different, especially with respect to the difference between “aid” and “cooperation.”<sup>2</sup> China's practice of “international development cooperation” focuses on development, emphasizes forms of cooperation that transcend the dichotomy between “donor” and “recipient,” and promotes local economic development based on equality and mutual benefit.

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1 State Council Information Office of China, “China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era,” *Xinhua*, January 10, 2021, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2021-01/10/c\\_1126965418](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2021-01/10/c_1126965418).

2 Marijke Breuning, “Foreign Aid, Development Assistance, or Development Cooperation: What's in a Name?” *International Politics*, Vol.39, September 2002, p.369.

## **Equality, partnership, and international development**

First, in the Western theory and practice of international politics, the content and objectives of “foreign aid” include not only economic development, but also military aid. In other words, the promotion of local economic growth does not always serve a single purpose. To give an example, the foreign aid of the United States is not only about settling transnational issues, humanitarian relief, and promoting the resolution of overseas humanitarian issues, but also includes peacekeeping missions. Some scholars argue that assistance aimed at solving development problems is best provided by multilateral development banks, because they have better resources and professional know-how to effectively promote economic and social transformation in less developed countries, while the US bilateral aid programs should serve its national interests and values to support and maintain its global leadership.<sup>3</sup> This argument correctly points out that multilateral development agencies have more professional knowledge and skills to handle development assistance issues, but on the other hand it pits the economic development interests of one country against those of another, reflecting the idea of power politics and mentality of zero-sum game. In foreign aid, donors often assert their purpose is to promote the democratic process and economic development of recipient countries, but in practice foreign aid usually serves a more direct political agenda and in some cases is even directly influenced by power politics.

Second, although development aid focuses on economic development, the donor-recipient relationship is fundamentally asymmetric and unequal. A donor is concerned about how best to present its commitment to help, including the purposes and goals, while a recipient is more concerned about how to meet the conditions of the aid. The effectiveness of the aid and the realization of local development goals often fall into the background. International political scientists are increasingly aware that the donor-

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3 Carol Lancaster, *Transforming Foreign Aid: United States Assistance in the 21st Century*, Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 2000, pp.85, 89 & 91.

recipient relationship is the core issue of development aid, and that the key lies in efficient cooperation and development. Some scholars point out that regionalism is a potent vehicle for promoting development cooperation. The economic integration of various regional economies with their different economic structures and development levels under a unified regional framework is the best way of improving economic openness and freedom of trade. Under the umbrella of regionalism, all parties involved in development cooperation may build a more equal partnership and reduce conditionalities and dependencies.<sup>4</sup> This approach can provide intellectual support for increasingly dynamic regional development cooperation. For example, international development cooperation with less-developed countries in Southeast Asia is largely carried out under the regional frameworks of ASEAN and “ASEAN Plus.” Since narrowing the development gap is regarded as the most important objective of the ASEAN community, ASEAN has not only carried out international development cooperation in its own framework, but also prioritized it on the agenda of the ASEAN-led and ASEAN-centered regional process. This involves working with major economies such as China, Japan, South Korea, the United States and Australia on regional development cooperation, which has enabled less-developed member states to have achieved economic growth rates above the world’s average in recent years.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, international policy makers and scholars, reflecting on the Western “liberal” aid model, the formulation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and the increasing strength and influence of emerging donor countries represented by China, have engaged in debates on “aid effectiveness” and “development effectiveness” that has driven the transformation of the concept of international development from “aid” to “cooperation.” All parties have realized that to improve aid effectiveness, the past practice of only following the donor’s standards and ignoring the subjectivity of the

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4 Stephen Browne, *Beyond Aid: From Patronage to Partnership*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1999, p.107.

recipient has to be abandoned. In order to bring the interests of both sides in accordance with each other, there needs to be a shift from the “liberalist” idea of aid for its own sake to “capacity development” of recipient countries and ultimately to the value system anchored in the UN Millennium Development Goals.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to “foreign aid” and “development aid,” the notion of “development cooperation” provides a clear orientation for development, represents a joint undertaking between the donor and the recipient, and has the character of a cooperative project. Development cooperation requires an in-depth understanding of specific local conditions and cultural traditions, because only by establishing partnerships with local actors and working with them can people truly make a difference and eliminate poverty and inequality. It is practically impossible to achieve development goals by imposing solutions that are not suitable for local conditions. Even though development cooperation policies of donor countries do not necessarily lead to full achievement of all development goals, the concept of development cooperation now plays a vital role in shaping the ideas and related practices of international actors.<sup>6</sup>

### **China, South-South cooperation and international development**

Since the 2008 global financial crisis, emerging countries such as China have actively participated in global development cooperation and have introduced the concepts, norms and practices of South-South cooperation into international development cooperation. No political conditions attached to aid, equality and mutual benefit, and emphasis on practical results are the fundamental norms in the new type of international development cooperation, where aid is defined as mutual assistance

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5 He Wenping, “From ‘Aid Effectiveness’ to ‘Development Effectiveness’: The Evolution of Aid Concepts and the Role of China’s Experience,” *West Asia and Africa*, No.9, 2011, p.122; Huang Meibo, *A Study on the Effectiveness of International Development Aid: From Aid Effectiveness to Development Effectiveness*, Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2020, pp.39-44.

