

# Self-governance and Shared Governance in the Interconnected World: China's Layout for the International Order

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To establish a stable, prosperous and impartial international order is the common cause of every nation's diplomacy. Several regional orders once co-existed in human history. The creation of the United Nations after the Second World War represents the exploration of 50 nations in the pursuit of a universal international order. However, the outbreak of the Cold War dragged the world into antagonism again. After the Cold War, the United States tried to build a new world order dominated by itself but the outcome was not desirable. Since the turn of the century, the world has showed signs of disorder and anomie. The establishment of the international order once again became a leading topic for discussion in international relations.

Why would the multipolar international system turn into the antagonistic bipolar system in the end? Why do tension and mistrust emerge between developed countries and emerging countries? Why do partially ordered world always come with the disordered part? Why does there lack effective domestic order to support the international order? Why do people lean on antagonistic worldview to ponder over the international order? The conflicts mentioned above are primary obstacles in the cause of establishing the international order. Needless to say, China would harbor the listed "why" to think about its planning and design of the international order. These questions and conflicts are not only the consequence of policies but also epoch-making theoretical problems. As the report reveals, the first breakthrough in the political civilization of mankind lay in the state formation, which provided residents in specific regions with orderly political community life. The second breakthrough depends on the exploration of an orderly political community in greater scope where diverse countries could co-exist.

## ***1. Antagonism and coexistence***

In the past, the pursuit of the universal international order was restricted by either the dualistic thinking or the monistic thinking. Dualism is the position that the world should be divided into two opposite parts while self-centered monism arrogantly upholds that the world should be organized by unilateral values, standards and rules, which leads to a favorable international order. However, neither dualism nor monism can lead to a complete international order. Sometimes, two strong powers

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are seen antagonistic towards each other; sometimes, partially ordered world are seen to come with partially disordered world. After the Second World War, the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union belongs to the former type while America's one-sided endeavor to build the world order after the Cold War is a demonstration of the latter. Both attempts proved to be ineffective in the end. The trend of political pluralism has become increasingly obvious. If we follow the same old path in the history, great powers will inevitably form various alliances and go against each other. In recent years, some countries have curiously put protocols unable to pass in the UN Security Council to vote without sufficient negotiation and artificially created split and veto situation in the UN Security Council; as for the world opinion led by the west, diplomatic vocabularies consistently used in the Cold War become popular again; some nations seem to anchor their hope on creating external war to transfer the internal economic crises. All of these are alarming to us.

People need to emancipate themselves from the old worldview and embrace the new reality of interconnection. In the universally related and interconnected world, it is unwise to establish an international order by splitting every part and putting them into confrontation. An interconnected world is also a symbiotic world where every country has close ties with each other. We hold that such symbiotic worldview is indispensable for us to figure out a new order in the interconnected world. To some extent, it represents China's unique reflection towards the international order planning. Moreover, it is not China's unilateral willingness but a consensus shared by more and more countries and social organizations.

First, countries in the world should share common values, seek utmost consensus and realize coexistence in the end. There is an old saying in China, "no common goal, no common cause to cooperate." But this thinking is unsuitable for the current interconnected world; the religious order and universal values advocate "an eye for an eye", which has repeatedly been proved not the way for diverse values to get along with each other. In this respect, human beings ought to humbly seek common points while reserving difference and strive to find utmost interactions of values. In terms of the establishment of the international order, China has thrown off the shackles of the mindset dominated by ideology and values. As the first-tier country got rid of the mindset after the Cold War, China reaped more diplomatic fruits accordingly. As for the west after the Cold War, many countries have emphasized consistently that countries should be classified in line with their values and ideology in terms of the international order. In the current international relations, it is several western countries rather than China that give priority to ideology. For western countries, ideology has been a mental load for their political

revolutions within and participation in the establishment of international order without. If the new international order still relies on one certain value to classify the world, it would set back the clock of history and have the world once again dominated by religious order, oriental order or western order.

The word “coexistence” defines that nations exist in harmony despite different ideologies or interests. In this case, it requires multilateral involvement. However, to dominate the world by a single ideology equals to unilateral monopoly. Objectively speaking, after the Second World War, the development of political science in the west encompasses the study of “coexistence”, though it has never been the mainstream in the realm. For developing countries, the new order of the international politics and economy they’ve been pursuing refers to establish a platform where countries can share development fruits. The exploration of regional cooperation and integration also aims at building a regional community for them to share achievements. Dialogues between different civilizations are thriving with the goal to reach consensus in fundamental issues. China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative is under the guidance of “joint negotiation, construction and sharing”. In this increasingly interconnected world, the hardest task before every country is to realize coexistence rather than confrontation.

