

THE LEADERSHIP

MWALIMU JULIUS NYERERE LEADERSHIP SCHOOL MAGAZINE

2026

No. 01



Transitioning towards an advanced, innovation-led economy



Comrades, Scholars, esteemed readers and students of leadership;

Welcome to this special edition of the Leadership Magazine, I trust that whichever God you believe in has kept you well and peaceful throughout the year 2025. This year's (2026) first edition comes at a very crucial stage within the African biggest trading partner (China) and Africa itself.

Last year, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China released its official recommendations for the 15th Five-Year Plan, providing the most detailed outline yet of the country's policy priorities for economic and social development over the next five years. It was then adopted at the fourth plenary session in Beijing from October 20 to 23, 2025. The recommendations set the framework for the 15th Five-Year Plan, which is expected to be formally released and implemented in March 2026.

China's Five-Year Plans are national blueprints guiding economic & social development, with the upcoming 15th FYP (2026-2030) focusing on tech self-reliance (AI, chips, green tech), boosting domestic demand, strengthening supply chains, green development, and national security, aiming for high-quality growth amidst global shifts and aiming to achieve long-term goals like becoming a moderately developed economy by 2035.

This 15th Five-Year Plan, which covers the years

from 2026 to 2030, comes at a pivotal moment as China seeks to complete its transition toward an advanced, innovation-led economy, strengthen social welfare and living standards, and deepen structural reforms to support sustainable and balanced growth.

Dear esteemed readers, why am I talking about this document? The reason is that our team of expert contributors have analysed the document and came up with different ways Africa can benefit from PLAN. I have gone through these well researched articles, and I can guarantee you that it is worth your time reading them.

Authors who have written on the Africa-China Cooperation have clearly shown how it adapts to new realities, including increased geopolitical tensions and domestic economic structural issues, signalling a new phase of strategic adaptation. Those who have written on Global Governance are focusing on the Global Governance Initiative; looking at the shared future of all countries and the development and progress of human society, and specifically offering answers to the epochal question of "what kind of global governance system to build and how to reform and improve global governance."

Thank you so much for your continued cooperation.

Warm regards,
Prof. Marcellina Chijoriga
 Editor-in-Chief

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Published by:
 Mwalimu Julius Nyerere
 Leadership School (MJNLS)

Our Academic Partner:
 Contemporary World
 Magazine

Date of Publication:
 March, 2026

Website:
<https://www.mjnls.ac.tz>

Contact:
 Mwalimu Julius Nyerere
 Leadership School (MJNLS),
 Ukombozi Road, Kibaha
 kwa Mfipa,
 Kibaha Pwani/Coast Region,
 Tanzania

Tel:
 +255733858001
 +255733858002

Email:
info@mjnls.ac.tz

A Lesson in Planning: How Africa Can Forge Its Own Path by Learning from China's Blueprint

Imagine a nation where every ministry works in harmony, where environmental protection fuels economic growth, and where today's policies are designed with the next generation in mind. This is not a utopian fantasy; it is the disciplined practice of long-term strategic planning. As China prepares its 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030), it offers a powerful playbook as Dr. Mubofu shows in this article.

By Dr. Christian Mubofu, Senior Lecturer, Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania

For African nations, often caught between the promises of foreign aid and the perils of the resource curse, the critical lesson is not to copy China, but to learn how it plans. The future of Africa depends on a major shift: from reacting to crises to proactively designing a sovereign, sustainable, and prosperous destiny.

LESSON 1: WEAVING A SINGLE TAPESTRY FROM SEPARATE THREADS

In many parts of the world, government departments often operate in silos. The agriculture ministry focuses on crops, the environment ministry on conservation, and the industry ministry on factories, often with conflicting goals. China's planning system strives to overcome this fragmentation.

Think of a national plan as a blueprint for a house. You wouldn't have one architect designing the foundation, another the walls, and a third the roof, without them ever speaking. The result would be chaos. Similarly, China's 15th Five-Year Plan seeks to integrate everything. Research on China's ecological regions, for instance, shows that protecting nature is not seen as a barrier to the economy, but as its essential foundation. By mapping out which areas are best for conservation, which for cities, and which for agriculture, the plan creates a synergistic map for the whole country.

At the same time, suggestions for adjusting the agricultural area are aimed at water security and adapting to climate change. This means the plan doesn't just ask the question of "How can we grow more food?" but the question of

"Where should we grow it to ensure we have enough water and can withstand droughts or floods?"

What can Africa do? This is a vital lesson for African leaders. A plan for a new dam must be developed alongside

the ministries of agriculture, environment, and energy. A policy to promote mining must be integrated with strategies for water management and local community development. By breaking down these silos and creating a single

and unified national vision, African countries can ensure that progress in one area does not create a crisis in another.

LESSON 2: SEEING GREEN AS THE NEW ENGINE OF GROWTH, NOT A FANCY EXTRA

For a long time, the narrative was that countries must choose between a healthy economy and a healthy environment. China's new direction shatters this myth. Scholars now talk about "green productivity," the idea that the most advanced and competitive industries of the future will be those that are environmentally friendly. In their view, true modern productivity is inherently green.

We can see this in action. As Chi-

na builds vast wind and solar farms, it faces a problem: the sun doesn't always shine, and the wind doesn't always blow. So, what is the solution? The government is aggressively approving massive "pumped storage" power stations. These stations act like giant batteries, storing excess energy when production is high and releasing it when needed. This isn't just an environmental project; it is a critical piece of national infrastructure to ensure a stable, and modern economy powered by clean energy.

What can Africa do? Africa is blessed with unparalleled sun, wind, and hydropower potential. The continent faces a choice. It can follow the old and polluting path of development that much of the world is now trying to escape. or it can leapfrog directly to a green and

modern economy. By making green energy and green technology the centerpiece of their industrial strategies, African nations can build manufacturing sectors that are sustainable and attractive to a new wave of global investment. This aligns with the broader concept of "Green Modernization," which China is pioneering as a new model of development. Africa's vast natural resources should be the engine of its future wealth, not just commodities to be sold raw.

LESSON 3: BUILDING FROM THE GROUND UP: FARMS AND THE PEOPLE

No nation can thrive without a solid foundation. For China, this means two things: investing in the land that feeds its people and the people who build its future.

Consider agriculture. Instead of just handing out subsidies for fertilizer, China invests in creating "high-standard farmland". This involves systematically improving the land itself, consolidating small plots into larger and more efficient fields, building reliable irrigation channels, and enhancing soil quality to make it more fertile and resilient. This is a long-term investment in the very foundation of food security.

Now, consider the people. A nation's strength lies in the well-being of all its citizens. China's approach to special education, which researchers describe as "Appropriate Inclusion," focuses on creating a framework where every individual has a path to contribute. This philosophy extends beyond education. It is about building a society where human potential is not wasted. As one analysis of China's sustainable development notes, navigating global crises successfully requires a deep and unwavering investment in human capital.

What can Africa do? For Africa, where a large portion of the population depends on farming, the lesson is clear. The strategic priority must shift from short-term fixes to long-term land improvement. Programs to build climate-resilient, and high-standard farmland can transform rural economies and ensure food sovereignty for generations.

Furthermore, Africa's famous



The aerial drone photo shows farmland in China. The Chinese government has made food security a priority, partly through increasing self-sufficiency in vital crops.

“youth dividend” is not automatic. A large population of young people only becomes an engine of growth if they are healthy, educated, and skilled. By adopting a philosophy of “appropriate inclusion” and making education and healthcare central, and integrated pillars of the national development plan, not afterthoughts, African nations can unlock the incredible potential of their people.

CONCLUSION: FROM BEING PLANNED FOR TO PLANNING FOR OURSELVES

The most important lesson from China’s 15th Five-Year Plan is not found in any single policy, but in the overarching principle: sovereign nations must be the authors of their own future. China uses its five-year plans as a disciplined tool to steer its own destiny, based on its own needs and context.

For Africa, the era of being passive recipients of international development agendas must end. It is time for African nations to become the master architects of their own ambitions. This requires a new mindset:

Embrace a Long-term Vision: Leaders must look beyond the next election cycle. A 25-year national vision, broken down into practical 5-year plans, provides the stability and direction needed for transformations.

Trust Local Knowledge: African universities and research institutions must be strengthened to provide the data and analysis that inform these plans, just as the Chinese Academy of Sciences does for China.

Focus on Faithful Implementation: A plan is only as good as its execution. Building the capacity of the civil service to implement policies effectively and learn from mistakes is essential.

China’s ongoing planning process is a living case study in strategic foresight. For Africa, the message is clear and urgent. The continent’s story does not have to be one of potential unfulfilled. By mastering the art of integrated, long-term, and sovereign planning, African nations can finally write a new story of resilience, innovation, and shared prosperity, which is built on their own terms. The blueprint for this transformation is there for the taking. The will to adapt and apply it is what the moment demands.

The aerial drone photo shows farmland in China. The Chinese government has made food security a priority, partly through increasing self-sufficiency in vital crops.



Language Diplomacy: Kiswahili's Expanding Role in China-Tanzania Relations

This article explores the growing role of Kiswahili in China-Tanzania relations, by highlighting its significance in areas, such as business, education, media, and diplomacy. Unlike other nationalities, people from China prefer to use local languages to make ties with African local communities, where Kiswahili becomes a major one as this article says.

By Tamasha Kitalima, Assistant Lecturer, Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania



A Tanzanian national, Legonga (second right) helps Chinese students study Kiswahili in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on July 4, 2025. (Xinhua photo)

China's growing presence in East Africa has revealed interesting linguistic dynamics in recent years. Unlike many visitors from Western countries and other regions across the globe, many Chinese nationals do not rely greatly on English, French or Spanish known for their status as the world's major lingua franca. They gravitate toward communication in local languages, believing such languages offer more direct and practical engage-

ment with the indigenous.

In East Africa, Kiswahili stands out as the major local language which is spoken by many compared to others. This status has placed it at the centre of everyday interactions, from business negotiations and infrastructure projects to education, media, and cultural exchange. As Chinese professionals, investors, students, and diplomats increasingly depend on Kiswahili to navigate social and professional issues, the

language is gaining its significance as a bridge that facilitates trust, cooperation, and deeper mutual understanding. This shift positions Kiswahili not only as a bond for regional unity but also as an increasingly important instrument of international diplomacy, especially in China-East Africa relations. This article attempts to navigate the expanding role of Kiswahili in China-Tanzania relations in media, education, business, and diplomacy.

Kiswahili has become particularly important in fostering the connection between China and Tanzania, especially in the domain of radio broadcasting and media. Some also argued that China is using Kiswahili media to build its image and communicate to Kiswahili-speaking audiences. China Radio International's Kiswahili section China Dunia and China's international TV broadcaster CGTN which has a Kiswahili website, are good examples. In the film and TV industry, *Karibu Kijiji cha Milele* aired on Azam TV and *Dou Dou na Wakweze* aired on TBC are good examples of many Chinese television products that have been dubbed in Kiswahili. According to *People's Daily* in 2023, over 100 Chinese films and TV series are dubbed in Kiswahili, which indicated how Chinese culture is shared through media by using Kiswahili.

In education, Kiswahili has taken a significant role in mentoring different Chinese professionals. It is taught as a subject in Chinese educational institutions, where some of its instructors are Chinese themselves. For instance, Kiswahili has so far been taught for nearly 65 years at the Communication University of China (CUC). Besides the CUC, there are four other universities in China that have set up the faculty of Kiswahili Language, purposely to teach the language among Chinese and other international students, including the Beijing Foreign Studies University, Tianjin Foreign Studies University, Shanghai International Studies University, and Xi'an International Studies University.

Additionally, there is an online Chinese-Kiswahili dictionary (Siwaxili) which is full of useful phrases trans-

On May 11, 2019, Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) held the launching ceremony for Kiswahili BA degree program. This photo shows that attendees were cutting the ribbon to launch the program.



lated into both languages. Moreover, in Tanzania, the Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam enrolls at least 90 Chinese students taking Kiswahili courses in a year. According to the School of African Studies of the Beijing Foreign Studies University in 2024, their graduates are trained for roles in diplomacy, trade, and international cooperation with Africa. Graduates from these programs are likely to work in sectors that involve Africa, such as trade, international business, translation, infrastructure, and diplomacy.

In the business sector, Kiswahili is playing a significant role in connect-

ing Chinese and Tanzanians. For instance, Chinese media outlet Xinhua Daily Telegraph dubbed in its reports in 2028 Kiswahili as a golden key for understanding Africa. This implies that Kiswahili has an important role in business contacts between Chinese and Africans (Tanzanians). Drawing specific examples, Kiswahili is used in some influential business Apps, such as KiKUU and Chap Chap, which operate in Africa and China. This bridge helps Chinese companies better understand local Tanzanian cultures, legal frameworks, and business norms which can reduce transaction costs and misunder-

standings and build trust.

Additionally, the story of a young Chinese named Tang Jingyu, famously known as Juma Sharobaro, is a living testimony to the significance of Kiswahili in maintaining Tanzania-China business relations. This is supported by Chinese state news agency Xinhua's report in 2022 that a young Chinese national's fluency in Kiswahili helps strengthen China-Tanzania relations. Mr. Jingyu, a Chinese born in East China's Fujian Province, speaks fluent Kiswahili and works in Tanzania as a marketing officer with Star Times. Jingyu represents tens of thousands

Chinese people in Tanzania and at least 500 small and large Chinese-managed enterprises, some of whom are speaking Kiswahili, while others are inspired to do so.

In diplomacy, Kiswahili has brought trust and legitimacy, transparency, soft power, and long-term engagement between the two peoples. To support this, the Chinese Embassy in Tanzania maintains a Kiswahili section on its website, showing that Kiswahili is used in diplomatic communication. Also, Chinese Embassy in Tanzania said in a report in 2025 that Ambassador Chen in her speech emphasized the

importance of Kiswahili in cultural and policy exchanges.

To enhance business between China and Tanzania, recently, Kiswahili language has officially been recognized as a key tool in enhancing legal and cultural understanding between Tanzania and China, following the launch of the first-ever translation of Chinese legal texts into Kiswahili. The launch took place in Dar es Salaam on July 17, 2025, during a symposium that brought together translation experts, publishers, and scholars from both countries.

It is with no doubt that Kiswahili has emerged as an important medium

in China-Tanzania engagement, where it serves as a bridge for communication across business, education, media, and diplomatic spheres. The growing reliance of the Chinese people on Kiswahili highlights the language's evolving role from a regional lingua franca to a strategic tool in international relations.

By facilitating trust, cultural understanding, and effective collaboration, Kiswahili not only strengthens local interactions but also reinforces China-Tanzania partnerships, underscoring its increasing significance in the region's socio-economic and diplomatic affairs.

How China's 2026–2030 Development Pivot Could Help Transform Tanzania's Industrial and Economic Future

China's 15th Five-Year Plan (2026–2030) signals a transformative shift toward green industrialisation, technological self-reliance, and carefully managed global engagement. This article shows how Tanzania, rich in critical minerals, endowed with renewable energy potential, and strategically located in East Africa, stands to benefit significantly from this shift.

By Ellen Joel Kalinga, Senior Lecturer, College of Information and Communication Technologies-University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



This photo captures a wind power farm based in northwest China's Gansu Province.

As the world's second-largest economy, China is restructuring its development model to navigate climate challenges, technological rivalry, and slowing global growth. Within this context, new strategic openings emerge for countries positioned to supply renewable resources, host low-carbon industrial parks, and serve as regional logistics hubs. Tanzania, rich in natural resources, stands to gain from this new window of opportunity. The author terms this "Tanzania's pathway to China's green and digital age."

However, the opportunity is not automatic. The challenge for Tanzania is to avoid remaining a supplier of raw

materials and instead engage China's new development priorities through value addition, technology transfer, skills development, and strong governance frameworks. This article analyses the opportunities, challenges, and policy pathways that can enable Tanzania to align strategically with China's 15th Five-Year Plan and secure long-term and sustainable gains.

THE GREEN ENERGY AND POWER SYSTEMS

Through its pillars, namely green energy and power systems, industrial upgrading and tech self-reliance, and high-level and selective opening-up, the

15th Five-Year Plan is crucial for advancing China's "dual carbon" goals of peaking carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060. Clean-energy targets are unprecedented: during the 15th Five-Year Plan period, China aims to add at least 120 GW of new wind power capacity annually. This paves the way towards carbon neutrality, alongside a smarter power grid with significant upgrades planned for the distribution network.