6 Marijke Breuning, “Foreign Aid, Development Assistance, or Development Cooperation: What’s in a Name?” p.369.

between developing countries, in contrast to the Western aid model which is paternalist and Eurocentric in nature. While traditional donor countries tend to invest in the civil society and the institutional capacity building of recipient countries, emerging donor countries pay more attention to the economic development of recipient countries, investing largely in infrastructure and human resource training. In addition, while traditional development aid is often supplied in the form of budgetary grants in a multilateral manner, emerging donor countries tend to offer aid for project financing in a bilateral manner. Although the latter raises questions of transparency and “tied aid,” it is simpler and faster for specific operations, and the investments are more directly targeted towards development.<sup>7</sup> Some scholars point out that the decades of Western assistance to Africa have generally been a failure. Development aid in the West has become an industry that benefits donors more than recipients. As a result, some African countries have become aid dependent and fallen into a vicious circle of corruption, market distortion and poverty. Since the beginning of the 21st century, emerging donor countries, China in particular, have rapidly increased their trade and investment in Africa. China’s trade and infrastructure investment in Africa, as well as its market-oriented aid efforts, have brought tangible economic growth to Africa and promoted poverty reduction on the continent. Africa may learn from China’s experience, by using exports, foreign investment and infrastructure construction to generate economic growth.<sup>8</sup>

Being both a donor and a recipient, China has accumulated rich experience in poverty reduction and economic development, especially in how to use assistance to achieve its own economic development. Therefore, a rising China better understands the needs of recipient countries and works to establish truly equal development partnerships with them, respecting local

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7 He Wenping, “From ‘Aid Effectiveness’ to ‘Development Effectiveness’: The Evolution of Aid Concepts and the Role of China’s Experience,” p.125.

8 Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009.

autonomy and integrating aid with local economic development plans.<sup>9</sup> It is an advantage of South-South cooperation that successful practices of developing countries in solving development problems can be utilized by their peers in tackling similar challenges, which contributes to the formulation of sustainable development strategies that are suitable for specific national and local conditions.

In the more than 70 years of economic and technical assistance and development cooperation, China has always upheld the principle of equality, mutual benefit and practical results, while adapting to the changing situation and attaching no political conditions to aid.<sup>10</sup> Africa is a key destination for China's expansion of South-South cooperation and implementation of the new concept of international development cooperation. China's foreign policy approach towards Africa has transformed from emphasizing African political emancipation and national independence to stressing the common development of both sides, from seeking no returns to pursuing mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, from mutual assistance to mutual cooperation, and from "a revolutionary community against imperialism and colonialism" to development partnership.<sup>11</sup> In April 2018, the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) was established, marking a new stage of China's foreign aid.

China has done much in recent years to establish a new type of international development cooperation based on equality, mutual benefit and practical results. This has contributed significantly to the overall prosperity and comprehensive national strength of Southern countries, bringing about a reshaping of the international power structure. Furthermore, the enhanced efficiency of South-South cooperation has also encouraged stakeholders to reflect on traditional aid and North-South cooperation models, causing

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9 He Wenping, "From 'Aid Effectiveness' to 'Development Effectiveness': The Evolution of Aid Concepts and the Role of China's Experience," p.129.

10 State Council Information Office of China, "China's Foreign Aid," April 2011, [http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2018-08/06/c\\_129925064.htm](http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2018-08/06/c_129925064.htm).

11 Hu Mei and Liu Hongwu, "50 Years of China's Assistance to Africa and the Growth of China's South-South Cooperation Concept," *International Studies*, 2012, No.1, p.12.

a restructuring of international norms and practices from assistance to cooperation. In recent years, multilateral institutions such as the UN and the World Bank have increasingly learned from the experience of South-South cooperation, and relevant donors have also begun to invite more and more Southern actors to participate in international development cooperation. The global South is emerging as a major force in shaping a new type of equitable, inclusive and sustainable international development cooperation.<sup>12</sup>

## Knowledge and Paradigm

In the wake of major changes in China and in international development cooperation, the second fundamental transformation is reflected in the discussion of the development knowledge and paradigms. If the debate about “aid” or “cooperation” transcends the ordinary donor-recipient dichotomy and moves towards an equal and mutually beneficial development partnership, then the discussion on “knowledge” and “paradigm” will reformulate the standardized concepts of development, i.e. what development is and how it functions.

### China and new development knowledge

In recent years, discussions in Chinese academic circles on new development knowledge have focused on compiling the lessons learned from the economic development practices of late-comer countries and on transcending traditional Western-dominated development knowledge to construct diversified development paths and improve the fairness and efficiency of global development. Research conducted by Li Xiaoyun and his team is quite typical of this approach. They define development knowledge as a cognitive system that relates to the transformation of societies from a traditional one to a modern one, and argue that such transformation is

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12 Rafael Belebani, “The Rise of the Global South: Can South-South Cooperation Reshape Development?” *Kennedy School Review*, 2019 Issue, November 26, 2019, <https://ksr.hkspublications.org/2019/11/26/the-rise-of-the-global-south-can-south-south-cooperation-reshape-Development>.

evaluated as progressive process known as development. The Western development knowledge system has evolved from Western social practices and experiences at different periods of time. Therefore, classical development theories largely focus on the evolution of European industrial capitalism with its core elements of rationalism, individual freedom and rights, free market, democracy, and small government. Modern development knowledge systems are usually built on the European experience of transitioning non-European countries into modern Western-style societies. Whenever the European industrial capitalist model was forcefully introduced to non-European countries, their independent development was interrupted or disrupted, resulting in political, economic, and socio-cultural disorder. In response, European intellectual elites have initiated development studies and built a modernized development knowledge system. Their main concern is why non-European countries have failed to take the path of industrial capitalism. And their studies focus on how developing countries can achieve economic growth through the means of national plans and development aid. A key challenge of the system is how developing countries can complete the transition from a traditional to a modern society, comparable to the process that developed countries have gone through. Based on liberalism and neo-liberalism, the modern development knowledge system regards structural change as a prerequisite for growth, and defines classic development ideas such as rationalism, individualism and marketism as necessary conditions for modernization in developing countries. Development as such is conditional.<sup>13</sup>

However, in the post-WWII years, most of the industrialization and modernization efforts of developing countries have failed as they followed such a modern development knowledge system. Since the beginning of the 21st century, especially since the 2008 global financial crisis, in the course of

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13 Li Xiaoyun, "The Evolution of the Development Knowledge System: From 'Suspension' to 'Presence'," *Academic Frontiers*, 2017, No.12 (Part 2), pp.86-94; Li Xiaoyun, Xu Xiuli and Qi Gubo, "Reflection on Development Research: Historical Origins, Theoretical Schools and International Frontiers," *Economic Review*, No.1, 2015, pp.152-160.

rethinking the modern development knowledge system and in the context of the growth of emerging economies, a new trend has emerged, namely that developing countries need to build their own expertise on development, based on their own social and cultural logic. Participatory development is an important component of this new knowledge development system, including central features such as political decentralization, culture serving a leading role, and technological adaptation. The new system emphasizes the initiative for national development, convinced that under the leadership of competent governments, developing countries can achieve growth through high savings, investment and market allocation of resources.<sup>14</sup> Development knowledge is equally the foundation for the construction of discourse and norms as well as for the shaping of society and order. For emerging countries, this new model of development is an important lever for shaping the global order in the face of profound changes unseen in a century. It is also an important cultural reference point for the international community in the future.

