

Special Edition

₹ 50



NEWS FROM CHINA

CHINA-INDIA REVIEW

10 Years of BRI A Global Public Good





A China-Europe freight train leaving the Xi'an International Port in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi Province



Shaping BRI Of the Future: Green, Clean & Win-Win

It's a high moment for the Silk Road spirit of "planning together, building together, and benefiting together." With the world watching, China hosted the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) in October this year. This edition of the BRF was a milestone as it marked the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a defining trans-regional connectivity and infrastructure project, which extends from the Eurasian continent to Africa and Latin America.

The BRI caravan is growing by the day: Over the years, more than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations have signed Belt and Road cooperation documents. This BRF was attended by over 10,000 registered representatives from 151 countries and 41 international organizations, exemplifying the growing global influence of Belt and Road cooperation.

In his remarks at the BRF, Chinese President Xi Jinping, the visionary founder and architect of BRI, encapsulated the evolution of this landmark initiative. "Belt and Road cooperation has progressed from "sketching the outline" to "filling in the details," and blueprints have been turned into real projects," he said. The Chinese leader unveiled an upgraded BRI, which will pivot around high-quality development, digital economy and sustainable green development. The upgraded BRI will be underpinned by the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, and the overarching goal of achieving high-standard, people-centered and sustainable cooperation.

President Xi has set the future trajectory of BRI by announcing eight major steps, which will include building a multidimensional Belt and Road connectivity network; supporting an open world economy; carrying out practical cooperation; promoting green development; advancing scientific and technological innovation; supporting people-to-people exchanges; promoting integrity-based Belt and Road cooperation and strengthening institutional building for international Belt and Road cooperation.

Integrity is the new mantra of the upgraded high-level BRI. In this context, one of the major outcomes of the BRF was the decision to set up the Integrity and Compliance Evaluation System for companies involved in Belt and Road cooperation and working with international organizations to carry out research and training on promoting integrity in Belt and Road cooperation. The third BRF also signalled a shift from massive projects to executing small yet smart high-impact livelihood assistance projects and promoting vocational education cooperation.

Against this backdrop, we are pleased to share the special edition of "China-India Review," which showcases key outcomes of the third BRF and maps the way ahead for this transformational initiative. The achievements of the past 10 years have underscored that BRI cooperation is on the right side of history. The Belt and Road cooperation was proposed by China, but its benefits and opportunities are for the world to share, as Xi Jinping pointed out. Let's join hands, in the Silk Road spirit, to build a community with a shared future for mankind. As the Chinese saying goes: "The flame runs high when everyone adds wood to the fire."

Editor-in-Chief : Wang Xiaojian**Associate Editors**

Chang Peilin, Yu Ruilin

Desk

Wu Yanzhi

Shweta Aggarwal

Published and Printed by

Wang Xiaojian, Counsellor
Embassy of the People's Republic of
China in India
50-D, Shantipath, Chanakyapuri
New Delhi - 110021
Tel: 011-26881249
Fax: 011-26882024
Website: <http://in.china-embassy.org>

Contact: newsfromchinadelhi@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Embassy-of-The-Peoples-Republic-of-China-in-India-110008601326429>

Printed at M/s Advantage Offset
B-256, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-I,
Delhi-110028

Consultant

TGII Media Private Limited

Website of Foreign Ministry of Chinawww.mfa.gov.cnwww.fmprc.gov.cnContact: webmaster@mfa.gov.cn**Chinese Embassy**

X: @China_Amb_India

Spokesperson

X: @ChinaSpox_India

RNI No.: 47440/88

E-book & PDF version
(<http://in.china-embassy.org>)

Disclaimer

All rights reserved throughout the world.
Reproduction in any manner is prohibited.

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Ma Jia, Chargé d'Affaires a. i, Embassy of
the People's Republic of China in India

Chen Jianjun, Minister Counsellor,
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
in India

Manish Chand, CEO, TGII Media Private
Limited & India Writes Network

Mohammed Saqib, Secretary-General,
India China Economic and Cultural Council

B. R. Deepak, Professor, JNU

Kaushal Goyal, CEO, GBD Books

**THE THIRD BELT AND ROAD FORUM FOR
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

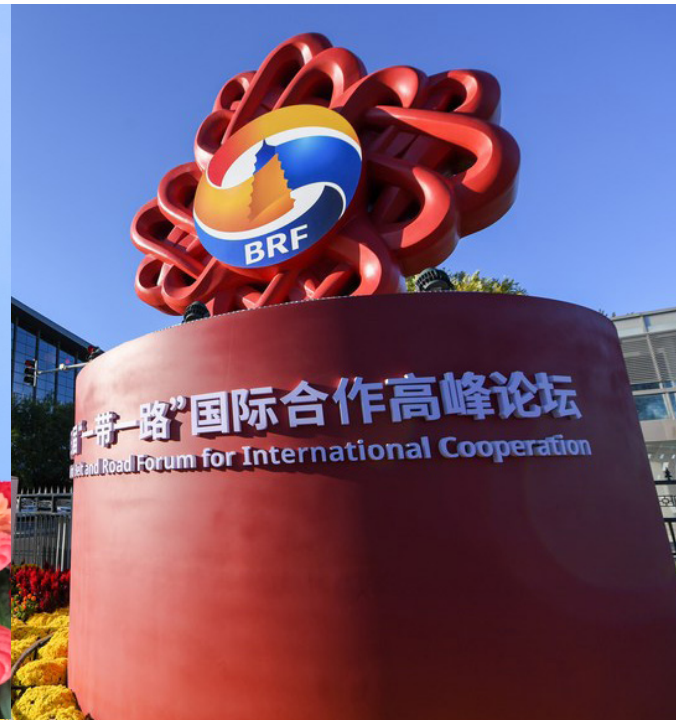
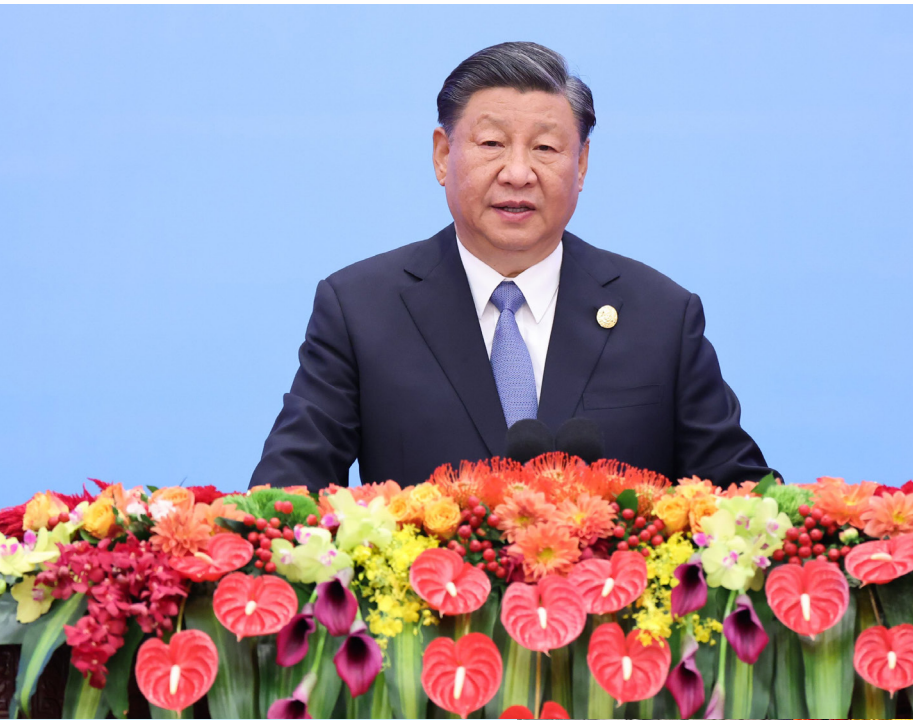
- Building an Open, Inclusive and Interconnected World for Common Development **6**
- Xi's BRI toast: Let's Embark on the New Journey Towards Another Golden Decade **12**
- Peng Liyuan and Wives of Foreign Leaders Visit China National Arts and Crafts Museum **14**
- Key Takeaways from Xi's Meetings with Foreign Leaders Attending 3rd BRF **16**
- Wang Yi Hails Fruitful Results of 3rd BRF **20**
- Key Takeaways from BRI White Paper **25**

**ACHIEVEMENTS OF BRI OVER
THE PAST DECADE**

- 10 Years on, Belt and Road Cooperation Delivers Fruitful Outcomes **27**
- Indonesia's First High-Speed Railway Comes into Service, Heralding A New Era **30**
- China, Europe Forge Deeper Ties Via Thriving Maritime Trade Routes **34**
- The Revival of A Millennia-Old Port **37**



TENTS



BRI THROUGH FOREIGNERS' EYES

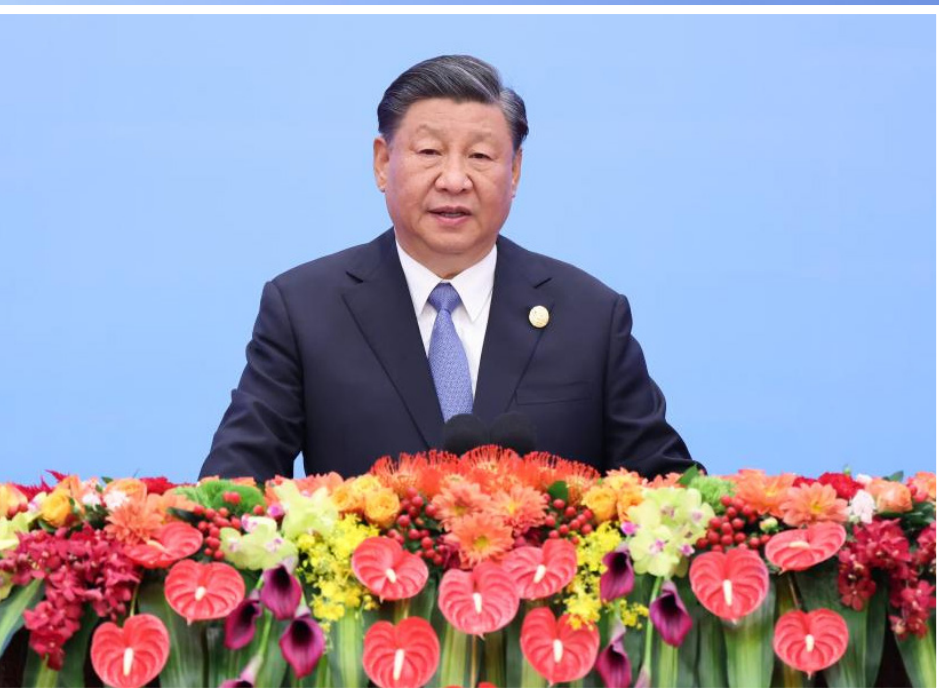
- Foreign Leaders, UN Chief and NDB President Laud China, BRI in Meetings with Xi **39**
- Multinationals Embrace Cooperation Opportunities Under Belt and Road Initiative **43**
- Belt & Road Initiative Cements Africa-China Cooperation, says South African lawmaker **45**
- BRI Allows Global South To Connect With Each Other, Says Pakistani Economist **46**
- BRI is Committed to Green Development and Global Harmony: Kulkarni **48**

DISPELLING MISCONCEPTIONS

- Why BRI is Not a Bad Investment **50**
- Why BRI is Not a Debt Trap **52**
- Why BRI is Not a Danger for Environment **54**
- Why BRI is Not a Jerry-Built Project **56**
- Why BRI is Not Predatory **58**
- Why BRI Doesn't Trigger Civilizations Clash **60**
- Why BRI is Not a Geopolitical Tool **62**
- Why BRI is Not a Transitory Initiative **64**



The Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation



Building an Open, Inclusive and Interconnected World for Common Development

In his remarks at the opening ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on October 18, 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled a blueprint for a high-quality green BRI that will herald a new stage of higher-quality and higher-level development for all participating countries.



and in my own name, I wish to extend a very warm welcome to you all!

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) I proposed. The BRI, drawing inspiration from the ancient Silk Road and focusing on enhancing connectivity, aims to enhance policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people connectivity, inject new impetus into the global economy, create new opportunities for global development, and build a new platform for international economic cooperation.

Over these 10 years, we have stayed committed to this founding mission. Thanks to our joint efforts, Belt and Road international cooperation has gotten off the ground, grown rapidly and produced fruitful outcomes.

Belt and Road cooperation has extended from the Eurasian continent to Africa and Latin America. More than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations have signed Belt and Road cooperation documents. We have held two sessions of the BRF before, and have established over 20 specialized multilateral cooperation platforms under the BRI.

Belt and Road cooperation has progressed from “sketching the outline” to “filling in the details”, and blueprints have been turned into real projects. A large number of signature projects and “small yet smart” people-centered programs have been launched.

Belt and Road cooperation has expanded from physical connectivity to institutional connectivity. Important guiding principles for high-quality Belt and Road cooperation have been laid down, which include the principle of “planning together, building together, and benefiting together,” the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, and the goal of pursuing high-standard, people-centered and sustainable cooperation.

Over these 10 years, we have endeavored to build a global network of connectivity consisting of economic corridors, international transportation routes and information highway as well as railways, roads, airports, ports, pipelines and power grids. Covering the land, the ocean, the sky

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Heads of International Organizations,
Representatives of Various Countries,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

Today, we are meeting here for the opening ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF). On behalf of the Chinese government and Chinese people

and the Internet, this network has boosted the flow of goods, capital, technologies and human resources among countries involved and injected fresh vitality into the millennia-old Silk Road in the new era.

Belt and Road cooperation has expanded from physical connectivity to institutional connectivity. In this regard, important guiding principles for high-quality Belt and Road cooperation have been laid down, which include the principle of “planning together, building together, and benefiting together,” the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, and the goal of pursuing high-standard, people-centered and sustainable cooperation.

Trains speeding along rail tracks, automobiles running on roads, flights connecting different countries, cargo ships breaking waves, and e-commerce bringing so much convenience to people—they have all become symbols of international trade in the new era, just like camel caravans and the sailing ships were for the past age.

Hydro, wind and solar energy based power plants, oil and gas pipelines, and the increasingly smart and interconnected power transmission networks are removing the development bottleneck caused by energy shortage and fulfilling the dream of developing countries to achieve green and low-carbon development. These energy projects have become the oasis and lighthouse for sustainable development in the new era.

Brand new airports and harbors, smooth roads, and newly built industrial parks for business cooperation have created new economic corridors and new growth drivers, and have become the trading routes and staging posts of the new era.

Rich and colorful cultural years, art festivals, expos and exhibitions, Luban Workshops, people-to-people exchange programs like the Silk Road Community Building Initiative and the Brightness Action program, and deepening

exchanges between non-governmental organizations, think tanks, media organizations, and the youth—all these flourishing activities have composed a symphony of friendship in the new era.

When COVID-19 struck, the Belt and Road became a life-saving road. China provided more than 10 billion masks and 2.3 billion doses of vaccines to other countries and jointly produced vaccines with over 20 countries, making a special contribution to BRI partners’ efforts in fighting COVID-19. And China also received valuable support from more than 70 countries when it was hit hard by the pandemic.

Belt and Road cooperation is based on the principle of “planning together, building together, and benefiting together.” It transcends differences between civilizations, cultures, social systems, and stages of development. It has opened up a new path for exchanges among countries, and established a new framework for international cooperation. Indeed, the BRI represents humanity’s joint pursuit of development for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

Our achievements in the past decade are truly remarkable, and there is so much we can draw from them.

Brand new airports and harbors, smooth roads, and newly built industrial parks for business cooperation have created new economic corridors and new growth drivers, and have become the trading routes and staging posts of the new era.

We have learned that humankind is a community with a shared future. China can only do well when the world is doing well. When China does well, the world will get even better. Through Belt and Road cooperation, China is opening its door even wider to the world, with its inland regions turning from “fullbacks” into “forwards,” and coastal regions scaling new heights in their opening-up. China’s market has become even more closely integrated with the global market. China has become a main



A floral decoration for the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) near China National Convention Center in Beijing, capital of China

trading partner of more than 140 countries and territories and a primary source of investment for more countries. Both Chinese investment overseas and foreign investment in China have boosted friendship, cooperation, confidence and hope.

