

# Global Governance Initiative: China's Proposal to Build a More Just and Equitable Global Governance System

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**Abstract:** The Global Governance Initiative (GGI) is another important public good that China has contributed to the world, following the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative. By systematically analyzing the historical evolution, core concepts, and contemporary value of the GGI, this article illuminates its role, as a Chinese proposal presented amidst the global changes unseen in a century, in building a more just and equitable global governance system and striving for a community with a shared future for humanity. The proposal of the GGI comes at a time when the deficit in global governance is continuing to grow, and the governance system is in desperate need of reform. The five core concepts of the GGI have significant theoretical and practical value, pointing the way forward for humanity as a whole.

**Keywords:** community with a shared future for humanity, global governance, Global Governance Initiative

On September 1, 2025, Chinese President Xi Jinping solemnly proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the “Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Plus” meeting, which has since received a widespread global response and recognition. Following the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), the GGI once again offers Chinese wisdom and solutions for the world, focusing on a subject of our times, namely, what kind of global

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governance system to build and how to reform and improve global governance. This initiative has provided conceptual guidance and action plans for building a more just and equitable global governance system.

## Historical Context

Global governance refers to the processes and systems in which governments worldwide, alongside international organizations and non-state actors, collectively address transnational issues and global challenges through consultation, cooperation, and rulemaking. Starting from scratch, the existing global governance system has undergone a long evolutionary process, from regional to global and from loose to standardized, making historic contributions to world peace and development. At the same time, however, the mismatch, incompatibility, and disharmony between global governance and the needs of the times have grown increasingly evident. Today, global governance has reached a crossroads where new reforms are badly needed.

### I. The origin and evolution of global governance

Historically, as early as the 19th century, the world already witnessed a series of attempts at global governance. The Vienna System, formed after the Napoleonic Wars, was the first attempt to maintain peace in Europe through coordination among major powers, and is considered the prototype of global governance. In the second half of the 19th century, with the progress of the Second Industrial Revolution and the gradual formation of global markets, international organizations such as the Universal Postal Union, the International Telegraph Union, and the International Committee of the Red Cross were created, bringing global governance into its early stage of practice. During the same period, the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Conventions initiated a governance model that used international treaties to regulate behavior and resolve disputes.

The horrors of World War I made it clear that relying solely on force could not preserve the international order. Explorations about global governance continued, driven by the desire for peace. In 1919, the League of Nations (LN) was founded. As the first worldwide intergovernmental organization, the LN shouldered the lofty historical mission of preventing another world

war. The primary goal of the LN was to promote international cooperation, maintain world peace, and settle international disputes, ensuring international security through a collective security mechanism. However, due to its inherent structural flaws and struggles among member states, the LN failed in its mission to prevent aggression and eventually dissolved. Despite its failure, the LN's pioneering practice in safeguarding collective security provided profound lessons and valuable experience for the creation of the United Nations (UN) after World War II.

In 1945, after the trauma of the two world wars, the international community established the UN, commencing the most ambitious attempt at international cooperation in human history. Thereafter, the global governance system, in the modern sense, gradually took shape. Since its inception, the UN has witnessed the explorations and practices by various nations in preserving peace, building their homes, and seeking cooperation. The UN has become the core platform of the global governance system. Based on the UN Charter, the current international order has established fundamental principles such as sovereign equality among states and non-interference in others' internal affairs, and laid the basic norms governing international relations. The international system centered on the UN champions consultation, consensus, and multilateral co-governance, serving as a crucial pillar of contemporary global governance, a significant guarantee for human progress, and the best solution for managing global problems.

Following the end of the Cold War, globalization accelerated significantly, bringing with it a range of global challenges. Global governance gained salience and experienced development and improvement. In 1990, former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt first mooted the concept of "global governance." The Commission on Global Governance was established in 1992 and comprised 28 eminent international figures. The commission published a report titled "Our Global Neighborhood" in 1995, spreading the idea of global governance. During this period, the participants in global governance grew to include governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations. The connotations and denotations of global governance expanded, from traditional fields, such as security, economy, and finance, to global issues, including climate change, public health, counter-terrorism, and cybersecurity.

Governance platforms constantly emerged, and the Global South was on the rise. Countries worldwide were more actively engaged in global affairs, establishing new governance mechanisms and platforms one after another, notably the Group of Twenty (G20) and BRICS.

Today, global governance has an irreplaceable role in maintaining world peace and stability while promoting common development. In the security field, the international system with the UN at its core, the world order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter have provided institutional guarantees for the world's overall peace, stability, and development. In the economic field, the multilateral trade and financial system has facilitated the global allocation of resources and contributed to the postwar economic recovery alongside the expansion of globalization. In terms of addressing global challenges, the role of global governance is increasingly indispensable in tackling trans-domain challenges such as nuclear proliferation and the utilization of atomic energy, weapons of mass destruction, climate change, and public health. Immersed in the culture of global governance, the international community has basically reached consensus on the need for global responses to global problems.