China is an essential contributor for the building of new development knowledge. After the economic construction period in the first 30 years of the People's Republic, China has achieved an unprecedented economic miracle in the world through the program of reform and opening-up in the recent 40 years.<sup>15</sup> What is China's development experience? What implications does it have for global poverty reduction and development? Since the global financial crisis in 2008, China's development achievements have stood out among the world's major economies, making it a new force for shaping the global development agenda. China's progressive reforms are regarded as exemplary and as an alternative development policy model for the 21st century.<sup>16</sup> Experts from the World Bank and

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14 Xu Xiuli and Li Xiaoyun, "Knowledge Development: The Hidden Clues in the Formation and Reshaping of the Global Order," *Beijing Cultural Review*, 2020, No.1, pp.94-102.

15 Cai Fang, "The Contribution of One-Fifth of the World's Population: World Significance of China's Economic Development," *World Economics and Politics*, No. 6, 2019, pp.4-18.

16 Monique Kremer, Peter van Lieshout and Robert Went, *Doing Good or Doing Better: Development Policies in a Globalizing World*, Amsterdam University Press, 2009, p.23.

other international institutions have had in-depth discussions on China's development experience. They have concluded that China's agricultural development, enhanced institutional capabilities and leadership, its spirit of pragmatism, the Confucian culture respecting virtue and education, reform and opening-up, and its infrastructure improvement are all fundamental elements of China's poverty reduction and development experience.<sup>17</sup> Former Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of the World Bank, Justin Lin, has pointed out that economic development is a process of continuous technological and industrial innovation as well as structural changes. In view of the challenges of long-term economic growth, he proposes a new structural economic theory, emphasizing that market and government must combine their efforts to promote economic development, and that structural characteristics of different development levels must be taken into consideration in the formulation of government policies and institutional arrangements. These structural characteristics are largely determined endogenously by the factor endowments and market forces of each developing country.<sup>18</sup> China's rapid economic development is not the result of Western free market economic policies and its prescribed "shock therapy," but rather the successful result of progressive long-term reforms. These reforms have enabled China to achieve economic growth while maintaining social stability in the transition to a market economy. China gives equal importance to reform and opening-up, by adopting a comparative advantage strategy and by learning from others. Through constant reform, adjustment and innovation, China has succeeded in bringing the reform process and institutional capacity building into conformity with its national development goals.<sup>19</sup> In her research on poverty reduction in China, Professor Yuen Yuen Ang has challenged the

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17 Arjan De Haan, "Will China Change International Development as We Know It?" *Journal of International Development*, No. 23, 2011, pp.894-895.

18 Justin Lin, "New Structural Economics: Reconstructing the Framework of Development Economics," *Economics Quarterly*, Vol.10, No.1, pp.1-25.

19 Justin Yifu Lin and Yan Wang, "China's Integration with the World: Development as a Process of Learning and Industrial Upgrading," World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4799, December 2008, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/6336/WPS4799.pdf>.

assumption of a one-sided causality between effective governance and economic growth, where institutions simply precede the market. Instead, she points out that successful development is the outcome of a co-evolutionary development process in which the market and the government are constantly adjusting and adapting to each other. This co-evolutionary process can be divided into three phases. In the first phase the market can be established within a setting of weak institutions. As the market expands, a better institutional environment is also gradually nurtured, which accelerates ideational and policy innovations for successful poverty reduction.<sup>20</sup>

### **China and an alternative development paradigm**

Discussions on development paradigms mainly focus on the comparison between the “Washington Consensus” and the “Beijing Consensus.” In the 1990s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, led by the US and Europe, have agreed on the Washington Consensus to restore laissez-faire economic policies, roll back government intervention, encourage privatization, and promote trade and financial liberalization at home and around the world by means of international mechanisms and agreements.

The Washington Consensus involves three major policy propositions and related practices. 1) Budget reforms to strengthen fiscal discipline; shifting the government’s financial expenditures to areas of high economic returns, as well as to culture, education, health, and infrastructure to improve income distribution; tax reform to lower the marginal tax rate, and broaden the tax base. 2) Market liberalization, including floating interest rates for a more competitive exchange rate system; trade liberalization to relax restrictions on foreign investment. 3) Government roll-back, such as privatization of state-owned enterprises to deregulate business entry and exit and protect private property rights. The Washington Consensus fundamentally undermined the government’s authority to regulate macro-

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20 Yuen Yuen Ang, *How China Escaped the Poverty Trap*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2016.

economic activities.<sup>21</sup> In 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement came into effect to promote the free flow of goods and capital worldwide. The IMF and the World Bank began to take the degree of liberalization as a measure of a good business climate and promote neoliberal economic adjustments and reforms in countries.<sup>22</sup> The neoliberal economic reforms in Latin America, Eastern Europe and East Asia, the IMF loan conditions, and the “shock therapy” in former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, were all specific applications of the Washington Consensus. To a large extent, the global promotion of the Washington Consensus led to the economic and financial crisis of emerging economies and developing countries in the 1990s, while in the developed world, economic liberalization also began to show some defects. However, it was not until the global financial crisis triggered by the US subprime mortgage crisis in 2008 that the West truly questioned and critically reflected on economic liberalization.