We have learned that win-win cooperation is the sure way to success in launching major initiatives that will benefit all. When countries embrace cooperation and act in concert, a deep chasm can be turned into a thoroughfare, land-locked countries can become land-linked, and a place of underdevelopment can be transformed into a land of prosperity. Countries taking the lead in economic development should give a hand to their partners who are yet to catch up. We should all treat each other as friends and partners, respect and support each other, and help each other succeed. As the saying goes, when you give roses to others, their fragrance lingers on your hand. In other words, helping others is also helping oneself. Viewing others' development as a threat or taking economic interdependence as a risk will not make one's own life better or speed up one's development.

We have learned that the Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit is the most important source of

strength for Belt and Road cooperation. I once said that the pioneers of the ancient silk routes won their place in history not as conquerors with warships, guns, horses or swords. Rather, they are remembered as friendly emissaries leading camel caravans and sailing ships loaded with goods. Belt and Road cooperation is based on the belief that flame runs high when everyone adds wood to the fire and that mutual support can get us far. Such cooperation seeks to deliver a good life not only to people of just one country, but to people in other countries as well. It promotes connectivity, mutual benefit, common development, cooperation and win-win outcomes. Ideological confrontation, geopolitical rivalry and bloc politics are not a choice for us. What we stand against are unilateral sanctions, economic coercion and decoupling and supply chain disruption.

What has been achieved in the past 10 years demonstrates that Belt and Road cooperation is on the right side of history. It represents the advancing of our times, and it is the right path forward. We need to remain clear-eyed and undisturbed in a volatile world, and we need to be keenly aware of our responsibility for history, for the people and for the world. We should jointly address various global risks and challenges, and deliver a bright

future of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit for future generations.

What has been achieved in the past 10 years demonstrates that Belt and Road cooperation is on the right side of history. It represents the advancing of our times, and it is the right path forward. We need to remain clear-eyed and undisturbed in a volatile world, and we need to be keenly aware of our responsibility for history, for the people and for the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

Changes of the world, of our times, and of historical significance are unfolding like never before. China is endeavoring to build itself into a stronger country and rejuvenate the Chinese nation on all fronts by pursuing Chinese modernization. The modernization we are pursuing is not for China alone, but for all developing countries through our joint efforts. Global modernization should be pursued to enhance peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation and bring prosperity to all. On our way forward, we will encounter both headwinds and tailwinds. We need to stay focused on our goal, take results-oriented actions, persevere, and keep moving forward until our goal is met. China will work with all parties involved to deepen Belt and Road partnerships of cooperation, usher this cooperation into a new stage of high-quality development, and make relentless efforts to achieve modernization for all countries.

Now, I wish to announce eight major steps China will take to support our joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation.

First, building a multidimensional Belt and Road connectivity network. China will speed up high-quality development of the China-Europe Railway Express, participate in the trans-Caspian international transportation corridor, host the China-Europe Railway Express Cooperation Forum, and make joint

efforts to build a new logistics corridor across the Eurasian continent linked by direct railway and road transportation. We will vigorously integrate ports, shipping and trading services under the “Silk Road Maritime,” and accelerate the building of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor and the Air Silk Road.

Second, supporting an open world economy. China will establish pilot zones for Silk Road e-commerce cooperation, enter into free trade agreements and investment protection treaties with more countries. We will remove all restrictions on foreign investment access in the manufacturing sector. In light of international high-standard economic and trade rules, we will further advance high-standard opening up in cross-border service trade and investment, expand market access for digital and other products, and deepen reform in areas including the state-owned enterprises, digital economy, intellectual property and government procurement. China will hold the Global Digital Trade Expo annually. In the next five years (2024-2028), China’s total trade in goods and services is expected to exceed USD 32 trillion and USD 5 trillion respectively.

Third, carrying out practical cooperation. China will promote both signature projects and “small yet smart” livelihood programs. The China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China will each set up a RMB 350 billion financing window. An additional RMB 80 billion will be injected into the Silk Road Fund. Together, they will support BRI projects on the basis of market and business operation. Cooperation agreements worth USD 97.2 billion have been concluded at the CEO Conference held during this Forum. China will carry out 1,000 small-scale livelihood assistance projects, and enhance vocational education cooperation through Luban Workshops and other initiatives. We will also step up joint efforts to ensure the safety of BRI projects and personnel.

Fourth, promoting green development. China will continue to deepen cooperation in areas such as green infrastructure, green energy and green transportation, and step up support for the BRI International Green Development Coalition. China will continue to hold the BRI



Green Innovation Conference, and establish dialogue and exchange mechanisms for the solar industry and a network of experts on green and low-carbon development. China will implement the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road, and provide 100,000 training opportunities for partner countries by 2030.

Fifth, advancing scientific and technological innovation. China will continue to implement the Belt and Road Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan, hold the first Belt and Road Conference on Science and Technology Exchange, increase the number of joint laboratories built with other parties to 100 in the next five years, and support young scientists from other countries to work on short-term programs in China. At this Forum, China will put forward the Global Initiative for Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance. We stand ready to increase exchanges and dialogue with other countries and jointly promote the sound, orderly and secure AI development in the world.

Sixth, supporting people-to-people exchanges. China will host the Liangzhu Forum to enhance dialogue on civilizations with BRI partner countries. In addition to the Silk Road International League of Theaters, the Silk Road International Arts Festival, the International Alliance of Museums of the Silk Road, the Silk Road International Alliance of Art Museums, and the Silk Road International Library Alliance that have been set up, China has also launched the International Tourism Alliance of Silk Road Cities. And we will continue with the Chinese government scholarship Silk Road Program.

Seventh, promoting integrity-based Belt and Road cooperation. Together with its cooperation partners, China will release the Achievements and Prospects of Belt and Road Integrity Building and the High-Level Principles on Belt and Road Integrity Building, and establish the Integrity and Compliance Evaluation System for Companies Involved in Belt and Road Cooperation. We will also work with international organizations to carry out research and training on promoting integrity in Belt and Road cooperation.

Eighth, strengthening institutional building for international Belt and Road cooperation. China will work with its BRI partner countries to strengthen the building of multilateral cooperation platforms covering energy, taxation, finance, green development, disaster reduction, anti-corruption, think tank, media, culture and other fields. China will continue to host the BRF and establish a secretariat for the Forum.

China will continue to implement the Belt and Road Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan, hold the first Belt and Road Conference on Science and Technology Exchange, increase the number of joint laboratories built with other parties to 100 in the next five years, and support young scientists from other countries to work on short-term programs in China.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

The past decade has been a journey of dedicated cooperation and fruitful outcomes. Belt and Road cooperation was proposed by China, but its benefits and opportunities are for the world to share. Let us meet the expectations of the people, assume responsibilities entrusted on us by history, closely follow the trend of the times, and press ahead with energy and enterprise. Let us deepen Belt and Road international cooperation, and bring Belt and Road cooperation to a new stage of higher-quality and higher-level development. Let us advance modernization of all countries, build an open, inclusive and interconnected world for common development, and jointly build a community with a shared future for mankind.

I wish the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation a full success!

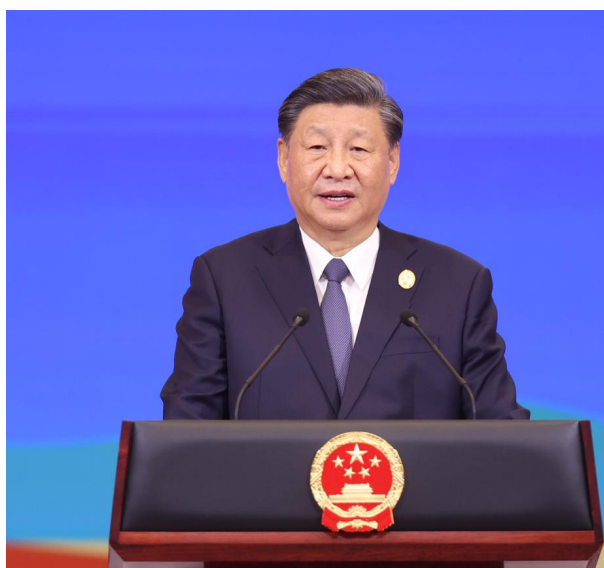
Thank you.

QR code of Chair's Statement of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.



Xi's BRI Toast: Let's Embark on the New Journey Towards Another Golden Decade

In his toast at the welcome banquet for guests at the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing on October 17, 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping lauded the Silk Road spirit, which is characterized by peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit.



Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellencies Heads of International Organizations,
Distinguished Representatives,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

Good evening.

It is a great pleasure to meet and gather with so many friends. On behalf of the Chinese government and people and in the name of myself and my wife, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all distinguished guests attending

the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

Spring is a season of blossoming, and autumn is a time of harvest. Over the past decade since the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was proposed, China and BRI partners have worked hand in hand and exemplified the Silk Road spirit, which is characterized by peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit. Together we have contributed to global connectivity and created platforms for international economic cooperation. Together we have been a driving force for global growth.

Together we have carried out thousands of cooperation projects with solid deliverables. Together we have written a magnificent chapter in promoting a connected world and charting a path for all to prosper individually and collectively. None of these achievements simply fell into our laps, or were granted by anyone. They have been made possible by the governments, businesses and people of BRI partners through hard work, wisdom and courage. Let us take this opportunity to salute all those who have participated in and contributed to Belt and Road cooperation.

The BRI pursues development, promotes win-win outcomes, and inspires hope. Human history shows that a bumper harvest would not be possible without an untiring spirit and

unremitting efforts, and the same is true of sustainable achievements that benefit our posterity. This is the responsibility that we, political leaders of this generation, must fulfill toward the people of today and future generations. Belt and Road cooperation, robust and fruitful in its first decade, is now full of dynamism and vitality. We must embark with drive and enthusiasm on the new journey toward another golden decade.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

The world today is far from tranquil. The world economy is under growing downward pressure. Global development is confronted with multiple challenges. That said, we remain unwavering in our belief that the historical trend of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit is unstoppable, our people's aspiration for a better life remains strong as ever, and the desire of all countries to achieve common development and prosperity is overwhelming. As long as we remain steadfast in our commitment to cooperation and common development, we will accomplish new feats in

high-quality Belt and Road cooperation that reflect the spirit of the times and will create a better future for humanity through our joint efforts.

Now, I would like to propose a toast,

To the full success of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation;

To the health of all our guests and your families; and

To each and every one of those who have participated in and contributed to Belt and Road cooperation.

Cheers.

Together we have carried out thousands of cooperation projects with solid deliverables. Together we have written a magnificent chapter in promoting a connected world and charting a path for all to prosper individually and collectively. None of these achievements simply fell into our laps, or were granted by anyone.



Peng Liyuan and Wives of Foreign Leaders Visit China National Arts and Crafts Museum

On the morning of October 18, 2023, Peng Liyuan, wife of President Xi Jinping, invited wives of foreign leaders attending the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation to visit the China National Arts and Crafts Museum (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum).

The picturesque scenery of golden autumn was refreshed by the cool breeze. The central hall of the China National Arts and Crafts Museum was ingeniously decorated with the Chinese Tree of Blessings, paper-cutting, kites and palace lanterns. Peng Liyuan warmly welcomed the guests and took group photos with them.

Amid the graceful melody of ancient chime bells, Peng Liyuan and the guests walked into the exhibition hall of “Four Seas of Jubilation” where treasured exhibits of the Museum are on display. Here they admired the exquisite artworks including jade carving, tapestry and embroidery, bamboo weaving, and wood carving. Inheritors of intangible cultural heritage on the site demonstrated the state-of-the-art craftsmanship such as embroidery, filigree inlay and ethnic Miao’s silver carving, receiving the attention and praise from Peng Liyuan and the guests. They were also enthralled by the joyful singing of the Song of Cuckoos performed by a



children chorus of the Dong ethnic group from Guizhou Province, their celestial voice echoing in the hall.

Peng Liyuan and the guests also listened to the introduction to the Chinese opera culture and ancient Chinese zither art, and watched art performances. The free flow of the ancient zither performance, the gorgeous and graceful Kunqu Opera singing and the unique Peking Opera show gave the guests an immersive experience of the charm of China's fine traditional culture, which drew warm applause from the guests from time to time.

Peng Liyuan said that culture is the spiritual bond of unity and cooperation among the BRI partner countries. Cultures become more colorful by exchanges, and civilizations become richer by mutual learning. She looks forward to greater effort to enhance the people-to-people and cultural exchanges, pass on the friendship from generation to generation, and achieve common development.

Ibu Iriana Jokowi, wife of Indonesian President; Rachel Ruto, wife of Kenyan President; Naly Sisoulith, wife of Lao President; Tamara Vučić, wife of Serbian President;

Maithree Wickremesinghe, wife of Sri Lankan President; Ogulgerek Berdimuhamedova, wife of the National Leader of the Turkmen People and Chairman of the Halk Maslahaty of Turkmenistan; Ziroat Mirziyoyeva, wife of Uzbek President; Pich Chanmony, wife of Cambodian Prime Minister; Anikó Lévai, wife of Hungarian Prime Minister; and Rachael Marape, wife of Papua New Guinea Prime Minister, among others, attended the above event.

Peng Liyuan and the guests also listened to the introduction to the Chinese opera culture and ancient Chinese zither art, and watched art performances. The free flow of the ancient zither performance, the gorgeous and graceful Kunqu Opera singing and the unique Peking Opera show gave the guests an immersive experience of the charm of China's fine traditional culture, which drew warm applause from the guests from time to time.



Key Takeaways from Xi's Meetings with Foreign Leaders Attending 3rd BRF

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with several foreign leaders during the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) and discussed the implementation of BRI projects with them.

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with foreign leaders who gathered in Beijing from near and far to attend the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF).

The following is a summary of what Xi said during the meetings.

During his meeting with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Xi said the two sides should promote further development of China-Kazakhstan permanent comprehensive strategic partnership, and expressed support for Kazakhstan in performing its duties as the rotating presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

China is willing to continuously facilitate trade and investment with Kazakhstan, expand imports of high-quality and green agricultural products from Kazakhstan, broaden green energy cooperation with the country, Xi said, noting that China is ready to improve connectivity with Kazakhstan and increase the transport capacity, scale and efficiency of China-Europe freight trains.

When holding talks with Chilean President Gabriel Boric, Xi said Chile is a pioneer in the Belt and Road cooperation between China and Latin America. The two countries should take the signing of the Belt and Road cooperation plan as an opportunity to strengthen the alignment of their development strategies, he said.



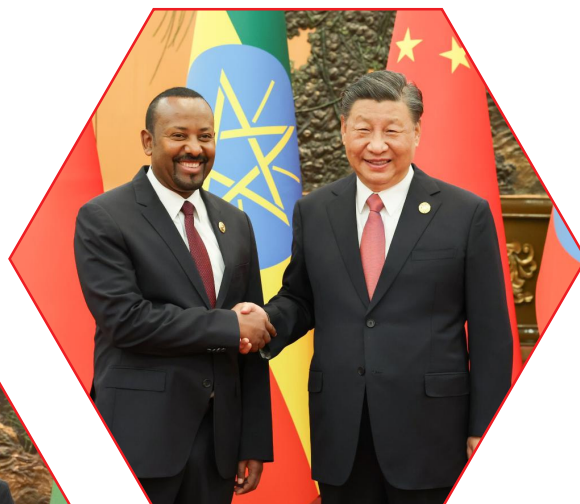
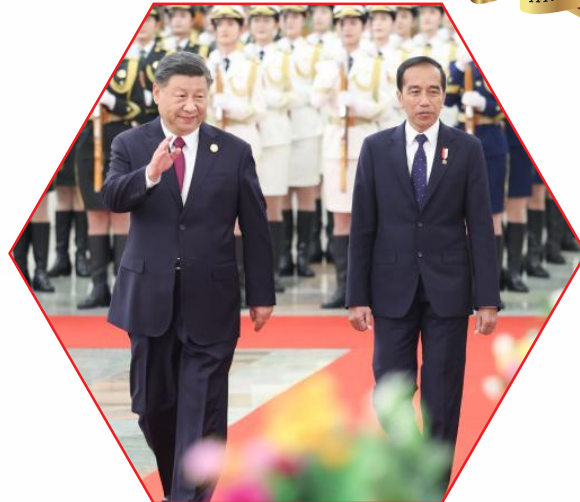
China is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with Chile to uphold solidarity and cooperation among developing countries, and safeguard true multilateralism and free trade, he added.