As part of its energy transition, China is actively establishing partnerships and identifying pilot sites to advance renewable energy deployment, grow green industries, and modernize

its power grid. Therefore, countries that can offer substantial renewable resources (hydro, solar, wind), stable regulatory systems, and regional interconnection opportunities shall be well-positioned to attract green-energy investment. As a resource-rich country with growing industrial capacity, Tanzania has the potential to move up the value chain by processing its minerals (e.g., graphite, nickel, rare earths); host manufacturing for components like batteries, solar panels, and transmission equipment; and link industrial parks to low-carbon power sources, such as hydropower and other renewables.

For Tanzania's leaders and policy-

makers, this is not a distant, abstract plan. It will shape capital flows, technology choices, and market access for decades to come, especially through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China-Tanzania strategic cooperation. The Tanzania-China relationship has deepened for decades, resulting in a bilateral trade volume close to US\$9 billion in 2024. China has been Tanzania's largest trading partner for nine consecutive years as of 2024.

Additionally, China grants zero-tariff treatment to 98% of Tanzania's taxable export items and has opened its market to products such as avocados and wild aquatic products. Meanwhile,

major projects include the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), Julius Nyerere Hydropower Plant, the Mtwara-Dar es Salaam Gas Pipeline, Dar es Salaam Port expansion, the new Tanzanite Bridge, the J.P. Magufuli Bridge, airport upgrades, and the extension of the National ICT Broadband Backbone.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TANZANIA UNDER THE 15TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Tanzanian leaders and policymakers have an obligation to analyse how Tanzania positions itself within this movement. For instance, Tanzania has the potential to become a regional green-industry hub by using hydropower and new solar or wind projects to power low-carbon industrial parks. Also, it should target joint ventures in sectors such as battery materials, ceramics and glass manufacturing, fertiliser, and construction materials.

Leveraging the transport corridor is another opportunity where, with the SGR, port expansions and potential revitalisation of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA), Tanzania can become an intermodal gateway linking landlocked neighbours to global markets. The policy should prioritize integrating Chinese financing and construction with East African Community (EAC) plans, harmonized customs, and digital logistics to convert "hard infrastructure" into trade competitiveness.

Besides, Tanzania should make efforts to scale agro-exports into China's consumer market. China's growing middle class and the dual circulation strategy favour safe, branded, high-quality food imports. Tanzania is already benefiting from exporting products like avocados and aquatic products under zero-tariff and "green lane" arrangements. In that case, Tanzanians should focus on expanding into processed agricultural goods, establishing traceability and quality systems aligned with Chinese standards, and negotiating long-term purchase agreements through state-owned enterprises and major retail platforms.

Last but not least, Tanzania should prioritise skill upgrading, standard har-

monization, and digital cooperation. The 15th Five-Year Plan stresses modern standards, smart grids, AI, and digital RMB. From this partnership, Tanzania should deepen cooperation on Technological and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), higher education, and digital skills; host Luban Workshops, Confucius Institutes, and joint training centres focusing on green industry and digital trade; and co-develop data and cyber standards that protect national interests while enabling cross-border commerce.

CHALLENGES AND RISKS FOR TANZANIA TO ENGAGE IN CHINA'S 15TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Debt sustainability and project selection are expected to arise from Tanzania's engagement with China's 15th Five-Year Plan. Large-scale infrastructure financed by external borrowing creates long-term fiscal obligations. As China tightens its own financial supervision and risk control, it will expect clearer feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, and repayment plans. In that case, Tanzania must strengthen independent project appraisal, debt-management capacity, and transparent renegotiation frameworks for key projects.

The risk of remaining a raw materials supplier persists. China's push for green development, which brings great demand for turbines, solar, and batteries, could lock Tanzania into a raw-material supplier if no value-added strategy is pursued. Policymakers should consider the question of whether we are exporting ores and importing finished technology, or whether we are building local processing, manufacturing, and service ecosystems.

Furthermore, environmental and social safeguards are also a major concern. As projects expand into energy, mining, ports, and industrial parks, environmental and community impacts will be intensified. Concerns over ecological damage (such as damage to the forests, coastlines, river basins) and misalignment with Tanza-



Tanzanian government, through the Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO), has reaffirmed its commitment to investing in diverse sources of electricity, including solar power farms, to ensure a stable and reliable energy generation and supply. (PHOTO: DAILY NEWS)

nia's own climate commitments must be properly addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To turn China's 15th Five-Year Plan into a genuine win-win outcome, Tanzanian policymakers should consider the following.

First, the Tanzanian government should ensure governance, transparency, and local benefits by enforcing transparent procurement and contract disclosure, demanding local content and skills transfer. Policymakers

should keep politics separate from technical project evaluation, maintain multi-partner diplomacy, and avoid over-dependence on any single country.

Second, the government should strengthen domestic institutions by ensuring the enhancement of regulators, environmental authorities, and competition agencies to manage large foreign investors fairly and predictably. Data use, monitoring, and independent audits should be ensured to track project performance.

Third, the authorities should develop a Tanzania-China green cooperation framework. Policymakers should map priority sectors like green power, critical minerals, agro-processing, and digital trade. Meanwhile, they should set clear criteria for project selection, including climate compatibility, debt sustainability, employment, and technology transfer.

Fourth, the government should negotiate agreements beyond construction. Tanzanian Ministry of Transport should tie major infrastructure to indus-

trial zones, logistics reforms, and trade facilitation, requiring joint R&D centres, vocational institutes, and local supplier integration in high-value projects.

Fifth, Tanzania's engagement with China's 15th Five-Year Plan must align with Tanzania's regional strategy. The policy formulated should stress the coordination with EAC and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) partners so that Tanzanian ports, railways, and energy systems will serve regional corridors, not just national endpoints.

CONCLUSION

China's 15th Five-Year Plan is a strategic recalibration toward green, technologically advanced, and more resilient development. For Tanzania, the choice is not whether to engage, but how to chip in. If Tanzania enters the 15th Five-Year Plan era with coherence, discipline, and ambition, China's new development blueprint can catalyse a transformative leap, positioning Tanzania not as a passive participant but as a proactive and capable partner in the emerging green and digital global economy.

Opportunities and Challenges: China-Tanzania Relations in the New Era

The diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and the United Republic of Tanzania have a long and rich history, dating back to the independence of Tanganyika and the founding of Tanzania. Leaders of both countries, Chairman Mao Zedong and President Julius Nyerere, are household names in both nations. This truly represents a long-standing friendship as this article describes in detail.

By Eric Chiang, Finance Chief of Fashion Tourism, China

The diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and the United Republic of Tanzania have a long and rich history, dating back to the independence of Tanganyika and the founding of Tanzania. Leaders of both countries, Chairman Mao Ze-

dong and President Julius Nyerere, are household names in both nations. This truly represents a long-standing friendship as this article describes in detail.

Over the past decades, although both countries have faced their own challenges, the peoples of China and

Tanzania, through their wisdom and hard work, have achieved remarkable progress. China is now the world's second largest economy and has engaged in the globalization process with unprecedented breadth and depth. Meanwhile, Tanzania has maintained political sta-

bility, dedicated itself to development, and made significant strides in both economic and social development.

Nevertheless, changes have emerged since 2018, particularly in the realm of international relations. First and foremost, the advancement of globalization is facing challenges from protectionism and decoupling in certain regions. The reasons behind this are complex and cannot be fully addressed within this article. Instead, the focus here is to analyse this paradigm shift in Sino-Western relations, accept it as a reality, and reflect on what it means for both China and Tanzania.

China's reform and opening up began in 1978. Since then, China initiated reforms in agriculture and rural areas, actively ending the constraints of the commune system. This marked the start

of a transition from a centrally planned economy toward a socialist market economy. In the 1990s, it deepened reforms of state-owned enterprises. The overarching goal of these reforms was to build socialism with Chinese characteristics. China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 marked a significant step toward integrating into global markets and opened up vast new opportunities for China. The rise of China's manufacturing industry and the global reach of Chinese products began in earnest from that point onward. The 2008 Beijing Olympics further introduced China to the world.

A decade later, the landscape has changed significantly. Driven by nationalism and protectionism, US President Donald Trump initiated the first round of the trade war against China in 2018.

As tensions rose between China and the US, China's relations with Europe presented a complex picture: while economic dialogues and cooperation continued, frictions over issues like market access also persisted. Concurrently, China-Africa relations were already well-established, with China having been Africa's largest trading partner for a decade. Against this backdrop, maintaining stability and diversity in its overseas markets held significant importance for China. If the relations between China and Africa were previously defined by political ties, the close economic integration of the coming decade will serve a dual purpose for both sides: beyond its economic value, it will play a crucial role in balancing global geopolitics.

Tanzania and China share long-standing and profound relations, with exceptionally close ties. At this moment, the value of old friends becomes clear and evident. Tanzania needs capital, and China has capital. Tanzania needs technology, and China has technology. Tanzania needs markets for its agricultural products, and China offers a vast consumer base. Frankly speaking, for Tanzania, this may be a historic opportunity for major development. The current global landscape presents both countries with numerous opportunities, and challenges as well. I would offer the following reflections on how to make full use of such a window of opportunity.

Firstly, both sides need to step beyond their borders, strengthen mutual visits, and gain an accurate understanding of each other's real needs.

Let me share a case study. A provincial academy of governance from China once visited Dar es Salaam and paid a visit to a private sector institute. Several interesting things occurred during this visit. The Chinese academy's English name, "Academy of Governance," gave the impression that it wielded substantial influence over provincial decision-making in China, when in reality it held almost no such authority. It is basically an honorary institution, mainly responsible for ideological and moral education—this was the first misunderstanding. This institute hoped to lever-



A Chinese delegation paid a visit to Channel TEN, the Chinese characters in the calligraphy work mean that distance can never separate real friends.

age the Chinese academy's resources to enhance its own capacity and therefore proposed collaborating on online courses in business, since Tanzania's top priority is economic development, whereas its counterpart mainly offered courses in Party members education and leadership development, resulting in another mismatch.

Another example involves a provincial delegation from China which paid a visit to Dar es Salaam. Among the delegates was a coal company head from that province. This state-owned company holds a total asset exceeding 700 billion RMB, a conglomerate indeed. They were looking for overseas markets for coal and coal-based chemical products. Their intentions were sincere, and they genuinely wanted to do something beneficial for both countries. However, Tanzania is a tropical country where coal is rarely used for heating, and in the power generation sector, hydro-power accounts for about 60%, while natural gas and petrochemical fuels make up around 25%. The remainder is supplemented by renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. As such, the demand for coal in electricity generation is minimal, and the proposal, while

well-intentioned, didn't align with Tanzania's actual needs.

This illustrates an important point: one must go beyond borders and conduct market research on the ground to truly understand the demand. The same applies to Tanzania. It must take proactive steps, turning passive recipients into active participants. By leveraging each visit of the Chinese delegations, Tanzania should clearly communicate its needs, allowing China to better understand the real demand. What do we really need here? Maybe equipment, equipment for various sectors. China wants to export, no matter whether it is consumer products or simply equipment for manufacturers.

Secondly, improving Tanzania's business and legal environment. To be frank, most Tanzanians are friendly toward the Chinese, and the Chinese people also hold deep feelings for the Tanzanians. The Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA) is a great historical testament to this. China has been providing medical aid to Tanzania since the 1980s, which is widely recognized. Not to mention the recent sacrifice of Dr. Zhang Junqiao, the Chinese medical team leader, who gave his life to save

a drowning girl here on June 15, 2025. His dedication is deeply admirable by both peoples. However, the widespread tipping culture in Tanzania, especially at airports, customs, and other places, severely affects Tanzania's business image. And incidents of robberies targeting Chinese nationals indicate that the protection of Chinese property and personal safety still needs improvement.

Thirdly, in-depth cooperation between China and Tanzania cannot be achieved without deep communication and understanding. This includes mutual learning of Swahili and Chinese, respectively, as well as various forms of cultural exchanges. In this regard, the Confucius Institute has made continuous efforts, and the Tanzania-China Friendship Promotion Association (TCFPA) has already played an important role ever before. It is purported that there are now over 100,000 Chinese people living in Dar es Salaam, and more than 100 Chinese restaurants running their businesses. Yet, there isn't even a single Chinese bookstore, which means great efforts remain to be made to promote bilateral communication and understanding.

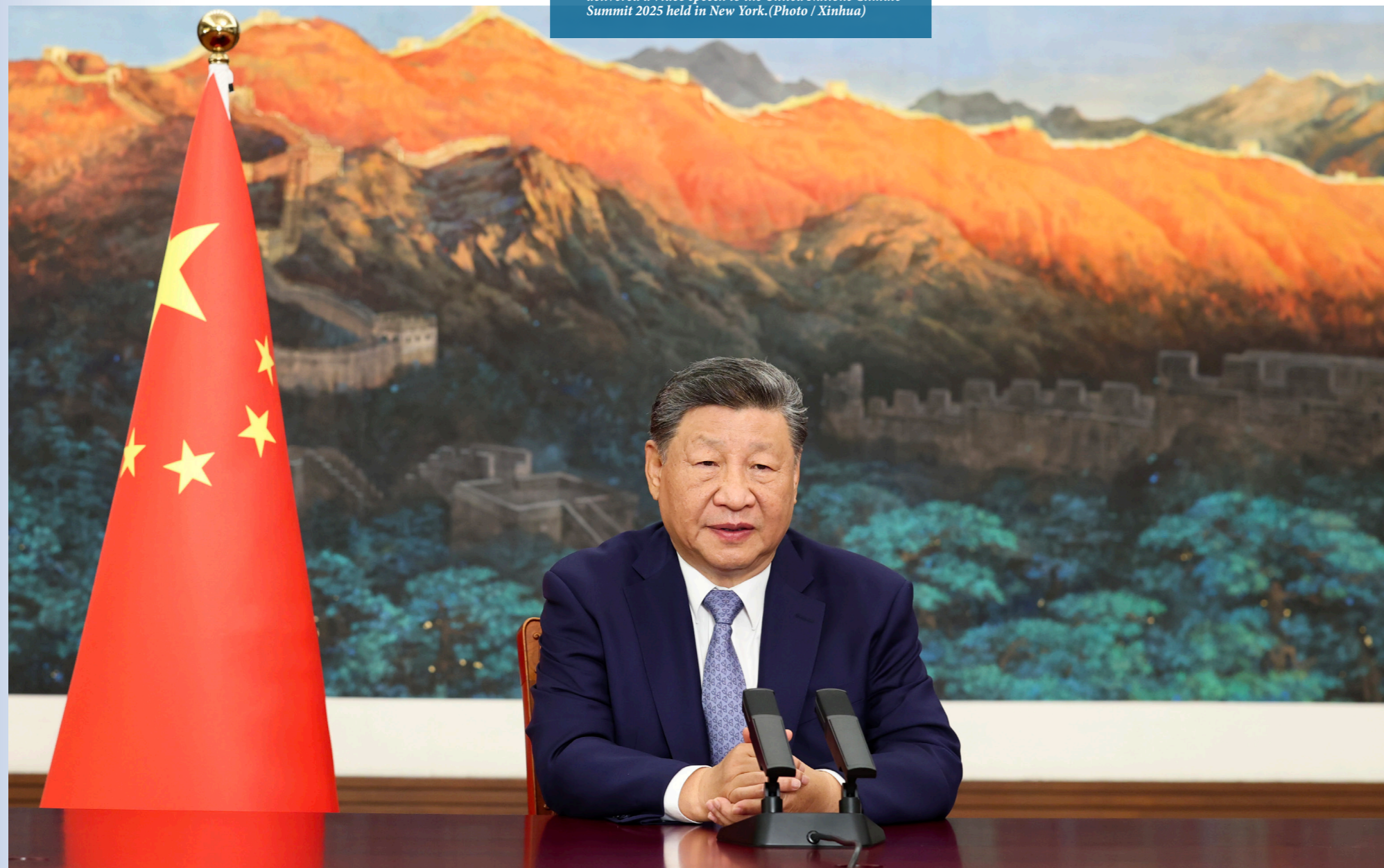


Tanzanian railway technicians attend a training session at Beijing Jiaotong University in Beijing, China, on Aug. 18, 2025. (CCECC/Handout via Xinhua)



Hou Jianwen (C) and his local colleagues pose for a group photo after completing the surgery in Zanzibar, Tanzania, on Jan. 18, 2026. (The 35th Chinese medical team in Zanzibar/Handout via Xinhua)

On September 24, 2025, Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a video speech to the United Nations Climate Summit 2025 held in New York. (Photo / Xinhua)



Significance of China's Role in Global Governance Initiative

In this special historical year marking the 80th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the founding of the United Nations, an era that connects the past and the future, President Xi Jinping, once again standing at the height of the shared future of all countries and the development and progress of human society, profoundly answered the epochal question of "what kind of global governance system to build and how to reform and improve global governance."