Secondly, the future security of the international order depends on whether countries choose alliance and confrontation or cooperation and sharing. If alliance and confrontation predominate the logic of international security order, the international system would split into two or more confronting blocs, a historical tragedy of international relations within the western world. As the report reveals, if political civilization wants to strive forward, we must make breakthroughs in the ideology of either friend or foe. The international order is doomed to be incomplete if its premise is to assume there is a real or potential enemy. There are many examples of zero-sum game in human history. For instance, the orthodox and heresy in religious order, the distinction between civilization and barbarian in both western and oriental order, the rival camps during the Cold War and the ideological trend of universal values after the war. Human being should realize that it would be a terrifying world where only a few countries/people are secure, for their security is based on others’ insecurity. Therefore, the idea of common security raised by China and other developing countries is more logical than the idea of either alliance or confrontation in the evolution of the international order. In this respect, great powers in the world share the responsibility to avoid the international system being plagued by the Cold War idea of either alliance or confrontation and inhibit the way of developing military alliances

to establish the international order. The world has developed into a community with a common future and every country has to recognize the sovereign state system. Since every member in the international system shares a common destiny, they should reflect on colonialism, imperialism and hegemony of the past centuries to avoid division and confrontation within the international system and address the common security problems facing all countries.

In the interconnected world, to establish international security order, it's inappropriate to curtly classify a country or a state bloc as an enemy; it's absurd for liberal international order to deem "not free" states as a threat of the free world. The logic underneath is akin to that of the religious order during Middle Age when heretics were regarded as the threat to the religious order. John Rawls' theory concerning the international order has been put into practice and proven a threat towards sovereign international order. Countries that brazenly infringe sovereignty and territorial integrity of others are in fact enemies of the sovereign order represented by the UN. However, human being must realize that more countries should be involved to deal with complex problems. Nowadays, countries have closer ties with each other and should realize rather than those with different ideologies, their true enemies are extremism, terrorism, environmental problems, poverty, interventionism, hegemony and so on. When establishing the international order, China should strive to solve problem instead of seeking enemies. The international community should also learn from such attitude and correct its cognition towards the international order.

## ***2. Self-governance and Collegiality***

In the interconnected world, domestic affairs of every country are more than ever exposed to the international politic realm. Conversely, international issues increasingly exert influence to domestic affairs. Nowadays, almost any country wouldn't be affected by the global political system. In the past, there was no need to take into account the interconnections of countries when establishing the international order, but nowadays when planning the international order, we must think about the general background. This report also discusses issues concerning self-governance and shared governance based on the theory of the interaction between the domestic order and international order.

Firstly, a bosom international order should render full respect and trust to sovereign countries that they enjoy the right of priority to solve their domestic affairs. International community should support and strengthen these countries rather than deny and negate their uniqueness of entity responsibility. All of these constitute the main points of the term "self-

governance” that the report emphasizes. On the other hand, some issues are beyond national jurisdiction and requires proper disposition. If not, they may endanger the domestic order. To handle these issues, every country should cooperate and explore solutions through shared governance. It is exactly what the term “shared governance” the report refers to.

Secondly, issues within national jurisdiction should be reserved in domestic governance. But for issues not quite controversial but relating to interests of many countries, international organizations ought to play a role to help countries take concerted actions. The combination of self-governance and shared governance fully affirms sovereignty as the bottom line in the international order but also advocate the concept of sovereignty. In the interrelated world, sovereignty is still the basis of the international order and sovereign states are high interconnected. If people can’t realize this reality, they can neither defend sovereignty against the external interventionism nor realize that outwardly transferring internal negative elements may jeopardize the domestic order of other countries. Furthermore, when handling problems ascending from domestic realm to the international politic system, countries should explore rules, programs, laws and international organization and take the path of shared governance. In this respect, both self-governance and shared governance are indispensable for the planning and construction of future international order. An orderly domestic system is based upon self-governance while an orderly international system is based upon shared governance. The combination of both forms a benign international order. In the interconnected world, people are in desperate need of figuring out a new political science encompassing the domestic and international politics by means of theory and practice.

Thirdly, this report holds that there is no conflict between the common rules for the international system and diversified domestic system. It also adheres to China’s planning of the international order. Both the eastern and western order theorists entertain that a benign international order relies on stable domestic orders. But the difference is that rather than based on exactly the same domestic systems, China believes that a benign international order could be based on diversified domestic system. Countries can cooperate to seek share governance and coexistence while keeping their diversified self-governance in the international order.

### ***3.The general idea for the planning of the international order***

This report lists four pillars of the international order as follows. Based on the four pillars, it further analyzes China’s general ideas towards the planning and practice of the international order.

1. The power base. This report holds that the power structure is the material basis of the international order. The durability and flexibility of the international order should not only take into account the static nature but also the dynamic nature in the balance of power. Generally speaking, the domestic order is established upon the orderly succession of power. However, in the international order, systems for the orderly succession of power haven't come into being. Therefore, if the balance of power is broken, the stability of the international order would face severe tests. In an effective international order, a dynamic adjustment mechanism is of vital significance to balance the major power relations. By virtue of such mechanism, developed countries and emerging power can seek agreement while shelving differences rather than tear each other down. This report believes that although the emerging power might challenge the international order, the frustration of the developed world also risks the international order. In this regard, a new type of relationship between major countries is a powerful tool for the stable transformation of the international system and a big concern in the establishment of a new international order. Moreover, in spite of the importance of relationship between major countries, its stability may not lead to a sustainable international order. Experience shows that if great powers are acquiesced to interfere in internal affairs of small countries, some small countries would become puppets of great powers and the international system would slide into turbulence. Therefore, it is of equal importance to balance the relationship between great powers and small countries and create an orderly, harmonious climate for their coexistence.

