

(Translation)

Let the Torch of Multilateralism Light up Humanity's Way Forward

Special Address by H.E. Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China

At the World Economic Forum Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda

25 January 2021

Professor Klaus Schwab,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The past year was marked by the sudden onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. Global public health faced severe threat and the world

economy was mired in deep recession. Humanity encountered multiple crises rarely seen in human history.

The past year also bore witness to the enormous resolve and courage of people around the world in battling the deadly coronavirus. Guided by science, reason and a humanitarian spirit, the world has achieved initial progress in fighting COVID-19. That said, the pandemic is far from over. The recent resurgence in COVID cases reminds us that we must carry on the fight. Yet we remain convinced that winter cannot stop the arrival of spring and darkness can never shroud the light of dawn. There is no doubt that humanity will prevail over the virus and emerge even stronger from this disaster.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

History is moving forward and the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice and move we make today will shape the world of the future. It is important that we properly address the four major tasks facing people of our times.

The first is to step up macroeconomic policy coordination and jointly promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth of the world economy. We are going through the worst recession since the end of World War II. For the first time in history, the economies of all regions have been hit hard at the same time, with global industrial and supply chains clogged and trade and investment down in the doldrums. Despite the trillions of dollars in relief packages worldwide, global recovery is rather shaky and the outlook remains uncertain. We need to focus on current priorities, and balance COVID response and economic development. Macroeconomic policy support should be stepped up to bring the world economy out of the woods as early as possible. More importantly, we need to look beyond the horizon and strengthen our will and resolve for change. We need to shift the driving forces and growth models of the global economy and improve its structure, so as to set the course for long-term, sound and steady development of the world economy.

The second is to abandon ideological prejudice and jointly follow a path of peaceful coexistence, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. No two leaves in the world are identical, and no histories, cultures or social systems are the same. Each country is unique with its own history, culture and social system, and none is superior to the other. The best criteria are whether a country's history, culture and social system fit its particular situation, enjoy people's support, serve to deliver political stability, social progress and better lives, and contribute to human progress. The different histories, cultures and social systems are as old as human societies, and they are the inherent features of human civilization. There will be no human civilization without diversity, and such diversity will continue to exist for as long as we can imagine. Difference in itself is no cause for alarm. What does ring the alarm is arrogance, prejudice and hatred; it is the attempt to impose hierarchy on human civilization or to force one's own history, culture and social system upon others. The right choice is for countries to pursue peaceful coexistence based on mutual respect and on expanding common ground while shelving differences, and to promote exchanges and mutual learning. This is the way to add impetus to the progress of human civilization.

The third is to close the divide between developed and developing countries and jointly bring about growth and prosperity for all. Today, inequality continues to grow, the North-South gap remains to be bridged, and sustainable development faces severe challenges. As countries grapple with the pandemic, their economic recoveries are following divergent trajectories, and the North-South gap risks further widening and even perpetuation. For developing countries, they are aspiring for more resources and space for development, and they are calling for stronger representation and voice in global economic governance. We should recognize that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid footing, and developed countries will stand to benefit from such growth. The international community should keep its eyes on the long run, honor its commitment, and provide necessary support to developing countries and safeguard their legitimate development interests. Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should be strengthened, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development.

The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity. In the era of economic globalization, public health emergencies like COVID-19 may very well recur, and global public health governance needs to be enhanced. The Earth is our one and only home. To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone. There must be global action, global response and global cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The problems facing the world are intricate and complex. The way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

First, we should stay committed to openness and inclusiveness instead of closeness and exclusion. Multilateralism is about having international affairs addressed through consultation and the future of the world decided by everyone working together. To build small circles or start a new Cold War, to reject, threaten or intimidate others, to willfully impose decoupling, supply disruption or sanctions, and to create isolation or estrangement will only push the world into division and even confrontation. We cannot tackle common challenges in a divided world, and confrontation will lead us to a dead end. Humanity has learned lessons the hard way, and that history is not long gone. We must not return to the path of the past.

The right approach is to act on the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind. We should uphold the common values of humanity, i.e. peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, rise above ideological prejudice, make the mechanisms, principles and policies of our cooperation as open and inclusive as possible, and jointly safeguard world peace and stability. We should build an open world economy, uphold the multilateral trading regime, discard discriminatory and exclusionary standards, rules and systems, and take down barriers to trade, investment and technological exchanges. We

should strengthen the G20 as the premier forum for global economic governance, engage in closer macroeconomic policy coordination, and keep the global industrial and supply chains stable and open. We should ensure the sound operation of the global financial system, promote structural reform and expand global aggregate demand in an effort to strive for higher quality and stronger resilience in global economic development.

Second, we should stay committed to international law and international rules instead of seeking one's own supremacy. Ancient Chinese believed that “the law is the very foundation of governance”. International governance should be based on the rules and consensus reached among us, not on the order given by one or the few. The Charter of the United Nations is the basic and universally recognized norms governing state-to-state relations. Without international law and international rules that are formed and recognized by the global community, the world may fall back to the law of the jungle, and the consequence would be devastating for humanity.

We need to be resolute in championing the international rule of law, and steadfast in our resolve to safeguard the international system centered around the UN and the international order based on international law. Multilateral institutions, which provide the platforms for putting multilateralism into action and which are the basic architecture underpinning multilateralism, should have their authority and effectiveness safeguarded. State-to-state relations should be coordinated and regulated through proper institutions and rules. The strong should not bully the weak. Decision should not be made by simply showing off strong muscles or waving a big fist. Multilateralism should not be used as pretext for acts of unilateralism. Principles should be preserved and rules, once made, should be followed by all. “Selective multilateralism” should not be our option.

