

# Join Hands on the Path Towards Modernization\*

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**Full text of Chinese President Xi Jinping's keynote speech via video link at the Communist Party of China's World Political Parties High-Level Dialogue Meeting on March 15, 2023, where he first put forward the Global Civilization Initiative.**

Leaders of political parties from around the world,

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to join all of you for the discussion on "Path Towards Modernization: The Responsibility of Political Parties".

The history of human development is full of twists and turns. Similarly, the journey of each country to explore the path to modernization is also arduous. In today's world, multiple challenges and crises are intertwined. The global economic recovery remains sluggish, the development gap is widening, ecological environment is deteriorating, and the Cold War mentality is lingering. Humanit-

y's modernization process has once again reached a crossroads of history.

Polarization or common prosperity? Pure materialistic pursuit or coordinated material and cultural-ethical advancement? Draining the pond to catch the fish or creating harmony between man and nature? Zero-sum game or win-win cooperation? Copying other countries' development model or achieving independent development in light of national conditions? What kind of modernization do we need and how can we achieve it? Confronted with these questions, political parties as an important force steering and driving the modernization process are duty bound to provide answers. Here, I wish to share some of my observations.

\* Subheadings in the text have been added by BRIQ.

Full text of Chinese President Xi Jinping's keynote speech via video link at the CCP's World Political Parties High-Level Dialogue Meeting on March 15, 2023, where he first put forward the Global Civilization Initiative. Retrieved from [http://english.scio.gov.cn/topnews/2023-03/16/content\\_85171478.htm](http://english.scio.gov.cn/topnews/2023-03/16/content_85171478.htm) on 1 May 2024.



Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled the Global Civilization Initiative for the first time at the Communist Party of China's World Political Parties High-Level Dialogue on March 15, 2023 (Photo: CGTN, 2023).

## People-Centered Modernization

We must put the people first and ensure modernization is people-centered. The people are the creators of history and are the strongest bedrock and force in advancing modernization. The ultimate goal of modernization is people's free and well-rounded development. For a modernization path to work and work well, it must put the people first. Modernization is not only about indicators and statistics on the paper but more about the delivery of a happy and stable life for the people. With a focus on the people's aspirations for a better life and further progress of civilization, political parties should strive to achieve material abundance, political integrity, cultural-ethical enrichment, social stability, and pleasant living environments so that modernization will better address the concerns and meet diversified needs of the people. In this way, modernization will promote the sustainable

development of humanity by not only increasing the wellbeing of this generation but also protecting the rights and interest of future generations.

## The Path of Modernization Based on National Conditions, with its Own Unique Characteristics

We must uphold the principle of independence and explore diversified paths towards modernization. Modernization is not "an exclusive patent" of a small handful of countries, nor is it a single answer question. It cannot be realized by a cookie cutter approach or simple "copy and paste". For any country to achieve modernization, it needs not only to follow the general laws governing the process, but more importantly consider its own national conditions and unique features. It is the people of a country that are in the best position to tell what kind of modernization best suits them.

Developing countries have the right and ability to independently explore the modernization path with their distinctive features based on their national realities. We must develop our country and our nation with our own strength, and we must maintain a firm grasp on the future of our country's development and progress. We should respect and support the development paths independently chosen by different peoples to jointly usher in a new prospect for humanity's modernization that is like a garden where a hundred flowers bloom.

**We should work together to reform and develop the global governance system and make the international order more just and equitable as we advance humanity's modernization in an environment of equal rights, equal opportunities and fair rules for all.**

We must uphold fundamental principles and break new ground and ensure the continuity of the modernization process. In the face of various new issues, conditions and challenges in the modernization process, political parties should boldly take on responsibilities and excel in their work. We should break the shackles of stale thinking, remove institutional barriers, explore new methods and new approaches, and break new ground in theories and practices to instill unceasing dynamism into the modernization process. We should work together to reform and develop the global governance system and make the international order more just and equitable as we advance humanity's modernization in an environment of equal rights, equal opportunities and fair rules for all.

### Shared and Common Development

We must help others to succeed while seeking our own success and ensure all can enjoy the outcomes of modernization. Humanity lives in a community with a shared future where we rise and fall together. For any country to achieve modernization, it should pursue common development through solidarity and cooperation and follow the principles of joint contribution, shared benefits and win-win outcome. The frontrunners should sincerely support other countries in their development. One will not be seen in a more favourable light after blowing out others' lamp; nor will they go farther by blocking others' paths. We should share opportunities, create a future together and make the pie of humanity's modernization bigger to ensure more people enjoy the outcomes of modernization in a fairer way. We stand firmly opposed to the practice of preserving one's own development privilege by suppressing and containing other countries' endeavor to achieve modernization.

We must forge ahead with enterprise and ensure firm leadership over modernization. Modernization does not fall into our lap automatically. It is the result of hard work with the strong historical initiative. Political parties are the leading and driving force for modernization. Their values, ability to lead and govern, ethos, willpower and character have a direct bearing on the orientation and future of the modernization process. As an ancient Chinese philosopher said, "He who conquers himself is strong." Political parties should integrate party building with national modernization, forge ahead with enterprise and resolve, and excel themselves. In this way, they will have the confidence, determination and capability to respond to the challenges and questions presented by the times, meet people's expectations, and steer the course and marshal strength for the modernization cause.



Xi Jinping: "We advocate respect for the diversity of civilizations. Countries should promote the principles of equality, mutual learning, dialogue and inclusiveness among civilizations and allow cultural exchanges to overcome alienation; mutual learning to overcome conflict; and coexistence to overcome feelings of superiority"

(Figure: Song Chen/China Daily, 2019).

