The Impact of “Belt Road Initiative” for a Community of Shared Future for Mankind*

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The “Belt and Road Initiative” is a major theoretical innovation of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. It is not only a flagship public good for China’s participation in global governance, but also is an important platform for us to build a community of shared future. With this initiative, the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is linked to the wonderful dreams of the peoples all over the world in pursuit of development and prosperity and has far reached strategic significance.

Keywords: belt road initiative, a community of shared future for mankind, influence

Introduction

The community of common destiny for all mankind is an important guiding ideology for the implementation of “Belt Road Initiative” (Yu, 2020, p. 60). It is of great theoretical and practical significance to explore the demonstrative effect of its connotation on world peace and development. The “Belt and Road Initiative” are the solutions proposed by China for common prosperity and development of the world, focusing on the common aspirations of the peoples of the world for peace and development. It is a valuable inspiration drawn from China’s ancient Silk Road and full of Eastern wisdom. As a Chinese systematic idea for building a community of shared future and forging a new model of international relations, the “Belt and Road Initiative” is an important part of Xi Jinping’s diplomatic thought, which fully embodies the great resourcefulness and great wisdom of the new generation of Chinese leadership who has accurately grasped the profound changes in the world situation and opened up a new broader space for development.

Belt Road Initiative’s Significance at Global Level

Belt Road Initiative is a flagship public good for China’s participation in global governance. The Silk Road originated in ancient China. It was an artery of trade and the cultural exchange went across the East and the West and connecting Europe with Asia. For thousands of years, it carried great missions of promoting the progress of

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human civilization, accelerated the communication between the Eastern and the Western civilizations, and facilitated exchanges, cooperation, and development of fruits sharing among the countries along with the Belt and Road. After the beginning of the 21st century, on the one hand, global issues have become increasingly prominent, forcing countries to help each other alleviate multiple challenges; on the other hand, the new technological revolution has enhanced the development and flourish of transportation and Internet information dissemination technologies, turning the whole world into a highly cohesive “village”. In the face of the stagnant global economic situation and the complex international political situation, the mission of inheriting and carrying forward the spirit of the Silk Road becomes more important. The “Belt and Road Initiative” is a major strategic decision made by the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, and an important step in the implementation of a new round of opening-up. As General Secretary Xi Jinping said, “the “Belt and Road Initiative” will be equipping the roc of China with two wings. Sound implementation of the “Belt and Road Initiative” makes the roc fly higher and farther”.¹

Since 2013, General Secretary Xi Jinping has expounded the “Belt and Road Initiative” many times, which makes it increasingly mature and consummate. In this process, the “Belt and Road Initiative” has been transformed from a macroscopic and abstract proposal of regional foreign policy into a comprehensive strategic concept, which both guides the medium and long term economic and social development at home and serves as an external policy for building a community of shared future for mankind abroad. The “Belt and Road Initiative” is carried out steadily following General Secretary Xi Jinping’s visits to foreign countries all over the globe. The “Belt and Road Initiative” has developed into an open international cooperation platform, which any like-minded countries can participate in, so that they will both benefit themselves and in turn promote the regional and world economic development by joining their development strategies with those of other countries and strengthening international cooperation.

The “Belt and Road Initiative” is hailed as the world’s largest and most potential economic cooperation zone. The Asia-Europe continent is the main region covered by the “Belt and Road Initiative”, which run through the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, connected the vibrant East Asia economic circle at one end and developed European economic circle at the other, and encompassed countries with huge potential for economic development.² The Silk Road Economic Belt is composed of three routes: the first goes from China and extends westward to Central Asia, Russia and Europe (the Baltic); the second goes southwestward, linking China with the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea through Central Asia and West Asia; and the third extends southward, connecting China with Southeast Asia. South Asia and the Indian Ocean. The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is made up of two routes: one is designed to go from China’s coast to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean; and the other from China’s coast through the South China Sea to the South Pacific. The “Belt and Road Initiative” is characterized by ASEAN and Southeast Asian being the focus, driving South Asia and radiating to the Middle East, East Africa and Europe. The land routes and the sea routes are joined up seamlessly, covering the new Eurasian Continental Bridge and such international economic cooperation corridors as the