Meeting with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Xi said the two sides should take the establishment of the all-weather strategic partnership as an opportunity to advance common development and win-win cooperation, promote South-South solidarity and cooperation, and safeguard international equity and justice.

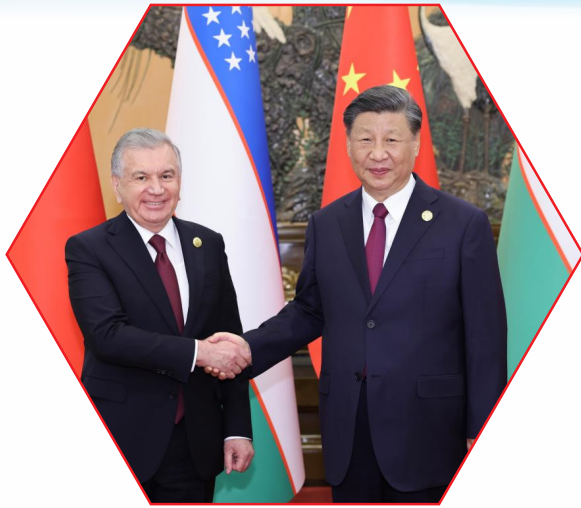
China is willing to support and participate in Ethiopia's post-war reconstruction and economic revitalization, and implement the Global Development Initiative to help Ethiopia achieve development, said Xi.

When meeting with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Xi stressed China's commitment to promoting a deep synergy of the Belt and Road Initiative with Hungary's "Opening to the East" policy, and sharing development opportunities and achievements.

China stands ready to work with Hungary to continue to lead cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries in the right direction and promote steady and sustained progress in China-Europe relations, Xi noted.



(Clockwise from top) Chinese President Xi Jinping with Indonesian President Joko Widodo; Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev; Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed; and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.



Chinese President Xi Jinping with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev (above) and Chilean President Gabriel Boric (below)



During the meeting with Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape, Xi said Papua New Guinea has played a leading and exemplary role in the Belt and Road cooperation between China and Pacific island countries.

He noted that China's assistance to Pacific island countries is candid, sincere and selfless. It does not attach political conditions or seek exclusive rights in conducting such assistance.

When holding talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Xi noted that the Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway is a "golden brand" for the Belt and Road cooperation between the two countries. China is willing to work with Indonesia to sum up successful experience, make sound efforts in its high-quality operation and foster an economic belt along the railway, Xi added.

The two heads of state jointly inaugurated the official operation of the Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway.

During the meeting with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, Xi called Serbia "an ironclad friend" of China, saying that the bilateral relations have withstood changes in the international landscape over recent years.



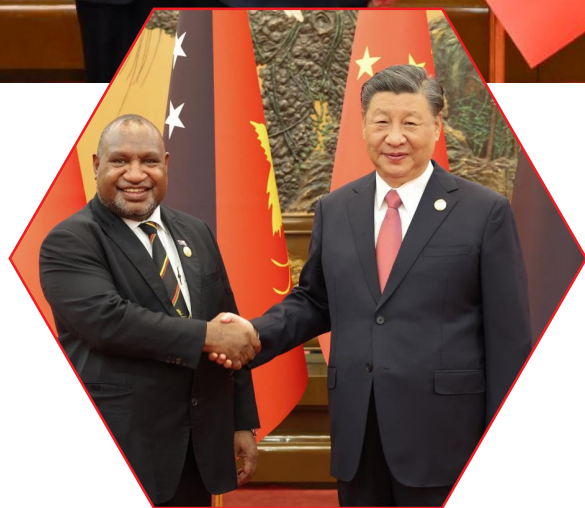


Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

China stands ready to continue to strengthen strategic synergy with Serbia in order to translate the traditional friendship between the two countries into more fruits of practical cooperation, Xi said.

When meeting with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Xi said that the two countries have similar development goals, and China stands ready to work with Uzbekistan to support each other's national modernization drive and build the China-Uzbekistan community with a shared future.

The two sides should effectively implement the medium- and long-term plan for economic and trade cooperation, advance cooperation in key fields, and create conditions conducive to an early start of the construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway, Xi said.



Chinese President Xi Jinping with Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape.

When holding talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Xi noted that the Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway is a "golden brand" for the Belt and Road cooperation between the two countries.

Wang Yi Hails Fruitful Results of 3rd BRF



In a press conference after the conclusion of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing on October 18, 2023, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, hailed the conference of unity and win-win cooperation that has broadened the bright prospects of BRI.

Friends from the Media,
Good evening!

Welcome to the press conference of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF). This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) put forward by President Xi Jinping. Our friends from the media have followed the progress of Belt and Road cooperation and increased global understanding of and participation in this important initiative. On behalf of the Chinese government, I wish to express our sincere appreciation for your hard work!

The past decade has witnessed historic achievements in Belt and Road cooperation. A path of cooperation, opportunity and prosperity that leads to common development has been found. Benefiting over 150 countries, the BRI has become the most popular international public good and largest international cooperation platform in today's world.

This BRF was attended by over 10,000 registered representatives from 151 countries and 41 international organizations. The scale of participation has once again showcased the tremendous appeal and global influence of Belt and Road cooperation.



Representatives attended the signing ceremony at the Belt and Road CEO Conference in Beijing on October 17, 2023.

This BRF was attended by over 10,000 registered representatives from 151 countries and 41 international organizations. The scale of participation has once again showcased the tremendous appeal and global influence of Belt and Road cooperation.

President Xi Jinping delivered a keynote speech at the BRF opening ceremony. Reviewing the achievements and successful experience of the past ten years, he emphasized that Belt and Road cooperation is on the right side of history, keeps pace with the advance of our times, and represents the right path forward. He announced eight major steps China will take to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, setting a new direction, opening new vistas and generating new momentum for the BRI. He is expected to hold meetings or talks with all foreign leaders attending the BRF and reach a wide range of important cooperation consensus.

During the BRF, we convened three high-level forums on digital economy, connectivity and green development; six thematic forums on trade connectivity, people-to-people bonds, think tank exchanges, clean Silk Road, subnational cooperation and maritime cooperation; and a CEO Conference. With all items on the agenda completed, the BRF has

just concluded and achieved great success. The participating parties agree that it is another important milestone in the process of Belt and Road cooperation. It is a conference of unity that has further consolidated the consensus on Belt and Road cooperation, a conference of win-win outcome that has further enriched Belt and Road cooperation, and a conference of development that has broadened the bright prospects of Belt and Road cooperation.

A Chair's Statement has been issued, which sets forth the important consensus and outcomes reached by the parties. Let me underscore four points.

First, the clearest message from this Forum is unity, cooperation, openness and win-win outcome.

Today's world is confronted with a multitude of crises and challenges; Cold War mentality and bloc confrontation have resurfaced. Yet all the participants have made it clear that they have come for friendship, for cooperation and for development. President Xi Jinping pointed out in his keynote speech that humankind is a community with a shared future; win-win cooperation is the sure way to success in launching major initiatives that benefit all; and the Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit is the most important source of strength for Belt and Road cooperation. From Beijing, a clear and unambiguous message has

been sent to the world, that is, we need unity, cooperation, openness and win-win outcomes, not division, confrontation, isolation or zero-sum mentality. Amidst great transformations unseen in a century, Belt and Road cooperation will always bring stability and positive energy to the world.

Second, the most important consensus of this Forum is to usher in a new stage of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation.

President Xi Jinping noted that China will work with all parties involved to deepen Belt and Road partnerships of cooperation, and usher this cooperation into a new stage of high-quality development. These words have received positive response and support from all parties.

At the High-Level Forum on Connectivity in an Open World Economy, the participants supported efforts to further boost connectivity; build high-quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure; enhance cooperation in such areas as transportation, energy, resources and irrigation; steadily increase institutional connectivity in infrastructure; and build an open world economy.

At the High-Level Forum on Digital Economy as a New Source of Growth, the participants called for expedited efforts to build a Digital Silk Road; fostering an open, fair, and non-discriminatory environment for digital development; promoting

deep integration of digital technologies and the real economy; and advancing the healthy, orderly and secure development of artificial intelligence (AI). To that end, China has put forward a Global Initiative for AI Governance, which has drawn great attention.

The BRI offers a cooperation platform for common development and helps many developing countries accelerate their pace toward modernization. President Xi Jinping proposed for the first time that global modernization should be pursued through the joint efforts of all countries to enhance peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation and bring prosperity to all.

At the High-Level Forum on Green Silk Road for Harmony with Nature, the participants highlighted the need to further build the Green Silk Road, meet the climate challenges together, step up cooperation on biodiversity protection, build investment and financing partnerships for green development, and empower green development. At the thematic forums, the participants shared their desire to fully advance practical cooperation, boost trade





During this BRF, 458 outcomes have been reached, far exceeding the number of the last Forum. They include important cooperation initiatives and institutional arrangements such as the Beijing Initiative for Deepening Cooperation on Connectivity, the Beijing Initiative for Belt and Road Green Development, the Beijing Initiative on the Belt and Road International Digital Economy Cooperation, the Green Investment and Finance Partnership, and High-Level Principles on Belt and Road Integrity Building.

and investment liberalization and facilitation, improve the business environment, support the development of the blue economy, build a clean Silk Road, deepen subnational exchanges, and carry out a variety of cultural, educational, sci-tech, tourism, health and sports activities.

Third, the most ambitious vision of this Forum is to realize global modernization through joint efforts.

Realizing modernization is the common aspiration and due right of all peoples. The BRI offers a cooperation platform for common development and helps many developing countries accelerate their pace toward modernization. President Xi Jinping proposed for the first time that global modernization should be pursued through the joint efforts of all countries to enhance peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation and bring prosperity to all. This ambitious goal is consistent with China's vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and sets the direction for high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. People around the world realizing modernization together will be a most magnificent endeavor in human history.

President Xi Jinping pointed out that the modernization China pursues is not for the country alone, but for all developing countries through joint efforts. He announced at the opening ceremony that China will further expand market access; deepen reform in areas including the state-owned enterprises, digital economy, intellectual property and government procurement; and enter into free trade agreements and investment protection



第三届“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛绿色发展高级别论坛 THE THIRD BELT AND ROAD FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON GREEN DEVELOPMENT

2023年10月18日 中国·北京

18 OCTOBER 2023 BEIJING, CHINA



treaties with more countries. China's potential as the world's largest market will be continuously tapped. Chinese financial institutions will set up new RMB financing windows and support BRI projects based on well-informed studies. China will promote local employment through cooperation projects and carry out 1,000 small-scale livelihood assistance projects. We believe that the materialization of these significant measures will surely provide stronger boost and greater space for global modernization.

Fourth, the defining feature of this Forum is that it is action-oriented, efficient and pragmatic.

To advance Belt and Road cooperation, we need to build consensus for collaboration and, more importantly, take concrete actions. President Xi Jinping announced in his keynote speech eight major steps China will take to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. These include steps to build a multidimensional Belt and Road connectivity network, promote green development, and advance scientific and technological innovation. They also include specific projects of practical cooperation, people-to-people exchanges, and institution-building for Belt and Road cooperation.

During this BRF, 458 outcomes have been reached, far exceeding the number of the last Forum. They include important cooperation initiatives and institutional arrangements such as the Beijing Initiative for Deepening Cooperation on Connectivity, the Beijing Initiative for Belt and Road Green Development, the Beijing Initiative on the Belt and Road International Digital Economy Cooperation, the Green Investment and Finance Partnership, and High-Level Principles on Belt and Road Integrity Building. They also include specific targets including providing 100,000 training opportunities on green development for partner countries by 2030, and increasing the number of joint laboratories to 100. Commercial agreements worth USD 97.2 billion have been concluded at the CEO Conference, which will help generate jobs and growth in relevant countries. The Forum also decided to establish a BRF secretariat to facilitate institution-building and project implementation.

These tangible cooperation outcomes are a vote of support and confidence in BRI by participating parties. Belt and Road cooperation is not about high-sounding rhetoric, but about concrete action. It will certainly provide sustained impetus for global growth and common development across the world.

Friends from the media,

The BRF also proves that peaceful development and win-win cooperation represents the prevailing trend and people's common aspiration. Cold War-style confrontation and decoupling efforts go against the tide of history and will lead nowhere.

As a Chinese saying goes, "When everybody brings firewood, the flame will be higher." The success of the BRF proves once again that China has followed the right direction in advancing Belt and Road cooperation, that BRI partners have shown firm commitment to participation, and that high-quality Belt and Road cooperation enjoys bright prospects.

The BRF also proves that peaceful development and win-win cooperation represents the prevailing trend and people's common aspiration. Cold War-style confrontation and decoupling efforts go against the tide of history and will lead nowhere. Standing at a new historical starting point, we look forward to working with all parties to carry forward the Silk Road spirit, embark on a new journey of Belt and Road cooperation, and usher in a better future of joint progress toward global modernization.

Thank you.

QR code of List of Practical Cooperation Deliverables of The Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.



QR code of List of Multilateral Cooperation Deliverables of The Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.



Key Takeaways From BRI White Paper



China's State Council Information Office on October 10 released a white paper titled "The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future." The white paper, comprising a preamble, five chapters and a conclusion, presents the achievements of the BRI over the last 10 years, aiming to provide the international community with a better understanding of the value of the initiative, facilitate high-quality cooperation, and deliver benefits to more countries and peoples.

Since its launch in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative has been welcomed by the international community as both a public good and a cooperation platform. The following are the key takeaways from the white paper, including some of the highlights and major achievements of BRI cooperation over the past decade.

Ultimate Goal

According to the white paper, the ultimate goal of the BRI is to help build a global community with a shared future. The BRI involves countries in different world regions, at different development stages, and with different cultures. It transcends differences in ideologies and social

systems. It enables different countries to share opportunities, realize common development and prosperity, and build a community of shared interests, responsibility and destiny characterized by mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness.

As a practical means of building a global community with a shared future, the BRI has brought new understanding, inspired the world's imagination, and contributed new ideas and new approaches to international exchanges.

Principles, Concepts, Objectives, Vision

The BRI was founded on the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. It advocates win-win cooperation in pursuit of shared interests and the greater good. It emphasizes that all countries are equal participants, contributors and beneficiaries, and encourages economic integration, interconnected development and the sharing of achievements. The BRI is committed to the concept of open, green and clean cooperation on inclusive and sustainable development. It has zero tolerance for corruption, and promotes steady and high-quality growth.

Major Achievements

BRI partners -- By June 2023, China had signed more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with more than 150 countries and 30 international organizations across five continents, yielding a number of signature projects and small-scale yet impactful projects.

High-level forums -- China has hosted the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation twice, providing an important platform for participating countries and international organizations to expand exchanges, increase mutual trust and strengthen ties. China will host the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation from Oct. 17 to 18 in Beijing.

Infrastructure connectivity -- Substantial progress is being made in the construction of six economic corridors: the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the New Eurasian Land Bridge Economic Corridor, the China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. And in Africa, railways such as the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway and the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway are now operational and have become important drivers of in-depth development in East Africa and across the entire continent.

Maritime connectivity -- By the end of June 2023, the Maritime Silk Road had reached 117 ports in 43 countries, and more than 300 well-known Chinese and international shipping companies, port enterprises and think tanks, among other organizations, have joined the "Silk Road Maritime" association.

Air connectivity -- China has signed bilateral air transport agreements with 104 BRI partner countries and opened direct flight routes with 57 partner countries.

International inter-modality transport -- The China-Europe Railway Express now reaches more than 200 cities in 25 European countries. By the end of June 2023, the cumulative volume of the China-Europe Railway Express had exceeded 74,000 trips, transporting nearly 7 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and over 50,000 types of goods in 53 categories, including automobiles and mechanical equipment, with a total value of more than \$300 billion.

Trade and investment -- From 2013 to 2022, the cumulative value of imports and exports between China and BRI partner countries was \$19.1 trillion, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent. Cumulative two-way investment between China and partner countries was \$380 billion during the period, including some \$240 billion from China. China had signed 21 free trade agreements with 28 countries and regions.