## **II. The current predicament and challenges facing global governance**

As times change, the mismatch and incompatibility between the global governance system and the international situation have become increasingly apparent. The existing global governance system has proved increasingly incapable of addressing global problems, including political disorders, economic imbalances, institutional dysfunctions, and out-of-control security. The difficulty of resolving the global governance predicament has led to a persistently widening deficit, which is manifested in the following four ways.

First, a leadership deficit caused by the dominant power's evasion of responsibility. The present global governance system originates from the hegemonic system established after World War II under the leadership of the United States. In essence, it represents a continuation of Western power and influence. With the gradual decline of its hegemony, the United States has shown a significantly diminished willingness and capacity to assume international responsibilities, shifting from a "propeller" of the postwar

international order to an “obstructor” of today’s global governance. Blindly believing in the so-called position of strength, the incumbent Trump administration has been pursuing “America First” by withdrawing the United States from international treaties and organizations. It refuses to provide public goods for global governance while attempting to enjoy the fruits of a reshaped global governance system. In the midst of global crises and challenges, the United States is reluctant to promote or lead reforms of the global governance system and international order. Instead, it is standing in the way of the creation of a worldwide synergy, for the sake of its selfish interests, failing to play its due role as a “leader” and betraying the expectations of the international community. Lacking in virtue, the United States places its own interests above those of the world, attempting to shift domestic problems and risks onto the international community, thereby running counter to the international order. The United States has become the “gravedigger” of the global governance system it created.

Second, dysfunctional governance institutions and resultant low efficiency. The essence of global governance is to provide public goods in a fair, equitable, timely, and effective manner. In reality, however, there is an evident dilemma regarding collective action—i.e., the authority of international mechanisms has been eroded, resulting in low efficiency in governance institutions and rendering effective governance difficult. For instance, the UN Security Council has convened emergency meetings on regional conflicts, such as those between Russia and Ukraine, Palestine and Israel, and Iran and Israel, which have hardly produced any real results due to their lack of binding force. The World Trade Organization (WTO), as the hub of global trade governance, has given the Trump administration free rein in its tariff policy, due to the paralysis of its dispute settlement mechanism in the absence of a functioning Appellate Body. When it comes to climate change, global climate governance mechanisms, including the Paris Agreement, have been severely obstructed by the inconsistent policies of certain countries, fueling pessimism about the future of multilateral climate governance. Poor execution by the existing global governance institutions and their lack of binding force have often led to the malfunction and inaction of multilateral mechanisms, seriously undermining the effectiveness of the global governance system.

Third, the Global North–South disconnect due to shifts in the international balance of power. The transformation of global governance is closely related to changes in the relative strength of international forces. Over the years, the global governance system has formed a core–periphery structure led by the United States and dominated by the West. In this system, the vast majority of Global South countries, including emerging economies and developing nations, have long lacked a voice in international rulemaking, resulting in ineffective protection of their legitimate rights and interests. Today, the world is undergoing profound changes not seen in a century. The rise of the East (and the Global South) and the decline of the West (and the Global North) are unstoppable. Changing times and circumstances necessitate the entry of global governance into a new historical epoch. However, the existing international governance system by and large continues to represent the post-World War II or post-Cold War international balance of power, falling short of the reality that tectonic changes have occurred globally since the start of the 21st century. Accordingly, the developing world has put forth reasonable demands, calling for a global governance system that better reflects the changes taking place in the international landscape and more equitably conveys the wishes of most countries, especially those of emerging markets and developing nations. Faced with these legitimate demands, developed countries have displayed great reluctance, disagreement, and rejection, even attempting to solidify dominance over global governance with their inherent advantages. Therefore, the road ahead remains long and challenging for developing countries to achieve equal rights as their developed counterparts in global governance.

Fourth, lagging governance amidst the burgeoning round of scientific and technological revolution. Currently, a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, represented by artificial intelligence (AI), is well underway, reshaping production patterns and human lifestyles at an unprecedented pace and scale while profoundly impacting the global economic landscape and governance system. The rapid advancement of emerging technologies, including AI, quantum computing, and biotechnology, has created new demands, new challenges, and new risks in areas such as law, security, employment, and ethics. Governance issues keep arising, resulting in numerous gaps and “gray areas” in global governance. Take AI as an example:

for countries around the world, the “singularity” moment is approaching in terms of technological development, alongside a critical moment for regulatory governance. However, the generalization of the concept of national security—or even worse, the weaponization of technological advantages in geopolitical rivalry—by some major countries has severely undermined the cohesion of global AI governance. The mutable, trans-domain, and compound nature of the current round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation is constantly expanding the scope of global governance while blurring the boundary of secure development. Humanity urgently needs to free itself from the path dependence on traditional rules and abandon outdated governance models, rigid regulatory frameworks, and geopolitical mindsets.