The Beijing Consensus was proposed in 2004 by Western scholars who had called the Washington Consensus into question. It offered an alternative development paradigm based on the experience of China’s economic rise.<sup>23</sup> The Beijing Consensus, together with the Japanese economic model of the 1950s and 1960s, and the economic rise of “Asian Four Dragons” from the 1960s to the 1980s, is an Asian model, i.e. a unique economic development strategy and development path evolving in the collective rise of East Asian economies. Such a model is made of three elements: an export-oriented economy, a government that promotes development, and a Confucian culture. First, these economies have all adopted export-oriented economic development models, especially through the construction of multiple strategic industries for the export of labor-intensive products, which entails the growth of other industries and employment opportunities. Second, the governments of these economies focus on mobilizing necessary resources

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21 Chu Ming, “Critical Neoliberalism and its Critic,” *Social Sciences Abroad*, No.4, 2005, p.13.

22 David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p.92.

23 Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus*, London: Foreign Policy Center, 2004.

and regulating the economy to optimize internal development and deal with external economic relations. Political and institutional guarantees are two prerequisites for a government to guide development. Political guarantees imply that domestic development alliances are protected from disruption by foreign capital, domestic opposition and civic organizations when formulating and implementing economic development strategies; institutional guarantees mean that there are strong government agencies and official organizations to ensure the authority of decision-making and implementation of development strategies. With a stronger power in the mobilization and distribution of economic resources, the government is able to promote economic restructuring, transform the domestic economic structure and move up its position in the world market, thus achieving rapid and relatively equal development.<sup>24</sup> Third, the collectivism in Confucian culture and the respect for authority in Confucian social order makes it possible for a development-oriented government to acquire political legitimacy, and achieve efficient institutionalization and implementation of economic strategies. As traditional Confucian culture values virtue and education, human factors, human capital and social capital have always played a vital role in economic life. With Confucian culture emphasizing industriousness and frugality, East Asian economies have such high savings rates that they can manage initial capital accumulation for industrialization, achieve high-level investments, and deploy financial resources to undertakings that are essential for economic growth, such as major infrastructure projects.<sup>25</sup>

Discussions on new knowledge and alternative paradigms regarding development have enriched conventional understanding of the issue and inspired thinking on how non-Western countries can achieve effective and sustainable development. Relevant theories and research paradigms

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24 Frederick C. Deyo et al., *The Political Economy of New Asian Industrialism* (Chinese edition), translated by Wang Puqu, Beijing: China Radio and Television Press, 1992, pp.1-12, 242-262.

25 Wei Ling, "Liberal Capitalism," in Qin Yaqing, *Contemporary Western International Thought*, Beijing, World Affairs Press, 2012, pp.32-36.

are expected to be upgraded as global development knowledge is more consciously constructed.

## **Institutions and Practices**

Changes in the philosophy and norms of international development can only be truly accomplished through institution-building and practice, by turning it into policy action to shape international development cooperation and the world order in times of dramatic structural shifts. Development concepts such as equal and mutually beneficial partnerships, mutual adjustment and adaptation between institutions and market, and the important role of infrastructure to promote economic growth, are substantially redefining the international system and world order, thanks to China's efforts to promote institution-building and innovative practices in international development cooperation. The establishment and successful operation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road Initiative for international cooperation are some of the most typical cases.

### **AIIB and innovation of the international development system**

Why did China initiate the establishment of the AIIB? The most important reason is that inadequate infrastructure has become a huge bottleneck for economic and social development in various countries, and that existing multilateral development agencies failed to provide sufficient infrastructure investment for that purpose. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the demand for infrastructure investment in Asia between 2016 and 2030 will be 22.6 trillion US dollars, or 26.2 trillion US dollars, if climate change factors are taken into account. Average annual demand will be as high as 1.7 trillion US dollars, of which energy and transport account for the largest shares at 56 percent and 32 percent respectively.<sup>26</sup> However, what Asia is short of are not funds, but

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26 Asian Development Bank, *Meeting Asia's Infrastructure Needs*, 2017, pp.39-45, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/227496/special-report-infrastructure.pdf>.

financing mechanisms. Therefore, China's proposal to establish the AIIB reflects its intention to take on more international responsibilities as the Chinese economy grows stronger. Based on its own successful development experience, China is offering a financing platform for infrastructure investment to utilize the region's abundant savings to improve infrastructure and promote win-win cooperation in Asia. Furthermore, Asia's economic development can provide growth opportunities for the world, make up for its development deficit, and contribute to the sustainable development of the global economy.<sup>27</sup>

The establishment of the AIIB supports the integration of emerging market countries' development experience into the international economic and financial system through international norms and institutions, and enhances their authority in decision-making and agenda-setting in the international economic and financial system. While there is global consensus on a rules-based international system and world order, the question is what those rules are and who gets to make them. The 2008 global economic and financial crisis revealed the imbalance and unfairness of the global development system, as well as institutional deficit in global governance. The rise of emerging economies has greatly reordered the international power structure, but emerging economies such as China are still unable to play a role that matches their strength, as institutional reforms have lagged behind structural adjustments. Besides, although the IMF and the World Bank have set strict and rigid loan conditions, these and other structural reforms have not proven effective in promoting economic growth.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the international economic and financial system needs urgent reform to enhance the institutional power of emerging economies and to expand the norms of international development by incorporating local knowledge and experience of emerging and developing countries. The AIIB came into being in an era of

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27 Jin Liqun, "Responsibilities of Great Powers: The AIIB in the Making," *Financial Market Research*, No. 4, 2015, pp.4-7.

28 Rebecca Liao, "Out of the Bretton Woods: How the AIIB Is Different," *Foreign Affairs*, July 27, 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2015-07-27/out-bretton-woods>.

profound global changes and emerged in a distinctive context of its time. It stands for a progressive reform and improvement of the existing international economic and financial system, not for its subversion; and it is a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, the existing multilateral development institutions.