Industrial cooperation -- By the end of June 2023, China had signed agreements on industrial capacity cooperation with more than 40 countries. These countries have promoted cooperation on industrial capacity, expanded cooperation in traditional industries such as steel, non-ferrous metals, building materials, automobiles, engineering machinery, agriculture, and resources and energy, and explored cooperation in emerging industries such as the digital economy, new energy vehicles, 5G, and nuclear energy and technology.

Financial cooperation -- By the end of June 2023, a total of 13 Chinese-funded banks had established 145 first-tier offices and branches in 50 BRI partner countries, some 17.7 million businesses in 131 partner countries had opened UnionPay banking services, and 74 partner countries had opened UnionPay mobile payment services. China has signed bilateral currency-swap agreements with 20 partner countries and established renminbi (RMB) clearing arrangements in 17 partner countries. China has funded the establishment of the Silk Road Fund (SRF) and opened the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with other participating countries. By the end of June 2023, the SRF had signed agreements on 75 projects with committed investment of about \$22 billion, there were 106 AIIB members, and the bank had approved 227 projects with a total investment of \$43.6 billion.

Green development -- China has signed a MoU with the United Nations Environment Programme on building a green Belt and Road for 2017-2022, launched the Initiative for Belt and Road Partnership on Green Development with 31 countries, and formed the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition.

QR code of full text of the above mentioned white paper



10 Years on, Belt and Road Cooperation Delivers Fruitful Outcomes

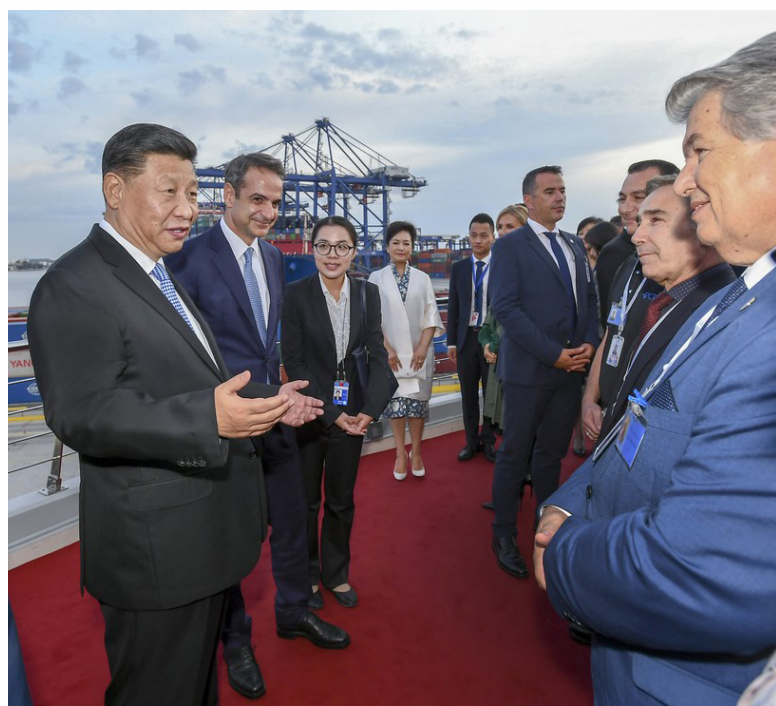
The last decade has taken the BRI to a new level, with China signing more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with over 150 countries and 30 international organizations. From 2013 to 2022, trade between China and BRI partner countries reached \$19.1 trillion, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent.

A decade after its launch, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has yielded substantial benefits and achieved initial success in promoting shared development and prosperity for participating countries, all amid a changing global situation.

Guided by the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, BRI cooperation has covered the majority of the world's countries. By June 2023, China had signed more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with over 150 countries and 30 international organizations across five continents, yielding a number of signature projects as well as "small yet beautiful" programs focusing on improving people's livelihoods.

As the BRI marks its 10th anniversary, especially with the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation scheduled for October 17 to 18, 2023 in Beijing, a brief review of the initiative's popularity and solid results is necessary to respond to those nitpickers who are negative about the BRI and have defamed it via deceitful means.

From 2013 to 2022, the cumulative value of trade between China and BRI partner countries reached 19.1 trillion U.S. dollars, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent. Cumulative two-way investment between China and partner countries reached 380 billion dollars, including 240 billion dollars from China.



A series of landmark BRI projects such as the China-Laos Railway, the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, and the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, were completed and put into operation, improving the infrastructure of partner countries and significantly enhancing connectivity. As regards specific cooperation projects, the annual cargo throughput of the Port of Piraeus in Greece has increased to above 5 million twenty-foot equivalent units. The container terminal of

Piraeus now ranks among the world's 40 largest ports. Before China's investment, Port of Piraeus ranked 93rd. Hambantota International Port in Sri Lanka is steadily moving toward its goal of becoming a hub in the region, with its annual throughput of bulk cargo increasing to 1.21 million tonnes. Yet some Western media have labeled the Hambantota port a "failed project" under the BRI.

To expand channels and platforms for investment and financing, China has funded the establishment of the Silk Road Fund and established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, along with other participating countries. These serve as a supplement to other multilateral financing institutions and help bridge financial gaps in improving infrastructure in developing countries.

The BRI, which is committed to open, green and clean cooperation, has created a new paradigm for cooperation and become the world's largest platform for international cooperation and a popular public good. It has seen notable outcomes in promoting connectivity in policy, infrastructure, trade, financing and people-to-people bonds, reinforcing the development capacity of relevant countries, improving

people's lives, and paving the way toward shared development and prosperity.

BRI-related cooperation principles have been incorporated into documents of organizations including the United Nations and the G20. The World Bank has estimated that by 2030, BRI-related investments could lift 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty and 32 million out of moderate poverty.

The all-round progress in BRI cooperation is recognized internationally. The BRI has brought great benefits to the Global South and the global economy in its first decade. It not only increased connectivity through energy and infrastructure construction and unlocked growth potentials, but also expanded energy access for the poor across the world, said Kevin P. Gallagher, director of the Global Development Policy Center at Boston University.

Representatives from over 130 countries and over 30 international organizations have attended the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing to pool wisdom and foster new momentum and consensus. The BRI has demonstrated greater creativity and vitality and opened up fresh opportunities for common development and prosperity among participating countries in the second 10 years.





Indonesia's First High-Speed Railway Comes Into Service, Heralding A New Era

The 142.3 km High-Speed Railway line, which cuts the journey between Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta, and the 4th largest city, Bandung, from over three hours to 40 minutes, has emerged as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative.

At Halim Station here in the Indonesian capital, the first official train of the Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway (HSR) glided away from the platform and picked up speed amid applause from its passengers.

After 40 minutes, the crimson and silver adorned train steadily came to rest at Tegalluar Station in Bandung, the capital of West Java Province, marking the successful launch of the first high-speed railway in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

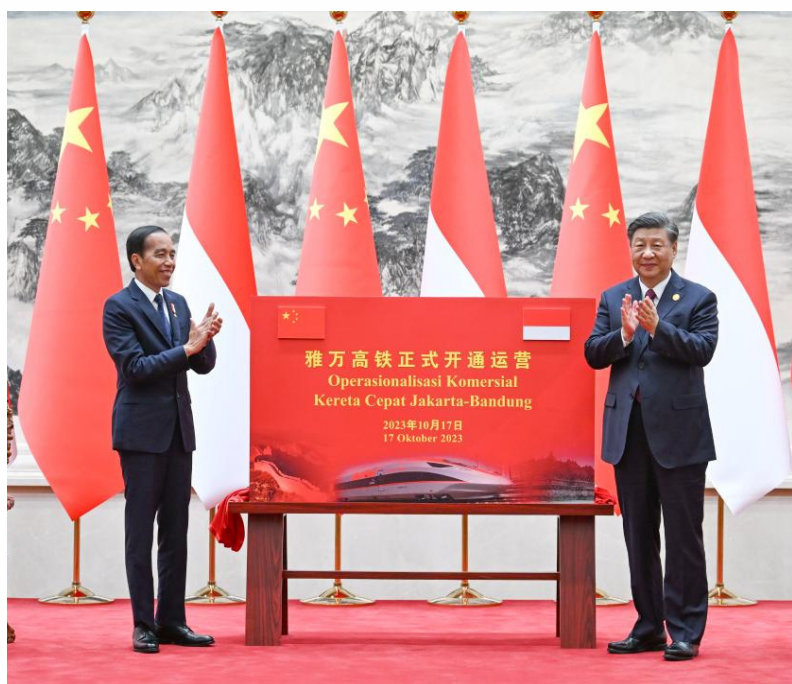
On October 17, 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indonesian President Joko Widodo jointly inaugurated the official operation of Indonesia's first High-Speed Railway. Indonesian President Joko Widodo said it marked the modernization of Indonesia's transportation mode.

Widodo revealed the name of the HSR, "Whoosh," inspired by the train's sound and meaning fast, efficient and reliable in Indonesian.

With a speed of 350 km per hour, the HSR is the first overseas high-speed railway project that fully uses Chinese railway systems, technology and industrial components.

Technology from China

The 142.3 km high-speed line, which cuts the journey between Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta, and the 4th largest city, Bandung, from over three hours to 40 minutes, is a flagship project that synergizes the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and Indonesia's vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indonesian President Joko Widodo jointly inaugurate the official operation of the Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway after their talks in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, October 17, 2023.

"It's like a dream come true," said Hermanto Dwiatmoko, chairman of the Indonesian Railway Society and former director general for railways at the Transportation Ministry. In 2008, he was invited to take the Beijing-Tianjin Intercity Railway, the first HSR with a design speed of 350 km per hour in China.

"When I was taking the HSR in China, the maximum speed of Indonesia's train was 120



High-speed electric multiple unit (EMU) trains for the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway are seen at Halim Station in Jakarta, Indonesia,

km per hour at that time, so the experience was quite a surprise to me,” he said.

Before introducing the HSR system, Indonesia predominantly relied on narrow-gauge and standard-gauge railways, with only a limited portion of the railway network electrified. Consequently, there was a pressing need for technological advancements and equipment upgrades to enhance the efficiency and capacity of the rail infrastructure.

The Jakarta-Bandung HSR uses the currently most advanced autonomous CTCS-3 train control system as the central nervous system, which took China more than 15 years to develop with independent intellectual property rights.

Guo Lei, head of the design department of the High-Speed Railway Contractor Consortium, said the line has made adaptations and technological innovations per local conditions, directly driving the modernization of the Indonesian railway system and the upgrade of related equipment.

Dwiyana Slamet Riyadi, president director of Kereta Cepat Indonesia China, a joint venture consortium between Chinese and Indonesian state-owned firms that runs the line, said the

long-tested Chinese standards guarantee the safe operation of the Jakarta-Bandung HSR.

“China provides the widest possible technology transfer, which puts Indonesia at the forefront of high-speed train technology compared to other ASEAN countries, and Indonesia will benefit from it in the future for a long time,” said Riyadi.

The Jakarta-Bandung HSR uses the currently most advanced autonomous CTCS-3 train control system as the central nervous system, which took China more than 15 years to develop with independent intellectual property rights.

Benefits For Locals

Galang Swandaru has witnessed the process of building Tegalluar Station.

After taking one-on-one training lessons from his Chinese teacher, the 27-year-old civil engineering graduate became a quality-control engineer at the high-speed railway project



Passengers pose for photos aboard a high-speed electric multiple unit (EMU) train running on the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway (HSR).

department of China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group. “Swandaru is not talkative but diligent and willing to learn,” said his teacher, Zhao Wei, also the deputy chief engineer of Tegalluar Station. “He managed to master the survey lofting skills quickly and can check whether construction meets design requirements. He is now capable of taking some technical work independently.”

“There are many young Indonesian technicians like me along the railway who have learned professional skills from Chinese teachers as well as from working on-site,” said Swandaru.

Apart from cultivating young talents, project departments in charge of civil engineering work prioritize nearby villagers when hiring workers. They also organize specific training like welding, forklifting and hoisting operations for them.

Khairul Ikmal is a villager in Malangnengah, Purwakarta Regency, near the railway project department of Sinohydro Bureau 7. Ikmal used to work as an assembly line worker in a shoe factory far away from home. He was recruited in 2019 and learned to become a welder after five months of training.

Many other villagers have also secured employment in the project department like Ikmal, resulting in a notable income boost.

Ikmal fulfilled his long-held dream of owning a motorcycle thanks to his new job.

“Since the railway project is completed now, I plan to open a welding studio and use the technology I have learned over the past four years to make products such as guardrails and window guards,” he said.

According to statistics provided by Kereta Cepat Indonesia China, 45,000 Indonesian employees were trained on-site through institutions and by their Chinese teachers during the high-speed railway’s construction. And the project has created about 51,000 jobs in Indonesia.

New Opportunities

“The opening of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway is undoubtedly good news for me,” said Hazrina Marlina, a 49-year-old who runs a rental department business near a college in Bandung while living in Jakarta with her family.

Many other villagers have also secured employment in the project department like Ikmal, resulting in a notable income boost. Ikmal fulfilled his long-held dream of owning a motorcycle thanks to his new job.

Marlina used to take the train from home to work, but the railway was built over 100 years ago with a speed of about 50 km per hour, thus costing her more than three hours. “The past travel experiences weren’t really ideal for me or other business people,” she said.

“Taking the high-speed train will save me at least two hours on the road. I can go to Bandung whenever necessary, and going there and back within a day is possible now,” said Marlina.

Arief Rahmanda, a transportation consulting company CEO, shares Marlina’s sentiments.

The 30-year-old travels from his company in east Java to Bandung almost weekly to meet clients, costing him at least two and a half hours by car. “The HSR has a reputation for being punctual and reliable, so I wouldn’t be worried

about getting stuck on the highway anymore,” Rahmanda said.

About 10 minutes ride away from Halim Station, the second stop of the line is Karawang, located in a famous industrial area with several automobile factories with Chinese and Japanese investments.

Wuling Motors Indonesia, a subsidiary of the major Chinese automobile manufacturer SAIC-GM-Wuling, is one of them.

“Our factory is less than half an hour’s drive from the Karawang Station. The HSR offers convenience for potential business clients and partners to come to visit us,” said Arif Pramadana, vice president of SAIC-GM-Wuling Motor Indonesia.

The HSR also provides residents along the line with a greener way of travel, Pramadana said.

“The multi-form cooperation between China and Indonesia in the field of transportation would promote sustainable development with far-reaching effects,” he added.

Java Island, through which the HSR passes, is the most densely populated island in this archipelagic nation. With over 151 million residents, it constitutes over half of Indonesia’s total population. Given this significant population concentration, there is a widespread expectation for more efficient transportation to address the increasing demand.

According to Ridwan Kamil, the former governor of West Java province, the Jakarta-Bandung HSR improves transportation and holds immense potential for creating new opportunities.

He believes the HSR will catalyze transit-oriented development, leading to an emerging new economy and employment opportunities.

“We are designing a master plan for a new city with more buildings around the high-speed railway stations,” said Kamil. “With new infrastructure being built and more investment coming, an increase of job opportunities will be given to the younger generations of West Java people.”



Crew members of a high-speed electric multiple unit (EMU) train for the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway greet passengers and guests at Halim Station in Jakarta, Indonesia,



The container ship Cosco Shipping Virgo calls at Meishan port area of Ningbo Zhoushan Port in east China's Zhejiang Province.

China, Europe Forge Deeper Ties Via Thriving Maritime Trade Routes

In late September, the Cosco Shipping Virgo, a 20,000-TEU ultra-large container ship, once again returned to the Port of Hamburg, the largest port in Germany and the third largest in Europe.

This impressive vessel, measuring 399.8 meters in length and 58.6 meters in width, embarked on its journey from China's Tianjin Port on Aug. 12. Before arriving in Hamburg, it made stops at various ports, including Dalian, Shanghai, Ningbo, Singapore, Piraeus, and Rotterdam. Right now, it is heading back to Shanghai.

In command of this colossal ship is Captain Mo Weidong, a seasoned mariner with over three decades of shipping experience. It is Mo's fifth year sailing on this specific route.