### Core Concepts

Today, the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation, and global governance has reached a new crossroads. Amidst the once-in-a-century global changes, Xi has solemnly proposed the GGI. The five core concepts of the GGI—staying committed to sovereign equality, staying committed to international rule of law, staying committed to multilateralism, staying committed to the people-centered approach, and staying committed to real results—have provided conceptual guidance and action plans for narrowing the deficit in global governance and building a more just and equitable global governance system, thereby effectively responding to global challenges.

#### **I. The GGI has been proposed to address the challenges of our times by systematically tackling global governance dilemmas**

The GGI was proposed based on China’s profound insights into and accurate understanding of the current predicament of global governance. Its core goal is to foster a just and equitable global governance system.

First, redressing historical injustices. At present, once-in-a-century changes are accelerating worldwide, catalyzing historical shifts in the international balance of power. Most remarkably, the Global South, a community of emerging markets and developing countries, is collectively rising. Today, the Global South accounts for more than two-thirds of the world’s population and contributes as much as 80% of global economic growth. It



has become a key force in maintaining international peace, promoting world development, and improving global governance.<sup>1</sup> However, under current international mechanisms, the Global South's representation, voice, and influence within the global governance system remain significantly inadequate, resulting in substantial historical injustices. Looking ahead, the Global South holds the key to a genuinely stable and better-off world. Therefore, it must play a bigger role in global governance. The GGI aims to end the monopoly of global governance by a few countries, enhance the representation and voice of developing countries in international affairs, and promote greater democracy in international relations, striving for global governance that features shared benefits through extensive consultation and collaboration.

Second, upholding the postwar international order. After World War II, humanity, upon deep reflection on the bitter lessons of the two world wars, established the international system centered on the UN, created an international order underpinned by international law, and laid the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. For the past 80 years, the world has generally maintained peace, with global governance making historic contributions to world peace, development, and the progress of human civilization. In recent years, however, certain countries have been practicing unilateralism, protectionism, and power politics to sustain their hegemony. They have been pursuing “great-power competition” on the world stage, undermining the authority of the UN with their hegemonic, high-handed, and bullying acts. Today, humanity once again faces a choice between peace and war, dialogue and confrontation, and win-win cooperation and zero-sum games. As Xi noted, “The purposes and principles of the UN Charter are not dated.” Conversely, the fact that they have not been effectively implemented is to blame for the rivalries and injustices of today.<sup>2</sup> “There is only one system, one order and one set of rules in the world, and all

<sup>1</sup> “Zhu shengkelusi zong lingshi wang huijun zai ‘zeren bao’ fabiao tiwei ‘quanqiu zhili changyi—zhongguo zhihui dui shijie xin gongxian’ shuming wenzhang [Consul General of China in Santa Cruz Wang Huijun published an article titled ‘Global Governance Initiative: China’s New Contribution to the World’ in *El Deber*],” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, September 15, 2025, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zwbd\\_673032/wjzs/202509/t20250916\\_11709221.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zwbd_673032/wjzs/202509/t20250916_11709221.shtml).

<sup>2</sup> “Xi Stresses Urgency of Reforming Global Governance,” October 14, 2015, [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-10/14/content\\_22182736.htm](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-10/14/content_22182736.htm).



countries should act within this framework, rather than do whatever suits them or reinvent the wheel.”<sup>1</sup> China’s proposal of the GGI reaffirms its commitment to staunchly safeguarding the standing and authority of the UN, upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, defending the authority of the international rule of law, and standing firmly on the right side of history and on the side of human progress.

Third, improving the global governance system. The current global governance system is increasingly incapable of responding to the call of our times. The supply–demand imbalance in global governance is increasingly noticeable. Improving global governance has become a pressing global issue that requires concerted efforts. Despite this context, some countries are adopting a “use it when it serves our interests and abandon it when it doesn’t” approach to global governance, turning a deaf ear to the legitimate demands and just calls of developing nations while attempting to discard the existing global governance system. The GGI does not seek to unravel the entire system or start all over again. It aims to reform and improve the global governance system to make it more just and equitable, thereby delivering greater benefits to all peoples. Upholding the unity of ontology, epistemology, and methodology, the GGI provides concrete conceptual guidance and detailed implementation pathways for throwing off the shackles of “Western-centrism” that views a small bunch of countries as dominators of the world and establishing global governance mechanisms that include all countries and regions, with the people of all countries as fundamental participants and beneficiaries.