Third, we should stay committed to consultation and cooperation instead of conflict and confrontation. Differences in history, culture and social system should not be an excuse for antagonism or confrontation, but rather an incentive for cooperation. We should respect and accommodate differences, avoid meddling in other countries' internal affairs, and resolve disagreements through consultation and dialogue.

History and reality have made it clear, time and again, that the misguided approach of antagonism and confrontation, be it in the form of cold war, hot war, trade war or tech war, would eventually hurt all countries' interests and undermine everyone's well-being.

We should reject the outdated Cold War and zero-sum game mentality, adhere to mutual respect and accommodation, and enhance political trust through strategic communication. It is important that we stick to the cooperation concept based on mutual benefit, say no to narrow-minded, selfish beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and stop unilateral practice of keeping advantages in development all to oneself. Equal rights to development should be guaranteed for all countries to promote common development and prosperity. We should advocate fair competition, like competing with each other for excellence in a racing field, not beating each other on a wrestling arena.

Fourth, we should stay committed to keeping up with the times instead of rejecting change. The world is undergoing changes unseen in a century, and now is the time for major development and major transformation. To uphold multilateralism in the 21st century, we should promote its fine tradition, take on new perspectives and look to the future. We need to stand by the core values and basic principles of multilateralism. We also need to adapt to the changing international landscape and respond to global challenges as they arise. We need to reform and improve the global governance system on the basis of extensive consultation and consensus-building.

We need to give full play to the role of the World Health Organization in building a global community of health for all. We need to advance reform of the World Trade Organization and the international financial and monetary system in a way that boosts global economic growth and protects the development rights, interests and opportunities of developing countries. We need to follow a people-centered and fact-based policy orientation in exploring and formulating rules on global digital governance. We need to deliver on the Paris Agreement on climate change and promote green development. We need to give continued priority to development, implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and make sure that all countries, especially developing ones, share in the fruits of global development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

After decades of strenuous efforts by the Chinese people, China is on course to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. We have made historic gains in ending extreme poverty, and have embarked on a new journey toward fully building a modern socialist country. As China enters a new development stage, we will follow a new development philosophy and foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other. China will work with other countries to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.

— **China will continue to take an active part in international cooperation on COVID-19.** Containing the coronavirus is the most pressing task for the international community. This is because people and their lives must always be put before anything else. It is also what it takes to stabilize and revive the economy. Closer solidarity and cooperation, more information sharing, and a stronger global response are what we need to defeat COVID-19 across the world. It is especially important to scale up cooperation on the R&D, production and distribution of vaccines and make them public goods that are truly accessible and affordable to people in all countries. By now, China has provided assistance to over 150 countries and 13 international organizations, sent 36 medical expert teams to countries in need, and stayed strongly supportive and actively engaged in international cooperation on COVID vaccines. China will continue to share its experience with other countries, do its best to assist countries and regions that are less prepared for the pandemic, and work for greater accessibility and affordability of COVID vaccines in developing countries. We hope these efforts will contribute to an early and complete victory over the coronavirus throughout the world.

— **China will continue to implement a win-win strategy of opening-up.** Economic globalization meets the need of growing social productivity and is a natural outcome of scientific and technological advancement. It serves no one's interest to use the pandemic as an excuse

to reverse globalization and go for seclusion and decoupling. As a longstanding supporter of economic globalization, China is committed to following through on its fundamental policy of opening-up. China will continue to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, help keep the global industrial and supply chains smooth and stable, and advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. China will promote institutional opening-up that covers rules, regulations, management and standards. We will foster a business environment that is based on market principles, governed by law and up to international standards, and unleash the potential of the huge China market and enormous domestic demand. We hope these efforts will bring more cooperation opportunities to other countries and give further impetus to global economic recovery and growth.

— **China will continue to promote sustainable development.** China will fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will do more on the ecological front, by transforming and improving its industrial structure and energy mix at a faster pace and promoting a green, low-carbon way of life and production. I have announced China's goal of striving to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China. Yet we believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, China must step forward, take action, and get the job done. China is drawing up action plans and taking specific measures already to make sure we meet the set targets. We are doing this as a concrete action to uphold multilateralism and as a contribution to protecting our shared home and realizing sustainable development of humanity.

— **China will continue to advance science, technology and innovation.** Science, technology and innovation is a key engine for human progress, a powerful weapon in tackling many global challenges, and the only way for China to foster a new development paradigm and achieve high-quality development. China will invest more in science and technology, develop an enabling system for innovation as a priority, turn breakthroughs in science and technology into actual productivity at a faster pace, and enhance intellectual property protection, all for the purpose of fostering innovation-driven, higher-quality growth. Scientific and technological advances should benefit all humanity rather than be used to curb and contain other countries' development. China will think and act with more openness with regard to international exchange and cooperation on science and technology. We will work with other countries

to create an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological advancement that is beneficial to all and shared by all.

— **China will continue to promote a new type of international relations.** Zero-sum game or winner-takes-all is not the guiding philosophy of the Chinese people. As a staunch follower of an independent foreign policy of peace, China is working hard to bridge differences through dialogue and resolve disputes through negotiation and to pursue friendly and cooperative relations with other countries on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. As a steadfast member of developing countries, China will further deepen South-South cooperation, and contribute to the endeavor of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ease debt burden, and achieve more growth. China will get more actively engaged in global economic governance and push for an economic globalization that is more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

There is only one Earth and one shared future for humanity. As we cope with the current crisis and endeavor to make a better day for everyone, we need to stand united and work together. We have been shown time and again that to beggar thy neighbor, to go it alone, and to slip into arrogant isolation will always fail. Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind.

Thank you.