### A Path to Progress for Humanity and Harmony for the Entire World

Ladies and gentlemen,

Friends,

Achieving modernization is a dream that the Chinese people have strived to fulfill since modern times. The journey of over 100 years that the Party has traversed to unite and lead the Chinese people in pursuing national rejuvenation is also an exploration of a path towards modernization. Thanks to the unremitting efforts of generation after generation, we have found our own path to modernization.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has proposed advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. Chinese modernization is one of a huge population, of common prosperity for all, of material and cultural-ethical advancement, of harmony between humanity

and nature, and of peaceful development. It is rooted in our national conditions and also draws on the experience of other countries. It carries the imprint of history and traditional culture and also contains modern elements. It delivers benefit to the Chinese people and also advances common development of the world. It is a sure path for us to build a stronger nation and realize the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It is also a path we must take to seek progress for humanity and harmony for the entire world. We will stay committed to the right direction, right theories and the right path. We will not veer off course by changing our nature or abandoning our system. As our own future is closely connected with that of other countries and peoples, we will strive to provide new opportunities for world development, add new impetus to humanity's exploration of paths towards modernization and make new contributions to the theory and practice of humanity's modernization as we make new progress in Chinese modernization.



The CPC will continue to pursue high-quality development and promote global growth and prosperity. We will accelerate the building of a new development paradigm that promotes high-standard opening up and steady expansion of market access. China's door will only open wider. As we further modernize our industrial system, we will provide the world with more and better products made and created in China, and with a Chinese market of a larger scale and stronger demand. We will continue to support and help developing countries in their pursuit of faster development, industrialization and modernization and offer Chinese solutions and strength for narrowing the North-South gap and achieving common development. The CPC stands ready to work with political parties of all other countries to advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, accelerate the solid implementation of the Global Development Initiative, foster new drivers for global development and build a global community of development.

### **China will never seek hegemony or expansion**

The CPC will continue to safeguard international fairness and justice and promote world peace and stability. In advancing modernization, China will neither tread the old path of colonization and plunder, nor the crooked path taken by some countries to seek hegemony once they grow strong. What China pursues is the right course of peaceful development. We seek to settle differences through dialogue and resolve disputes through cooperation. We firmly oppose hegemony and power politics in all their forms. We advocate solidarity and win-win mentality in handling complex and intertwined security challenges to set up a fair and just security architecture that is built and shared by all. The world does not need a new Cold War. The practice of stoking division and confrontation in the name of democracy is in itself a violation of the spirit of democracy. It will not receive any support. What it brings is only endless harm. A modernized China will

strengthen the force for world peace and international justice. No matter what level of development China achieves, it will never seek hegemony or expansion.

The CPC will continue to promote inter-civilization exchanges and mutual learning and advance the progress of human civilizations. Around the world, countries and regions have chosen different paths to modernization, which are rooted in their unique and long civilizations. All civilizations created by human society are splendid. They are where each country's modernization drive draws its strength and where its unique feature comes from. They, transcending time and space, have jointly made important contribution to humanity's modernization process. Chinese modernization, as a new form of human advancement, will draw upon the merits of other civilizations and make the garden of world civilizations more vibrant.

### **Global Civilization Initiative**

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Friends,

A single flower does not make spring, while one hundred flowers in full blossom bring spring to the garden. As the future of all countries are closely connected, tolerance, coexistence, exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations play an irreplaceable role in advancing humanity's modernization process and making the garden of world civilizations flourish. Here, I wish to propose the Global Civilization Initiative.

We advocate the respect for the diversity of civilizations. Countries need to uphold the principles of equality, mutual learning, dialogue and inclusiveness among civilizations, and let cultural exchanges transcend estrangement, mutual learning transcend clashes, and coexistence transcend feelings of superiority.

We advocate the common values of humanity. Peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom are the common aspirations of all peoples. Countries need to keep an open mind in appreciating the perceptions of values by different civilizations, and



The Public Forum on China's Global Civilization Initiative was successfully held in Accra on 19 July 2023 by the Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory (ACCPA), a China-Africa research and policy think tank and consulting firm (Photo: Newghana, 2023).

refrain from imposing their own values or models on others and from stoking ideological confrontation.

We advocate the importance of inheritance and innovation of civilizations. Countries need to fully harness the relevance of their histories and cultures to the present times, and push for creative transformation and innovative development of their fine traditional cultures.

We advocate robust international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation. Countries need to explore the building of a global network for inter-civilization dialogue and cooperation, enrich the contents of exchanges and expand avenues of cooperation to promote mutual understanding and friendship among people of all countries and jointly advance the progress of human civilizations.

We are ready to work together with the international community to open up a new prospect of enhanced exchanges and understanding among different peoples and better interactions and integration of diversified cultures. Together we can make the garden of world civilizations colorful and vibrant.

The CPC is committed to strengthening exchanges

and cooperation with other political parties to pursue the just cause together. We are ready to deepen interactions with political parties and organizations in other countries to expand the convergence of ideas and interests. Let us leverage the strength of a new type of party-to-party relations for the building of a new type of international relations and expand global partnerships by fostering stronger partners with world political parties. The CPC stands ready to share governance experience with political parties and organizations of other countries so that together we can make big strides on the path to modernization toward the goal of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

There are bound to be setbacks on humanity's journey to modernization, but the future is bright. The CPC is willing to work with all of you to ensure that different modernization drives form a mighty force driving prosperity and progress of the world and forge ahead nonstop in the long river of history!

Thank you. 🌸