By Wu Xiaodan, Director and Distinguished Research Fellow of the Comprehensive Research Office of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy Studies Centre, China

On September 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping solemnly proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "Shanghai Coop-

eration Organization Plus" Meeting. Following the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Civil-

ization Initiative (GCI), the GGI constitutes another major global initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping. In this special historical year marking the 80th

systematic solution for reforming and refining global governance and offers a new path for addressing the fundamental and pressing issues facing human society today.

REFORMING AND IMPROVING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IS AN INEVITABLE CHOICE CONFORMING TO THE TREND OF THE TIMES

Historically, global governance emerged in the process of the formation and evolution of the international system, playing a crucial role in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development. From a developmental perspective, as the once-in-a-century changes evolve, strengthening and refining global governance has become an urgent need and a universal desire of the international community. The proposal of the GGI is timely, reflecting the logical and historical inevitability of the continuous enrichment and development of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy.

I. Global Governance Is an Inevitable Outcome of the Development of Human Society at a Certain Stage

Global governance is a major institutional innovation for managing social conflicts and addressing common challenges as human society enters the modern era. In the mid-17th century, the signing of the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe, establishing the Westphalian system aimed at avoiding wars. It pioneered global governance where conflicts were solved through international rules and conferences, and established basic norms of international relations such as sovereign equality, providing the foundational experience and normative basis for subsequent global governance efforts. However, constrained by factors such as productive forces, industrialization levels, and transportation methods, this order remained regional and lacked true global attributes.

After World War I, the Versailles-Washington system centered on the League of Nations, a framework dominated by the victorious powers, marked the beginning of genuine global governance in a certain sense. Never-

theless, built on the sacrifice of the interests of defeated nations and oppressed peoples and dominated by a handful of victorious powers such as the UK and France, the system lacked fair and reasonable mechanisms. Ultimately, it failed to prevent World War II and collapsed.

Following the historical evolution from the Peace of Westphalia to the experimental phase of the League of Nations, the international community, drawing profound lessons from the tragedies of the two world wars, resolved to establish the United Nations (UN). The founding of the UN created a multilateral platform for countries to engage in dialogue and consultation on international affairs. A series of principles enshrined in the UN Charter, such as "sovereign equality," "settle their international disputes by peaceful means," and "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force," jointly constitute the cornerstone of the post-WWII international order and ushered in a new era of global governance practice. The concepts and practices of global governance, including the UN-centered international system, the international order based on international law, and the basic norms of international relations rooted in the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, have made historic contributions to safeguarding world peace and development.

In 1990, the Independent Commission on Global Governance proposed the concept of "global governance," which was quickly endorsed by the international community. After the end of the Cold War, with the deepening of economic globalization and the emergence of global challenges, global governance gained increasing attention from all countries. The number of actors participating in global governance expanded, and the connotations and extensions of global governance continued to broaden, becoming an integral part of international relations theory and practice. The in-depth development of global governance has greatly promoted the democratization and legalization of international relations, expanded the depth and breadth of international co-

operation, enhanced the coordination of responses from the international community to common challenges, better protected the equal development rights of people of all countries, and made significant contributions to advancing the common well-being of humanity.

II. Reforming and Refining Global Governance Is an Epochal Question that Must Be Answered by the World Today

President Xi Jinping pointed out: "While the historical trends of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit remain unchanged, the Cold War mentality, hegemonism and protectionism continue to haunt the world. New threats and challenges have been only increasing. The world has found itself in a new period of turbulence and transformation. Global governance has come to a new crossroads." In this sense, "what kind of global governance system to build and how to reform and refine global governance" has become an urgent epochal question.

From the perspective of governance principles, the purposes and principles of the UN Charter have not been effectively observed, resulting in a prominent deficit in the authority of global governance. The resurgence of hegemonism, power politics, and the Cold War mentality has severely eroded the authority of global governance. Principles enshrined in the UN Charter, such as "sovereign equality" and "settle their international disputes by peaceful means," have not been effectively implemented in practice. Multilateral mechanisms have been marginalized or selectively utilized, and international rule of law faces grave challenges. Some major country has even withdrawn from international organizations and treaties, cut funding, obstructed the adoption of UN Security Council resolutions, and paralyzed the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization. For example, the United States launched the Iraq War in 2003 without the authorization of the UN Security Council, seriously undermining the authority of the UN in the field of security. Since the outbreak of the new round of Israeli-Palestinian conflict in October 2023, some

permanent member has abused the veto power, leaving the UN Security Council unable to adopt effective resolutions for a long time.

From the perspective of governance effectiveness, global governance suffers from a prominent effectiveness deficit, as it faces severe functional failures and gaps in addressing global challenges and governing new domains. With the deepening of economic globalization, the interests and future of all countries have become more closely intertwined,

forming an inter-connected community of shared interests. Meanwhile, new challenges such as terrorism, refugee crises, transnational crimes, and major infectious diseases have emerged one after another. Global issues have become increasingly inter-connected and complex, no longer confined within national borders, and no longer solvable by individual countries alone. This requires concerted efforts from all nations, posing challenges to the adaptability of global governance. However,

On September 18, 2025, the 12th Beijing Xiangshan Forum opened at the Beijing International Convention Center, under the theme of "Upholding International Order and Promoting Peaceful Development."



the UN's operational efficiency, emergency response capacity, and transparency need to be improved. Multilateral institutions have long been plagued by a lack of decisions after deliberation or failure to act on decisions. The progress in implementing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has seriously lagged behind. Issues such as climate change and the digital divide have become increasingly prominent, while governance in new areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), cyberspace,

and outer space remains inadequate. In an era of interdependence, addressing global challenges requires new governance wisdom and solutions.

From the perspective of governance participants, the Global South's inadequate representation in the global governance system underscores the prominent representation deficit. The collective rise of the Global South is a distinctive feature of the profound transformations of the world. The Global South accounts for over 40% of the

world's total economic output and contributes 80% to global economic growth. Its willingness to participate in global governance continues to strengthen, and its ability to advance the global governance system in a more equitable and reasonable way is constantly improving, providing a fundamental driving force for the transformation of the global governance system. Reflecting the international political reality of the Global South's collective rise with the times is an inherent requirement for addressing governance deficits. However, some countries that have long held dominant positions are unwilling to cede more power to developing countries. They have long obstructed the reform process of the UN and its agencies to safeguard their own hegemony and self-interest, leading to serious delays in the reform of international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These institutions have failed to fully reflect and protect the representation and voice of developing countries. The calls of the Global South for peace, development, and cooperation are growing louder, and the urgency of improving global governance and rectifying historical injustices is increasing.

THE INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND THEORETICAL SUBLIMATION OF CHINA'S VISION ON GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IN THE NEW ERA

In the evolution process of global governance, China has undergone a profound transformation from a participant to a leader. Especially since entering the new era, China has played a constructive role in shaping the rules, concepts, and institutional development of global governance. It has proposed the vision of global governance based on extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, adhered to true multilateralism, advocated for equitable and orderly multi-polarity and inclusive economic globalization, and put forward a series of new concepts, initiatives, and propositions with Chinese characteristics that conform to the historical trend, such as the GDI, GSI, and GCI. These efforts have provided important

strategic guidance for the reform of the global governance system. The GGI, by accurately grasping the pulse of the times and actively responding to epochal questions, offers a systematic solution for reforming and improving global governance. It also represents the latest and most comprehensive achievement of China's concepts on global governance in the new era.

I. The Theoretical Connotations of the Global Governance Initiative

The core concepts of the GGI are adhering to sovereign equality, abiding by international rule of law, practicing multilateralism, advocating the people-centered approach, and focusing on taking real actions. They clarify the principles, methods, and paths for reforming and improving global governance. With strong problem orientation and practical relevance, the GGI further embodies China's wisdom and sense of responsibility in advancing global governance reform.

With sovereign equality as the primary prerequisite, the GGI serves to clarify the fundamental norms of global governance. Sovereign equality is the most important norm governing state-to-state relations and the primary principle followed by the UN and all international institutions and organizations. Only by effectively implementing sovereign equality can global governance be built on solid moral and practical foundations. The essence of sovereign equality lies in respecting the sovereignty and dignity of all countries, regardless of their size, strength, or wealth; refraining from interfering in their internal affairs; and ensuring that all countries have the right to independently choose their social systems and development paths, as well as to participate in, make decisions on, and benefit from global governance on an equal footing.

With international rule of law as the fundamental guarantee, the GGI serves to consolidate the legal foundation of global governance. International rule of law is the fundamental guarantee for global governance. International law and rules are common standards that should be formulated, maintained, and



On November 20, 2024, the World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit kicked off in Wuzhen, East China's Zhejiang Province.

implemented collectively by all countries. No country should be exempt. The purposes and principles of the UN Charter are the fundamental guidelines for handling international relations and an important cornerstone of international order stability. Without these internationally agreed-upon rules, the world would ultimately slide into the law of the jungle, bringing catastrophic consequences to humanity.

With multilateralism as the basic

path, the GGI serves to build broad consensus on global governance. Global governance is a shared responsibility that concerns the vital interests of every country. It relies on coordination and cooperation, not unilateral bullying. Adhering to multilateralism is a distinctive banner and important principle of China's diplomacy in the new era. We must uphold extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. Global affairs should be discussed by

all, the governance system should be built by all, and the fruits of governance should be shared by all. We must reject unilateralism. The actions like forming "small circles" or a "new Cold War" in the international community, excluding, threatening, or intimidating others, engaging in decoupling, supply chain disruption, or sanctions at every turn, and artificially causing isolation or even estrangement will only push the world toward division and confrontation.

With the people-centered approach as the value orientation, the GGI serves to expand the sharing of global governance achievements. Ultimately, global governance aims to realize the aspirations of people of all countries for a better life and build a world where everyone enjoys prosperity and well-being. The people of all countries are the fundamental participants and beneficiaries of global governance. Only when governance is for the people and its fruits are

shared by the people can the global governance system gain broad support and operate effectively. Through reforming and improving global governance, we should enhance the sense of gain for people of all countries by promoting common development, strengthen their sense of security by better addressing common challenges facing human society, and boost their sense of happiness by better advancing the common interests of different countries and groups.

With taking real actions as an important principle, the GGI serves to strengthen the action orientation of global governance. The vitality of global governance lies in practice; its key lies in action; and its ultimate success depends on results. China proposed that “We should adopt a systematic and holistic approach, coordinate global actions, fully mobilize various resources, and strive for more visible outcomes. We should enhance practical cooperation to prevent the governance system from lagging behind or being fragmented.” We must address both symptoms and root causes and seek sustainable solutions. We should not only focus on urgent current issues but also keep an eye on long-term challenges ahead. All countries must take real actions and become doers in addressing challenges.

II. The Distinctive Features of the Global Governance Initiative

With its five core concepts, the GGI represents the creative transformation and innovative development of fine traditional Chinese culture, such as “harmony among all nations,” “harmony without uniformity,” “pursuing common good for all,” “to honor commitment and take practical actions,” and “regarding the people as the foundation of the state.” It also inherits and carries forward the fine traditions of China’s diplomacy, such as peaceful coexistence and seeking common ground while shelving differences, providing a new value guide for global governance.

Upholding openness and inclusiveness, the GGI seeks to expand new paths for global governance. For a long time, global governance has been equated with “Western governance” or “elite governance” rather than shared governance. In contrast, the GGI abandons the exclusive governance model of a few countries that draw lines based on ideology and replace dialogue with confrontation. Instead of dividing countries into “allies” and “opponents,” it regards all countries as partners. It aims to reform and improve global governance based on the common concerns of the international community and seek in-

clusive solutions through extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits.

Upholding fairness and justice, the GGI seeks to shape new norms for global governance. The GGI advocates enhancing the representation and voice of developing countries, opposing the imposition of “house rules” by a few countries on others, and rejecting unilateralism. It goes to the heart of the unfair, unjust, and unreasonable phenomena in the current international political and economic order. The initiative abandons outdated concepts such as traditional zero-sum games and winner-takes-all, and transcends old mindsets such as “Western-centrism,” “the superiority of some civilizations,” and “racial superiority,” shaping a new norm of fairness and justice in global governance.

Upholding integrity and innovation, the GGI seeks to open up new horizons for global governance. The UN-centered international system is an important guarantee for the cause of human progress, and the concept of multilateralism based on coordination and cooperation is the best solution to global issues. Faced with new situations and challenges, the authority and core status of the UN must be strengthened, not weakened. On this basis, we need to reform and improve the global governance system. The purpose of reform is to enhance the effectiveness and implementation capacity of the existing international system and mechanisms, making them more adaptable to changing circumstances, more responsive to various global challenges in a timely and effective manner, and better serving the interests of all countries, especially developing ones.

Upholding action orientation, the GGI seeks to enhance new effectiveness in global governance. The GGI addresses the problem of “more promises than actions” through its “action orientation,” encouraging the international community to strengthen its sense of implementation and jointly become doers in addressing challenges. The initiative proposes prioritizing increased communication and cooperation in areas with pressing governance needs and signifi-

cant deficits, such as the reform of the international financial architecture, AI, cyberspace, climate change, trade, and outer space, as well as in firmly safeguarding the authority and core status of the UN and supporting the UN in implementing the Pact for the Future. It aims to actively build consensus, secure outcomes, and achieve early harvests.

CHINA’S PRACTICES IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE CONFORMING TO THE GGI

As a responsible major country, China is not only an advocate of concepts but also a pragmatic doer in reforming and improving the global governance system. Through solid actions and practical explorations over the years, China has accumulated valuable experience and laid a solid foundation for the proposal of the GGI.

China is a defender of the UN-centered international system. As a founding member of the UN and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China was the first country to sign the UN Charter. For a long time, China has carried out fruitful cooperation with the UN. It is the second-largest fund contributor to the UN’s regular budget and peacekeeping actions, a leader in implementing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and an active participant in the work of the UN Human Rights Council. China has continuously deepened and expanded its participation in the international system. Today, it has joined almost all universal intergovernmental international organizations and more than 600 international conventions, and concluded over 27,000 bilateral treaties, setting an example for safeguarding the UN-centered international system.

China is a leader in enabling the Global South to participate in global governance. China has actively promoted the historic expansion of BRICS, leading the high-quality development of greater BRICS cooperation. It has built the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) into the largest regional international organization in terms of geographical coverage and population. China has promoted the establishment

of the New Development Bank (NDB) by BRICS countries, the first multilateral development institution founded and led by emerging markets and developing countries. It also promoted the political decision to establish the SCO Development Bank at the SCO Tianjin Summit, effectively advancing infrastructure construction and economic and social development in SCO member states. China took the lead in explicitly supporting the African Union’s accession to the G20, worked with Africa to take the “ten partnership actions” for modernization, initiated the “five programs” with Latin American and the Caribbean countries, put in place the “five cooperation frameworks” with Arab states, and established the “six new platforms for cooperation” with Pacific Island Countries. Through tangible measures, China is promoting solidarity, cooperation, development, and rejuvenation of the Global South.

China is a promoter of global security governance. Advocating a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security, China promotes the implementation of the GSI. It has actively participated in UN peacekeeping operations. Over the past 35 years, Chinese peacekeepers known as the “Chinese Blue Helmets” have been deployed to more than 20 countries and regions around the world, acting as a key force in safeguarding world peace. China has explored and practiced a Chinese-style approach to resolving hotspot issues. It has adhered to an objective and impartial stance on issues such as the Ukraine crisis and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for promoting political solutions. Together with Brazil and other countries, it launched the Group of Friends for Peace on the Ukraine crisis. On top of this, China facilitated the historic reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It also actively promoted the first joint statement by the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon states on preventing nuclear war. All of these demonstrated its major-country responsibility in safeguarding global strategic stability.