Fourth, caring about the future of humanity. Humanity has a bright future. However, that future will not come automatically. Given the chronic problems and new challenges the world faces, along with the ensuing anxiety and confusion, if every country muddles along without taking responsibility or action, the future of humanity will indeed be bleak. As Xi emphasized, “All countries need to demonstrate a strong commitment to their global responsibilities in the face of daunting global challenges. Indeed, they need to determine a decisive direction for humanity at this juncture. We must take

<sup>1</sup> “Xi Jinping Meets with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, October 26, 2021, [https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/zy/jj/2020zt/kjgzbdffyq/202110/t20211026\\_10069913.html](https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/zy/jj/2020zt/kjgzbdffyq/202110/t20211026_10069913.html).

action instead of simply watching as bystanders, and endeavor to shape the future of humanity.”<sup>1</sup> For this purpose, the UN convened a Summit of the Future in September 2024, calling for solidarity and cooperation to seize opportunities and address challenges for a better common future. The reform of global governance will shape the future of humanity. The GGI strives to write a new chapter for humanity sharing the same future, bearing in mind the holistic development of the world in the long term.

## **II. The five core concepts of the GGI embody China’s wisdom**

The GGI has five core concepts. First, staying committed to sovereign equality. The essence of sovereign equality is that all countries, regardless of size, strength, or wealth, shall have their sovereignty and dignity respected, their domestic affairs free from external interference, the right to independently choose their social system and development path, and the right to participate in, make decisions in, and benefit from the global governance process as equals. This is the foremost premise of global governance. Second, staying committed to international rule of law. In particular, the purposes and principles of the UN Charter are universally recognized basic norms of international relations. They must be upheld unwaveringly. This is the fundamental safeguard for global governance. Third, staying committed to multilateralism. The principle of extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefits must be upheld. Global affairs should be decided by all, the governance system built by all, and the fruits of governance shared by all. Practice of unilateralism must be rejected. This is the basic pathway of global governance. Fourth, staying committed to the people-centered approach. The people of all nations are the fundamental actors in global governance, and their well-being is its ultimate benefit. Global governance should be improved through reforms to inspire a greater sense of fulfillment, safety, and well-being among the people of all countries. This is the underpinning value of global governance. Fifth, staying committed to real results. Effective global governance is essentially one that resolves real problems. This is an important principle of global governance.<sup>2</sup>

These five concepts reflect China’s profound thinking on reforming the

<sup>1</sup> Xi Jinping: *The Governance of China (Vol. III)* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2020), 535.

<sup>2</sup> “Concept Paper on the Global Governance Initiative,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, September 1, 2025, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/wjbxw/202509/t20250901\\_11699912.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/wjbxw/202509/t20250901_11699912.html).

global governance system and represent an interpretation and application of the governance philosophy of Chinese civilization for the present era.

First, respecting rules and order. The Chinese translation of “governance” is “*zhili*” (治理). In traditional Chinese culture, the character *zhi* (治) consisted of the radical *shui* (水, meaning “water”) and the phonetic *tai* (台),<sup>1</sup> emphasizing the maintenance of a dynamic balance, as when directing the flow of water; the original meaning of *li* (理) was jade processing,<sup>2</sup> stressing the need to follow natural laws, just as processing jade along its texture. Therefore, the global governance China advocates emphasizes guiding and following the trends of the times in our action, rather than pursuing coercive control or unilateralism; it rejects creating something out of thin air but calls for discovering and following inherent laws; it has no intent to reinvent the wheel when problems arise, but insists on solving the problems when they are identified and fostering a more just and equitable global governance system through improvement and innovation for the greater benefit of all peoples of the world.

Second, staying committed to equality-based co-governance. Given the current unjust and inequitable global governance system, China has integrated its traditional governance philosophy, which values “harmony without uniformity” and “harmony among all nations,” with contemporary principles such as collaboration, participation, and shared benefits. Its advocacy that all countries should participate in global governance on an equal footing has provided broader space, alongside discourse platforms, for the Global South and laid a solid foundation for building a community with a shared future for humanity.

Third, applying a holistic approach. The five core concepts of the GGI are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing, with sovereign equality as the premise, international rule of law as the safeguard, multilateralism as the pathway, people-centeredness as the underpinning value, and results-oriented action as the practical principle. Together, these concepts form a systematically integrated, organic governance framework. Drawing on the principles of

<sup>1</sup> “Shuowen jiezi: zhi [Explaining simple and analyzing compound characters: zhi],” accessed October 15, 2025, [https://www.shuowen.cn/%E6%B2%BB\\_zi/](https://www.shuowen.cn/%E6%B2%BB_zi/).

<sup>2</sup> “Shuowen jiezi: li [Explaining simple and analyzing compound characters: li],” accessed October 15, 2025, [https://www.shuowen.cn/%E7%90%86\\_zi/](https://www.shuowen.cn/%E7%90%86_zi/).

systematic thinking, pragmatism, and balance embedded in traditional Chinese culture, the GGI has incorporated a holistic approach into the reform and improvement of the global governance system in various fields at different levels, fully demonstrating China's governance wisdom and sense of historical mission as a responsible major country.