"Having sailed back and forth on the route between China and Europe, I have indeed witnessed the transformative effects of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," the 54-year-old captain told Xinhua reporters, as the ship called at Ningbo Zhoushan Port.

From the vantage point of the ship's bridge, perched dozens of meters above the deck, a bustling scene unfolds at the port. Containers are being impeccably stacked in precise rows by the gantry cranes used adeptly to handle them, ensuring an efficient and seamless workflow.

"Since the beginning of this year, we've seen a notable increase in cargo volumes on this shipping route," said Mo, while adding that there has been a surge in the exports of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and solar cells.

Mo also revealed that aircraft parts will now be shipped weekly from the Port of Hamburg to the Tianjin Port via this route, further attesting to the thriving trade and economic exchanges between China and Europe.

At present, the Port of Hamburg is directly connected to major Chinese ports via 15 regularly scheduled liner services. Approximately one-third of the containers processed at the Port of Hamburg either originate from China or are bound for China.

Jens Meier, CEO of Hamburg Port Authority, underscored the significance of cooperation between the Port of Hamburg and Chinese ports. "We are actively sharing knowledge and strengthening the corridors, particularly in maritime supply chains, as well as land-based corridors," Meier explained.

In late August, the COSCO Shengshi, a ship used to carry vehicles, arrived at Germany's Port of Bremerhaven, where it unloaded 530 commercial vehicles from China, marking the successful maiden voyage of the liner.

On its way to Bremerhaven, a total of 3,731 Chinese-made commercial vehicles, including over 2,700 new energy vehicles, were loaded onto the ship at the ports of Shanghai and Xiamen.

Following its departure from Xiamen, the COSCO Shengshi navigated across the Indian Ocean and passed through the Suez Canal,

making stops at ports in the UK and Belgium before finally reaching Germany. This 43-day journey spanned approximately 9,900 nautical miles.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past few years, the flow of trade between China and Europe has demonstrated remarkable resilience. Mo observed an increase in trade volume, noting that it now takes two days to unload at Piraeus Port in Greece, compared to one and a half days previously.

In 2022, China and the EU, who are each other's second-largest trading partners, achieved record bilateral trade flows of 847.3 billion U.S. dollars, marking a year-on-year increase of 2.4 percent. This equates to over 1.6 million U.S. dollars worth of trade conducted on average every minute. Simultaneously, the two-way cumulative stock of direct investment had exceeded 230 billion U.S. dollars by the end of 2022.

"Having sailed back and forth on the route between China and Europe, I have indeed witnessed the transformative effects of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," the 54-year-old captain told Xinhua reporters, as the ship called at Ningbo Zhoushan Port.



A container ship of China's COSCO Shipping calls at the Port of Hamburg in Germany,

BRI cooperation has significantly enhanced maritime connectivity, fostering flourishing China-EU trade and economic partnership. COSCO Shipping, for instance, now operates 181 container liner routes and allocates over 50 percent of its container capacity to BRI partner countries. The company has also invested in 57 ports within these nations.

In 2016, COSCO Shipping acquired a 67-percent stake in Piraeus Port and took over the port's management and operation. In May 2023, COSCO Shipping Ports, the company's ports operator, acquired a nearly 25 percent stake in one of Hamburg's terminals.

With the investment from China, Piraeus Port has become a leading European port. Data from the port revealed that in the fiscal year of 2022, its profit after tax had stood at 52.9 million euros, achieving a remarkable 43.9 percent increase from the previous year.

At Ningbo Zhoushan Port, situated some 12,000 km from Piraeus, crane operators

efficiently controlled busy gantry cranes from an operation room located 3 km away.

Drawing from his decades of experience in the shipping industry, Mo highlighted that continuous infrastructure upgrades at Chinese ports have significantly improved their operational efficiency, providing solid support for the smooth flow of global trade. "I am expecting the BRI will bolster cooperation among countries and deliver more benefits to their peoples," Mo said.

With the investment from China, Piraeus Port has become a leading European port. Data from the port revealed that in the fiscal year of 2022, its profit after tax had stood at 52.9 million euros, achieving a remarkable 43.9 percent increase from the previous year.



This aerial photo shows a terminal of Piraeus Port in Greece.

The Revival of A Millennia-Old Port

The Greek port of Piraeus, which was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy, has been revived by the BRI and is now a success not just for the Greek people and Chinese companies, but also for the region.

Tassos Vamvakidis, who has worked at the Port of Piraeus in Greece for over five decades, has seen the ebb and flow of this millennia-old port. Nevertheless, there are still moments that evoke strong emotions whenever he recalls.

On November 11, 2019, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Piraeus port, a flagship project of China-Greece Belt and Road cooperation, during his state visit to Greece. The project has brought the port back from the brink of bankruptcy through Chinese investment of capital and advanced technologies and equipment.

“The port was bustling with excitement, just like celebrating a festival,” Vamvakidis recalled. “President Xi’s visit is of great significance

for every staff member and the entire port.” Standing on a rooftop platform overlooking the port, Xi talked with the staff members.

“He spoke with wisdom and foresight,” Vamvakidis recalled.

Xi said the principles of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) -- extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits -- mean that no single country dictates the terms and all participants share the responsibilities and the gains.

In 2013, Xi proposed the BRI, an initiative drawing inspiration from the ancient silk routes that bridged the East and the West through trade and cultural exchanges. Over the past decade, China has signed BRI cooperation



OOCL PIRAEUS, one of the largest container vessels in the world, arriving at Piraeus port in Piraeus, Greece.

documents with more than 150 countries and 30-plus international organizations, helping participating countries address challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, lagging industrial development, limited industrialization, insufficient capital and technology, and a shortage of skilled workers.

The Piraeus project is one of them. Situated on the Mediterranean coast, Piraeus is Greece's largest port and boasts a history of over 2,000 years.

As a pivotal gateway linking Europe with Asia and Africa, this port serves as a testament to the vicissitudes of European maritime civilization.

Yet, the prominence of Piraeus had been steadily diminishing for years until Chinese shipping company COSCO made an investment in 2008, helping it out of the clutches of the international financial crisis.

Thanks to Belt and Road cooperation, Piraeus has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Its container operating capacity surged from around 1.5 million TEUs in 2010 to 6.2 million TEUs, making it one of the largest ports in the Mediterranean.

The time-honored port is bustling with vitality. China and Greece, two ancient civilizations that began exchanges over 2,000 years ago through the ancient Silk Road, have been once again closely linked through this port.

The Piraeus port project has been a success not just for the Greek people and Chinese companies, but also for the region and all of the port's business partners, said Vamvakidis.

"Seeing is believing," Xi said while visiting the port in 2019. "The BRI proposed by China is not mere rhetoric or a legend, but a concrete example of success and a wonderful reality."

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Piraeus port, a flagship project of China-Greece Belt and Road cooperation, during his state visit to Greece. The project has brought the port back from the brink of bankruptcy through Chinese investment of capital and advanced technologies and equipment.



Foreign Leaders, UN Chief and NDB President Laud China, BRI in Meetings with Xi



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addresses the opening ceremony of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing.

Representatives from more than 140 countries and 30-plus international organizations were gathering in Beijing to attend the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on October 17-18, 2023.

Twenty foreign leaders, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General and president of the New Development Bank (NDB) held bilateral meetings or talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, during which they lauded the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China's development and

its constructive role in international affairs, among others.

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said that from day one, Kazakhstan has firmly supported and actively participated in the BRI. Over the past decade, China has become a leading country in the world, and the Belt and Road cooperation has yielded remarkable achievements, he added.

Noting that China is Kazakhstan's forever trustworthy friend and partner, Tokayev said Kazakhstan speaks highly of China's just

position and positive role in international affairs, including its efforts to promote the settlement of the Ukraine crisis, and is willing to strengthen multilateral communication and coordination with China.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that during the trip to China, he found that Beijing has become cleaner and more beautiful, and people here are living happier lives. Ethiopia will continue to advance the Belt and Road cooperation and welcome more Chinese enterprises to invest in the country, he said.

Ethiopia highly appreciates and actively supports the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative proposed by President Xi, and is willing to work closely with China to promote their implementation, Ahmed said.

Chile supports China's efforts to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, Boric said, adding that Chile hopes to become the hub of cooperation between China and Latin American countries and play an active role in promoting the development of the Latin America-China relations.

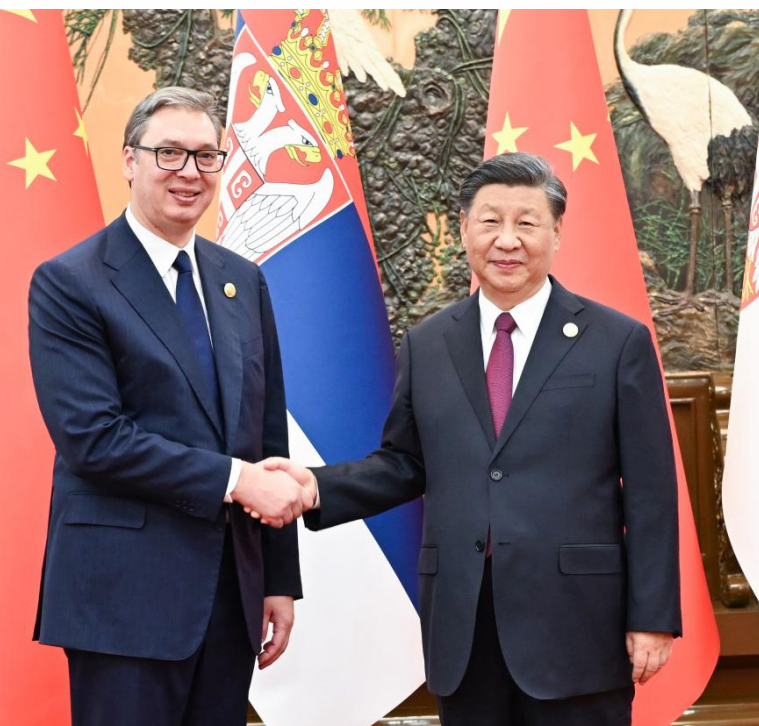
Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said Hungary will firmly support and continue to actively participate in the BRI, and Hungary stays committed to deepening its friendly and cooperative relations with China and will continue to be a trustworthy friend and partner of China in the European Union.

Hungary opposes decoupling, severing supply chains, and the so-called "de-risking," said Orban, noting that Hungary will continue to actively promote cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries with China, and promote the sound and steady growth of Europe-China relations.

Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape said that China's selfless assistance has brought enormous benefits to the people of Papua New Guinea, noting that the country firmly adheres to the one-China principle, and believes that China's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected.

Marape said strengthening cooperation with China is of great significance not only to Papua New Guinea but also to the world. The two countries will continue to firmly support each other, deepen and strengthen cooperation in various fields within the BRI framework, and promote mutually beneficial cooperation between countries in the South Pacific region and China, he said.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo said that Indonesia takes China as an important strategic partner in the country's economic development and construction, and is looking forward to further promoting communication and cooperation with China, enhancing mutual trust and developing even closer relations, to benefit the two peoples and contribute to regional peace and prosperity. He said Indonesia is willing to promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic.

Chilean President Gabriel Boric said the BRI has become an important platform for mutually beneficial cooperation and an important opportunity for countries around the world to achieve common development. Chile highly values and will continue to actively participate in the cooperation, he said.

and accelerate the construction of major projects such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Corridor and “Two Countries, Twin Parks.”

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said Serbia stands with China on all China-related issues and firmly follows the one-China policy, adding that Serbia is proud of its ironclad friendship with China.

Vucic said Serbia fully supports the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative, and will continue to actively participate in the Belt and Road cooperation and deepen friendly cooperation with China in various fields.

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev hailed the BRI proposed by President Xi as a great project that is open and inclusive, saying that Uzbekistan always firmly supports and actively participates in the initiative.

Uzbekistan hopes to draw on China’s poverty alleviation experience, deepen cooperation and exchanges in various fields under the BRI framework and advance the building of a green Silk Road, Mirziyoyev said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the BRI has achieved great success and has become an important international public good widely recognized by the world, expressing his confidence in greater achievements of this great cause.

Russia is willing to strengthen communication and collaboration with China within multilateral mechanisms such as BRICS, uphold the international system based on international law, and promote the establishment of a more just and reasonable global governance system, Putin said.

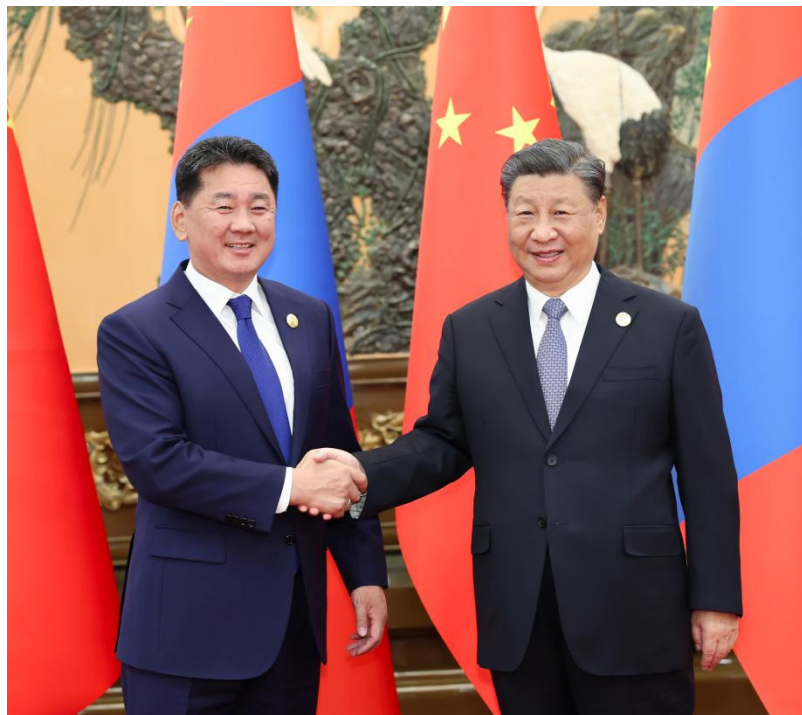
Nigerian Vice President Kashim Shettima said that China has consistently shown respect and equality toward Nigeria and other African countries, and has made every effort to support the people of Africa in seeking independence and development.

Nigeria is willing to continue deepening the Belt and Road cooperation with China and elevate bilateral ties to a new level, Shettima said.

Hailing China as a “true friend” of Argentina, Argentine President Alberto Fernandez said the Belt and Road cooperation has created important

opportunities for developing countries and played an irreplaceable role in promoting world peace, fairness and sustainable development.

Argentina will work with China to support multilateralism and strengthen communication and coordination within the frameworks of the G20 and BRICS cooperation mechanism, Fernandez said.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Mongolian President Ukhnaa Khurelsukh.

Kenyan President William Ruto said that Kenya has benefited a lot from its cooperation with China since the BRI was put forward. The Mombasa-Nairobi Railway and other important projects have greatly enhanced Kenya’s economic development capacity and improved people’s well-being.

He expressed the belief that the eight major steps proposed by President Xi to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation will further help Kenya and Africa achieve industrialization, agricultural modernization and economic integration.

Prime Minister of Egypt Mostafa Madbouly said that Egypt and Arab countries commended China for its consistent and fair stance on the Palestinian issue and look forward to China’s

more significant role in resolving the current crisis.

Highly commending China's important role in world peace and stability, Mongolian President Ukhnaa Khurelsukh noted that Mongolia attaches importance to strengthening trilateral cooperation among Mongolia, China and Russia, and it is willing to promote interaction and collaboration with China in multilateral affairs.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet expressed appreciation for China's long-time and valuable support for Cambodia, noting that Cambodia pursues a friendly policy toward China and supports China's core interests.

Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, said China and Turkmenistan should continue to deepen economic and energy cooperation as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and strengthen multilateral communication and coordination within frameworks such as the China-Central Asia mechanism.

President of the Republic of the Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso said that the BRI is a great project that offers the world a new model of inclusive development, and China is a major contributor to global economic growth. The Republic of the Congo looks forward to strengthening practical cooperation with China in areas such as infrastructure and green energy, and maintaining close communication and coordination within frameworks including the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, he said.

Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin noted that Thailand will work with China to build a more stable, prosperous and sustainable Thailand-China community with a shared future. He said Thailand will do its utmost to ensure the safety of Chinese citizens in Thailand, and welcomes more Chinese enterprises to invest and more Chinese citizens to visit Thailand.

Mozambican Prime Minister Adriano Maleiane said important initiatives including the BRI and the Global Development Initiative can help other countries eliminate poverty, develop economy and improve people's livelihoods. Mozambique hopes to learn from China's modernization experience, better realize its own development, deepen practical cooperation with China in various fields and promote the



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Nigerian Vice President Kashim Shettima.

building of a community with a shared future for humanity, said Maleiane.

Prime Minister of Pakistan Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar said that Pakistan will always be a reliable and trustworthy friend of China and will never allow any force to undermine the Pakistan-China friendship. Pakistan will also be committed to deepening the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership with China, he added.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that the BRI provides a very important and effective way to help developing countries achieve sustainable development. The eight major steps announced by President Xi to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation are fully in line with the UN purposes and objectives and are conducive to helping developing countries accelerate their development.

The UN highly appreciates China's firm commitment to multilateralism and supports the three global initiatives put forward by President Xi, said Guterres.

NDB President Dilma Rousseff thanked the Chinese government for its support for the NDB and expressed the belief that the BRI and the forum will play an important role in global sustainable development and green development. The NDB is willing to actively participate in Belt and Road cooperation and make due contributions to promoting world multi-polarity and the reform of the international financial system, she said.

Multinationals Embrace Cooperation Opportunities Under Belt and Road Initiative

Multinationals have leveraged BRI to expand their presence across geographies and are playing an important role in accelerating infrastructure connectivity and promoting financial integration under the BRI.

From manufacturers and lenders to consulting service providers, it's not uncommon to see multinational corporations participating in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects. With global ambitions, many of them have embraced the tailwind produced by the BRI to expand their presence and navigate business landscapes across the world.

With the trial run of Egypt's first electrified light rail line (LRT) last year, more than 180 escalators and elevators provided by American multinational Otis Worldwide Corporation for the project were put into operation.

The LRT was one of the major BRI projects that saw participation from Otis in recent years. The multinational also supplied about 50 elevators and escalators for one of the tallest buildings in East Africa -- the new headquarters of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia inaugurated last year, among other projects.

"Over the years, Otis has been deeply involved in BRI projects," said Sally Loh, president of Otis China. The company has provided vertical transport solutions and dispatched technical teams to support elevator installation for many signature projects, she noted.

"By actively engaging in these projects, Otis has fully leveraged its advantages of being a global brand and manufacturing in China to support infrastructure construction and smart city development and contribute to regional prosperity," she said.

As one of the world's major financial institutions, Deutsche Bank has borne witness to multinationals' participation in BRI projects.

"We see cases where multinationals co-develop renewable energy projects with Chinese players in the Middle East, and occasions where multinationals appear in the supply chain of BRI projects," said Peter Qiu, president of Deutsche Bank (China) Co., Ltd. Third-party market cooperation opportunities are appealing to multinational corporations, Qiu added.

The German lender has been engaged in several BRI projects, including Sinosure's guaranteed syndication for China Harbor's infrastructure project in Jamaica and trade services for Chinese solar projects in Saudi Arabia.

Having a global network of professional firms providing audit, tax and advisory services, KPMG has set up offices in more than 90 percent of BRI participating countries and regions, and will continue to scale up services for BRI-related investment and trade activities, said Jiang Liqin, head of clients and markets for KPMG China.

Advancing the BRI will bring huge investment and development opportunities for local businesses cooperating with Chinese enterprises to improve their research, technology and application capabilities, Jiang added.

Multinationals play an important role in facilitating infrastructure connectivity, smoothening trade and promoting financial integration under the BRI, which in turn



A train is seen during a trial running of light rail transit (LRT) system, which was jointly built by Chinese and Egyptian companies, in east of Cairo, Egypt,

provides huge business opportunities for them, said Liu Nanxing, an expert on international cooperation at the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

“BRI cooperation has created enormous demand for products, investment and economic cooperation in various fields such as infrastructure construction,” he noted. “It has offered multinationals new partnerships and supply orders, and increased needs for their services.” Many multinational companies pay great attention to the BRI and make it one of the key factors to be considered in their global layout, in a bid to strengthen cooperation with various parties and broaden the space for development, he said.

According to a white paper on BRI cooperation released by China’s State Council Information Office, countries and businesses are encouraged to engage through various forms such as bilateral cooperation, third-party market cooperation and multilateral cooperation, thereby creating synergy for development.

By joining third-party market cooperation, enterprises from different countries can work together to carry out projects, which can reduce the risk of undertaking projects on their own, especially given the large scale of some BRI projects, said Liu.

The BRI is not only attractive to multinational giants, but also for foreign-funded small and medium-sized companies, which could enter overseas markets through the BRI to boost international development, Liu added. Since the

BRI was proposed in 2013, over 3,000 cooperation projects have been launched, involving close to 1 trillion U.S. dollars of investment, creating an array of national landmarks, livelihood projects, and milestones of cooperation.

The Chinese government has been clear that it is open to multinational companies taking part in BRI projects, and for those willing to engage, it offers some interesting opportunities since multinationals and Chinese firms have complementary contributions to make, said Carl F. Fey, Professor of Strategy at BI Norwegian Business School.

He said multinationals can lend international experience to the projects as well as technology and strong brand names, while they can benefit from taking part in such projects by obtaining additional business, especially given the sluggish global economy.

Multinationals are both a driving force and beneficiaries of globalization, which now faces challenges and calls for transformation, while BRI cooperation is a major contributor to the sound development of globalization, said Liu from the NDRC.

Looking forward, he believes that the BRI, by connecting broad regions with economic vitality and potentials, will shape new growth centers for the world economy, help partner countries advance modernization, and propel global economic recovery.

“This process will generate even more opportunities for both partner countries and multinational companies,” he said.

Belt & Road Initiative Cements Africa-China Cooperation, Says South African Lawmaker

The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has deepened Africa-China cooperation in various fields hence crucial for the relationship-building between the two sides, said Lechesa Tsenoli, deputy speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa.

In a recent interview with Chinese media, Tsenoli shared his insights on the significance of the initiative and its impact on the multifaceted relationship between China and African countries.

The initiative “magnifies the impact China is making on our relationship,” Tsenoli said. “Indeed, it strengthens our ability to work together across the continent, as well as with China itself in a variety of areas.”

He stressed the importance of the transportation infrastructure that has developed under the initiative, citing the railway lines that have been built in the African continent, such as the one between the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and the coastal city of Mombasa.

As of Aug. 31, the railway is operating an average of six passenger trains per day; a total of 11 million passengers have been carried, and the average occupancy rate is above 95 percent; an average of 17 freight trains operate daily, and a total of 28 million tonnes of goods have been transported, according to a white paper on the BRI released on October 17, 2023.

By June, China had signed more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with more than 150 countries and 30 international organizations across five continents, yielding a number of signature projects and small-scale yet impactful projects, said the white paper titled “The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global

Community of Shared Future.” “The provision of infrastructure for the African Union ... is a significant thing that China is contributing towards,” said Tsenoli, a respected figure in African politics.

The initiative “requires good country relationships” and its growing importance underscores the profound impact on nations that benefit from their association with China, said the politician.

The third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation has been held in Beijing from October 17 to 18, 2023.

It serves as a valuable mechanism for fostering relationships, not only for China but also for the Belt and Road countries, he said, adding that statistics are suggesting a growth in the quality and content of the relationship between Africa and China.

The initiative “magnifies the impact China is making on our relationship,” Tsenoli said. “Indeed, it strengthens our ability to work together across the continent, as well as with China itself in a variety of areas.”

Africa and China, he said, can use their collective influence to “drive things for the better” for the continent in particular and the world in general.

He applauded the progress made in Africa-China collaboration on the global level, including in global organizations and other international forums. “We sing from the same song sheet, as I said.”

| INTERVIEW |

BRI Allows Global South to Connect With Each Other, Says Pakistani Economist



The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) allows countries of Global South to connect with each other, a Pakistani economist told Xinhua in a recent interview.

“We have seen that China itself has come out of years and decades of poverty, and it has transitioned into a country that is fast developing. So for them to tailor a program for the developing

countries is much easier than for the Global North,” said Vaqar Ahmed, joint executive director at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank.

This is what China has been trying to do under the BRI, he added.

The BRI is a very decent model for cooperation, particularly for the developing countries,

because many programs are led or participated in by developing countries, and by some of the poorest countries of the world, Ahmed said.

“So it’s not like traditional development programs, for example, a model having bilateral, multilateral donors involved that will come in and do a diagnostic of their own, and then they will offer you a platter or a choice set, that this is what we can do for you, would you sign up for it,” he said.

The BRI is a very decent model for cooperation, particularly for the developing countries, because many programs are led or participated in by developing countries, and by some of the poorest countries of the world, Ahmed said.

But it’s not the way that the BRI, or its flagship project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has operated, he said.

Launched in 2013, the CPEC is a corridor linking the Gwadar port in southwestern Pakistan with Kashgar in northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport and industrial cooperation.

“In BRI or like in the case of CPEC, you were asked to come up with a priority of choices. What do you want? Where do you want Chinese investment to go? You prioritize that,” the economist added.

Most of the BRI’s technical assistance projects, in the case of infrastructure, are backed by a financial model, which is easier for developing countries to participate in, as most of them are in investment mode, Ahmed said.

Even if they are loan projects, he noted that they are loans for longer time periods with repayments not around the corner, which is really helping the developing countries to come on board and has allowed more and more of these countries to become part of the BRI umbrella.

Highlighting the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing in October, the economist said that one of its objectives is that the countries of the Global South, who are beneficiaries of the BRI should actually come together to share those experiences and knowledge.

It’s not just the responsibility of China, but in fact, all those countries who are participating in the BRI should utilize this opportunity to share their experiences, he said.

“So without naming any multilateral institution from the Global North, if they were delivering you a project in let’s say, five years or 10 years, BRI was able to cut short that time,” said Ahmed, adding a BRI project would have been delivered in one or two years maybe and “there are countless examples within Pakistan.”

Elaborating on the importance of understanding the global trade architecture, the economist noted that the way the BRI stands at the moment would potentially create more opportunities and productive capacities for developing countries in the future.

Even if they are loan projects, he noted that they are loans for longer time periods with repayments not around the corner, which is really helping the developing countries to come on board and has allowed more and more of these countries to become part of the BRI umbrella.

“Once those productive capacities are created, for example, in my large-scale manufacturing sector, I would like to trade more. But this is the time when Global North should not change the rules of the trade,” said the economist.

“If you don’t like multilateralism now, that’s going to send a very negative signal to the Global South, to the developing countries, who have added productive capacities due to BRI, due to CPEC,” he pointed out.

BRI is Committed to Green Development and Global Harmony: Kulkarni

The third Belt and Road Initiative Forum for International Cooperation, is an important milestone in the history of connectivity and cooperation, both at the regional and global levels, says Sudheendra Kulkarni, an Indian political analyst.

I am from India. I have been a strong champion of India joining the Belt and Road Initiative as an equal partner since its inception a decade ago. I believe that India becoming a partner country will greatly enhance the BRI's potential to create shared prosperity in Asia, especially South Asia. This will also provide a strong fillip to friendship and cooperation between the two great Asian civilizations.

Western powers are unable and unwilling to accept the fact that the BRI has become the largest and most beneficial project in the modern history of the world to promote common development and common prosperity. Therefore, they are spreading all kinds of false allegations to malign it. One such false allegation is that the BRI is not environmentally sustainable.

Let me ask these critics: Which global leader has been most consistently and passionately talking about green development, environmentally sustainable development, and socially equitable development? Undoubtedly, it is Chinese President Xi Jinping. He has given a wise new mantra, a wise new motto, which



states “Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets.” This is true not only for China, but also for every country in the world.

Which global leader has given a call for a transition from industrial civilization to ecological civilization? It is Chinese President Xi Jinping. He has repeatedly cautioned that man and nature should coexist harmoniously, and that if man seeks to exploit nature, the outcome will be counterproductive and humanity itself will become a victim. This explains why the Belt and Road Initiative has the potential to become

the greatest accelerator of green development globally in the years to come.

The other malicious allegation of Western powers is that the BRI is a Chinese ploy to subjugate partner countries into neocolonialism. I can best answer these allegations by recalling a popular saying in India. It translates as “A cat eats up 900 mice and then preaches religion.” Who colonized more than 80 countries in Asia,

Africa and Latin America? European powers. Who has been following the policy of neo-colonial hegemony since the end of World War II? The United States of America.

China has never colonized any foreign country, nor is it practicing neocolonialism in any form.

To cover up American deceitfulness, its officials are saying that they will offer developing countries a “better alternative” to China’s allegedly “coercive and unsustainable” lending through the Belt and Road Initiative.

This is a big lie. An unprejudiced evaluation of BRI projects shows that it has brought significant benefits to partner countries – be it Laos and Indonesia in South-East Asia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia, or Kenya and Nigeria in Africa, to name only a few countries.

Let me give an example, the high-speed China-Laos railway line, constructed under the BRI. Fifty years have passed since the end of America’s “secret war” in Laos from 1964 to 1973, when the U.S. rained down more than 2 million tons of /bombs and 270 million cluster munitions, making Laos one of the most heavily bombed countries in world history. Even now, these cluster bombs are still being found.

During the construction of the China-Laos railway line, the Chinese were helping locals build infrastructure to pave the way for economic development, while the bombs that the U.S. military dropped continue to threaten lives and kill innocent people.

Truly, the cat that ate up 900 mice is now preaching religion to the whole world. The world should beware of this deceitful cat.



A general view of Carnelian Tower (L) and condominiums at Forest City, a development project launched under the Belt and Road Initiative, in Gelang Patah, Malaysia’s Johor state.

Western powers are unable and unwilling to accept the fact that the BRI has become the largest and most beneficial project in the modern history of the world to promote common development and common prosperity.



Passengers watch and take photos as train conductors dressed in national costumes dance on the high-speed China-Laos railway.



Why BRI is Not a Bad Investment

Over the past decade, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has gained worldwide traction and garnered overwhelming support from the international community. Having galvanized nearly \$1 trillion of investment, the BRI has built numerous livelihood projects, developed massive infrastructure facilities and achieved milestones of cooperation.

However, some Westerners hype the BRI as a bad investment. “There are diminishing economic returns from investing in (BRI) projects overseas,” a Bloomberg article quoted Jamus Lim, associate professor of economics at ESSEC Business School, Asia Pacific, as saying.

The reality looks different. The BRI is not for short-term gains, but for the long-term common good of all. In fact, as the mega-project evolves from broad strokes to refined details, the BRI, over the past 10 years, has become increasingly important, especially to developing countries in resource-poor regions. For these countries, BRI offers an opportunity to integrate into global supply chains, enhance capacity building in infrastructure, value-addition, technological innovation and product standards – thereby improving the operational capacities and competitiveness of businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises. Ultimately, the change witnessed in developing countries drives

economic transformation and builds robust economies.

For example in Kazakhstan, the largest economy in Central Asia, a World Bank report (2020) shows that BRI corridor routes are potentially “game changers” for the land-locked country. At present, BRI improvements in infrastructure have reduced Kazakh shipment time by more than 8 percent and trade cost by 4 percent. The impact of the improved infrastructure alone on Kazakh gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated at about 6.5 percent, while improving trade facilitation and reducing tariffs along the corridors will add around 15 percent.

Similar examples can be seen in Africa, which is home to the world’s largest number of least-developed countries. For decades, Africa has been facing complex and formidable structural challenges that hinder sustainable growth and development. The BRI has breathed new life into various industries in the continent, steering African countries along a sustained path of growth, economic transformation and resilience. The BRI is increasingly central to national and concerted actions dedicated to tackling decades-long challenges and structural deficiencies, widely known as the reasons for low GDP growth and the slow pace of development.