China is a contributor to global economic governance. China has always held high the banner of economic glo-

balization and guided the right direction of global economic governance. It has successfully concluded the negotiations on the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area 3.0, effectively advancing the process of global trade liberalization and facilitation. China has comprehensively promoted the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership with high-quality, actively applied to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, and continued to advance regional economic integration and economic and trade cooperation. It has promoted the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative, initiated the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Silk Road Fund, and the NDB, building popular platforms for open cooperation. Guided by the implementation of the GDI, China has promoted the international community to consolidate and expand consensus on development, and to place development at the center of the international agenda. It has established the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund to support the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China has continuously expanded high-level, institutional opening-up, and continued to host major exhibitions such as the China International Import Expo, promoting economic globalization towards greater openness, inclusiveness, balance, and win-win outcomes.

China is a builder of governance in new areas. China played a key role in the signing, entry into force, and implementation of the Paris Agreement, promoting the building of a new global climate governance system. It has pushed for the full and effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, contributed to the establishment of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, and led global ecological civilization construction. China has released the Global Initiative for Artificial Intelligence Governance, proposed the establishment of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization, and strived to ensure that AI is devel-

oped for good and benefits all humanity. It has also issued the Global Initiative on Data Security, promoting the building of a community with a shared future in cyberspace featuring peace, security, openness, and cooperation. Adhering to the principles of peace, sovereignty, inclusiveness, and shared governance, China has actively participated in the formulation of rules for new areas such as the polar regions, deep seas, and outer space, ensuring that the development of these areas is governed by law and benefits all countries fairly.

CONCLUSION

At every critical juncture in human social development, clear direction and guidance are needed. Rooted in the once-in-a-century great changes, the GGI conforms to the trend of the times and historical logic, aligning with the strong desire of the international community to strengthen solidarity and cooperation and jointly address common challenges. It provides a practical path and solution for countries to tackle global challenges in an era of interdependence. The GGI transcends the single narrative of traditional realist “power politics,” the radical thinking of “reinventing the wheel,” and the zero-sum logic of “major-country competition.” It voices strong support for international fairness and justice, pointing the way for all countries to jointly uphold the post-WWII international order and promote the reform and improvement of the global governance system. Based on changes in the international landscape, the GGI responds to the trend of world multi-polarity and the calls of the Global South for improving global governance and rectifying historical injustices. It helps the global governance system more objectively reflect the international political reality and keep pace with the era of democratization of international relations. Looking ahead, the GGI will inject new impetus into the reform and improvement of the global governance system, offer new solutions for humanity to address common challenges, and make new contributions to building a community with a shared future for humanity.

On September 25, 2025, guests were visiting the photo exhibition of “Embracing a Shared Future: China’s Initiatives and Global Contributions” held at the headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.



Global Governance Initiative: Its Core Principles and Contemporary Value

On September 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping put forward the Global Governance Initiative at the “Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus” Meeting. He outlined the principles, methods, and pathways essential for reforming and improving global governance, calling on all parties to work together to strengthen it. Professor Lu has analysed this initiative in this article.

By Lu Jing, Professor at the Institute of International Relations, China Foreign Affairs University, China

The Global Governance Initiative represents China’s answer to the questions of our time: “What kind of global governance system should we build, and how should we reform and improve global governance?” It is China’s solution to the pressing challenges facing global governance today, setting the course for building a more just and equitable global governance system and

a community with a shared future for humanity.

THE CONTEXT FOR THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

The world is undergoing accelerated transformation unseen in a century. The international landscape is fraught with changes and volatility, marked by intense major-power rivalry, frequent

geopolitical conflicts, headwinds against globalization, and rising global challenges. Deficits in peace, development, security, and governance are widening, placing global governance at a critical juncture. Progress is essential to avoid regression. The severe challenges confronting global governance today are evident in the following areas.

First, there is a growing lack of

agreement on the core values of global governance. Common values are the prerequisite and foundation for global governance. They also serve as the bedrock for joint efforts, coordination, and cooperation among nations. For a long time, the Western-dominated global governance system has upheld liberal values, pursued the maximization of national interests, and followed

the logic of power politics, attempting to create a homogenized world through the “universalization” of Western civilization. This capital-centric governance system reflects the profit-driven nature and inherent demands of capital expansion. However, since the dawn of the 21st century, profound shifts have occurred in the global balance of power. In a world of diversified cultures and extensive inter-civilizational exchanges and mutual learning, the liberal values championed by the West face daunting challenges due to their failure to reflect and accommodate the diverse aspirations of other nations. A broad group of developing countries, particularly China, follow a people-centred approach and advocate mutual respect, common development, and win-win cooperation among nations with different social systems, ideologies, histories, cultures, and development stages, striving to build a community with a shared future for humanity. Consequently, global governance is grappling with the inherent contradiction between Western dominance and the diverse demands of the rest, as well as a growing divide between a capital-centric orientation and a people-centred orientation. All of these have led to a growing governance crisis.

Second, the effectiveness of global governance institutions is weakening. After World War II, a multilateral cooperation system with the United Nations at its core was established, which has greatly contributed to the advancement of human progress. However, in recent years, against the backdrop of profound shifts in the global balance of power, the United States and other Western nations have come to view the rise of emerging markets and developing countries as a serious threat to their own security and development. They perceive that some multilateral institutions increasingly serve the interests of emerging nations at their own expense. As a result, they have resorted to unilateralist and protectionist measures such as decoupling, severing supply chains, and withdrawing from international agreements, placing substantial pressure on the UN-centred multilateral system. In the realm of global trade, the Appellate Body of the

World Trade Organization (WTO) has been paralyzed for an extended period due to US obstruction, and the WTO’s negotiating function has continued to weaken due to disagreement on key issues. In the international finance sphere, major multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication face challenges to their legitimacy and effectiveness due to inadequate representation. In the political and security arena, the protracted Ukraine crisis and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict underscore the limitations of the UN’s collective security mechanism, which has led the Security Council into a crisis of legitimacy and credibility.

Finally, competition for dominance in setting global governance rules is intensifying. International rules often reflect the interests and concerns of their architects. In an era of escalating strategic competition among major powers, the struggle for dominance in shaping global governance rules has intensified. As the economic strength of the Global South countries continues to grow, so does their willingness and capacity to participate in rule-making. They demand a voice commensurate with their economic contributions. Established powers, however, are reluctant to relinquish their institutional privileges. Competition over who sets the rules has thus intensified. For instance, the governance structure of the IMF, dominated by the US and Europe, severely misrepresents the current global distribution of power. Countries of the Global South, represented by the BRICS nations, strongly advocate the reform of the IMF’s quota system and voting rights to end the American and European monopoly. Furthermore, competition for rule-making is also highly intense in emerging areas such as digital trade, artificial intelligence, and cross-border data flows, pitting established powers against emerging ones.

THE CORE CONCEPTS OF THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

The Global Governance Initiative has five core concepts: adhere to sovereign

equality, abide by international rule of law, practice multilateralism, advocate the people-centred approach, and focus on taking real actions. Consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, it upholds the vision of global governance featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits.

First, sovereign equality is the number one precondition for global governance. It is a basic principle of modern international law, and the cornerstone of the international system and a stable international order. In essence, it means that the sovereignty and dignity of all countries shall be respected, regardless of their size, strength, or wealth. Their internal affairs are not to be interfered with. All countries have the right to independently choose their social systems and development paths, as well as the right to participate as equals, make decisions as equals, and benefit as equals in global governance. However, the reality is that hegemonism and power politics persist in our world. Certain major powers take advantage of their monopoly in global discourse and global governance rule-making to maximize their own interests in disregard of the interests and appeals of developing countries. They apply double standards to maintain their privileges, creating obstacles to the participation of developing countries. Upholding sovereign equality means ending the unequal situation where a minority of countries monopolize global governance. The representation and voice of developing countries should be enhanced to ensure that the global governance system reflects the interests and concerns of most nations. Thus, sovereign equality is the primary principle to follow to strengthen global governance. It sheds light on important questions like “governance by whom,” “governance for whom,” and “how to govern.”

Second, international rule of law is the fundamental guarantee of global governance. International law and rules should be written, upheld, and implemented by all countries. They serve as the common standard for state conduct,

and must be applied equally and uniformly, instead of being applied selectively, abandoned when inconvenient, or subject to double standards. No country should practice exceptionalism, still less impose its own rules onto others. The purposes and principles of the UN Charter, universally recognized as the basic norms of international relations, must be observed comprehensively, fully, and in their entirety by all states. Some nations promote the “rules-based

international order” while deliberately avoiding mention of international law. This selective approach to UN-centred multilateral institutions and attempts to marginalize them run counter to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. Some countries even bypass the UN to take unilateral actions and deliberately obstruct the implementation of UN resolutions against the spirit of international rule of law. Such acts severely weaken the binding force of international

law. Strengthening global governance requires unwavering commitment to international rule of law, the UN-centred international system and the international order based on international law. Major countries should take the lead in championing and upholding international rule of law to maintain its authority and effectiveness.

Third, multilateralism serves as the fundamental pathway to sound global governance. In an increasingly inter-

dependent world, multilateralism represents the right approach to addressing global challenges and safeguarding common interests. Currently, as the once-in-a-century transformations accelerate, unilateralism and bullying are on the rise. Certain Western countries wilfully abandon international organizations and agreements, undermining the UN-centred multilateral system. Obsessed with building “small yards with high fences,” and creating closed

and exclusive clubs, a certain country wantonly uses international multilateral platforms as a weapon to suppress and contain competitors. Such actions have plunged multilateralism into crisis. Multilateralism means that international affairs should be decided by all through discussion, and the future of the world should be determined by all countries together. To reform and improve global governance, we need to practice true multilateralism and uphold the vision of global governance featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. All countries should be able to work together to shape the future of the world, set international rules, govern global affairs, and share development outcomes. The United Nations is the primary platform for multilateralism. Its authority and central role in global governance must be firmly upheld, along with the purposes and principles of its Charter.

Fourth, global governance should follow the people-centred approach. The ultimate goal of global governance is to translate peoples’ aspirations for a better life into reality and build a prosperous world for all. Peoples are the principal participants and beneficiaries of global governance. We should thus make their all-rounded development the top priority and their fundamental interests the starting point and ultimate goal, to enhance their sense of gain, happiness, and security. It is crucial to ensure that people of all nations can participate in global governance, share the benefits, and safeguard the common interests. The global governance system can only gain extensive support and function well if it puts people front and centre.

Fifth, taking real actions is also critical to global governance. The vitality of global governance comes from practice. Actions decide the result. Reforming and improving global governance requires not only overarching concepts and strategic planning but also concrete actions to solve practical problems. The growing deficit of the global governance highlights inadequate actions and unsatisfactory outcomes. To improve global governance, actions are needed to address both immediate, pressing issues



From July 26 to 28, 2025, the 2025 World Artificial Intelligence Conference and High-level Meeting on Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence were successfully held in Shanghai.

and long-term challenges. Concerns of all nations especially developing countries should be accommodated. Systematic planning and coordinated global actions are needed to truly tackle both symptoms and root causes. Practical cooperation may help us find sustainable solutions. In this process, major countries should assume greater responsibility and provide more resources and public goods, while developing countries should seek strength in solidarity and make their due contributions.

THE CONTEMPORARY VALUE OF THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

Today, as the world undergoes turbulence and transformations, the UN-centred global governance system faces severe challenges like never before. However, there are also historical opportunities for reform and improvement. This is an era of challenges. It is also an era of hope. At this critical juncture of adjustment and transformation, the Global Governance Initiative carries great contemporary value and global relevance.

First, amidst accelerating transformations, the Initiative responds to the critical question of where humanity is headed in a world of complex changes. As things stand, major-country rivalry is intensifying, and the international order, international rules and the international system established some 80 years ago are under severe strain. At the same time, a slew of global problems—economic and financial crises, climate change, and risks brought by AI—create complex and severe security challenges and hold back the global development agenda. Humanity stands once again at a historical crossroads. Where are we headed? Will countries choose cooperation and integration, or division and confrontation? Will they work together to uphold peace and stability, or descend into the abyss of a new Cold War? Will they prosper in openness and inclusiveness, or stagnate under hegemony and bullying? Will they enhance mutual trust through exchange and mutual learning, or allow arrogance and prejudice to colour judgment? These are the

questions of our time. The answer provided by the Global Governance Initiative is unity over division and cooperation over confrontation for the common interests of humanity, which charts the course of human advancement.

Second, the Initiative follows the prevailing trend of peace, development, cooperation, and win-win outcomes, in line with the shared aspirations of all peoples. We live in an era of major development, transformation, and adjustment. On one hand, the world continues to move toward multipolarity. Economic globalization is deepening, and our societies are becoming increasingly digitized and culturally diversified. The ongoing technological revolution and industrial transformation are making new progress. Indeed, countries are becoming ever more interconnected and interdependent. With the collective rise of the Global South, forces for peace predominate over elements of war, reinforcing the underlying trend of peace, development, cooperation and win-win outcomes. On the other hand, however, humanity also faces unprecedented challenges. Factors of instability, uncertainty and insecurity are on the rise. Unilateralism and acts of bullying pose serious threats to international peace, stability, and human development. Against this backdrop, peoples of all nations yearn for peace, development, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation more than ever before. Believing that peace and development are our common cause, equity and justice our common aspiration, and democracy and freedom our common pursuit, President Xi Jinping has put forward the Global Governance Initiative in line with the global trend of peace, development, and cooperation as well as the common aspirations of people worldwide.

Third, the Initiative provides a model of building a more just and equitable global governance system that is different from the Western-centric model. The current global governance system formed after WWII takes Western liberalism as its core value. Western powers are able to influence and even control developing countries to maximize their own interests due to their dominance

in setting and interpreting international rules. Meanwhile, the founding of the UN opened a new chapter of international cooperation for addressing challenges and pursuing peace and development. Over the past 80 years, the UN has played an indispensable role in maintaining world peace and promoting common development. Since the dawn of the 21st century, with profound shifts in the global balance of power, the representation and legitimacy of the Western-dominated global governance system have been put into doubt. As economic globalization and interdependency deepen, the primacy of national interest also becomes more untenable. However, the United States and other Western nations refuse to adapt the rules to changing circumstances, instead resorting to power politics and bullying to maintain their privileged position. This is the root cause of turbulence in our world. In contrast to the Western-centric system, the Global Governance Initiative upholds sovereign equality, demanding greater representation and voice for developing countries. It supports UN-centred multilateralism, safeguarding the UN's authority and status, and calling for greater efficiency and pragmatism through UN reform. It also highlights governance in emerging areas like artificial intelligence, cyberspace, polar regions, and outer space, and advocates a more just and reasonable global governance system in line with the aspirations of developing countries.

Finally, the Initiative demonstrates China's sense of responsibility as a major country to advance the building of a community with a shared future for humanity. The Global Governance Initiative is yet another public good China offers the world, a Chinese solution for navigating global changes and solving pressing issues. China has not merely proposed this Initiative. It is acting upon it. To boost global development, China actively promotes inclusive economic globalization and an open world economy. It has built a highly inclusive platform for international cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative. It has also facilitated the founding of multilateral financing institutions like the

On September 10, 2025, the 2025 China International Fair for Trade in Services Global Trade in Services Summit was held at Shougang Park. Guests from China and other countries were having a free and easy talk before the summit.



Silk Road Fund, the New Development Bank, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and has called for the early establishment of a SCO Development Bank. In the face of trade protectionism, China continues to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation. Its total trade in services hit a record high in 2024, ranking second globally. In September 2025, at the High-level Meeting on the Global Development Initiative, China announced that it “will not seek new special and differential treatment in current and future negotiations at the WTO.” It was a major move to uphold and strengthen the multilateral trading system that contributes to global trade and investment liberalization and facilitation. To safeguard world peace and security, China actively promotes an equal and orderly multipolar world and greater democracy in international relations. It firmly upholds

the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter as well as international rule of law. It advocates resolving differences and disputes through dialogue and consultation and plays an active role in mediating international and regional hotspot issues for political settlement. China and more than thirty other countries have jointly established the International Organization for Mediation as a new tool for international rule of law.