The establishment of the AIIB has not only institutionalized China's development experience but also incorporated the general practice of international rules and systems, based on equal consultations and mutually beneficial cooperation. In the past five years, the AIIB has grown from 57 founding members to 103 members covering six continents, providing a total investment of 20 billion US dollars in infrastructure projects. A total of 108 projects have so far been approved in the fields of energy, transportation, finance, water resources and urban development. The AIIB fully reflects the decades of practical experience of developing countries, as demonstrated by China's efforts in recent decades to improve the environment, tackle climate change, create job opportunities, and improve the wellbeing of the people in low-income countries. Adhering to principles of consultation, cooperation, development and sharing, the AIIB has formed favorable cooperative relationships with other multilateral development institutions. About 53 percent of total AIIB investment has gone to jointly financed infrastructure construction projects, which represents the "new dividend" of global economic development and will benefit many countries around the world.<sup>29</sup> Chinese President Xi Jinping has pointed out that apart from being a model for multilateral cooperation, "high standard and high quality must be ensured in the development of the AIIB. While following international standards and respecting the general law of development, the AIIB should keep in mind the actual development needs of its members, thus creating best practices for international development cooperation."<sup>30</sup>

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29 See the official website of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, <https://www.aiib.org>; "AIIB Fifth Anniversary: Creating a New Model of International Multilateral Cooperation," December 25, 2020, <http://news.cri.cn/2020-12-25/e31816f6-2f17-9564-ab65-7b72b9fa6ca1.html>.

30 Xi Jinping, "Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank," July 28, 2020, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2020-07/29/c\\_139247707.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2020-07/29/c_139247707.htm).

The operation of the AIIB is a successful example of how China transforms its development experience into international norms, integrates it with the international system, and shapes the international development process and its institutional structure through institutionalized cooperation.<sup>31</sup>

### **The Belt and Road Initiative and innovation in the practice of international development**

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was set in motion by China to build a collaborative system with extensive consultation, an open and inclusive global economic framework, and an international development cooperation community with sustainable development at its core. The Belt and Road cooperation is not only a process of sharing China's development experience, but also an exploration of how to institutionalize development cooperation.

The institutionalized Belt and Road cooperation is characterized by a pragmatic agenda, voluntary participation, flexibility and openness aimed at promoting sustainable economic and social development and advancing development security interests. It has thus forged a pragmatic institutionalist cooperation paradigm with relatively loose organization and high efficiency. The cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) is a typical case in point.<sup>32</sup> Officially launched in 2012, China and CEECs have jointly carried out policy communication, economic and trade activities, and social and cultural exchanges with a focus on common development interests, through bilateral, small and larger multilateral, and various other flexible arrangements. The continuous expansion and deepening of cooperation has set a successful example that countries of different sizes and at different stages of governance and development can build a new type of development partnership featuring

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31 Jeffrey D. Wilson, "The Evolution of China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: from a Revisionist to Status-seeking Agenda," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.19, 2019, pp.147-174; Wei Ling, "Changing Yourself to Shape the World: The Co-Evolution of China and the International System," *Asia-Pacific Security and Maritime Affairs*, 2020, No.2, pp.23-34.

32 Natasha Maric and Wei Ling, "Pragmatic Institutionalism: Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries," *World Economics and Politics*, No.7, 2018, pp.41-68.

mutual respect and win-win cooperation. In a pragmatic approach, the experience of developing countries is brought into the institutionalization of development cooperation, which can enrich and supplement the existing neoliberal international system.

**Cooperation based on demand and supply.** The pattern of cooperation between China and CEECs is relatively loose and does not have compulsory binding force. Instead, it is a very pragmatic form of cooperation based on “demand and supply.” The general outline for cooperation is customarily adopted at meetings of state leaders. Prior to this, special working teams of all parties conduct comprehensive consultation and coordination to prepare the draft outline. Once the cooperation outline is adopted, an overall cooperation agenda will be established, after which the tasks will be divided among different mechanisms in different fields, such as trade and investment, connectivity, industries and energy, science and technology, financial cooperation, agriculture, forestry and environmental protection cooperation, health cooperation, local cooperation, and cultural exchanges. Countries that are willing to participate in certain projects need to designate relevant agencies to take responsibilities, make recommendations on advancing cooperation, and implement them through policy actions. In fact, most of the cooperation between China and CEECs is carried out in bilateral and small multilateral formats in accordance with the needs of all stakeholders and based on their conditions and readiness to get involved. In this way, all parties can deepen cooperation in areas that are most suitable for them, as differences will not lead to conflict, but rather underline diversity and vitality of cooperation efforts.

**Cooperation based on a voluntary principle.** Under the principle, countries choose the agenda and projects that correspond to their interests. At the first China-CEEC summit in 2012, China proposed 12 measures to promote friendly cooperation, which led to the formulation of the first guideline for cooperation. The document stipulated that a coordination mechanism be established based on a voluntary principle and suggested the creation of an advisory committee to review infrastructure cooperation

between China and CEECs. China invited the CEECs to hold voluntary talks about regional railway and highway construction projects. At that time, countries such as Serbia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro, which were in urgent need of an infrastructure upgrade, took action even before the advisory committee was established and actively sought cooperation with China. In all outline documents adopted by the leaders of China and CEECs, the principle of voluntary participation has been affirmed for institution building and cooperative practice. Accordingly, not every CEEC necessarily participates in all meetings within the overall China-CEEC cooperation framework. Generally, those countries that are willing to participate first set up a meeting mechanism and then negotiate cooperation agreements during the meeting process. Only countries that believe they can benefit from the meeting mechanism and related agreements will participate in the cooperation and sign agreements. For example, in 2013, only Hungary, Serbia, Latvia, and Macedonia signed the quality inspection cooperation agreement with China. It was one year later that Romania, Slovenia and Poland followed. Whether the participation of these countries in such cooperation depended on their specific attitude towards China or certain technical terms of the agreement, their choice of cooperation in the process has been entirely voluntary. Voluntary participation has been an important incentive for these countries to take part in these cooperative arrangements.<sup>33</sup>