Fourth, pursuing effective governance. "The greatest truths are the simplest, and hard work is the key." As a saying from *Zhouli* (Rites of the Zhou) reads, "Instead of talking the talk, we must walk the walk." The GGI emphasizes results-oriented action and has set out, through its Concept Paper, clear arrangements and plans for the way forward. Through systematic efforts at the governance level, the GGI can provide viable pathways and platforms for effectively bridging the various governance deficits the world faces in areas such as development, security, and civilization.

Fifth, following a people-centered doctrine. People-centeredness is a value long cherished in Chinese culture. The GGI has creatively proposed a people-centered approach as the underpinning value of global governance, aiming to ensure that the people of all nations jointly participate in and share the fruits of global governance, making them true masters of the world community. The GGI seeks improvement of global governance through reforms to inspire, among the people of all nations, a greater sense of fulfillment through accelerated common development, a greater sense of safety through more effective response to humanity's common challenges, and a greater sense of well-being through advancing the common interests of different countries and communities.

### **III. The GGI will form an organic whole with China's three other global initiatives, providing comprehensive support for tackling the deficits facing the world today**

The GGI is another global initiative that China has proposed following the GDI, GSI, and GCI. These four initiatives are integrated and mutually complementary. With differing focuses, they form an organic whole, offering a systematic solution to global deficits in development, security, civilization, and governance through concerted efforts.

The GDI aims to narrow the global development deficit. In recent years, sustainable development has faced significant challenges due to multiple

factors, including geopolitical conflicts, the COVID-19 pandemic, the evolving international landscape, and economic anti-globalization. Uneven and inadequate development among countries has become increasingly noticeable, resulting in growing income inequality and development imbalances, which have become the most pressing issue facing the international community. Development is the eternal pursuit of human society and holds the key to the common well-being of all peoples. Failure to handle development issues properly will risk losing the “master key” to solving all problems. The GDI emphasizes the importance of development as the foundation of global governance. Staying committed to six core principles,<sup>1</sup> it plays a guiding role in international efforts toward common development.

The GSI aims to tackle the global security deficit. Security provides a pivotal foundation for steady and sustained development. It is the cornerstone of a stable country and a peaceful world. Humanity is an indivisible security community. However, a small number of countries stubbornly cling to erroneous mentalities such as hegemonism, power politics, and zero-sum games. They always put their own interests first, pursuing security and development at the expense of others. Their obsession with “small circles” and “great-power competition” has once again confronted humanity with a historic choice between peace and war, dialogue and confrontation, and win-win cooperation and zero-sum games. Moreover, international and regional hotspots, along with various security issues, are constantly emerging. There is a risk of deterioration of the overall security environment. The GSI highlights the importance of security as a priority of global governance. Staying committed to common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security, the GSI calls for addressing traditional and non-traditional security threats through a systematic approach, thereby offering a Chinese solution to the global security predicament and contributing to building a community of shared security.

The GCI aims to address the “clash of civilizations.” Over the years, the West, by leveraging its economic, technological, military, and international governance primacy, has been instilling in the world erroneous theories

<sup>1</sup> The six core principles are as follows: staying committed to development as a priority; staying committed to a people-centered approach; staying committed to benefits for all; staying committed to innovation-driven development; staying committed to harmony between man and nature; staying committed to results-oriented actions.

such as “civilizational superiority,” “Western-centrism,” and “clash of civilizations.” The West has attempted to sustain its international status by dwarfing or denigrating other civilizations, and even maliciously inciting antagonism and discord among them. Such practices have not only weakened the foundation of multilateral cooperation but also hindered the progress of human society. The GCI stresses the importance of civilization as the soul of global governance. Recognizing the diversity of human civilizations, the GCI advocates coexistence, exchanges, and mutual learning among civilizations on an equal footing, as these are crucial sources of impetus for human progress, world peace, and development. Toward this end, the GCI has put forth “Four Advocacies,”<sup>1</sup> drawing up an ambitious blueprint for world civilization in which countries treasure their own distinct heritages, appreciate other cultures, and promote shared prosperity.

The GGI aims to bridge the global governance deficit. UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned, “We are edging towards the unimaginable—a powder keg that risks engulfing the world.”<sup>2</sup> Global governance is going astray, with the existing system on the verge of chaos, disorientation, and even collapse. The various traditional and non-traditional threats that keep popping up have posed, both objectively and subjectively, higher requirements for global governance. In this context, a few countries, driven by self-interest, have demonstrated a lower willingness to participate in global governance. They have reduced their provision of public goods while continuing to restrict Global South countries from taking a more active role in global governance. As a result, the current global governance system is facing a growing imbalance between supply and demand, as well as rising tensions between old and new. Some countries have evolved into major saboteurs of the global governance system, attempting to politicize, instrumentalize, and even weaponize the existing international governance organizations and platforms. The GGI accentuates the importance of effective governance. It contains five core

<sup>1</sup> The GCI advocates the respect for the diversity of civilizations, the common values of humanity, the importance of inheritance and innovation of civilizations, and robust international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation.