CONCLUSION

At this critical juncture for global governance, the Global Governance Initiative provides China's answer to the question: “What kind of global governance system should we build, and how should we reform and improve global governance?” China's approach to reform and improvement is not to overturn

the existing international order or start anew outside the current system. Rather, it aims to enhance the efficacy and effectiveness of the UN-centred international system and multilateral mechanisms in light of the evolving international situation, so that they can better respond to global challenges and serve the interests of all countries, particularly developing nations. This will help build a more just and equitable global governance system. The Global Governance Initiative, together with the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, constitutes a complementary and organic whole. Together, they offer a comprehensive and systematic Chinese solution to addressing the deficits in peace, development, security, and governance, thus advancing the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

Changes in the Post-War World Order and China's UN Diplomacy

The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations (UN). As the most universal, representative, and authoritative intergovernmental international organization in the world, the UN serves as the core platform for upholding multilateralism and a crucial cornerstone of the international order. In recent years, the UN's ability to address global challenges is tested, and the profound adjustments in the world order urgently call for effective reforms of the UN as Prof. Wang narrates in this article.

By Wang Cungang, Professor at Zhou Enlai School of Government & Director of the Centre for the Study of Political Parties and World Politics, Nankai University, China

As a founding member of the UN and a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), China actively participates in UN affairs and commits itself to upholding the authority of the UN and promoting UN reform. In this era of transformation and turmoil, President Xi Jinping has put forward important initiatives such as the Global Governance Initiative. These initiatives not only chart the course for China's diplomacy with the UN but also enable China to engage more extensively and effectively in global governance through its UN diplomacy and steer the world order towards a more just and equitable direction.

CHANGES IN THE POST-WAR WORLD ORDER AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE UN'S ROLE

Over the past 80 years, along with the development of human society and adjustments in the world order, the role of the UN has been constantly evolving.

I. The Post-War World Order: From Bipolar Confrontation to a Multi-polar World

After the end of World War II, the world order underwent fundamental changes. With the collapse of traditional European centralism, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the two most powerful countries in the world. Against this backdrop, the UN was founded, marking a milestone event in the cause of global peace and development. The fundamental norms governing international relations enshrined in the UN Charter, such as sovereign

equality, non-interference in internal affairs, and peaceful settlement of disputes, have laid the cornerstone of the modern international order.

During the Cold War, the world order was characterized by bipolar confrontation. As one of the key arenas for the rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, the UNSC struggled to play an effective role, while the UN General Assembly became a forum for mutual accusations between the two camps. Nevertheless, the UN still played a certain positive role.

After the end of the Cold War, the UN faced new opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, the end of the Cold War created favourable conditions for the UN to play a greater role. On the other hand, the in-depth development of globalization brought about new challenges, which required the UN to take a more active role. To adapt to new changes and requirements, the UN has carried out a series of reforms. In March 2025, UN Secretary-General António Guterres announced the launch of the UN 80 Initiative, with an aim to reform

the way the UN works and promote the transformation of the UN, so as to better fulfil its global mission.

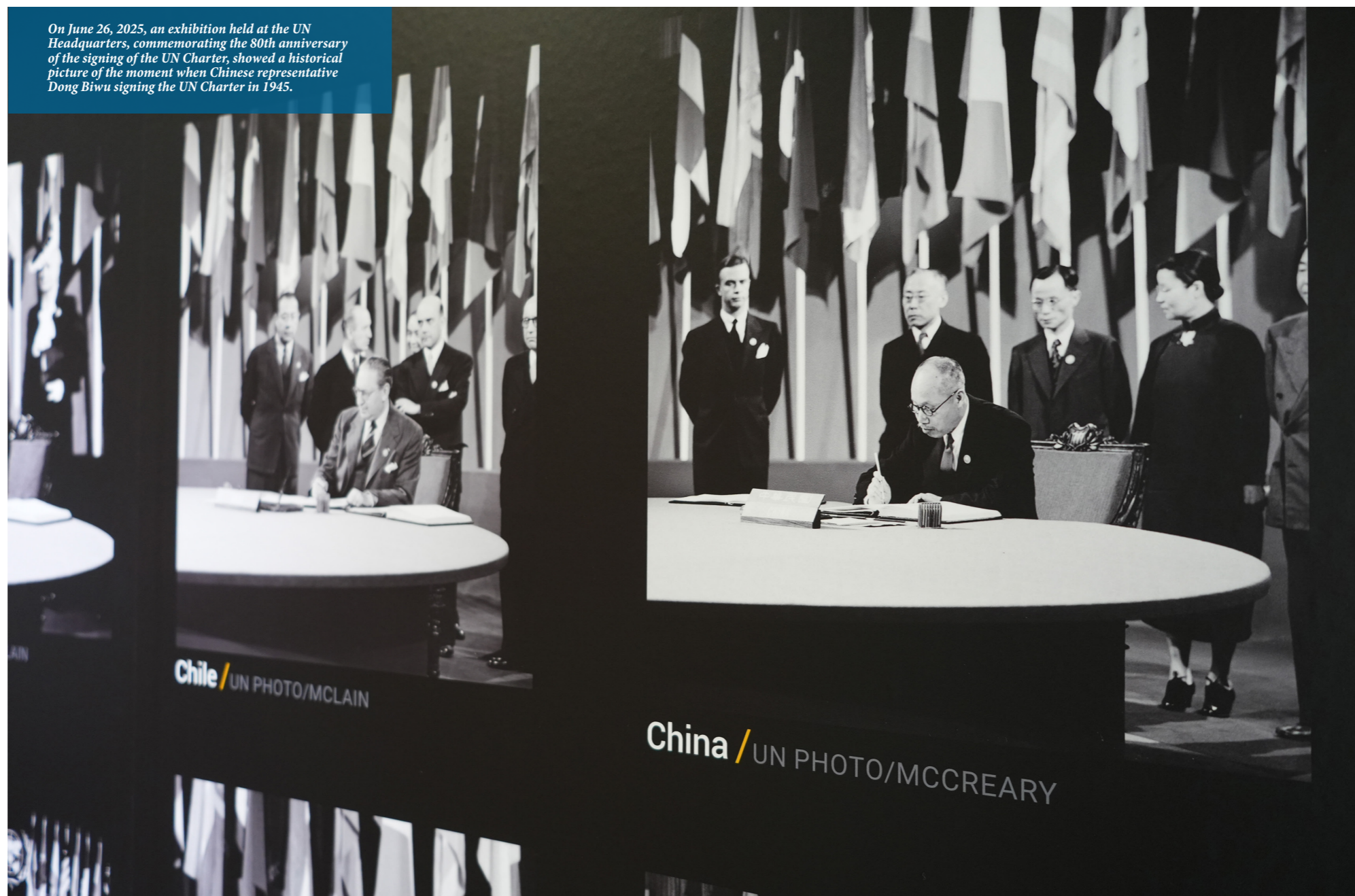
II. The UN's Significant Contributions to Global Peace and Development

Over its 80-year journey, the UN has mobilized the efforts of all member states in safeguarding peace, building homes, seeking cooperation, and creating a shared future. It has played an important role in maintaining global peace, promoting common development, and enhancing solidarity and cooperation.

First, the UN is actively contributing to building sustainable peace. Maintaining global peace and security is the primary goal of the UN. To a certain extent, the UN has effectively prevented the outbreak of another world war and helped many countries end internal conflicts and reach political reconciliation. Among its efforts, UN peacekeeping operations have become an important means of maintaining global peace and security. Although the flames of war are still raging in some parts of the world and 1/4 of the world's population still lives in conflict-torn countries and regions, it is an indisputable fact that there has been no large-scale war between major powers.

Second, the UN is continuously promoting global prosperity and sustainable development. Promoting economic and social development and improving the lives of all people is one of the main tasks of the UN. The UN has successfully implemented progressive and increasingly inclusive development agendas and formulated and assisted in implementing the Millennium Development Goals. Currently, the UN is striving to pool global consensus and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, which form the core of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Third, the UN is deepening international cooperation in a divided world. "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character" is the founding mission of the UN. To this end, the UN has



On April 23, 2025, Fu Cong, China's Permanent Representative to the UN (third from the left in the front row of the rostrum), presided over a Security Council Arrria-formula Meeting on "The Impact of Unilateralism and Bullying Practices on International Relations" at UN Headquarters in New York.



made various efforts, mainly including establishing multilateral consultation platforms centred on the UN General Assembly to allow member states to express their opinions and discuss global affairs as equals; setting up a series of specialized agencies to carry out international cooperation in specific fields such as education, health, labour, and agriculture; promoting the formulation of international conventions and treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biological Diversity to form a relatively complete system of international law; developing a global development agenda to provide clear goals and directions for international development cooperation; and encouraging member states to take collective actions on major global issues. In September 2024, all UN member states jointly signed the Pact for the Future, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening global cooperation and addressing challenges together.

Having gone through numerous tests, the UN has largely fulfilled its founding commitments. Although the UN today faces enormous challenges and has many shortcomings, it still maintains its vitality and dynamism. The UN Charter remains an important guarantee for global peace and development, providing an anchor of order and a source of confidence to a world fraught with transformation and turmoil.

THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF CHINA'S UN DIPLOMACY

China is the first country to sign the UN Charter, a founding member of the UN, and the only developing country among the permanent members of the UNSC. Along with the changes in the world order and the evolution of the UN's role, China's perception of the UN and its identity have constantly changed, and China's UN diplomacy has also undergone continuous adjustments. This aspect of China's diplomacy includes two dimensions: first, the interactions between China (as a member state) and

various UN agencies, including the performance of obligations and exercise of rights in accordance with the UN Charter; second, China's promotion of multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation through the UN platform, and the deepening of exchanges and collaboration with countries and regions around the world in political, economic, cultural, security, and other fields.

I. Changes in China's Status at the UN: From "Being Illegally Excluded" to "Playing a Core Role"

In the early post-World War II period, China was a founding member of the UN and one of the five permanent members of the UNSC. By virtue of this status, China participated in the formulation of international rules. However, due to the impact of the civil war, the role China played at the UN was constrained. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, due to the political manipulation of the US and other Western countries to divide China, China's legitimate seat at the UN was illegally occupied by the Taiwan authorities for a long time, preventing China from substantively participating in UN affairs.

In October 1971, the 26th Session of the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 2758, deciding to "restore all rights of the People's Republic of China and to recognize the representatives of its government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations." This resolution effectively enhanced the universality, representativeness, and authority of the UN, and significantly strengthened the forces for global peace and development. In the early days after regaining its legitimate seat, China regarded the UN as a platform for "Third World countries" to strive for their rights.

After the launch of reform and opening-up in 1978, China has increasingly viewed the UN as an important channel for communication with the outside world. Its participation in the activities of various UN agencies shifted from passive and limited involvement to extensive engagement and proactive action. China has played an increasing-

ly important and constructive role in many fields and has become a key force in upholding multilateralism.

After the end of the Cold War, China has gradually become an active builder within the UN system. The scope of its participation in UN affairs has continued to expand; its financial and human resources contributions have been increasing; and its ability to set the agenda has been constantly enhanced.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, in the face of an increasingly unstable and uncertain world, China has actively promoted the reform of the global governance system through the UN, put forward innovative concepts such as building a community with a shared future for humanity, a new type of international relations, and the common values of humanity, as well as four major global initiatives. The UN system has thus become an important platform for China to shape and demonstrate its image as a responsible major country.

II. The Profound Impact of China's UN Diplomacy: From Ideas to Practices

China's UN diplomacy is different from that of other major powers in the world, as well as from that of other emerging market countries and developing countries.

In terms of ideas, China firmly advocates that there is only one global governance system in the world, namely the international system with the UN at its core; only one order, namely the international order based on international law; and only one set of rules, namely the fundamental norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

China has always held high the banner of multilateralism, practiced true multilateralism, and insisted that international affairs should be discussed and decided by all countries through consultation, and that the future and destiny of the world should be jointly decided by all countries. It firmly opposes unilateralism, protectionism, and hegemonic practices, as well as all forms of "pseudo-multilateralism" such as bloc politics

and forming exclusive “small circles.”

China has always adhered to the concept of global governance featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. It advocates upholding sovereign equality, abiding by international rule of law, following a people-centred approach, and taking real actions. China is committed to making the global governance system better reflect changes in the world order, more equitably represent the aspirations and interests of most countries in the world, especially emerging market countries and developing countries, and more effectively address global challenges.

China's initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Governance Initiative are all closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. They are conducive to reshaping the logic of international cooperation and effectively responding to the theories of “stability through hegemony” and “clashes of civilizations” boasted by some countries.

In terms of practices, China fully supports the UN in playing a central role in international affairs and actively participates in various fields of UN work. China supports the UN in enhancing its ability to coordinate countries in addressing global challenges through reform, focusing on the concerns and demands of developing countries, and better responding to the expectations of the international community.

China has continuously expanded the scope of its cooperation with the UN and enriched the content of such cooperation. Relevant UN agencies have successively established offices in China, and comprehensive cooperation between China and these agencies in multiple fields has yielded fruitful results. At the same time, China's influence within the UN has steadily increased. Since 1972, 11 Chinese diplomats have successively held the position of UN Under-Secretary-General. Currently, among the 15 specialized agencies of the UN, four of them are headed by Chinese diplomats. The “Group of Friends of the

Global Development Initiative” established by China has covered more than 80 countries.

As a builder of world peace, China unswervingly follows the path of peaceful development. China is the second largest contributor to UN peacekeeping budget and the largest provider of peacekeepers among the permanent members of the UNSC. China advocates resolving disputes through consultation and dialogue, adheres to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, firmly opposes the arbitrary use or threat of use of force in international affairs, actively participates in the political settlement of major regional hotspot issues, and continuously explores and practices solutions with Chinese characteristics to international and regional hotspot issues.

China strives to uphold the authority and unity of the UNSC, actively supports the UN in conducting mediation in accordance with its mandate, and supports the coordination and cooperation between the UN and regional, sub-regional organizations, making contributions to maintaining global peace and security. China actively participates in the international arms control and disarmament process by joining more than 20 international arms control treaties and mechanisms so far and participates constructively in the work of the UN and relevant international institutions. China also takes an active part in UN-led global cooperation to address non-traditional security threats and plays an active role in fields such as international counter-terrorism, bio-safety, and cyber security.

As a contributor to global development, China unswervingly follows the path of common development. China advocates that the UN should place the issue of development in a prominent position in the global macro framework and attach importance to the promotion and protection of the right of development. China has historically eradicated absolute poverty and achieved the poverty reduction target of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 10 years ahead of schedule. At the same time, China actively participates in in-

ternational poverty reduction cooperation and has promoted the UN General Assembly to adopt resolutions on rural poverty reduction for three consecutive years. China has continuously increased investment in international poverty reduction cooperation and fully implemented major practical measures put forth by President Xi Jinping to support developing countries, such as the 100 poverty reduction projects. Attaching great importance to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, China has taken the lead in releasing a national implementation plan and three progress reports and achieved early results in multiple fields. Recently, the Global Governance Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping has once again contributed Chinese wisdom and solutions to improving the global governance system, promoting global common development, and advancing the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

China promotes the alignment of the BRI with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and incorporates infrastructure development and the digital economy into the UN development system. China supports the early filling of governance gaps in emerging fields and supports the UN in playing a leading role in this regard. At the general debate of the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly, China announced that it would establish the China-UN Global South-South Development Facility and provide 10 million US dollars in budgetary support for it. China would also establish the Shanghai Global Center for Sustainable Development in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to accelerate the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As a defender of the international order, China unswervingly follows the path of cooperative development. The UN Charter is the foundation of the post-war world order and a guide for maintaining the stability of international relations and promoting human progress. The various confrontation and injustice in the world today are tak-

ing place not because the purposes and principles of the Charter have become obsolete, but because these purposes and principles have not been effectively implemented. China has joined almost all universal intergovernmental international organizations and participated in more than 600 international conventions and their amendments, making it a reliable partner of the UN.

China advocates resolving disputes through dialogue and addressing differences through consultation, and advocates building partnerships at the international and regional levels, blazing a new path for state-to-state exchanges characterized by “dialogue over confrontation, and partnership over alliance.” China always stands with developing countries, firmly supports enhancing the representation and voice of developing countries, especially African countries, in the global governance system.