**Cooperation based on a consensus of development priorities.**

Cooperation between China and CEECs has similar characteristics as South-South cooperation. China's own development experience shows that investment in infrastructure lays necessary foundation for poverty alleviation, not only because infrastructure construction itself directly generates economic growth, but also because it creates major opportunities for broad economic and social development. Therefore, a consensus between China and CEECs has been reached that cooperation should be centered

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33 Natasha Maric and Wei Ling, "Pragmatic Institutionalism: Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries", *World Economics and Politics*, No. 7, 2018, pp. 41-68.

on economic development, with infrastructure being the highest priority area of cooperation. When CEECs began to look for cooperation partners after the 2008 global financial crisis, China's pragmatic approach seemed most consistent with their development interests and long-term strategic interests. Through new development cooperation with partners along the Belt and Road routes, including CEECs, infrastructure construction can be strengthened, development bottlenecks be cleared, trade costs in a broad sense be reduced, and the construction of overseas industrial parks be promoted. At the same time, China's domestic market will be further opened up to complete the cycle of production and consumption and achieve common development by creating regional economic development conditions.<sup>34</sup>

It is evident that while China does not reject institutional arrangements when cooperating with other countries, including CEECs, within the BRI framework, it does not regard them as a prerequisite. Instead, cooperation mechanisms of various forms are built according to the needs of relevant parties, such as economic corridors, sub-regional cooperation, alignment of cooperation mechanisms, and industrial parks. As a new type of international development cooperation, the Belt and Road Initiative has created a flexible and pragmatic institutional paradigm, by following the principle of "building roads and bridges to cross mountains and rivers, as long as it promotes win-win cooperation and development."<sup>35</sup>

## Security and Order

This section discusses the link between development, security and order, i.e. the impact of China's development and its participation in international development cooperation on the construction of security and peace, and how the world order is shaped by the development-security nexus.

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34 Shen Minghui, "The Belt and Road Initiative, Trade Costs and New International Development Cooperation: A Perspective of Constructing Conditions for Regional Economic Development," *Foreign Affairs Review*, No.2, 2019, pp.1-28.

35 Li Xiangyang, "The Absence of Regional Economic Integration in Asia and the Development Orientation of the Belt and Road Initiative," *Social Sciences in China*, No.8, 2018, p.38.

## **Research on development-security nexus and China's practice**

Research about the development-security nexus first appeared after the Cold War and has become an important topic of international security research. Previously, development research mainly looked at domestic economic growth, while security research focused primarily on the geostrategic significance of the researched country. After the Cold War, with the rapid development of globalization, these internal and external factors became increasingly interlinked, resulting in mutual penetration and integration of development and security issues and policies. In other words, there are security implications of development policies and vice versa.

Given this, research on the development-security nexus attempts to develop a holistic response strategy.<sup>36</sup> The basic assumption is that economic development has crucial political, security and social implications, and that development and security can have a mutually supportive effect on each other. At both national and global levels, the close interaction and reciprocally causal relationship between development and security can be felt. Security is both an end and a means to achieve sustainable development; and by the same token, economic and social development is both the ultimate goal and a powerful tool to achieve sustainable security. Security policies can be a part of development policies because strengthened security also promotes development. Similarly, development policies can be a subdivision of security policies, because development in turn enhances security. For a society to achieve progress, it is necessary to continuously remove those factors of insecurity, and inclusiveness and equal development is conducive to enhancing security. Of course, it is not easy to achieve a favorable interaction between security and development where there is both more security and greater development. At the global level, to deal with "fragile states," to solve regional and local conflicts, and to create and maintain peace, development is indispensable. Without development, it is hardly possible for fragile states to

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36 Zhang Chun, "Development-Security Nexus: A Comparison of China-US-European Policies on Africa," *Chinese Journal of European Studies*, No.3, 2009, pp.69-73.

escape the vicious circle of instability and violence. Only when development and security are strengthened at the same time can countries truly move from conflict to peace; and only when social and political stability is maintained, can they provide basic conditions for economic and social development to achieve lasting success.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, development-security nexus research has a significant guiding function for international development cooperation.

China's knowledge concerning the link between development and security comes from its experience with reform and opening-up and from its participation in the process of East Asian economic integration. In the era of peace and development, maintaining basic political and social stability has created the necessary conditions for economic advancement. An export-oriented economy, high-level investments, mutual adaptation and continuous adjustment of institutions and markets have created miracles in large-scale poverty alleviation and economic growth. Deng Xiaoping's well-known saying, that "Development is the absolute principle," illustrates the fundamental significance of economic development to national security. Prioritizing economic development and cooperation in the exchanges with other countries does not only benefit China to achieve its sustainable development goals, but also serves to maintain international stability and a friendly external environment. Some scholars argue that since the launch of its reform and opening-up, China has adopted a major development-oriented security strategy in which it sets development goals based on its per capita GDP for different phases, pursues an integration of security and development interests, and commits to creating a peaceful external environment.<sup>38</sup> Regarding China's neighboring regions, it was the export-oriented economic development strategies of East Asian countries and regions which has created the East Asian economic miracle including its increased political stability. Prioritizing economic development has been

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37 Ling Wei, "Developmental Peace in East Asia and Its Implications for the Indo-Pacific," *International Affairs*, Vol.96, No.1, pp.193-195.

38 Zhong Feiteng, "Development-Oriented Security: A Grand Strategy of China," *Foreign Affairs Review*, 2013, No.6, p.16.

the key to long-term peace in East Asia since the 1980s,<sup>39</sup> as well as to the concurrence of China's rise and East Asian integration. Putting development above everything else, most East Asian countries not only promote economic growth through trade, foreign direct investment and manufacturing, but also strive to actively reduce poverty and close development gaps at national and regional levels. For them, development is the most urgent objective and the most fundamental challenge to be addressed, while inclusive and sustainable development is the driving force for regional cooperation and represents the strongest common interest of all countries.