¹ The Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee. General Secretary Jinping’s important remarks. Beijing: Xuexi Publishing House, 2016, p. 266.
² Vision and actions on jointly building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2015, p. 6.
China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, the Central and the West Asian Economic Corridor, the Indo-China Peninsula Economic Corridor, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. As a key partner in building the Belt and Road, Africa is closely linked with the Asia-Europe continent, and we should work together for common development. Oceania includes the southward extension of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. As an open platform, the “Belt and Road Initiative” also welcomes Latin American and Caribbean countries to participate in the construction. It also welcomes interested countries and international organizations to participate in different ways. China is also willing to work with the developed countries, to give to lull play their complementary advantages in technology, capital, capacity and market, and carry out third-party cooperation in countries along the routes to promote mutual benefit and win-win result. It is conducive to stabilize China’s surrounding geopolitical environment, and provides a new platform for China’s all-round diplomacy, so that China, together with countries along the routes and participants in the “Belt and Road Initiative”, is able to provide new international public goods in the reform of the global governance system.

With the lofty cause of peace and development of the world in mind, we will contribute the Chinese vision to the management of contemporary international relations, offer the Chinese solution for improving global governance, and work with the international society to meet various challenges of the 21st century.3

Belt Road Initiative’s Significance at National Level

Belt Road Initiative is also an important platform for us to building a community of shared future. The “Belt and Road Initiative” sets building a community of shared future for mankind as its goal, breaks the historical logic that a country will definitely seek hegemony when it grows stronger, and makes theoretical innovations in the traditional national development strategy.4 As an enormous inclusive development platform, the “Belt and Road Initiative” abides by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, adheres to the principles of openness and cooperation, harmony and inclusiveness, market operation, mutual benefit and win-win result, and mutual efforts. It completely abandons the zero-sum mentality and sense of hegemony long pursued by Western countries in their development, and embodies the innovative thinking of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. China has benefited from the international community in its development process and is willing to contribute to the development of the international community with its development. The interaction between China and the world is becoming closer and closer, and their opportunity and future sharing relationship have become increasingly prominent. In essence, the “Belt and Road Initiative” is a new model of international political and economic cooperation as well as the road leading to a community of shared future for mankind. It uses economic cooperation as the guide, political cooperation as the promoter, people-to-people exchange as the basis, integrates the domestic development strategy with the international strategy, and harmonizes China’s interests and other countries’ interest demands. With a Chinese philosophy of “being righteous alone in a community where the general moral tone is low when you are nobody, and benefit all peoples under the sky when you are somebody”, the “Belt and Road Initiative” strives to build a grand blueprint for both China and the countries along the routes and even all countries in the world to jointly realize their dreams and pursue their

3 Xi, J. P., Speech at the Korber Foundation, Germany, People’s Daily, 2014-03-20.
4 Xi, J. P., Deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and promote common development, People’s Daily, 2017-09-06.
happy future. The construction of the Belt and Road is committed to exploring a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation and embodying the concept of win-win cooperation in various aspects of international cooperation including the political, economic, security, civilization, ecological aspects, with important constructive significances for future international relations.

The “Belt and Road Initiative” provides a new space for China’s sustainable economic development, mobilizes and integrates both international and domestic resources, and builds a new all-around open architecture.

To be confidently open to the outside world, a country must be strong enough, and being open to the outside world promotes a countries strength. The achievements of China’s reform and opening up since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee have fully proved that opening to the outside world is an important driving force for China’s economic and social development. A With our economic output ranking second in the world, as China’s economic development enters into the new normal, to maintain sustained and healthy economic development, we must establish a global perspective, more consciously co-ordinate the domestic and international situations, comprehensively plan the grand strategy of all-round opening-up, and goes to the world with a more active attitude.5

Due to the differences in the physical and geographical environments and the social environments between China’s eastern and western parts, the Chinese economy as a whole shows a pattern of unbalanced development that futures a faster eastern part and a slower western part, as well as a stronger coastland and a weaker hinterland. The Belt and Road stretch across the eastern, central and western regions of China. While increasing the level of opening up of the east, the initiative focuses on increasing the degree of opening of the central and western regions, so as to optimize the utilization of regional resources, open the international market channels for the central and western regions, cultivate the international market space, and turn the hinterland into an open frontier. The construction of the Belt and Road gives full play to the comparative advantages of all regions in China, promotes the orderly free flow of the economic elements and the highly efficient allocation of production resources, so as to achieve the docking of the eastern coastal areas and the central and the western regions, to create a comprehensive, multi-angle and deep level framework of opening to the outside world, to balance the eastern and western social and economic development, and to promote the overall development level and quality of the Chinese society.