Over the past 80 years, China's UN diplomacy has forged ahead through trials and tribulations and become increasingly sophisticated. It not only reflects the historic changes in the relationship between China and the world but also embodies the phased adjustments in China's foreign policy, and has exerted a profound impact on the operation mode of the UN system.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHINA'S UN DIPLOMACY

In today's world, the once-in-a-century changes are unfolding at a faster pace and problems in this new era of turbulence and transformation are on the rise. Against this backdrop, China's UN diplomacy faces both new challenges and opportunities.

I. Complex and Daunting Challenges

First, balancing the defence of the UN Charter and the avoidance of major-country confrontation. “Great power unanimity” is a fundamental principle of the UN, aimed at preventing major-country confrontation from endangering world peace. However, hegemonic countries have long manipulated UN mechanisms, and the UN has even been used as a tool by some major coun-

try to carry out interference and aggression abroad. In recent years, the United States has continuously sent signals of “withdrawal.” For example, it has significantly cut development and humanitarian assistance, delayed the payment of assessed contributions, and taken actions to weaken multilateral partnerships. The US approach runs counter to China's positions and proposals. In particular, the US regards China and Russia as strategic competitors, brings the competition with China and Russia into the UN arena, and forces other member states to take sides. This will inevitably undermine the UN's efficiency and ability to address global challenges. This situation compels China to seek a balance between upholding the UN Charter and avoiding major-country confrontation.

Second, balancing the defence of the system and the innovation of rules. Upholding the authority of the UN is not only what history has taught us, but also what it requires to build the common future of humanity. Weakening the authority of the UN essentially undermines the collective ability of humanity to address common challenges and may eventually lead to the return of the law of the jungle where “the strong prey on the weak.” China firmly upholds the authority of the UN and believes that the UN plays an indispensable role in global affairs. At the same time, China also holds that strengthening the role of the UN through reform is in the common interests of the international community. Against such a backdrop, a new important task facing China's UN diplomacy is how to effectively defend the authority of the UN while actively reforming its legacy of Western centralism, in a bid to enhance the authority and efficiency of the UN, maintain and strengthen the unity of UN member states, improve the representation of countries in the Global South, and realize the vision of true multilateralism in the process of advancing an equitable and orderly multi-polar world.

Third, balancing the defence of national interests and the fulfilment of international responsibilities. Firmly safeguarding national interests is the core mission of China's diplomacy and

the core goal and main task of China's UN diplomacy. At the same time, China has always earnestly fulfilled its international responsibilities. China's perception of international responsibilities has evolved along with changes in its relationship with the world and adjusted as its national strength grows. How to better balance national interests and international responsibilities is one of the key points for China to eliminate misunderstandings by other member states within the UN system.

Fourth, bridging international perceptual gaps in China's solutions. In recent years, China has put forward several solutions with Chinese wisdom at the UN, but there are differences in how various countries perceive these solutions. For example, the BRI proposed by China is a public good that benefits the international community, yet a few countries have maliciously labelled it as a “new Marshall Plan,” and individual countries have even launched targeted initiatives such as the “Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment,” and the “India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.” How to bridge international perceptual gaps and shape a friendly international public opinion environment is also an important task for China's UN diplomacy in the future.

II. Opportunities to Shape the Future

The imperative UN reform provides new space for China's UN diplomacy. Currently, the institutional structure of the UN largely remains as it was when it was founded 80 years ago, making it difficult to address the increasingly complex global challenges and meet the growing needs of global governance. Therefore, the UN reform is not only an urgent requirement for the development of international relations but also has become a basic consensus among most member states. China supports the UN in building a more complete global governance system through reform and making it a major platform for coordinating national actions and addressing challenges together. This will bring new changes to the content, methods, and goals of China's UN diplomacy, as well as new adjustments to China's role and

interests within the UN system.

The collective rise of emerging market countries creates conditions for China's UN diplomacy to build a global partnership network. Over the past 80 years, the UN has successfully assisted many colonies in becoming independent countries, enabling them to enter the international arena as sovereign states. Especially since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the collective rise of emerging economies and the louder voice of developing countries have not only made the UN more diversified and democratic but also provided favourable conditions for China's UN diplomacy to build a global partnership network. China promotes the building of a global partnership network, abandons the feelings of superiority as well as the divide between camps, opposes the domination of international and regional affairs by any major country, and has repeatedly called for appropriate preferences for countries in the Global South in the reform of the UNSC, including increasing their seats as both permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC, to ensure the fairness of global resource allocation at the cradle of policy-making.

The new round of technological revolution creates new opportunities for China's UN diplomacy in agenda innovation and identity transformation. The new round of technological revolution, with artificial intelligence (AI) at its core, is reshaping the international power structure in multiple dimensions. With the widespread application of AI, new global threats have emerged, yet relevant regulatory systems have not yet been established. This creates an opportunity to create global and institutional public goods. China can carry out agenda innovation through the UN, provide "non-Western-centred" solutions for global governance, especially global technology governance, promote the formation of an inclusive and benefit-sharing global rules system, and contribute to the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

On June 9, 2025, China held a themed event for the "International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations" at UN Headquarters in New York. Artists from China, the United States, Greece, Senegal and other countries performed an instrumental ensemble.



Understanding Background and Rationale for Global Governance Initiative

Global governance refers to the joint management of global affairs by the international community to ensure peace, stability, prosperity, and the resolution of global issues. Based on a set of rules, principles, and norms, global governance aims to improve the governability of the global economy and international relations. Prof. Yana has this concept detailed in this article.

By **Leksyutina Yana**, Deputy Head of the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia at the Russian Academy of Sciences and Professor at European University at St. Petersburg, Russia

At the “Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus” Meeting in Tianjin on September 1, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the Global Governance Initiative (GGI)-the fourth landmark global initiative proposed in a row since 2021. The initiation of the GGI can be seen as both China’s policy response to the current international landscape and to the objective deficiencies in the existing global governance system, as well as a logical and further step in the development of China’s diplomatic theories and practices in global governance.

Global governance refers to the joint management of global affairs by the international community to ensure peace, stability, prosperity, and the resolution of global issues. Based on a set of rules, principles, and norms, global governance aims to improve the governability of the global economy and international relations. By creating and acting through various formal and informal international mechanisms and institutions, states regulate various types of relations and spheres of activity to maintain world order. A significant aspect of states’ participation in global governance is their interaction with international institutions and their conduct within them.

In recent years, particularly in the new era, China has deepened its engagement in global governance, making it a central pillar of its foreign policy. During this historical period, China has proactively shouldered international responsibilities, provided global and regional public goods, put forward new agendas for the global community, promoted various international initiatives,

increased its funding support for international organizations, and successfully hosted a series of major international events (the so-called “summit diplomacy”) aimed at promoting world peace and development. The initiation of the GGI can be seen as the culmination of this process.

CHINA’S PRE-GGI ENGAGEMENT IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

China’s engagement in global governance is not a new phenomenon. Since the onset of the 2008 world financial crisis, China has become more proactively engaged in global economic governance and has consistently contributed its strength to the reform and improvement of the global governance system. The 2008 world financial crisis exposed the weaknesses of the global economic governance system and provided Beijing with strong arguments to support calls for the reform of global economic governance, which was seen as no longer capable of regulating global processes and ensuring stability, sustainable growth, and prosperity.

By the time the 2008 world financial crisis unfolded, China had already fully developed a sense of urgency about reforming the international economic system. Two economic crises, occurring a decade apart—the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis and the 2008 world financial crisis – testified to the limited effectiveness of the existing global economic governance and the ability of its institutions to avoid, manage and overcome economic crises.

Moreover, the existing international economic governance system began to take shape in the 1940s when developing

countries were underrepresented in formulating the rules and principles regulating global economic processes, due to their low level of economic development and specific foreign policy priorities. The international economic governance system was created by leading developed countries, which secured a special status in the governance of the global economy and finance. Over time, as new centres of global economic development emerged at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries (the so-called “emerging markets”), the system of global economic governance ceased to adequately reflect the new balance of power in the global economy.

In the wake of the 2008 world financial crisis, China, in collaboration with other developing countries, began to call for reforming the international economic system and revising decision-making rules for global economic governance. Beijing’s efforts were specifically directed to promote strengthening of the role of emerging markets and developing countries in major financial institutions, like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The G20 Leaders’ Summit, started in 2008, and the BRICS, elevated to the summit level in 2009, played a pivotal role in forming a collective push for the reform of global economic governance. As a result of these efforts, some minor adjustments were made back then, however serious underrepresentation of the Global South countries in major international financial institutions continued to exist.

Since 2013, the push for reform of major financial institutions has been supplemented by China’s practical steps to provide global public goods and by its more proactive participation in global

On October 16, 2025, the Global Governance Roundtable for SCO Countries 2025 was held in Beijing. The picture is Chang Bo, President of the China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration, delivering an address.



economic governance. At the opening ceremony of the APEC CEO Summit in Beijing in November 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping stated that “As its overall national strength grows, China is capable and willing to provide more public goods for the Asia-Pacific and the world, especially new initiatives and visions for enhancing regional cooperation.” The 13th Five-Year Plan (2016–2020) outlined China’s intentions to actively participate in global economic governance and the creation of global public goods, and to seek a greater role in global economic governance institutions. On a practical level, these intentions have been embodied in the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank, as well as the initiation and implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). While these

three initiatives were key efforts to create public goods that fill gaps in global economic governance, the BRI specifically was meant to become a new model of regional and global cooperation that advances economic globalization, contributes to the improvement of global economic governance, and optimizes the global order.

The new stage of China’s participation in global governance can be roughly dated to 2016-2017. It was from this time that a change in China’s foreign policy on global governance issues began to become quite clear—a shift in China’s focus from promoting reform of the global governance system to leading this reform as a major responsible country.

At a seminar on national security work held on February 17, 2017, President Xi Jinping mentioned that China

should lead the international community in jointly creating a more reasonable and just new international order and jointly ensuring international security. During the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs held in June 2018, President Xi Jinping also highlighted leading the reform of the global governance system with the concept of fairness and justice. China’s willingness to take a proactive stance and play a key role in global economic governance was also reflected in Xi Jinping’s speech at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou in September 2016. By advocating for an open global economy, economic globalization, the rule of law, and a multi-lateral approach to resolving global and regional issues, Beijing has assumed the role of a major responsible country to promote the development of the international order in a more just and equi-

table direction.

The Brexit process, launched by the UK, and the isolationist policy declared by Donald Trump in the first months of his first presidency (the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from a number of international agreements and organizations) could be interpreted as a decline in the West's interest and ability to maintain world order and actively participate in global affairs. To a certain extent, it has pushed Beijing to adopt a more active foreign policy in global governance.

THE RATIONALE FOR PROMOTING THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

China's latest effort to enhance its role in global governance, openly manifested in the initiation of the GGI, is driven by several factors. The successive global economic crises (i.e. the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis, the 2008 world financial crisis, the world economic crisis caused by the COVID-19) clearly demonstrate the multiple deficiencies of the existing global economic governance system. The newly implemented decoupling and de-risking strategies, various forms of economic, resource and technological nationalism, rising pressures from comprehensive sanctions and tariff wars are contributing not only to the potential new world economic crisis, but also to the malfunction and fragmentation of the global financial and economic system, and the emergence of multiple, often opposing, systems—financial, technological, and others. On top of that, Western countries have begun to restrict individual countries' access to global public goods. What were previously considered global public goods, open to all countries without exception, are now increasingly used to punish other countries.

Moreover, new areas are emerging that require global regulation and governance, such as artificial intelligence, cyberspace and outer space. In its GGI, China underlines the necessity to formulate international rules in emerging areas based on extensive consensus.

The U.N., which is at the core of

the existing international system and the core platform for advancing global governance, together with multilateralism, is being challenged. International law is challenged by the so-called "international rules", which are established and strongly promoted by a small group of Western countries. Multilateralism is brought into question by unilateral sanctions and tariff pressures exercised by the Trump administration.

There has been a major shift in the balance not only of economic, but also technological power between traditional developed countries and countries of the Global South, which has not yet been adequately reflected in the structure of international institutions and the global governance system. The existing international institutions have been losing their adequacy, authoritativeness and efficiency to the new distribution of power between developed states and the Global South, which is shown in the collective rise of emerging markets and developing countries' poor representation in the structure of international institutions.

THE SCO AS A PLATFORM FOR PROMOTING NEW GLOBAL GOVERNANCE VISIONS AND IDEAS

The fact that the GGI was proposed by Xi Jinping at the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" Meeting is very telling. On the one hand, the major premise of the GGI is that the U.N. should be the core platform for advancing global governance, and its role must be enhanced, not weakened. On the other hand, the weakening of the existing global governance mechanism and the challenges the U.N. faces open a window of opportunity for regional multilateral organizations to assume the role of regulating global governance issues according to their respective strengths. As an important platform for regional cooperation and consultation, the SCO has potential to play a more active role in international affairs and global governance. Chinese experts are increasingly stating that the SCO platform should be used to develop and announce decisions and plans for promoting a more just and

equitable international order.

In recent years, the Chinese leadership has focused on creating global public goods for improving global governance, putting forward new initiatives, development plans, ideas, and concepts for the global community. Beijing takes the SCO as a channel for sharing China's visions on global governance and presenting Chinese solutions to multiple challenges facing the world. Hence after the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, the SCO summit held in Tianjin in late August and early September brought China's fourth global initiative, the GGI, to the world.

China believes that in the era of emerging multipolarity, collective leadership is the smart way to manage complex global dynamics. This does not mean that the SCO should assume leadership responsibilities, but it would be useful for SCO member states to contribute to the development of norms and rules in new and pressing areas such as artificial intelligence governance, cybersecurity, e-commerce, the transition to a green economy, and food security. Moreover, each SCO member state has accumulated experience and achieved significant success in various areas, such as combating sanctions or eradicating poverty. Widespread dissemination of such experience within the SCO and beyond would lend greater weight to the organization's activities.

All in all, the purpose of the announcement of the GGI is to invite all interested parties to contribute and jointly work on finding the methods and pathways for reforming, improving and making global governance more efficient, people-centred, action- and results-oriented (instead of mere high diplomatic rhetoric). The interested parties should join their efforts and make their collective contribution to the development of norms and rules in emerging and pressing areas, becoming a driving force for reforming and improving global governance, and making it more efficient, designed and aimed at acting in the interests of the international community.

This photo shows a scene of a seminar on global governance and the launch ceremony of the English edition of the first volume of "China's Governance Under Xi Jinping's Leadership" at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, Feb. 24, 2026. (Xinhua/Peng Ziyang)





This photo taken on Oct. 22, 2025 shows wind turbines of De Aar Wind Power Project in De Aar, Northern Cape, South Africa. (Xinhua/Han Xu)

Infrastructure as Governance: Africa's New Power Architecture in a China-Led Industrial Era

Africa has reached the limit of political rhetoric. For decades, we have argued for democracy, multiparty ideals, and continental unity. But Africa's real weakness has never been ideological; it has always been structural, as businessman Eric Chonjo tells in this article.

By Eric Peter Chonjo, Tanzanian Entrepreneur, Tanzania

In the modern world, power is not defined by elections or speeches. Power belongs to whoever controls the ports, railways, power grids, industrial zones, telecom backbone, and water systems that sustain cities and economies.

According to a report by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA), Africa's significant

infrastructure funding gap is costing Africa a 2% annual reduction in its GDP growth. This means that Africa has great potential for upper double-digit growth if we can properly handle the infrastructure gaps and give full play to what we have. The continent's per capita electricity production capacity is lower than that of Spain. This reveals an indisput-

able truth: governance collapses without infrastructure systems. This is also the truth that many leaders ignore. Everything else such as institutions, reforms, and policies sits on top of that foundation.

Meanwhile, global power is shifting. China is entering a new industrial wave just as Africa faces its sharpest need for capital, engineering, and execution. This overlap is not about ideology; it is about timing. And Africa cannot afford to misread the moment.

The age of diplomatic influence determining the world order is over. Today, global governance is shaped by those who control logistics and mineral corridors, the digital and telecom grids, and industrial production and

supply chains. Parliaments can debate endlessly, but without structural assets, they govern nothing. The world respects capacity, not conversation. Africa has paid the price for this. Despite having 30% of the world's minerals, it contributes to only 2% of global manufacturing value added (MVA). All above demonstrates that real integration into the global economy cannot happen when infrastructure systems for integration do not exist.

AFRICA'S REALITY: A YOUNG CONTINENT ON FRAGILE FOUNDATIONS

Africa's population is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050, almost one out of four people on Earth being an African.