<sup>2</sup> “Secretary-General’s Remarks at the Opening of the General Debate of the Seventy-Ninth Session of the General Assembly [Trilingual, as Delivered, Scroll Down for All-English and All-French],” September 24, 2024, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statements/2024-09-24/secretary-generals-remarks-the-opening-of-the-general-debate-of-the-seventy-ninth-session-of-the-general-assembly-trilingual-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english-and>.

concepts, seeking to provide means and platforms for effectively narrowing various deficits through systematic efforts, building a more just and equitable global governance system, and striving for a community with a shared future for humanity.

### Contemporary Value

Focusing on current challenges and the future of humanity, the GGI has drawn a new blueprint for global governance. It will generate strong impetus for building a community with a shared future for humanity, and guide China's practice in global governance as a responsible major country. Therefore, the GGI carries rich contemporary value.

#### **I. Drawing a new blueprint for global governance**

First, steering global governance in the right direction. Today, global governance has once again reached a crossroads in history, and its future course will have a profound impact on the development of all countries, particularly emerging markets and developing nations, on the peace, prosperity, and stability of the whole world, and on the progress of human civilization. The GGI has its roots in the time-honored Chinese civilization. It embodies China's firm commitment to the right path, broad vision in pursuing the common good for the world, and readiness to help others while developing itself. China's advocacy for harmony without uniformity has transcended the West's arrogance and hegemonic practices. Combining China's traditional worldviews with the principles of contemporary global governance, such as extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, the GGI strives for a community with a shared future for humanity, in contrast to the West's "binary oppositions," which are essentially narrow-minded and selfish. The GGI balances multiple relationships, including development and security, self-interests and common good, fairness and justice, and rules and order. It follows a coordinated, pragmatic, and balanced approach, eclipsing the West's self-centered obsession with supremacy. With an entirely new vision and line of thinking, the GGI offers direction and guidance for reforming and improving the global governance system, outlining a workable blueprint for achieving a better world for humanity.



Second, answering the question of who takes charge of global governance. The GGI pays close attention to the interests and demands of developing countries and is committed to enhancing their representation and voice in global governance and promoting a more just and equitable global governance system. Xi emphasized, “World affairs should be handled through extensive consultation, not dictated by those with more muscles.”<sup>1</sup> China will always be a reliable friend and sincere partner of other developing countries, and the GGI will endeavor to enhance “Southern voices” in global governance. It will guide the world in finding the maximum convergence of interests among all countries, regardless of their cultures and levels of development. The global governance system will become more diversified, democratic, and law-based, shifting from “Western-centrism” toward “pluralistic co-governance.”

Third, optimizing the efficiency of global governance. As a Chinese saying goes, “Knowing is not that difficult, but doing is.” The GGI has opened up a new, practical path to addressing the growing global challenges. At present, multilateral mechanisms—and multilateralism itself—are under serious threat due to the complex and volatile international situation, particularly the bullying acts by some countries using strength to intimidate the weak. Meanwhile, a new round of scientific and technological revolution is sweeping the globe. Governance deficiencies in new domains such as the deep sea, the polar regions, the outer space, the Internet, and AI have become more acute, further widening the global governance deficit. A novel governance paradigm that transcends zero-sum game mentality and balances equity and efficiency is urgently needed to resolve the above problems, old or new. The GGI is not a simple repudiation of the past, but aims to “identify and solve problems.” It seeks to reform, improve, and upgrade the current international system and global governance mechanisms by upholding them, harnessing their strengths, and avoiding their weaknesses. The five core concepts of the GGI form a feasible path for global governance that is guiding conceptually, sympathetic emotionally, and workable practically, enhancing humanity’s confidence and capacity to overcome complex challenges.

<sup>1</sup> “Full Text: Address by Chinese President Xi Jinping at Conference Marking 70th Anniversary of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence,” June 28, 2024, <https://english.news.cn/20240628/71733dd6f26441d4965dbb1a937e21ef/c.html>.

## II. Boosting the building of a community with a shared future for humanity

In 2013, Xi propounded the idea of building a community with a shared future for humanity, answering a question raised by the world, history, and the times: where is humanity headed? Amidst the once-in-a-century global changes, his proposal demonstrated China's profound concern for humanity's future, offered spiritual guidance for the sustainable development of human civilization, and illuminated the path forward for the world. As a crucial link in building a community with a shared future for humanity, the GGI can provide a powerful boost to realizing this vision.

