

(Translation)

Together, Let Us Fight COVID-19 and Create a Better Future

Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of China
At Session I of the 15th G20 Leaders' Summit

Beijing, 21 November 2020

Your Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud,
Dear Colleagues,

I wish to begin by expressing heartfelt thanks to the Saudi Presidency and especially Your Majesty King Salman for the tremendous efforts in hosting this summit.

This outgoing year, humanity has experienced the most serious global pandemic in a century. Over one million people have lost their lives. The world economy is in recession. Societies and livelihoods are taking a big hit. The impact of COVID-19 is even worse than that of the 2008 global financial crisis.

The G20 has taken swift actions in the wake of COVID-19. At the Extraordinary Summit earlier this year, we agreed to step up cooperation to fight the pandemic. We agreed to advance the R&D of medicines and vaccines, maintain economic and financial stability, keep the industrial and supply chains open, and ease the debt burden of developing countries. These measures have given the world confidence and charted the course for international cooperation against the virus. In this global battle, the G20 has once again played an important and, indeed, irreplaceable role.

As we speak, the pandemic is still wreaking havoc across the world, and some countries face the threat of a second wave of infections. To contain the virus, stabilize the economy and protect livelihood remains a long and arduous journey for all countries. In the meantime, the international architecture is evolving at a faster pace. Rising unilateralism and protectionism are causing disruptions to global industrial and supply chains. While containing the virus on an ongoing basis, we must also stabilize and restore economic growth. For the G20, I believe more efforts are needed in the following areas:

First, build a global firewall against COVID-19. We must first put the disease under control at home and, on that basis, strengthen exchanges and cooperation to help countries in need. Several G20 members have made progress in vaccine R&D and production. We should speed up action and support the WHO in mobilizing and consolidating resources and distributing vaccines fairly and efficiently. China actively supports and participates in international cooperation on COVID-19 vaccines. We have joined the COVAX facility and stand ready to step up cooperation with other countries on the R&D, production and distribution of vaccines. We will honor our commitment of giving assistance and support to other developing countries, and work to make vaccines a global public good accessible and affordable to people around the world.

Second, ensure the smooth functioning of the global economy. While containing the virus, we need to restore the secure and smooth operation of global industrial and supply chains. We need to reduce tariffs and barriers, and explore the liberalization of trade of key medical supplies. We need to further harmonize policies and standards and establish “fast tracks” to facilitate the orderly flow of personnel. China has proposed a global mechanism on the mutual recognition of health certificates based on nucleic acid test results in the form of internationally accepted QR codes. We hope more countries will join this mechanism. We also support the G20 in carrying out institutionalized cooperation and building global cooperation networks to facilitate the flow of personnel and goods.

Third, harness the role of the digital economy. COVID-19 has fueled the boom of new technologies, new business forms and new platforms such as 5G, artificial intelligence (AI) and smart cities, and accelerated the development of a contact-free economy like online shopping, online education and telemedicine. All this opens new pathways for economic growth. We ought to adapt to change and turn crisis into opportunity. We may deepen structural reform and cultivate new growth drivers through scientific and technological innovation and digital transformation. We could foster an enabling environment for the development of the digital economy, enhance data security cooperation, strengthen the digital infrastructure, and level the playing field for high-tech companies from all countries. Meanwhile, we need to address the challenges posed by the digital economy to employment, taxation and vulnerable groups, and seek to bridge the digital divide.

Fourth, pursue more inclusive development. We should keep our

support for developing countries and help them overcome the hardships caused by the pandemic. In spite of its own difficulties, China has fully implemented the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) and put off debt repayment totaling over US\$1.3 billion. China supports the decision on DSSI extension and will continue to work with other parties for its full implementation. Meanwhile, China will increase the level of debt suspension and relief for countries facing particular difficulties and encourage its financial institutions to provide new financing support on a voluntary basis and according to market principles. We should help women walk out of the shadow of the pandemic, address their special needs, and implement the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. China has proposed the convening of another Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in 2025 to contribute to women's development in the post-COVID era. It is also vital that we take the challenge of food security seriously and support the UN in holding the Food Systems Summit next year. In this connection, China proposes the holding of an international conference on food loss and waste in due course, and welcomes the active participation of G20 members and relevant international organizations.