### **From development cooperation to developmental peace**

The historic achievements of China's peaceful development have made its development experience the greatest soft power asset. "Peace through development" has become an important standard and practice for shaping the international order in its transition process. Based on the guiding principles of "shared development" and "development guidance," China has assumed an active leadership role in development issues on a series of global and regional platforms such as the UN, G20, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), to build a new type of South-South cooperation and shape the world order in the midst of an era of profound changes. In 2014, China proposed the Asian Security Concept, in which "sustainable security" was introduced as an important innovation to the vision of common, comprehensive and cooperative security.<sup>40</sup> This concept recognizes that development and security are two mutually dependent processes. Wherever a development agenda is given a higher priority, the more likely it is that peace will be maintained and cooperation promoted. For example, Western countries believe that the fundamental challenge for development cooperation with Africa is security,

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39 Stein Tonnesson, "Explaining East Asia's Developmental Peace: The Dividends of Economic Growth," *Global Asia*, Vol.10, No.4, 2015, pp.10-13.

40 Xi Jinping, "New Approach for Asian Security Cooperation: Remarks at the Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia," May 21, 2014, <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2014/0522/c1024-25048258.html>.

and only when security issues are resolved can real development be achieved. China, on the other hand, is inclined to believe that the solution to all the challenges facing Africa is development, and that the lack of security is due to insufficient sustainable development.<sup>41</sup>

The norm of developmental peace includes the following aspects. First, national security and economic development are highly related and deeply intertwined, with economic development being the means to achieve security, and maintaining domestic stability and avoiding international conflicts being necessary conditions for economic development. Second, prioritizing economic development is not only a constitutive norm that shapes the preferences, interests and identities of actors, but is also a practical and generative concept to build the basic framework and agenda for the interaction of international actors. Third, peace is built through development. When a state declares economic development as its primary goal, its foreign policy would follow a typical model. It strives for external and internal stability, adopts pragmatic strategies, tends to seek dialogue and negotiation when disputes and conflicts arise, and responds to security challenges in a way that best serves the goal of promoting regional and domestic economic development. When negotiation is difficult, disputes are first put aside to maintain basic stability, and direct confrontation or the use of force is rejected to avoid causing substantial damage to the overall situation of economic development cooperation or settling disputes at the expense of development. Thus, the more countries give priority to economic development, the more effectively they can defuse or resolve security challenges and conflicts, and the more likely they are to maintain peace and cooperation.<sup>42</sup>

The Belt and Road Initiative also reflects the idea of developmental peace. As a first step, it promotes strategic communication and policy consultation to create stable political conditions for common development;

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41 Zhang Chun, "Development-Security Nexus: A Comparison of China-US-Europe Policies Towards Africa," p.90.

42 Wei Ling, "Local Practices and Regional Order: ASEAN, China and the Indo-Pacific Construct," *Southeast Asian Affairs*, No.2, 2020, pp.9-10.

in addition, the close intertwining of development interests is intended to deepen political mutual trust and people-to-people bonds, maintain the cooperative order, and build a culture of peaceful cooperation.

The China-Myanmar Economic Corridor is a flagship project of China-Myanmar Belt and Road cooperation, and a model case for development-security nexus. China has repeatedly emphasized that the construction of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor should start from the most vulnerable areas of Myanmar, namely the improvement of infrastructure and the provision of basic public services such as roads and electricity. The corridor starts in China's Yunnan Province and continues southward to Mandalay in Myanmar, extending eastward to New Yangon City and westward to the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone. The Y-shape design connects Myanmar's most developed Yangon region and the least developed northern region to close the regional development gap. In January 2020, the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone deep-water port project was officially launched, marking the transition of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor from planning to construction.

For Myanmar, the project will help improve the overall infrastructure level, create local job opportunities, promote sustainable development of the local economy, and support positive interaction between its domestic development and security, thus achieving political and social stability. In fact, a long-term development perspective is the only way to overcome Myanmar's chronic fragility of its economy and governing institutions.

For China, the project will help safeguard the stability of northern Myanmar and boost its economic development, which is directly related to peace and harmony along the more than 2,000-kilometer border between China and Myanmar and the neighborhood security of China. Moreover, the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor has also created opportunities for China's southwestern provinces to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative and achieve higher quality growth. In addition, the project, together with the China-Myanmar oil and gas pipeline, will not only help enhance China's energy security, but also greatly improve the power supply situation in areas

along the route in Myanmar.<sup>43</sup>

Building peace by fostering development is China's guiding idea when participating in international security affairs and for resolving international conflicts. In the Middle East, such idea is practiced on both national and regional scales. At the national level, China calls for respecting the development rights of the Middle East countries, and facilitating the construction of major infrastructure projects to strengthen people's livelihood and enhance the governance capability of target countries through development cooperation. At the regional level, China uses the Belt and Road Initiative as a platform for regional infrastructure connectivity and a community of shared interests to gradually realize regional peace.<sup>44</sup> Developmental peace is also applied as a guiding principle to the Palestine-Israel issue. President Xi Jinping pointed out the necessity of comprehensively implementing measures and promoting peace with development in his talks with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, highlighting the value of the development issue to advance Palestine-Israel cooperation. "China regards both Palestine and Israel as important partners along the Belt and Road, and stands ready to carry out mutually beneficial cooperation in line with the idea of promoting peace with development to continue supporting Palestine in speeding up its development," Xi said, "China proposes to launch China-Palestine-Israel trilateral dialogue mechanism, and coordinate and push forward major projects aiding Palestine."<sup>45</sup> In Africa, China supports and encourages African countries to choose development paths that suit their national conditions. In accordance with the principle of sovereignty and non-interference, China continues to strengthen common interests with African countries through the expansion and deepening of economic ties and mutually beneficial cooperation. In this way, China has further enhanced its capability to participate in

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43 Wei Ling, "The Belt and Road Initiative: Building a New Type of International Development Cooperation," *Belt and Road Initiative Observation*, No.3, 2020, pp.9-15.