For instance, Nigeria, as the continent’s

largest economy and most populous country, reaps increasing social and economic gains from several massive transport infrastructure facilities under the BRI. In January this year, Nigeria witnessed the opening of major BRI projects, including the first phase of the Lagos Rail Mass Transit Blue Line and the Lekki deep-water port. As the largest deep-water port in West Africa, Lekki deep-water port is expected to generate about \$360 billion of economic value and create 170,000 jobs for Nigeria. This enhances Nigeria's capacity to process exports and imports.

These are just a few examples at the national, regional and global levels of BRI cooperation providing opportunities for establishing and improving supply chains and production network systems. The initiative increasingly tackles structural deficiencies especially in the Global South across various sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture, and information and communications technology, addressing decades-long structural constraints that impeded growth, contributing in enhancing their capacities for growth, and providing new opportunities to achieve national development goals.

A World Bank report in 2019 shows that if fully implemented, the BRI transport projects could foster trade between 1.7 and 6.2 percent for the world, increasing global real income by 0.7 to 2.9 percent – lifting 7.6 million people from extreme poverty (people earning less than \$1.9 a day) and 32 million people from moderate poverty (people earning less than \$3.2 a day). According to a 2019 study from the London-based Centre for Economics and Business Research, the BRI is likely to boost world GDP by \$7.1 trillion per year by 2040.

A progress report on the BRI in support of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, launched during the 77th Session of the General Assembly in the United Nations headquarters in 2022, shows that the China-led initiative is a highly valuable vehicle for accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda – proving effective in bridging various gaps in



A China-Europe freight train leaves for Kazakhstan from Xi'an International Port in Xi'an



Facilities at the Lekki deep seaport in Lagos, Nigeria.

implementation efforts of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including trade, policy coordination, financing, and infrastructure connectivity among others.

As a well-received international public good and an important platform for building a community with a shared future for mankind, the BRI accounts for colossal socio-economic gains. It provides more than enough evidence to prove that Western allegations about BRI's low rate of return do not hold water. Rather, the BRI is investing for the common development of international organizations and countries worldwide.

The author Alexander Ayertey Odonkor is a global economist with a keen interest in the social, environmental and economic landscape of both developing and developed countries, particularly in Asia, Africa and Europe.



Why BRI is Not a Debt Trap

In recent years, Western countries led by the United States have increasingly raised concerns about “debt-trap diplomacy,” suggesting that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) may be turning China into a conniving creditor while portraying participating countries as unsuspecting victims. But is the BRI truly creating a “debt trap,” as some Western critics claim?

First and foremost, it is crucial to acknowledge that several developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are indeed grappling with significant debt burdens. However, these debt issues are primarily a consequence of an unjust and irrational global economic order – characterized by a monetary framework dominated by the U.S. dollar, a production chain controlled by Western multinational corporations, and trade mechanisms marked by unequal exchanges.

For decades, developed countries have exploited this outdated economic order to shift financial crises onto their developing counterparts, substantially undermining their economic potential and prospects. In essence, when it comes to the criticism of China for “debt-trap diplomacy,” it is Western-led nations that bear the responsibility for the debt crises facing developing countries.

Furthermore, developing nations face pressing challenges in expanding their economies

and enhancing the well-being of their citizens. The BRI, through substantial investments in infrastructure, offers a practical solution. It has been repeatedly demonstrated that for developing nations, the quality of infrastructure significantly influences their economic potential and efficiency in reducing poverty.

For instance, former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta stated in a 2018 interview with CNN’s Richard Quest that they had utilized their debt to bridge the infrastructure gap. He emphasized that, over the course of a decade, new roads and railways would contribute to improved business prospects and job opportunities for local youth.

Several BRI projects, including the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka, the Gwadar port in Pakistan, and the Piraeus port in Greece, have collectively generated around 420,000 jobs in participating countries and have helped elevate nearly 40 million people out of poverty over the past decade, according to China’s Foreign Ministry. The BRI has played an indispensable role in stimulating local economies, rather than burdening small nations with unmanageable debt.

Additionally, with regard to debt ownership, it is essential to recognize that Western developed countries and global financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), not China, are the principal creditors of developing countries.

According to data from the Belt and Road Institute in Sweden, in 2022, Western private and public institutions owned 80 percent of Sri Lanka's external debt, 70 percent of Pakistan's, and 77 percent of Zambia's, whereas China's share was only 10 percent, 15 percent, and 17 percent, respectively, for these three countries.

In reality, some countries had already become ensnared in heavy debt obligations prior to the proposal of the BRI. The BRI, with its focus on development-oriented sectors like infrastructure, presents a practical means to address these pre-existing debt challenges. The West created and accumulated a significant portion of the debt burdens in developing nations, and it is unfair to solely attribute these debt crises to the BRI.

The Western narrative surrounding China's "debt diplomacy" is motivated by self-interest. First, some Western nations are concerned that BRI partner countries may choose China's initiative over their own. Many BRI infrastructure projects are executed by China's state-owned enterprises, and Western firms struggle to compete with them. Fearing that they might lose opportunities in developing countries, some Western actors have resorted to unfounded allegations against China's state-owned enterprises, accusing them of engaging in unfair competition and propagating false claims about China creating debt crises and forcing BRI countries to relinquish control of their land.

Moreover, some Western stakeholders are anxious about the growing influence of the BRI. Successful BRI cooperation has forged close ties between participating countries and China, enabling them to learn from China's developmental model. A series of China-led multilateral initiatives, such as the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, have heightened Western concerns.

Consequently, they deliberately classify China's investments, loans, and aid as "debts" in an attempt to manipulate public opinion



A section of the Nairobi Expressway built by China Road and Bridge Corporation in Nairobi, Kenya.

Additionally, the BRI has reduced the scope for Western interventions in other countries, a development that the West does not view favorably. Before the BRI was proposed, developing nations had no choice but to borrow from Western-dominated financial institutions, such as the World Bank. With the introduction of the BRI, developing nations gained more options, including the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China. This has, to some extent, challenged the Western-dominated governance structure, making it less likely for Western powers to meddle in the domestic affairs of developing countries.

The claims of the BRI being a "debt trap" are driven by Western self-interest, power dynamics, institutional structures, and even ideological concerns. Such narratives are not only biased but also short-sighted. The BRI is not a unilateral endeavor by China; it is a collaborative initiative involving countries from around the world. It is imperative for the West to recognize this before unfairly discrediting the BRI as a "debt trap."

The author Wang Yiwei is Jean Monnet Chair Professor, Director of Institute of International Affairs, Director of Center for European Studies at Renmin University of China.



Why BRI is Not a Danger for Environment

Ever since 2013 when China launched its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), some Western powers, driven by misplaced apprehensions, have been persistently fueling a campaign of disinformation against the initiative. In the prevailing discourse on the BRI, Western think tanks have blamed China's large-scale investment in coal and other fossil fuels for possible intensification of carbon emissions. They claim that the BRI must align with the Paris Agreement and prioritize environmental sustainability.

For instance, an article published by the U.S.-based Council on Foreign Relations accused the BRI of being "dominated by fossil fuels." "BRI's fossil fuel investments will make combatting climate change more difficult. The U.S. needs to offer developing nations an alternative means of acquiring clean energy," the article said.

It is crucial to evaluate the BRI from a balanced standpoint that recognizes its immense potential benefits, as well as China's steadfast dedication to environmental safety. While environmental concerns are valid, it is essential to recognize that construction and development projects are ongoing worldwide, irrespective of the BRI's existence. Hence, the demand for environmentally friendly policies should not be limited to the BRI alone. China, the driving force behind the BRI, is actively transitioning towards a green economy. This commitment reflects China's leadership in balancing economic development with environmental responsibility

on a global scale. As the BRI continues to shape the global landscape, its expansion into various dimensions, including the Digital Silk Road, Health Silk Road, and Polar Silk Road, underscores the initiative's evolving nature and commitment to addressing pressing global challenges. Among these dimensions, the Green Silk Road stands out as a beacon of hope for a world grappling with environmental crises and the urgent need for sustainable development.

The world is increasingly prioritizing sustainable development as the need to address climate change and environmental degradation becomes more urgent. The Green Silk Road serves as an effective solution for implementing the UN's 2030 Agenda. To fulfill these ambitious targets, China recognizes the importance of promoting sustainability not only within its borders but also in the regions connected through the BRI.

China has actively promoted the Green Silk Road through the establishment of guidelines and partnership agreements. The Green Investment Principles (GIP) for the BRI, introduced in late 2018, provide a framework for greener investments in BRI participant countries and regions. In 2021, China published the Green Development Guidelines for Overseas Investment and Cooperation. These programs focus on managing environmental risks associated with overseas BRI projects and supply chains, further underlining China's commitment to sustainability.

A key aspect of China's commitment to sustainability within the BRI is the shift away from coal-related investments. Conversely, China has significantly increased its investments in renewable energy, including solar, wind, and hydropower within BRI-involved regions. China's dominance in renewable energy manufacturing, accounting for 72 percent of global solar manufacturing and 50 percent of global wind turbine manufacturing, positions it as a crucial contributor to low-carbon technologies for BRI participants.

In 2021, China's total renewable energy use reached 750 million tons of standard coal, leading to a reduction of 2.1 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions. At the same time, China holds the distinction of being the global leader in the production of solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, and electric vehicles. This status uniquely positions China to deliver cutting-edge, low-carbon technologies to the Emerging Markets and Developing Economies engaged in the BRI.

Collaboration between Chinese officials, local governments, and corporations in BRI-participating countries and regions has also led to the development of green infrastructure. China's Lancang-Mekong Sweet Spring Project, for instance, has provided safe drinking water to thousands of individuals in Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, underscoring China's ecology dedication in vulnerable communities.



The wind turbines provided by China's Goldwind generate power in Chaiphum, Thailand.

China's huge investment in borehole drilling is serving as a vital lifeline to water-scarce communities across Africa as well, where the availability of clean and safe drinking water remains an enduring challenge for many. In Zimbabwe, China has built 1,000 wells since 2012, benefiting over 400,000 local people. China-built wells are "gifts of lives" for locals.

The Green Silk Road within the BRI represents a forward-looking commitment to sustainability, environmental protection, and global cooperation. Contrary to the negative framing by Western critics, the actual reality of the BRI is quite different from this narrative. China's dedication to sustainable development through the Green Silk Road offers a compelling vision for the future of global infrastructure and connectivity.



The view of a Chinese-built photovoltaic power plant in the Central African Republic.

The author Imran Khalid is a freelance columnist on international affairs.



Why BRI is Not a Jerry-Built Project

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been a transformative global project since it was proposed in 2013. As a platform that seeks to foster international cooperation and development, it has been met with both enthusiasm and scepticism.

At its core, the BRI is a colossal infrastructure and economic development project aimed at enhancing global connectivity. It draws inspiration from the ancient Silk Road, which facilitated trade, cultural exchange, and the transfer of knowledge from East to West. With its modern-day interpretation, it seeks to create an extensive network of roads, railways, ports, and other critical amenities to connect countries across Asia, Europe, Africa, and beyond.

However, some accusations against BRI in recent years have proved groundless. In January this year, the Wall Street Journal falsely claimed that the China-built Coca Codo Sinclair (CCS) hydroelectric plant in Ecuador had quality problems, due to cracks in the plant's "eight turbines" due to "faulty steel imported from China." However, a test report by TUV SUD, an independent German inspection agency, reported to Sinohydro and the Ecuadorian State Electricity Company that the operation and safety of the plant is not affected.

The story even went further by stating that many residents in Kilamba New City, which is part of Angola's national social housing program

and was built by China's CITIC Construction, complained "about cracked walls, moldy ceilings and poor construction." But in fact, only a very few residents reported that there were problems with their houses, which were basically caused by substandard decoration. Angolan engineer Carlos Augusto who is working on Phase II of the project praised the construction quality of the project and said that the apartments reached full occupation.

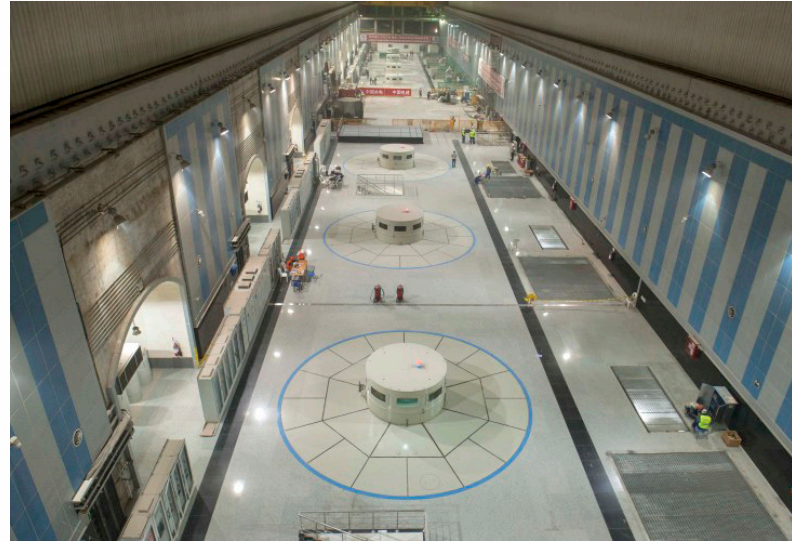
Another report from The Economic Times alleged that China "abandoned" the Neelum Jhelum hydropower project in Pakistan, and that "major cracks in the tailrace tunnel forced" the plant to be shut down in July, 2022. The truth is that in June last year, Pakistan suffered a historic flood, and then several earthquakes occurred in June and July, all of which had a tremendously negative impact on the plant; as a result, the project was brought to a halt. Regarding the emergency repair of the hydropower project, China and Pakistan already signed a contract last August.

China guarantees that the implementation of mega projects is of high quality as the China-Laos Railway demonstrates. The rail connection has transformed Laos from a landlocked country to a land-linked hub, increasing cross-border trade and promoting transportation connectivity in the region, facilitating the development between China and ASEAN countries.

As a landmark project, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has provided Pakistan with enormous socio-economic benefits, boosting the country's sustainable development. According to the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, by the end of 2022, CPEC has brought \$25.4 billion in direct investment to Pakistan and has created about 236,000 jobs in the country.

To understand the criticism surrounding the BRI, it is crucial to juxtapose it against the insidious history of Western colonialism and the shallow cynicism of their media. Critics have often overlooked the immense benefits and the positive impact the BRI has had on development in numerous regions, in particular the countries of the Global South. The disproportionate criticism from some developed nations is rooted in geopolitical rivalries and ideological differences, rather than genuine concerns for global development pursuing their own interests at the expense of others.

The glaring double standards are exposed as geopolitical rivalry and coincide with a shifting global order as the BRI gains momentum. Some



This undated photo shows the hydroelectric power generators of the Coca Codo Sinclair hydroelectric plant between Ecuador's provinces of Napo and Sucumbios.

critics view China's growing influence as a challenge to their own dominance and seek to undermine its initiative through protectionist tendencies. The BRI's emphasis on global connectivity and cooperation stands in contrast.



Kenyan sing and dance beside one of the first batch of locomotives for the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in Mombasa, Kenya.

The BRI represents a break away from this exploitative past of divide-and-conquer while China's initiative focuses on mutual cooperation and win-win development. It seeks to bridge economic disparities, promote sustainable growth, and improve the living conditions of people in participating countries.

While constructive criticism is essential for any initiative, the BRI is not "jerry-built." And a decade later, a fair and balanced assessment of the initiative, acknowledging its potential to reshape a better global landscape, is critical.

The author Kirtan Bhana is the founding editor of the Diplomatic Society of South Africa.



Why BRI is Not Predatory

In 2013, the multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), hailed by Chinese President Xi Jinping as “the project of the century,” was announced. As a vast network of transportation, energy, and telecommunications infrastructure aimed at connecting maritime and overland trade, the BRI has steadily extended from Asia to Europe, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America.

Among the countries participating in the BRI, the largest bloc is from Africa. Among the 53 African countries that have established diplomatic relations with China, 52, plus the African Union Commission, have signed BRI cooperation documents with China.

However, in some areas, particularly the West, the increasingly close relationship forged between China and Africa, as powerfully reflected in the robust and growing cooperation under the framework of the BRI, has led to a high level of criticism. Frequently, the relationship is portrayed in an unjustifiably harsh negative light, often based on a Sino-phobic narrative and involving paternalistic warnings to Africans of the alleged dangers of China’s “predatory” activities on the continent.