Cities like Lagos and Dar es Salaam are expected to reach 30 million people within a few decades. Yet, the total length of Africa's standard gauge railway (SGR) hasn't met the continent's demand. A large portion of Africans still lacks electricity, and a lot of African universities are now suffering staff housing deficits.

We speak of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), but there is no integration without rails, grids, and digital networks. Even brilliant ideas collapse under weak infrastructure.

Consider that the electric-driven Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway reduces the transportation time from 3 days to less than 20 hours and increases cargo volume by 25% annually. This one line, one system, and immediate impact is what real integration looks like. Africa's obstacle to growth is not its political will, but a lack of tangible infrastructure projects.

TANZANIA AS A CASE STUDY: A NATION AT THE CONTINENTAL PIVOT

Tanzania sits at one of Africa's most strategic hinges. It has multiple deep-sea ports, mineral corridors to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), gas reserves in the south, and access to eight neighbouring countries. It is the gateway to cobalt and copper, minerals powering global technology.

If Africa is to matter in the 21st century, corridor nations like Tanzania will set the pace. Key shifts are already underway: the SGR connecting the coast to Africa's interior, the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA) revitalizing connections between Tanzania and Zambia, the Mtwara Development corridor leveraging the concerted effort of four African countries for joint development, expanding recoverable natural gas reserves of around 57 trillion cubic feet (about 1.61 trillion cubic meters), telecom restructuring, and university-based industrial parks.

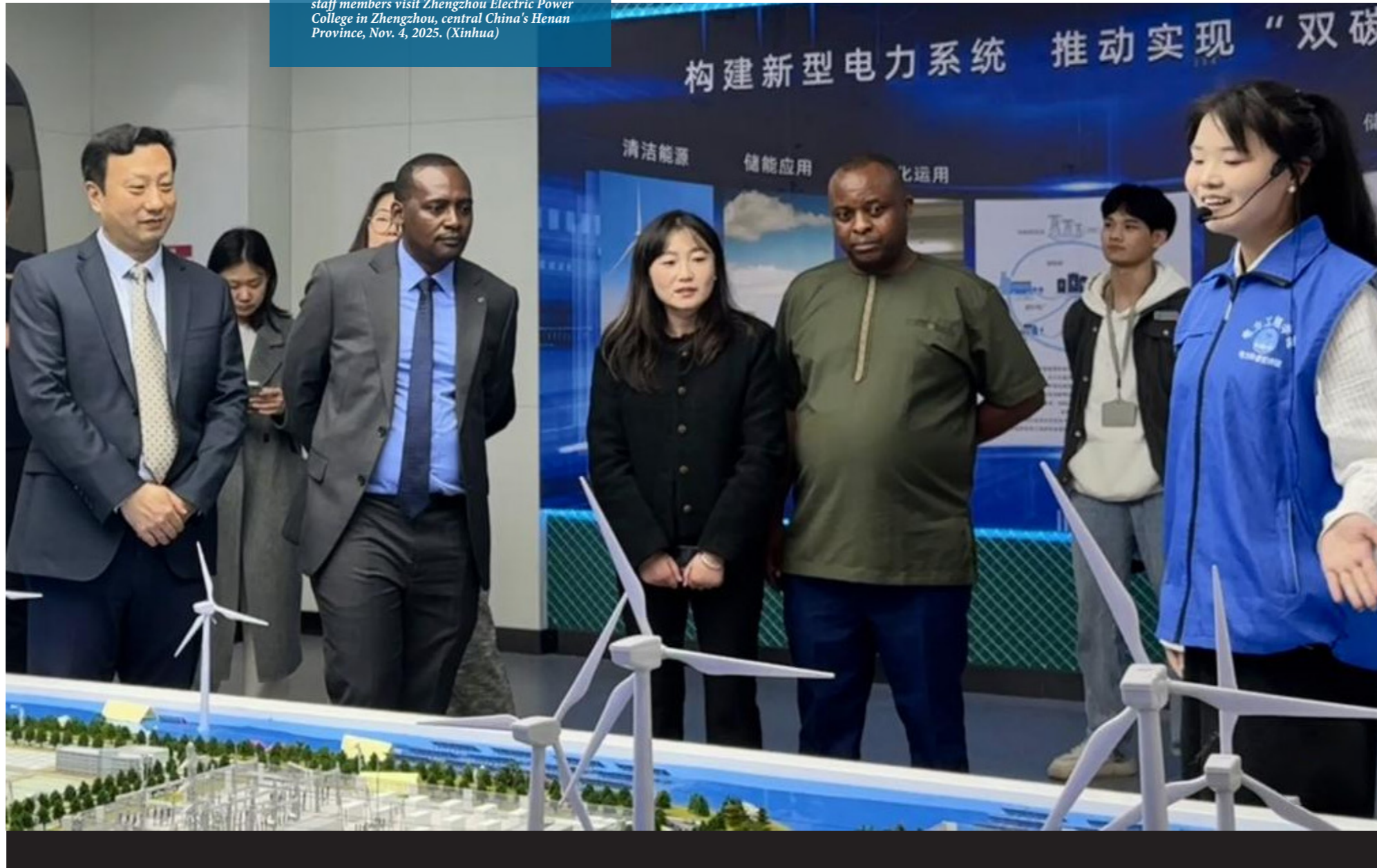
Tanzania can really seize the opportunities for growth only when it has strengthened and autonomous infrastructure. This is where China becomes relevant.

CHINA'S ROLE: INDUSTRIAL CONVERGENCE NOT DEPENDENCY

Debates on Africa-China ties are often clouded by scepticism and doubts, yet the structural reality is simple: China is currently the only industrial country capable of building mega-projects at the speed and scale Africa urgently needs. To understand why China matters now, you must look at the evolutionary history of global powers.

The first wave came with Portugal and Spain (1500-1600), who opened global sea routes and established a system of exploration-extraction-export. They created the world's first global economic network. Then came the Dutch (1600-1700), who transformed capitalism through the Dutch East India Company the first multinational corporation and the first stock market powerhouse in human history. They professionalized global trade, finance, and maritime logistics. The British and French (1700-1900) consolidated their empires with the aid of systematic knowledge gathering. Their scientists and cartographers mapped Africa's rivers, soils, minerals, and ecological systems with precision. Their power rested not only on force but also on documentation, classification, and institutional memory. After World War II, the United States (1945-present) built a pervasive influence exercised through global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the United Nations, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Now enters China, whose rise is not accidental but a natural outcome of its years-long dedication to development: accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, a manufacturing explosion, deep supply-chain consolidation, the Belt and Road Initiative spanning over 150 nations, and an 20-trillion-USD industrial engine that seeks stable mineral suppliers, open markets, and reliable partners. China's relevance



Paul Umukunzi (2nd L, front), director general of the Rwanda TVET Board, and staff members visit Zhengzhou Electric Power College in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province, Nov. 4, 2025. (Xinhua)

is structural, not just political rhetoric. China's strategy is rooted in the principles of mutual benefit and shared development. Its industrial growth requires inputs, supply-chain stability, and cooperation, not a colonial-style relationship. In this context, Africa, with its vast development potential, rightly aligns with these needs as an equal partner for common prosperity.

INFRASTRUCTURE AUTONOMY: TANZANIA'S FOUR PILLARS OF NATIONAL POWER

Africa's rise doesn't merely hinge on infrastructure access but on infrastruc-

ture ownership. Tanzania has the foundations for a new national architecture with the following four pillars.

Pillar 1: Digital Sovereignty

Foreign power monopolies weaken national stability. Every call, every payment, every data package runs through foreign hands. Yet Kenya's example proves the opposite. M-Pesa now processes transactions around 50% of Kenya's GDP because the country owns and controls its digital backbone. Tanzania must scale its own telecom ecosystem. A nation that does not control its infrastructure does not control its future.

Pillar 2: Capital Sovereignty — A Construction & Infrastructure Finance System

Africa can never realize industrialization with commercial bank loans. The continent's infrastructure financing need is estimated at US\$130-170 billion annually. Despite African governments contributing approximately 40% of the current US\$80 billion annual investment, a significant funding gap remains, according to the AUDA's report. Countries like Japan, South Korea, and China industrialized through state-backed construction finance, supplier-guarantee systems, direct payments to contractors, and indus-

trial credit lines. Africa needs the same architecture without dependence on foreign engineering, procurement and construction (EPC).

Pillar 3: Intellectual & Industrial Sovereignty — University Workbenches

Universities worldwide are increasingly recognized as vital engines for national industrial growth, not merely academic ivory towers. For example, the boom of India's IT sector is closely linked to university-industry hubs. South Korea's industrial conglomerates benefited from strong research-industry alignment. In China, the integration of academia and

innovation has been fostered through mechanisms such as university science parks. Similarly, African universities, which possess substantial land resources, have the potential to leverage these assets to support sustainable industrial growth, in line with their own national development strategies.

Pillar 4: Human Capital Resources

Sovereignty — Housing as Infrastructure

Housing is a production tool, not a luxury. Countries that have solved the housing issue, such as Singapore, China, and the UAE, have gained decades of stability and economic acceleration. Tanzania can follow suit by scaling green housing financed through long-term institutional capital, so as to unleash its great human capital resources.

The bigger message here is: sovereignty is not a speech; it is an architecture. These four pillars define Tanzania's long-term independence: the digital sovereignty ensures its data backbone; capital sovereignty ensures construction finance; intellectual and industrial sovereignty converts universities into industrial engines; and human capital resources sovereignty multiplies productivity.

Once these pillars align with each other, Tanzania will become a producer of value, not a spectator in global cycles.

CONCLUSION: AFRICA'S FUTURE BELONGS TO BUILDERS

A new leadership is emerging, who understands governance as logistics, engineering, finance, and digital architecture. The leadership knows that countries progress through industrial systems, not political slogans.

China's next industrial cycle gives Africa a rare window of opportunity to align with a global superpower whose priorities match Africa's real needs. This is not a moment to fear global shifts. It is a moment to place ourselves inside them.

Africa must move to embrace its own structural reality. Power in the new world is defined by logistics, minerals, energy, technology, and data. We need infrastructure, because in the world we are entering, infrastructure is the constitution and nations that build it will determine their own destiny.

Towards Reducing Trade Barriers: A Need for Regional Integration in Africa

As the calls for unification of all African countries to form the United States of Africa seem to be gaining momentum from different voices across the continent and outside, the question of “how” a prime point of departure to the reproval of many critics and pessimists has been, as this article narrates.

By Tokologo Ribson Mathabatha, COSAS HQ Deputy of Education Portfolio Committee, South Africa

For better prospects of united African states, advancement of regional integration should be the starting point. Neighbouring countries should create strong working relations with one another to collaborate in growing their economies and ameliorating political stability. This will culminate in larger economic and political entities which will place the continent at the far better state of self-reliance and independence as it will reduce trade barriers which makes it difficult for neighbouring states to trade with one another. It will help in addressing the policy issues whereby trade policies of one country are peculiar to another's, which discourages the preferability to collaborate and consequently destroys the common market.

Africa remains arguably the richest continent in terms of natural resources. Yet the irony of that is how the same continent's economy is ailing and it has to consistently seek intervention from the West for a bailout. Some of the states which harbour most important raw minerals are struggling to repay debts to Western countries while others continue to sign predatory bilateral trade deals which can potentially put their sovereignty at risk. There is a lack of beneficiation of the mineral resources that are extracted from the continent due to the industrialization deficit. And as a result, the extraction of these minerals does not benefit the citizens of the continent. The mere presence of the minerals in the continent does not grow the economy, create jobs, nor improve the infrastructure. There should be regional strong policy framework that drives the extraction and beneficiation strategy to catalyse the development of the down-

stream industries.

ARE WE PULLING IN THE SAME DIRECTION?

There are concerted efforts to work together towards the common goal of economic growth, political unity and promotion of peace and security by several countries despite the failures and challenges of these collaborations. A minimal progress has been made to forge collectively in promoting continental unity with formation of regional economic blocs such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), East African Community, Southern African Development Community (SADC), and others. To promote free trade, African Continental Free Trade Area is a trade-enabling organization that aims to facilitate economic integration. On political cooperation, the African Union is charged with promoting continental peace and stability. However, the progressiveness of these regional organizations has not inspire significant confidence nor instil greater confidence in ordinary Africans. The further perpetuation of injustice and violation of basic human rights under their watch cast a lot of doubt on the progressives of these organizations.

The suppression of freedom of speech, unlawful detention of political activists, political killings and a rigging of electoral votes which prevent a free and fair running of election is prevalent in the SADC regions with countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique consistently alleged to have a total disregard of democratic governance. The ECOWAS has failed at playing parental role to oversee the radical political change in countries like Burkina Faso and Mali. It

allowed the greedy voices of the imperial West to infiltrate its agenda and overlooked the legitimate concerns of the

young people of these countries. This failure is what led to an intensified militant radicalism which is currently dominating across the region. The continuous erasure of democratic governance under the complete observation of these blocs delegitimises their existence.

THE ANTITHESIS OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION

The priorities of these countries in terms of economic systems and political ideologies are not aligned, and most countries prioritise their individual national interests over multilateral collab-

orations. This can be blamed from the historical difference in politics that has shaped the self-identification of those countries. Some countries compete for resources in terms of foreign investment and trade. This breeds further division and non-alignment of policies as other countries develops loyalty towards their foreign investors and consequently allow the policies of those foreign powers to influence their policy direction. This failure to pull in the same direction is a hindrance to the regional integration.

Negative towards the idea of regional integration in Africa is a lack decisive

and highly capable leaders who can champion the aspirations of African unity to the best of their best-informed ability. Africa is widely considered as having a leadership crisis. Poor governance, corruption, and lack of accountability halt the idea of regional integration because leaders serve their self-interest not the people. The success of regional integration will be delivered by incorporation of young people with fresh ideas to the plenipotentiaries, not only to be given opportunity to speak but to have a dominant say in the direction of policies that steers their continent.



Copper tipped to rival gold as driver of Tanzania's growth (PHOTO: The Citizen.html)

TANU's Leadership Code and Its Relevance in Tanzania to Date

The Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) played a pivotal role in the struggle for independence and the subsequent nation-building process in Tanzania. Founded in 1954, TANU emerged as a leading political force advocating for self-governance and liberation from colonial rule. This article retraces the values for the establishment of the Party and its relevance today.

By Kihaka Adam, Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania



MR Pius Msekwa (right), then Clerk to the Legislative Council joins Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, President of TANU, at a press conference at Government House in March 1961, following the Constitutional Conference. Others are Sir Richard Turnbull, Governor of Tanganyika (second left); Iain Macleod, the British Secretary of State for Colonies (centre) and A.Y.A Karimjee, Speaker of the Legislative Council.

BACKGROUND AND CORE IDEOLOGY OF TANU

Tanzania, formerly known as Tanganyika, was under German colonial rule until the end of World War

I when it was placed under British mandate. Throughout the colonial period, indigenous Tanzanians experienced political marginalization, economic exploitation, and

social injustices. The emergence of nationalist movements across Africa inspired Tanzanian intellectuals and activists to organize against colonial oppression. In this

context, TANU was established as a vehicle for articulating the aspirations of the Tanzanian people for self-determination. Julius Nyerere, widely regarded as the founding father of the Tanzanian

nation, played a central role in shaping the ideology and direction of TANU.

Nyerere, a charismatic and visionary leader, emphasized the principles of African socialism, equality, and self-reliance. His philosophy of Ujamaa, which advocated for collective ownership and communal living, became the guiding ideology of TANU and post-independence Tanzania. Other notable leaders within TANU included Oscar Kambona, Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu, and Rashidi Kawawa, who contributed significantly to the liberation struggle and the consolidation of independence.

The ideology of TANU was rooted in the principles of Pan-Africanism, nationalism, and socialism. It sought to unite Tanzanians across ethnic, regional, and religious divides under a common vision of nationhood and progress. TANU employed a multifaceted approach to achieve its objectives, including grassroots mobilization, political education, civil disobedience, and international diplomacy. Nyerere's concept of "Education for Self-Reliance" emphasized the importance of education in empowering Tanzanians to participate actively in nation-building and development.

The legacy of TANU extends far beyond the struggle for independence. It laid the foundation for Tanzania's nation-building process and influenced the country's political, economic, and social development for decades to come. Nyerere's emphasis on unity, equality, and self-reliance shaped Tanzania's policies in areas such as education, healthcare, agriculture, and rural development. Despite facing challenges and criticisms, TANU's commitment to African values and solidarity remains an enduring legacy in Tanzania and a wider African continent.