Colleagues,

The grave challenge of COVID-19 has exposed the deficiencies of global governance. The international community has a keen interest in the post-COVID international order and global governance as well as the future role for the G20. In my view, the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits should guide our way forward. We should uphold multilateralism, pursue openness and inclusiveness, promote mutually beneficial cooperation and keep pace with the times. The G20 ought to play a bigger role in this process.

First, we need to strengthen the UN-centered international system. The UN is the core institution for addressing international affairs through cooperation. All countries should firmly support the UN's authority and standing, follow the purposes and principles of its Charter, and uphold the international order underpinned by international law. We support the UN in more effectively building global consensus, mobilizing global resources and coordinating global actions. We support a bigger role of the UN in promoting world peace and development.

Second, we need to improve the governance architecture for economic globalization. We should firmly safeguard the rules-based multilateral trading system that is transparent, nondiscriminatory, open

and inclusive, and support the reform of the WTO to enhance its effectiveness and authority. We should promote free trade, oppose unilateralism and protectionism, uphold fair competition, and protect the development rights, interests and space of developing countries. We should continue the reform of the international financial system, conclude the IMF's 16th General Quota Review on schedule, expand the role of the Special Drawing Rights, buttress the global financial safety net, and raise the representation and voice of developing countries. We should also address the challenges to economic globalization head-on, and make it more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

Third, we need to promote the sound development of the digital economy. To address countries' concerns on data security, the digital divide, personal privacy and ethics, we should adopt people-centered and facts-based policies to encourage innovation and build trust. We should support the UN's leadership role in this field, and work together to foster an open, fair, just and nondiscriminatory environment for building the digital economy. Recently, China launched the Global Initiative on Data Security. We may work on that basis and join other parties for discussing and formulating rules on global digital governance. China supports increased dialogue on AI, and proposes a meeting on this in due course to advance the G20 AI Principles and set the course for the healthy development of AI globally. The G20 also needs to discuss developing the standards and principles for central bank digital currencies with an open and accommodating attitude, and properly handle all types of risks and challenges while pushing collectively for the development of the international monetary system.

Fourth, we need to build up capacities for tackling global challenges. The most pressing task of the moment is to shore up the global public health system and contain COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. We need to enhance the role of the WHO, improve pandemic preparedness and response, forge a strong shield for human health and safety, and build a global community of health for all. We need to scale up international cooperation on ecology and environment to protect the planet Earth, our only homeland. We need to further curtail the production and use of non-essential, disposable plastic goods. COP26 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, both to be held next year, may serve as opportunities for forging broader consensus and stronger synergy in building a clean and beautiful world where man and nature coexist in harmony. China calls for a complete ban on illegal trade of wildlife and for stronger exchanges and cooperation on the protection of wild fauna

and flora.

Colleagues,

Building on its major strategic gains in fighting COVID-19, China has made steady strides in economic development. The recently concluded Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee adopted recommendations for formulating China's 14th five-year plan. The plenum underscored that China will finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects within the set time frame, and will embark on a new journey next year toward fully building a modern socialist country. Based on a scientific analysis of the new stage of China's development, we will stay committed to the new development philosophy, and actively foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other. This new development paradigm is by no means a closed-door policy. Instead, it urges efforts on both the supply and demand sides to ensure unimpeded flow in production, distribution, exchange and consumption. While making the Chinese economy more resilient and competitive, it also aims to build a new system of open economy of higher standards. This will create more opportunities for the world to benefit from China's high-quality development.

China will always be a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order. On the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, China stands ready to pursue peaceful coexistence and common development with all countries. We may bridge differences through dialogue, resolve disputes through negotiation, and make a joint effort for world peace and development.

Colleagues,

As a Chinese poem reads, "Past a fallen ship, one thousand sail onward; for a sick tree, ten thousand thrive by spring." I believe that when COVID-19 is over, our world will rise from the pandemic and emerge even stronger. In that spirit, let us join hands to deliver a better life for our people and build a community with a shared future for mankind.