The construction of the Belt and Road will accelerate the integration of China’s economy with the world economy, providing new opportunities for the world’s economic development. General Secretary Xi Jinping remarked, Rapid growth in China has been a sustained, powerful engine for global economic stability and expansion. The inter-connected development of China and a large number of other countries has made the world economy more balanced. China’s remarkable achievement in poverty reduction has contributed to more inclusive global growth. And China’s continuous progress in reform and opening-up has lent much momentum to an open world economy.6

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5 Sum up the experience, firm confidence, and promote the Belt and Road Initiative to benefit the peoples along the routes, People’s Daily, 2016-08-18.
6 Xi, J. P., Jointly shoulder responsibility of our times, promote global growth: keynote speech at the opening session of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017, People’s Daily, 2017-01-18.
The construction of the Belt and Road provides a more convenient channel for countries along the routes to participate in the development of the Chinese market, to share the achievements and experience of China’s economic development, to promote the efficient allocation of resources and economic policy coordination of the participating countries, to achieve a wider range, higher level and deeper layer of international cooperation, and take the path of common construction, common development and common prosperity. With the gradual implementation of the “Belt and Road Initiative”, the international community is generally aware of this historic opportunity. Many countries respond positively and take the initiative to seek the strategic docking of their development strategy and the “Belt and Road Initiative”, in the hope of gaining momentum from this initiative to their development or their regional development. The “Belt and Road Initiative” focuses on the Asian, European and African continents, but is also open to all other countries. All countries, from either Asia, Europe, Africa or the Americas, can be international cooperation partners of the “Belt and Road Initiative”. The “Belt and Road Initiative” fully demonstrates China’s will, capability and wisdom to shape the international order, and effectively enhances China’s international influence and voice. The countries and regions along the routes are an important area of overseas interests of China’s concern. Implementation of the “Belt and Road Initiative” helps to effectively protect China’s growing overseas interests, increase China’s weight in the neighborhood and international affairs. The “Belt and Road Initiative” is not only an economic blueprint, but also a deeper level of peace concept, security consensus and cultural values. It conveys to the world China’s concepts of peace, development, win-win cooperation, and manifests the self-confidence in its socialist path, theory, institution and culture with Chinese characteristic.

Conclusion

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, Xi Jinping’s diplomatic thought has been developing continuously and perfected in the diplomatic practice of major-country relations with Chinese characteristic by forming a complete scientific system. This system has the rich essence of Chinese traditional culture and reflects the trends of the times. At present, the international community is in the transitional period of great changes. It is strongly hoped that statesmen can step forward bravely, and the responsible major countries can provide solutions to the global issues. Xi Jinping’s diplomatic thought sets the achievement of the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and a community of shared future for mankind as the goals, holds high the banner of peace, development, cooperation and win-win result, firmly sticks to the path of peaceful development, promotes the sound values of friendship, justice and shared interests, strives to forge a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, and demonstrates to the world China’s political commitment and brilliant wisdom as a responsible major country. In the face of the historical changes in the balance of power in international relations, General Secretary Xi Jinping, with the overall strategic thinking and the active and enterprising spirit of innovation, made a far-sighted Chinese initiative to lead the global governance system reform, and proposed to the world the Chinese framework of the “Belt and Road Initiative”, drawing a new blueprint for the development and progress of the international community. His diplomatic thought has written a new chapter in Chinese diplomatic theory, and opened up a new situation for Chinese diplomatic practice. It will

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7 Xi, J. P., Work together to build the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road: speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, People’s Daily, 2017-05-15.
surely continue to guide Chinese diplomacy to make greater contribution to the realization of the Chinese Dream of the great renewal of the Chinese nation, and promote the great process of building a community of shared future for mankind.

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