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## China's Active Role in Global Governance

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By Amrita Jash



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On December 1, at the opening ceremony of China's first ever event "*CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-Level Meeting*" held in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping promulgated the proactive interest of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in solving the difficulties faced by the international community. Themed under "*Working together towards a community with a shared future for mankind and a better world: the responsibility of political parties*", Xi in his speech addressed to above 300 representatives of overseas political parties, **stated**:

*"[China] will proactively push forward the construction of a global network of partners and will proactively push for political solutions for international hot issues and difficult problems". And further pointed that "We [China] do not import foreign models, and we do not export the China model, either", "We will not require other countries to copy what we do."*

Xi's expressed interest to make China play an active role in global governance further affirms his primary agenda of *"building a community of common destiny"*—the motivating force that has become a key driver in Xi's foreign policy agenda. In this regard, this first major diplomatic dialogue on a multilateral setting in the immediate aftermath of the 19th CPC National Congress wherein, Xi opined that *"Socialism with Chinese Characteristics has entered a new era"*. In this 'era', with rising in China's *"international influence"*, China has the *"ability to inspire, and power to shape"* the world at large.[1]

Unlike his predecessors who followed Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *"keeping a low profile"* (tao guang yang hui, 韬光养晦), Xi as the new architect of China's destiny aims at *"striving for achievement"* (fen fa you wei, 奋发有为). Under this policy framework, China seeks to actively shape the external environment rather than adapting itself to the external environment. That is, becoming a responsible player by professing *'proactive diplomacy'* (zhudong shi waijiao 主动式外交). This marked policy shift further exemplifies the rise in China's level of confidence from that of its past, as noted in Xi's 19th Party Congress statement which acknowledged that:

*"China's international standing has risen as never before. Our Party, our country, our people, our forces, and our nation have changed in ways without precedent. The Chinese nation, with an entirely new posture, now stands firm and tall in the East."*[2]

What prompts China's such a behavior? Here, the ambition lies in creating a *'just world order'* against the existing international order which in the Chinese view is *'unfair'*. In view of this, China's international behavior is orchestrated by the interplay of its perception of *'self'* identity *vis-à-vis* its perception of the international order. Wherein, China perceives as well as relates itself in a broad spectrum of— a developing country, a major power, a status-quo power, a reformer, a non-western/Asian country as well as a modernizing country. Given these multiple identities at play, what China *'wants to do'*, as Xi stated: *"[is to] actively take part in reforming and constructing the global governance system, and ensuring the world political and economic order develops in a more just and reasonable direction"*. And China *'does not want to do'*, as Xi noted: *"no matter how the international landscape may evolve, or how strong China may become, it will never pursue hegemony, expansion or look to extend its sphere of influence."* However, China's increasing military muscle flexing behavior in the South China and East China Seas as well as the lack of transparency over China's intentions behind the *'Belt and Road Initiative'* (BRI) has raised significant concerns over China's revisionist tendencies— corrodes China's responsible international image.

Given this perspective, China regards playing an active role in global governance, through cooperation and coordination with other emerging powers as a useful means. Wherein, the desire is to achieve tangible goals, in terms of pushing for a more equitable and fairer international political and economic order, striving for a larger share of decision-making power in various international institutions and boost its international influence. Hence, China's proactive participation in global governance aims at setting new rules to the old order if not change the order at large.

## About the Author:

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[2] Ibid.

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