2. The domestic order. After the Second World War, the greatest achievement in the evolution of the international order lies in the mutual recognition and insurance of state sovereignty between countries. The denial of sovereignty should never be the prerequisite for the reform and adjustment of the international order. Instead, the completion and development of sovereignty serve as the guidance during the reform and adjustment. This report realizes that after the Cold War, there emerged several ideological trends and campaigns deviating from the sovereignty order. The current planning of the international order must return to the sovereignty doctrine stipulated in the U.N. Charter. Under these circumstances, China plays a special role in upholding sovereignty. This report also believes that the extension of sovereignty of every country begins to overlap with each other in the interconnected world. Therefore, issues that obviously belong to the domestic administration should be reserved within self-governance. Every country is at different development stage and enjoys special national conditions. Their people should decide its domestic system and development road based on

their own choice. The international community should constructively help every country improve its capacity of self-governance so that every country can continuously elevate its administration ability and sustain social stability, prosperity, fairness and justice. The international community should not push the regime change of a certain country responding to the appeals of universal values or pressures from great powers. It should also avoid military intervention. After the Cold War, the result of western intervention in some countries has fully demonstrated such actions wouldn't improve national governance of these countries but stimulate conflicts of their ethnic groups.

China can formulate domestic and abroad policies in three aspects as follows:

1)China should support its effective self-governance with the establishment of the international order. China should promote global economic and political stability and realize domestic economic transformation and upgrading at the stage of "New Normal".

2)China should take the lead and bring along the self-governance of other countries. China should set out from the "One Belt, One Road" initiative and coordinate its development strategies with those of countries along the Silk Route. In this way, China can share development achievements with these countries and promote their national governance.

3)China should use its achievements from effective self-governance to help other countries develop their self-governance. China has recently established several financial institutions to support international development. These institutions can improve China's supply of international public goods and its capability of coping with challenges such as poverty, environmental disruption, terrorism and armed conflicts. These institutions would also bring more higher-quality resources of governance to other countries and back up their development of self-governance.

3. The value criterion. In the interconnected and diversified world, it is pragmatic to replace universal values from certain civilization with shared values as the basis of the international order. There are core values every civilization or country. The values serve as a criterion to sustain its domestic order. Therefore, countries in the international community and influential international media shouldn't use their core values to negate or lash those of other civilizations/countries. They shouldn't set their core values as the benchmark and force other countries to follow, either. Otherwise, there would be endless clashes about values. However, to promote international cooperation, there is no denying that value criterion is still necessary in the interconnected world. This report holds that shared

values of a specific international order should concentrate on diversity, commonality and integrity. Values such as unity, coexistence, harmony, justice and sharing can reflect meanings to live in the international community. This report believes that although democracy, rule of law and human rights are components of shared values, their definition, significance and practice depends on specific national conditions. The promotion and maintenance of these values differ in each countries and mainly belong to the domestic order. Right now, these values trend to be parts of ideology and often face double standards in practice. In view of disputes, the international community should force other countries to put them into practice. However, since there are extremists tramping on human rights, the international community has the responsibility to formulate clearer criteria and discreetly exercise their right of enforcement intervention. For instance, in 2005 out of its “protective duty”, the UN summit defined four types of offence: genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

4. The organization and mechanisms. The interconnected world witnesses common problems deriving from countries to the international realm. Effective international organizations and mechanisms have to be established to tackle these problems through global shared governance. This approach doesn’t deny the priority of sovereignty or postpone the disposition of common problems.

This report affirms the significance of many international organizations and mechanisms in international shared governance after the Second World War. It also believes that since the world structure has changed, these organizations and mechanisms are faced with tremendous pressure to conduct reform. China wouldn’t challenge the existing and wide-accepted international rules, because China itself is a key member of these rules. But China would actively renovate international rules and bring more innovative rules and proposes to the reform of the international order. Some countries flaunt the banner of “higher standards” to form exclusive trade blocks and even strengthen their military alliances, which hampers the coexistence, inclusiveness and openness in the international order. Facts are that these countries wouldn’t play constructive roles in the establishment of future international order. Meanwhile, at the end of 2015, several international events showed signs of a better international order. In October, the International Monetary Fund announced that the Chinese currency the Yuan is eligible to join the Special Drawing Rights, or SDR basket. Yuan became the first currency from the emerging economies in the basket. In December, developed countries and developing countries finally reached an agreement in Climate Change Conference in Paris



to tackle with global climate change. In the same month, US Congress passed the bill about the share reform of IMF which had been raised in 2010 but shelved for 5 years. In this case, some decision-making power would shift from developed countries to the emerging power. Although reforms would take long time, the revolution of international order appears to ahead in the right direction. As a pushing hand for the new consensus and reforms, China more than ever realizes its position in the international community and strives to play a greater part in the establishment of future international order.

*Translator/Hua Zhiyun*