First, charting a reliable path for humanity's continued interdependence. The interdependence of humankind is an irreversible historical trend and the bedrock upon which human civilization has persistently progressed. Currently, however, a combination of hegemonism, unilateralism, zero-sum game mentality, and anti-globalization sentiments has posed unprecedented challenges to humanity's interdependence and sustainable development, rendering peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation among nations increasingly difficult. If this trend continues, world peace and development will be jeopardized, and the risk of conflict or war will significantly rise. In light of this, the GGI strives to reform and refine the current international order and governance mechanisms, promoting their self-innovation in tune with changing times and encouraging all countries to contribute to their improvement through collaborative efforts, thereby solidifying the international basis for interdependence and paving a new, historical path for lifting the world out of its current predicament.

Second, serving as a driver for true multilateralism. As Xi said, "Multilateralism is the shared aspiration of the people and the overarching trend of our time. It provides an important underpinning for world peace and development."<sup>1</sup> The notions and policies that put a country's interests above those of others and willfully show off muscles or wave a fist reflect unilateralism and a zero-sum game mentality. They may provide short-lived advantages in terms of development and security. In the long run, however,

<sup>1</sup> "President Xi Jinping Attends Virtual BRICS Summit and Delivers Important Statement," September 8, 2025, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, [https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xw/zyxw/202509/t20250908\\_11704682.html](https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xw/zyxw/202509/t20250908_11704682.html).

such practices, which ignore and sacrifice the interests of other countries, are tantamount to draining the pond to fish or burning the forest to hunt and will eventually do more harm than good. For this reason, all countries should see the world as a whole and humanity as a community of shared development, security, and future. Collaboratively pursuing development, safeguarding security, and countering risks is the only reasonable option. All countries, regardless of their size or strength, must practice true multilateralism and treat each other as equals. They all have the right to choose their own development path and to participate in multilateral affairs through extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. The UN and other global or regional multilateral mechanisms should better fulfill their missions. Since its proposal, the GGI has received wide acclaim from the international community. Moving forward, it will make greater contributions to true multilateralism with more supportive measures put in place.

Third, contributing to a more perceptible, accessible, and enjoyable community with a shared future for humanity. A community with a shared future for humanity is a significant concept and an ambitious goal that requires tremendous efforts. Rome was not built in one day. The same is true of a community with a shared future for humanity, which cannot be attained without sustained efforts over a long-term period. Implementing the GGI, while continuing to advance the GDI, GSI, and GCI and cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), will convince all parties that a community with a shared future for humanity is not a distant, abstract concept, but a shared vision that can continuously generate concrete actions and practical results. By participating in global governance, all stakeholders can jointly address global challenges, share in development opportunities, and achieve win-win results across multiple levels, including economic development, social progress, and cultural exchanges. Such a tangible sense of participation and fulfillment will further popularize the vision of a community with a shared future for humanity, laying a solid foundation for its realization.

### **III. Guiding China's practice in reforming the global governance system on the new journey**

Xi solemnly stated, “We believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, China must step forward, take action, and get the job

done.”<sup>1</sup> As a responsible major country, China honors its commitments and strives to translate its proposals regarding global governance into concrete action, offering the world one important public good after another. Guided by the GGI, China will more actively shoulder its international responsibilities, demonstrating its sense of duty for the future of humanity and the world, and spearhead the reform of the global governance system on the journey ahead.

China will remain committed to sovereign equality, consolidating the foundation for international fairness and justice. In terms of institutional reform, China calls for substantially increasing the representation and voice of developing countries, particularly African countries, in the reform of the UN Security Council to enhance the Global South’s representation and redress historical injustices. China supports special arrangements prioritizing the demands of African countries—in fact, it backed the African Union’s accession to the G20. Moreover, China will continue to promote quota reform at the International Monetary Fund. To promote common development, China advocates an innovation-driven growth model, an open and win–win cooperation model, a just and equitable governance model, and a balanced and inclusive development model. It is committed to high-quality cooperation with all countries under the BRI. It has initiated the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Silk Road Fund, and the New Development Bank, establishing open and equal cooperation platforms. On hotspot issues, China pursues no selfish interests; contrarily, it has always adopted an objective and impartial stance, decided its position on the merits of each matter, and actively promoted peace talks. For instance, China has worked for the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis and the Palestine–Israel conflict.