Despite these concerns and notwithstanding the fact that the BRI has faced multiple challenges since its inception, a large body of research has strongly rejected these criticisms, while the populations of many African countries



A staff works in the “Let’s go China” exhibition hall at Kigali City Tower in Kigali, Rwanda

actually regard China and the BRI in a much different light. For many Africans, China’s engagement with the continent, as embodied by the BRI, has met the diverse needs of locals, promoted development, and helped improve living standards.

“China is not here to exploit Africa as the Western world perceives, because looking at the African infrastructure development side, the BRI is helping Africa to transform itself. China

comes with the help Africans need,” Frederick Golooba Mutebi, a Ugandan independent researcher and analyst, was quoted by Xinhua as saying. A 2022 survey issued by the Inter Region Economic Network, a Kenya-based think tank, found that China takes a substantial lead in timely completion of infrastructure projects in Africa and has tangibly contributed to the continent’s development.

Since its inception, the BRI has been particularly important for African integration and connectivity, industrialization, energy, and plugging the continent’s longstanding infrastructure deficits – all of which are high-priority areas under the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and various regional or national development strategies. This is also in keeping with the win-win cooperation approach that has historically guided China-Africa relations.

In the energy sector alone, China has funded more than 36 projects in at least 19 African countries. In addition, China has helped African countries build more than 6,000 kilometers of railways, 6,000km of roads, and nearly 20 ports, among other major infrastructure, thus not only significantly improving transportation and trade between China and the continent, but also spurring intra-continental links and breaking a major bottleneck which has long held back Africa’s aspirations for sustainable development.

Moreover, under the framework of the BRI, over two dozen economic and trade cooperation zones have been established in 16 African nations. This has led to the development of hundreds of businesses, created jobs, and attracted billions of dollars in investment flows.

Notably, although many traditional types of infrastructure have remained central to the BRI in Africa, digital technology is an increasingly important area for growth and investment. Worth keeping in mind, too, is that the BRI, and Chinese investment and engagement more broadly, are especially critical for Africa moving forward, in light of the fact that the continent is home to some of the world’s fastest-growing

economies, possesses a young population, and holds a middle class that is rapidly expanding.

Within the BRI framework, China’s investments in Africa, with a focus on infrastructure, trade, and digital technology, aim to enhance the continent’s capacity for self-development, rather than exploit it for selfish economic gains. This approach stands in stark contrast to the Western colonization of the past, during which significant investments in mining and other resource-related industries often led to deteriorating conditions in Africa.

For Africa, the BRI has helped to promote an array of positive outcomes in multiple areas and deepened the continent’s ties with China. Looking ahead, Africa’s continued participation within the BRI framework will present it with a host of opportunities and offer the potential for further development and prosperity. BRI’s “predatory” engagement in Africa as hyped by some Westerners is a pure lie.



Audiences take photos of a performance at the Changsha International Convention and Exhibition Center during the third China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo in Changsha, central China’s Hunan Province

The author Fikrejesus Amahazion is an educator and research analyst at the Eritrean Center for Strategic Studies in Asmara. His areas of interest include human rights, political economy, and international development, with a particular focus on Africa.



Why BRI Doesn't Trigger Civilizations Clash

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a monumental endeavor initiated by China to enhance global connectivity and people-to-people bonds, has at times been portrayed in Western media as a potential catalyst for a clash between civilizations. They argue that China's ambitious global outreach threatens Western interests and values. These allegations often take root in concerns about the cultural, economic, and geopolitical dimensions of the BRI, and tend to overlook the core objectives of the BRI, which revolve around promoting global prosperity, synergy and cooperation.

Boosting cultural understanding among participating countries, rather than transplanting Chinese culture onto others, is a key characteristic of the BRI. China has not sought to impose its culture or ideology but instead aims to build partnerships and achieve mutual development through cooperation. The collaborative projects under the BRI emphasize win-win outcomes rather than a zero-sum game.

One of the important pillars of cultural diversity cooperation and building people-to-people bonds is enhancing physical connectivity among participating countries. The diverse range of infrastructure development and cooperation within the framework of the BRI possesses a transformative power that helps promote cultural cooperation and catalyzes

civilization exchanges hence fostering deep cultural understandings between participating nations. Roads, railways, and ports established under the BRI not only facilitate the flow of goods and services but also people and ideas. As travelers move across borders and explore new regions, they inevitably encounter diverse cultures, traditions, and belief systems.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a prime example of developing as a natural conduit for mutual understanding and appreciation. It features the construction of transportation networks, providing not only economic benefits, but also creating an avenue for people from both nations to engage with one another. These interactions enable the sharing of cultural practices, art, music, and traditions, thus fostering cross-civilizational understanding.

Thanks to enhanced physical connectivity, China and Pakistan have seen intensified cultural exchanges in recent years. For example, the China Cultural Heritage Week celebrated in Pakistan unveiled the splendors of Chinese culture, while Pakistan reciprocated with its cultural festivals hosted in China, showcasing its diverse heritage and fostering cultural understanding.

Apart from easier transportation access, another powerful way that infrastructure cooperation enhances civilization exchanges is through the incorporation of cultural elements

within BRI projects. These cultural elements often act as symbolic and practical hubs for people of different civilizations to come together. Several landmarks and infrastructures like Karakoram High Way, Gawadar Port, and CPEC projects serve as more than just structural achievements; they are cultural fusion points where people gather to celebrate their shared and distinct cultural identities.

Education emerged as another catalyst for strengthening cultural bonds among participating countries. According to the white paper titled “The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future” that China released on October 10, 2023 Chinese universities and colleges have opened 313 Confucius Institutes and 315 Confucius Classrooms in 132 partner countries. The “Chinese Bridge” Summer Camp has invited nearly 50,000 young people from more than 100 partner countries to come to China for academic visits and supported 100,000 Chinese language enthusiasts from 143 partner countries to learn Chinese and experience Chinese culture online.

Cultural exchange and understanding are central tenets of the BRI. Instead of promoting cultural conflicts, the BRI facilitates cultural harmony and mutual respect. China’s openness to embracing participating countries’ cultures and vice versa has led to a rich exchange of traditions, languages, and arts. By the end of June 2023, China had signed cultural and tourism cooperation documents with 144 BRI partner countries.

Under the BRI framework, China continues to expand international cultural exchanges. Apart from further enhancing physical connectivity, a slew of organized signature events such as the Happy Chinese New Year celebrations, the Nihao China tourism promotions, and the Silk Road: Artists’ Rendezvous art exhibition have been launched to promote cultural understanding among countries across the world. The above mentioned collaboration exemplifies not only



A ceremony is held to mark the second-stage river closure of the Suki Kinari (SK) Hydropower Project in Mansehra district, Pakistan.



Students present Chinese traditional costume at the Confucius Institute of Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya.

the spirit of the BRI but also the complementarity among participating countries, which serves as a compelling rebuttal to the misconceptions perpetuated by Western media. The economic synergy, cultural exchange, geopolitical cooperation, and commitment to sustainable development challenge the narrative that the BRI causes cultural clashes.

The author Muhammad Asif Noor is the founder of the forum “Friends of Belt and Road Initiative” and an advisor to the Pakistan Research Center under Hebei Normal University, China.



Why BRI is Not a Geopolitical Tool

Since 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has evolved from a vision to a series of bilateral and multilateral arrangements, offering the potential to serve as a global public good platform. While it has been warmly embraced in ASEAN, Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, skepticism still lingers regarding the initiative, particularly from the Western bloc.

Some Western countries accuse the BRI of being a geopolitical tool and thus have actively proposed alternatives to the initiative in an attempt to contain the BRI's growing international influence. For instance, Washington launched the Build Back Better World (B3W) during the G7 summit in 2021. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) was also announced on the sidelines of this year's G20 leaders' summit in New Delhi.

These endeavors demonstrate some Westerners' continued perception of the BRI through a Cold War prejudice, seeing it as a modern-day version of the Marshall Plan. The facts have proved that the BRI is for the good of all. It is not a tool for geopolitical games. While participating countries had little say in the implementation of the Marshall Plan, openness is one of the hallmarks of the BRI.

With no bars set, countries do not need to negotiate their way into the initiative. Under the

BRI framework, Chinese and foreign partners have launched 20-plus multilateral cooperation mechanisms in professional domains, attracting a growing number of participants. By June 2023, China had signed more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with over 150 countries and 30 international organizations across five continents, according to the white paper "The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future" that China released on October 17, 2023.

A slew of countries and regions have dovetailed the BRI with their development strategies such as Kazakhstan's Nurly Zhol (Bright Path), the Russia-led Eurasia Economic Union, the EU's Juncker Investment Plan, and Australia's Northern Development Strategy. Regardless of political systems, historical backgrounds, ideology, or development stages, countries from Africa, Eurasia, the Americas, and Oceania are all welcome to participate in the initiative. Instead of creating an exclusive club, the BRI embodies multi-win cooperation and a genuine pursuit of common development.

Having proposed the BRI, China has no intention to challenge the current global order. It has been actively promoting cooperation, partnership, and sharing, rather than power politics. China welcomes so-called BRI alternatives and is anticipating cooperation with

West-proposed initiatives as long as it is good for the community of a shared future.

But still, this cannot dispel Western distrust and even smearing against the BRI. Such skepticism stems from the disparity between China and the West in discourse power. It has to be admitted that Chinese media's voice is much weaker than their Western counterparts in the global arena. This means the international community's views on the BRI have been largely influenced, and even distorted, by some anti-China Western media.

To address this, more efforts can be devoted to boosting the BRI's multilateralism. International and multilateral decision-making structures could be created, offering participating countries real responsibility over what is considered a Chinese initiative. The BRI could engage with international organizations under the United Nations system. The initiative could encourage the United Nations to establish a BRI cooperation mechanism, giving full play to the bridging role and global influence of the United Nations.

Meanwhile, China could engage more developed countries in BRI third-party market cooperation and enhance its cooperation with the United States and Europe in infrastructure. Third-party market cooperation agreements emphasize complementarities, which include high-level production capacity from China, advanced technology from developed countries and the infrastructure needs of developing countries.

Additionally, China could cautiously consider joining the Paris Club. Development of the BRI involves massive lending programs and China could greatly relieve the international community's doubts about the BRI if its lending practices followed internationally accepted rules. This could also help mitigate China's external debt risks, safeguard global financial stability, and boost the international community's confidence in China.

Also, expanding the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)'s target sectors and regions would be a plausible way to support



A China-Europe freight train leaves Wuxi in east China's Jiangsu Province and heads for Uzbekistan

eligible infrastructure investment projects worldwide. China could probe the possibility of building an alliance to boost collaboration among various international development banks. This will bolster inter-banking coordination to improve and renovate traditional infrastructure in developing countries, build digital infrastructure, and enable green transitions toward a goal of carbon neutrality.

The BRI can mobilize business resources as well as think tanks worldwide to explore more intellectual resources. Establishing a multi-tiered and diversified think tank platform would help introduce dynamics to people-to-people communications. By organizing non-official international forums and summits, these alliances are expected to enrich the diversity of the BRI.

A multilateral BRI means China does not focus only on developing and underdeveloped countries, but also attracts advanced economies to participate in the initiative. The BRI has already proved to be a global public good, rather than a tool in geopolitical games, and, in the face of Western skepticism, efforts should continue to make it more multilateral.

The author Wang Huiyao is the president of the Center for China and Globalization.



Why BRI is Not a Transitory Initiative

In 2013, China introduced a large network of infrastructure projects known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with the goal of establishing commercial connections between Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America. This construction endeavor has drawn both support and opposition. The BRI has been subjected to a torrent of unfavorable narratives and rumors, particularly in the West. But it's critical to dispel these myths and illuminate the true significance of this long-lasting global development program.

One widespread misperception is that the BRI is only a transitory endeavor with few advantages. Critics argue that the BRI faces ongoing challenges and difficulties that seem never-ending or constantly shifting, such as poor planning, a lack of clear goals and objectives, as well as ineffective communication that has created a transitory atmosphere of confusion and inefficiency, among others.

Contrary to these misconceptions, the BRI has had a significant and long-lasting impact on the participating nations. Consider the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) of Kenya's history. While some critics highlight the railway's drawbacks, including its financial strain and unfinished extensions, it's important to note that the passenger side of the SGR is fully booked and has reduced travel time between Nairobi and

Mombasa, which used to take hours, to just a few hours.

Furthermore, Kenya is still dedicated to finishing the railway and is looking into financial sources. This determination to carry on indicates the BRI's long-term goals. The program's contribution to the improvement of African infrastructure is evidence of its dedication to fostering regional connectivity and socio-economic development.

Nevertheless, the BRI is fundamentally about more than just building infrastructure. It covers a wide range of topics, such as sustainable development, commerce, investments, policy coordination, and digital technologies. This extensive breadth represents a long-term strategy that aspires to boost economic growth, foster international cooperation, and heal regional gaps.

Comprehensive and evolving scope

The BRI's development over time shows how adaptable it is to shifting global demands and how relevant it continues to be. The project is built on a foundation of sustainability. One of the BRI's facets, the Green Silk Road, is committed to environmental responsibility and supports the UN's 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. This dedication to a sustainable future

demonstrates the BRI's focus on the long-term advantages for the planet and its inhabitants.

It is untrue that the BRI will only be effective for a limited period because it has already had a substantial impact in regions like Asia and Africa. The BRI's investments in green infrastructure, such as supplying clean water to communities in Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, show how steadfastly committed it is to the preservation of the environment and the welfare of underprivileged groups.

On balance, the paradigm for international development in Africa and Asia has changed significantly as a result of the BRI. The initiative has placed a strong emphasis on mutual cooperation and win-win growth, in contrast to earlier methods that frequently maintained economic inequities.

The program has closed economic inequalities and enhanced the quality of life for people in participating nations rather than the exploitation of resources or labor. This change represents a

genuine, long-lasting dedication to fairness and prosperity for all people.

Balancing criticism with reality

If the BRI's main goal was to increase infrastructure connectivity between Asia, Europe, and Africa, it has been successful in attaining this goal through supporting and sponsoring a wide range of initiatives, including ports, energy facilities, highways, and trains. Along with improving the infrastructure in the participating nations, these investments have boosted trade and investment prospects as well as economic growth.

It is crucial to recognize the economic advantages that the BRI has given to participating countries. Infrastructure deficiencies have been filled thanks to Chinese investments, promoting the expansion of the economy. Chinese initiatives have shortened bureaucratic procedures, offering effective substitutes for their frequently sluggish equivalents. China



A train leaving for Mombasa waiting at the Nairobi Terminus Station of the China-built Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in Nairobi, Kenya.



Cambodia's Golden Port Expressway in Kampong Speu province.

has assisted numerous nations in getting over infrastructural roadblocks so they may take part more fully in the global economy.

Chinese businesses and banks now have access to priceless international experience because of the BRI's emphasis on public-private partnerships and collaboration. These encounters have improved their skills and competitiveness on a worldwide scale. Additionally, the BRI has promoted technology transfer, talent enhancement, and knowledge exchange in partner nations, all of which can stimulate regional economic development and growth.

In large part, the BRI has been successful in promoting increased trade between participating countries. The growth of effective transportation networks has decreased logistical costs and restrictions, facilitating the flow of products and services across international boundaries. As a result, both China and the other participating countries have benefited from sustainable trade

and increased economic interdependence. Many of the nations involved in the BRI have seen tremendous economic growth as well. The BRI has boosted economic activity, helped create jobs, and reduced poverty in member countries by investing in infrastructure and fostering economic development. Additionally, it has given Chinese businesses access to new markets and business opportunities.

Beyond the headlines, China continues to show steadfast financial support for the BRI. In addition to funding from China's banks, the establishment of financial organizations like the Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has maintained a consistent supply of funds to finance BRI's long-term projects. In order to ensure that the impactful initiative remains pertinent and responsive to the needs of the participating countries, China, both practically and politically, has been open to modifying programs to match their unique needs and goals.

The author Bobby Naderi is a London-based journalist, guest contributor in print, radio and television, and documentary filmmaker.



A comprehensive inspection train running along the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway in Bandung, Indonesia.

R.N.I. No. 47440/88
Special Edition 2023