44 Sun Degang and Zhang Dandan, "Peace through Development: Ideas and Paths for China's Participation in Middle East Security," *Global Review*, No.6, 2019, pp.109-129.

45 "Xi Jinping Holds Talks with President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine," *People's Daily*, July 19, 2017.

African security affairs and to maintain and build peace, which enables it to exert more influence on war-torn regions and help these regions restore peace under the framework of the UN and other multilateral mechanisms. China has invested in a complete petroleum industrial chain in Sudan and established close bilateral economic ties with the country. For this very reason, China has the willingness and capability to play an important role in the Darfur issue. China, the UN, the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) have worked together in persuading Sudan to accept the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the “Annan Plan.” Through mutually beneficial cooperation and the provision of security public goods, China has played an important role in building a secure environment in Africa by maintaining peace through development.<sup>46</sup>

## Conclusion

With the collective rise of emerging economies and the appearance of new types of South-South cooperation, the global South is playing an increasingly important role in shaping the world order.<sup>47</sup> How China and the world interact and shape each other in the midst of an ongoing period of profound changes is a major theme of the times in the 21st century. International development cooperation is indeed an important channel and focal point for China to interact with the world and shape the global order. This article, using development as the core concept, tries to clarify the evolutionary path and trend of international development cooperation by discussing development aid and cooperation, development knowledge and paradigms, institution-building and practice, and development security and order. It also looks at how China's propositions and practices regarding these aspects have promoted the progress of international development cooperation and shaped the world order.

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46 Yang Na, “China and the European Union’s Competition and Cooperation in Africa: The Perspective of Security-Development Nexus,” *International Economic Review*, No.6, 2020, p.157.

47 Rory Horner and David Hulme, “From International to Global Development: New Geographies of 21st Century Development,” *Development and Change*, Vol.50, No.2, 2019, pp.347-378.

China's remarkable economic rise has of course raised suspicions, criticisms, and has even triggered countermeasures against how China has used its power to promote development. For example, when China shared economic growth with its neighbors to enhance East Asian economic integration, China was criticized for its alleged "charm offensive" against Southeast Asian countries.<sup>48</sup> China was suspected of conducting "neo-colonialism" for its increased investment and improved China-Africa economic and trade relations.<sup>49</sup> China was accused of dividing Europe for its pragmatic cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries, and the Belt and Road Initiative was labeled the Chinese version of the "Marshall Plan."<sup>50</sup> The Asia Rebalance strategy and the Indo-Pacific strategy launched by the United States after the global financial crisis of 2008 may also be considered countermeasures against a rising China's capabilities to influence the international power structure and shape the world order. These accusations and countermeasures reflect the deep-rooted Western-centrism in international politics, the power politics mentality that a strong nation is bound to be hegemonic, and the pre-set geopolitical strategic assumptions.

Whenever China promotes and participates in international development cooperation, it undeniably has the consideration of turning the advantages of geographical proximity into advantages of pragmatic development cooperation, and also plans to transform the advantages of economic growth into strategic opportunities for sustainable development. As China expands its overseas investment and projects, its development and security interests in the relevant regions naturally grow accordingly, generating specific security needs and geopolitical goals for protecting overseas interests. For that purpose, China needs to make policy adjustments

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48 Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007.

49 Amsalu K. Addis and Zhu Zuping, "Criticism of Neo-colonialism: Clarification of Sino-African Cooperation and Its Implication to the West," *Journal of Chinese Economic and Business Studies*, 2018.

50 Jonathan Holslag, "How China's New Silk Road Threatens European Trade," *The International Spectator*, 2017, Vol.52, No.1, pp.46-60; Jeremy Garlick, "China's Economic Diplomacy in Central and Eastern Europe: A Case of Offensive Mercantilism?" *Europe-Asia Studies*; Jin Ling, "The Belt and Road Initiative: China's Marshall Plan?" *International Studies*, No.1, 2015, pp.88-99.

to relevant external security strategies to more actively and effectively protect its growing assets.<sup>51</sup> With the advancement of development cooperation and the continuous expansion and deepening of common interests, the relevant geopolitical effects will be further amplified. Consequently, it is more necessary than ever to advance with the times, learn from the experience of promoting equality, mutual benefit and practical results in South-South cooperation, explore the knowledge and paradigmatic innovation of international development cooperation, and advance the transformation of relevant international institutions, norms and practices.

Facts have clearly demonstrated that geostrategic competition and zero-sum game can be overcome in the process of international development cooperation, and mutual benefit and win-win cooperation can be achieved if development is taken as a priority and orientation, with an open and inclusive attitude. For example, the model of third-party cooperation in the Belt and Road Initiative can open up sufficient policy space to not only attract high-quality resources and enhance cooperation effectiveness, but also increase transparency and mutual trust among all parties concerned. Cooperation between China and the European Union in the construction of the Croatian Pelješac Bridge is a good example of transcending geopolitical thinking in favor of a win-win situation for all parties.<sup>52</sup>

If development is China's greatest soft power asset, then we need to not only tell China's own development story, but more importantly, promote and lead international development cooperation in the wake of momentous changes brought about by the rise of the global South. China needs to promote the creation of knowledge and research on the new development paradigm, support institution-building and local practice of international development cooperation, endorse a favorable development-security interaction, and shape a world order of developmental peace. 🌐

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51 Mingjiang Li, "The Belt and Road Initiative: Geoeconomics and Indo-Pacific Security Competition," *International Affairs*, Vol.96, No.1, 2020, pp.173, 169-187.

52 Wei Ling, "The Belt and Road Initiative: Building a New Type of International Development Cooperation," pp.14-15.