China will remain committed to the international rule of law, demonstrating its sense of duty as a responsible major country promoting world peace. In maintaining global strategic stability, China fosters major-country relations featuring peaceful coexistence, overall stability, and balanced development. It facilitated the first joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon states (China, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France) on

<sup>1</sup> “Let the Torch of Multilateralism Light Up Humanity’s Way Forward—Special Address by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China, at the World Economic Forum Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda,” January 25, 2021, <https://language.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202101/26/WS600f6927a31024ad0baa5046.html>.

preventing nuclear war. In international peacekeeping, China provides more peacekeepers than any other member of the UN Security Council. It contributes more than 20% of the regular UN budget and approximately 18% of UN peacekeeping costs. China has provided the most direct and tangible support for world peace by paying its dues in full and on time. In ensuring regional security and stability, China advocates a model of security for Asia that features sharing weal and woe, seeking common ground while shelving differences, and prioritizing dialogue and consultation. It facilitated a historic reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran and played a constructive role in the peaceful settlement of the Cambodia–Thailand border dispute. In promoting innovation in the international rule of law, China, joined by 32 like-minded countries, has established the International Organization for Mediation, creating a new option and pathway for resolving international disputes through mediation by an intergovernmental legal organization.

China will remain committed to multilateralism, empowering and enhancing a global synergy. In defending the multilateral system, China has firmly upheld the standing and authority of the UN, supported the implementation of the Pact for the Future, and promoted the reform and improvement of global governance. Moreover, it has consistently safeguarded the multilateral trading system centered on the WTO, promoting trade and investment liberalization and facilitation worldwide while advocating a stronger role for multilateral mechanisms such as the G20 and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. In enhancing the influence of the Global South, China has facilitated the historic expansion of the BRICS group, spearheaded the high-quality development of greater BRICS cooperation, and built the SCO into the world's largest regional organization in terms of geographic scope and population. It has called for more open and inclusive Global South cooperation, announcing eight measures in support of it. Actively participating in multilateral processes, China is today a member of nearly all universal intergovernmental organizations and a signatory to over 600 international conventions and amendments. It has deeply engaged in the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Convention against Corruption, and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, among others.

China will remain committed to the people-centered approach, setting a

good example in enhancing the well-being of humanity. In supporting global sustainable development, China has adhered to a people-centered development philosophy. It established the China–UN Peace and Development Fund and the Global Development and South–South Cooperation Fund to advance the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. China pursues high-standard institutional opening-up. It has hosted the China International Import Expo, facilitated the finalization of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, and applied high standards in its implementation. Additionally, China has extended the zero-tariff treatment to cover 100% of tariff lines for all the least developed countries and African nations with which it has diplomatic ties. In strengthening global public health security, China was the first country to provide aid for African countries after the Ebola outbreak. It was also actively engaged in international cooperation to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. In promoting exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, China has upheld humanity's shared values, actively implemented the GCI, launched the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations and the Ancient Civilizations Forum, and backed the UN General Assembly in establishing the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations, thereby creating a global network for civilizational dialogue and cooperation.

China will remain committed to real results, providing innovative solutions for governance in key areas. In promoting pragmatic Global South cooperation, China is ready to implement 10 partnership action plans with Africa to ensure that both sides advance further toward modernization. Additionally, it has launched five cooperation programs with Latin America, established five cooperation frameworks with Arab states, and created six new cooperation platforms with the Pacific island countries. In leading global solidarity and collaboration, China has actively advocated building a community with a shared future for humanity. For eight consecutive years, this vision has been included in resolutions of the UN General Assembly, and its core tenets have been integrated into the UN's Pact for the Future. The GDI has garnered the support of over 100 countries and international organizations, with more than 80 countries joining its Group of Friends. The GSI has also been supported by more than 130 countries and regional and international organizations. The GCI has been written into UN resolutions and a host of bilateral and multilateral

documents. The GGI, since its proposal, has been welcomed and supported by leaders of many countries and international organizations, and will undoubtedly gain widespread international recognition. In bridging governance gaps in emerging fields, China has made a serious commitment to its dual carbon goals—i.e., peaking carbon emissions by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality by 2060, facilitated the conclusion and engaged in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and established the Kunming Biodiversity Fund. Moreover, China has proposed the Global AI Governance Initiative, initiated the World AI Cooperation Organization, and launched the Global AI Governance Action Plan.

### Conclusion

The GGI represents China’s profound response to the questions posed by the world and the times amidst the global changes unseen in a century. It is rooted in the philosophical wisdom of Chinese civilization that seeks “harmony without uniformity” and “harmony among all nations,” and reflects a sober assessment of the existing global governance system, including its historical evolution and current predicament. The GGI has charted a path to reform and improve the global governance system. It does not seek to reinvent the wheel, nor will it surrender to complacency. Sticking to the right direction of historical development, the GGI will inject inexhaustible dynamism into humanity’s lasting peace and shared prosperity. Under the guidance of the GGI, China will, on the journey ahead, work with all parties to build a more just and equitable global governance system, pursuing the just cause and addressing global challenges. Together, they will usher in a new era for the world, creating a bright future of peace, security, prosperity, and progress.

(edited by Chen Qingyi)