CORE PRINCIPLES AND MOTIVATING FACTORS BEHIND THE LEADERSHIP CODE

Since its inception, Tanzania has contended with the challenges of governance, accountability, and transparency. In response to these challenges, TANU introduced the leadership code, with the aim of creating the classless society,

ensuring accountability, combating corruption, and fostering national unity.

Tanzania's journey to independence was marked by the emergence of TANU as a leading political force. Founded in 1954, TANU played a pivotal role in advocating for independence from colonial rule. Upon achieving independence in 1961, Tanzania faced numerous challenges, including the need to establish effective governance structures and combat corruption. The leadership code under the one-party state was binding on senior civil servants and TANU party leaders and was set out in the TANU Party Constitution. Similar requirements, extended to the membership of the successor organization Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), appear in the 1982 Constitution of CCM. The leaders in this leadership codes of ethics were wide-ranging from the president to the members of a local government authority, but this list could be altered by the minister in charge, who appears to be a minister of state in the office of the president, though not defined as such.

The leadership code of ethics was the result of the introduction of the Ujamaa philosophy by the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, in his pamphlet titled "Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism" stipulated that Ujamaa is an attitude of mind which is needed to ensure that the people care for each other's welfare. In addition, Ujamaa aimed to stress the sense of brotherhood or familyhood within society with the intention Nyerere considered there to be a very close links between caring for one another in other words, brotherhood or familyhood. On top of that the philosophy of Ujamaa integrated the liberal principles such as equality, freedom, and democracy in its implementation. TANU introduced the leadership code to address these pressing issues and steer the country towards progress and development. This paper explores the historical context surrounding the introduction of TANU and TANU's leadership code, analyzes its key reasons, evaluates its relevance to date into and examines into its implications for governance in Tanzania. The TANU leadership code emphasized five main points: The following are the

TANU leadership codes which were stipulated by the central committee of TANU in 1967.

First, it stipulated that every TANU and government leader must be either a peasant or a worker and should in no way be associated with the practices of capitalism and feudalism. The practices of capitalism that are rejected here are private ownership of the means of production and individual's accumulation of wealth for the purpose of gaining power and prestige.

Secondly, neither TANU nor government leaders should hold shares in any company. Holding shares in a company was considered a capitalist practice and like the first code of conduct, the intention was to prevent leaders from owning means of production and thus creating a class of their own.

Thirdly, leaders were not allowed to hold directorship in any privately owned enterprise, since this was an incentive to engage in capitalist practices, which as shown, were not conducive to the creation of a classless society.

Fourthly, leaders were not permitted to receive two or more salaries, presumably because this was interpreted by the leaders as a form of wealth accumulation incompatible with creating a classless society.

Finally, no leader was allowed to own houses which he rents to others, because collecting rent from tenants would also be a capitalist practice of wealth accumulation considered by Ujamaa to be detrimental to the creation of a classless society.

Considered as a whole, the leadership code of conduct was a measure to curb the development of classes and reduce conflict between them. The reasons for the introduction of TANU's leadership code were due to the following:

First, the historical context: The introduction of TANU's leadership code of ethics occurred against the backdrop of Tanzania's post-independence nation-building efforts. Following independence in 1961, Tanzania, under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, embarked on a transformative journey towards socialism and self-reliance. Central to this

vision was the establishment of ethical governance structures that prioritized the welfare of the people and the promotion of social justice. TANU, as the ruling party, recognized the need for ethical leadership to uphold its principles and fulfill its mandate of serving the interests of the Tanzanian people.

Second, the ideological motivations: TANU's leadership code of ethics was driven by its ideological commitment to African socialism and moral integrity. Julius Nyerere, the ideological architect of TANU, espoused the principles of Ujamaa, which emphasized collective responsibility, egalitarianism, and moral rectitude. Ethical leadership was seen as essential for realizing the ideals of Ujamaa and building a just and equitable society. By enshrining ethical standards for its leaders, TANU sought to maintain the integrity of its revolutionary agenda and ensure that governance remained accountable to the people.

Third, the preservation of revolutionary ideals: TANU sought to uphold the revolutionary ideals that had guided the struggle for independence, including integrity, selflessness, and service to the nation. Through TANU's unwavering dedication to these principles, Tanzania stood not just as a liberated nation but as a testament to the enduring spirit of revolution and the pursuit of a better future for all.

SOCIAL IMPACT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LEADERSHIP CODE

The leadership code has emerged as a crucial instrument in Tanzania's governance framework, designed to cultivate a culture of accountability and transparency within its public sector. By imposing strict standards of conduct on public officials, it aimed to hold them accountable for their actions and decisions, ensuring that they served the interests of the people above all else. Through transparent practices and the disclosure of assets, the code sought to diminish opportunities for corruption and malfeasance, fostering an environment of trust between the government and its citizens. By upholding these principles, Tanzania aimed to bolster the legitima-

cy of its institutions and demonstrate its unwavering commitment to good governance. The leadership code thus became a cornerstone of Tanzania's efforts to build a more accountable and transparent government, laying the foundation for a stronger, more equitable society.

Corruption emerged as a formidable obstacle to Tanzania's development trajectory, undermining progress and eroding public trust in governmental institutions. Recognizing this pervasive threat, the leadership code embarked on a multifaceted mission to combat corruption and foster a culture of ethical conduct among its leaders. Through stringent regulations and enforcement mechanisms, it aimed to dismantle the networks of corruption that hindered the nation's growth.

By holding leaders accountable for their actions and promoting transparency in governance, the code sought to create a hostile environment for corrupt practices to thrive. Moreover, it endeavored to empower citizens with the tools and knowledge to demand accountability from their leaders, thereby fostering a collective effort against corruption. As a cornerstone of Tanzania's anti-corruption strategy, the leadership code stood as a testament to the nation's unwavering commitment to integrity, justice, and the pursuit of a brighter future for all.

The leadership code has been fostering national unity and development, by promoting ethical leadership and good governance; It aims to foster national unity and accelerate Tanzania's socio-economic development.

It also has significant impact on Tanzanian politics and society, shaping the behavior of leaders and influencing governance practices. It fostered a culture of integrity and probity within TANU, encouraging leaders to prioritize the needs of the people over personal gain. By promoting ethical leadership, TANU sought to build trust and legitimacy among the populace, thereby strengthening its political authority and fostering social cohesion. Moreover, the emphasis on ethical governance set a precedent for future leaders and in-

Bibi Titi and other TANU members at Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial House, Mzimuni, Kinondoni MC, Dar es Salaam (FILE PHOTO).



stitutions in Tanzania, highlighting the importance of moral values in public service.

The TANU leadership code was established during Tanzania's early years after independence, primarily under the leadership of Julius Nyerere. Its relevance to governance in Tanzania today depends on various sectors, including political, social, and economic matters. For example, as the legacy of ethical leadership, the TANU leadership code emphasized ethical conduct, selflessness, and dedication to serving the nation. These values remain relevant in contemporary governance, as they contribute to fostering trust between the government and citizens. Also regarding anti-corruption efforts, the TANU leadership code aimed to combat corruption and promote transparency. In modern Tanzania, corruption remains a significant challenge, and the principles of the TANU leadership code can provide a basis for anti-corruption efforts

and institutional reforms.

TANU's advocacy for citizen involvement in decision-making processes marked a pivotal step towards democratization in Tanzania. By engaging citizens in governance, it empowered them to actively contribute to shaping policies and initiatives that directly impacted their lives. Today, the imperative of ensuring citizen participation in governance transcends borders, recognized globally as indispensable for the vitality of democracy and the preservation of accountability. Through mechanisms such as participatory budgeting, town hall meetings, and grassroots initiatives, governments worldwide strive to amplify the voices of their constituents, thereby enriching the democratic fabric of their societies. In embracing participatory governance, nations uphold the principle that the true essence of democracy lies in the active engagement and empowerment of every citizen, fostering a collective sense of ownership

and responsibility towards the common good.

TANU's advocacy for social justice and equitable resource distribution was foundational to Tanzania's post-independence vision, striving to rectify historical injustices and uplift marginalized communities. In today's global landscape, these principles remain indispensable for tackling inequality and fostering inclusive development. By prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, nations can mitigate the widening gap between the rich and the poor, ensuring that everyone has access to essential services, opportunities, and rights. Embracing social justice entails dismantling systemic barriers that perpetuate discrimination and exclusion, fostering a society where everyone can thrive regardless of their background or circumstances. In the face of evolving challenges such as climate change and economic volatility, upholding these principles becomes

even more urgent, as they lay the groundwork for resilient, cohesive societies capable of weathering adversity and forging a path towards a more equitable future.

TANU's emphasis on national unity and the rejection of tribalism and divisive politics laid the foundation for Tanzania's enduring commitment to fostering cohesion and inclusivity. In today's Tanzania, maintaining national cohesion and addressing ethnic tensions remain paramount for stability and sustainable development. By embracing diversity as a source of strength rather than division, Tanzania can harness the collective potential of its diverse population to drive progress and prosperity for all. Initiatives promoting interethnic dialogue, cultural exchange, and inclusive policymaking are instrumental in bridging divides and fostering a shared sense of national identity. Moreover, investing in education and socioeconomic opportunities for marginalized communities can address underlying grievances and promote social inclusion.

Globalization has interconnected economies and societies more than ever before, necessitating leaders to adopt a global perspective and engage in international cooperation to address issues like economic inequality, migration, and climate change. Embracing principles of cooperation, inclusivity, and sustainable development can guide leaders in navigating the complexities of a globalized world while safeguarding national interests and promoting the well-being of all citizens.

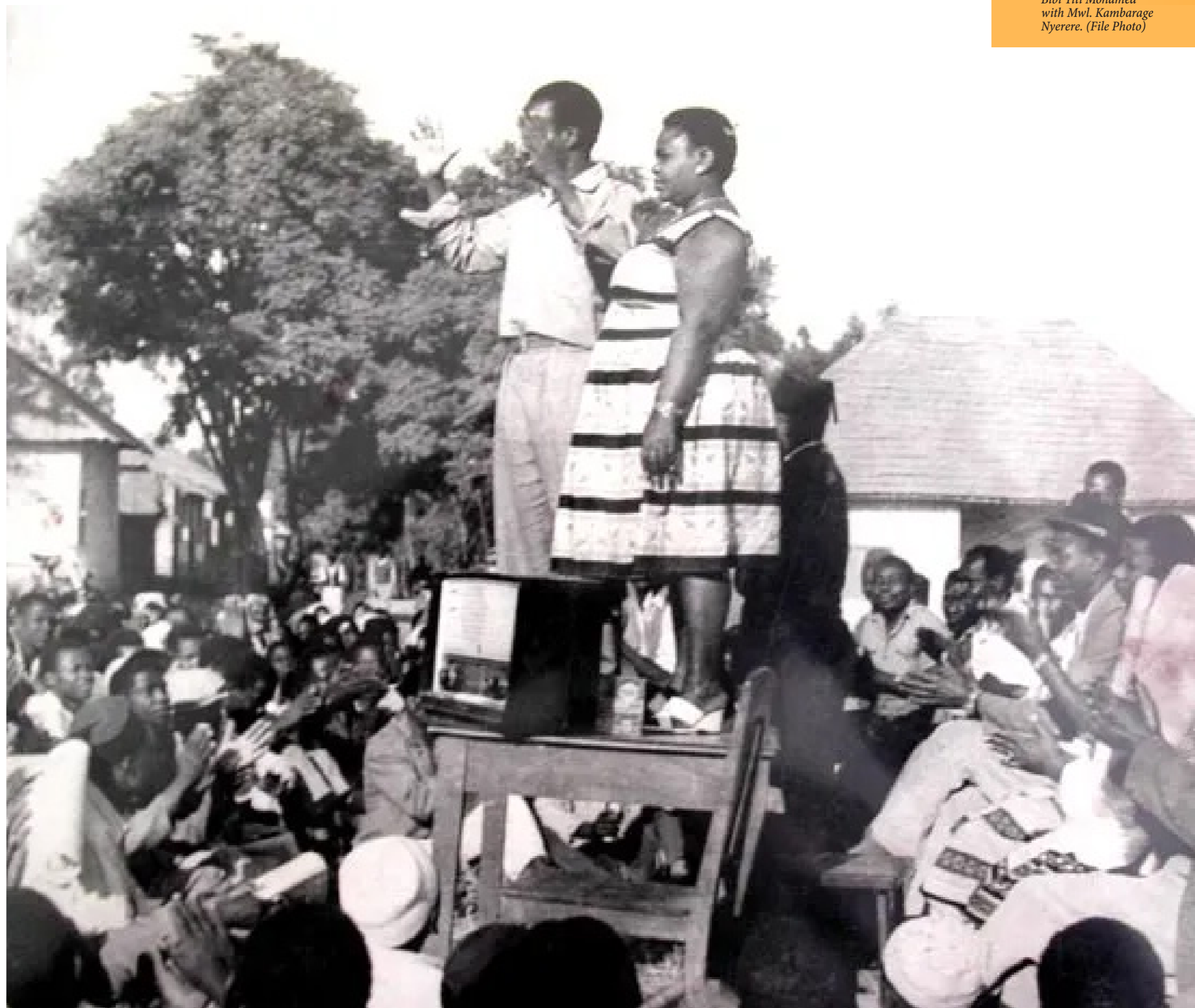
Environmental sustainability is another pressing concern that demands attention. Leaders must prioritize principles of stewardship and long-term thinking to address environmental degradation and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Incorporating sustainability into policymaking, promoting renewable ener-

gy sources, and advocating for conservation efforts are essential steps towards ensuring a habitable planet for future generations.

CONCLUSION

With the introduction of the multi-party state, the subject of leadership ethics was incorporated in section 132 of the Constitution and Parliament was required to give practical effect to the subject by setting up a tribunal to adjudicate on matters of leadership ethics. The new code passed by Parliament in May 2025 (Public Leadership Code of Ethics Act 1995 – part of the 12th Amendment to the Constitution) set up an Ethics Secretariat under an Ethics Commissioner. It differs in important respects from the TANU's leadership code. No longer is the holding of shares in public companies, or the ownership of rented housing, forbidden. Leaders are, however, required to declare their assets, including dividends and profits from stocks and shares or real estate other than personal houses. The definition of leader is wide-ranging from the president to the members of a local government authority, but this list can be altered by the minister in charge, who appears to be a minister of state in the office of the president, though not defined as such.

To conclude, it is the fact that TANU's leadership code represents a significant milestone in Tanzania's quest for ethical leadership and good governance. While the code has made strides in promoting transparency and accountability, challenges remain in its enforcement and implementation. Moving forward, concerted efforts are needed to address these challenges and uphold the principles enshrined in the leadership code, thereby advancing Tanzania's socio-economic development agenda and ethical leadership issues.



*Bibi Titi Mohamed
with Mwl. Kamarage
Nyerere. (File Photo)*

Innovating Africa: How Digital Platforms Are Reshaping Local Economies

Africa finds itself at a crucial juncture, with innovations that address fundamental human needs poised to influence its economic trajectory. While the continent missed the opportunities of the last two industrial revolutions, it now has a chance to leapfrog into the digital economy, offering services tailored to its needs. These digital platforms have the potential to create integrated markets, driving growth and helping many escape extreme poverty as Dr. Mahundu tells in this article

Dr. Fabian G. Mahundu, Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania

Despite facing challenges such as inflation, energy price increases, and food scarcity exacerbated by global conflicts, Africa is embracing technology on an unprecedented scale, paving the way for digital infrastructure to power the next decade of economic growth. A new generation of tech-savvy entrepreneurs will leverage these platforms to create businesses that drive job creation, skill development, and financial contribution.

THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE IN AFRICA

Africa, with its growing population of over 1.34 billion people (expected to exceed 1.6 billion after 2025), represents an untapped goldmine for investment. The continent invests heavily in broadband, connectivity, energy, and digital infrastructure to bridge the digital gap. However, challenges persist. Africa's digital infrastructure accounts for just over 1.2% of global gross profitability, with broadband speeds lagging other regions. Mobile phone penetration has surpassed one billion, but access remains uneven between urban and rural areas. Additionally, most small businesses, which employ 90% of Africa's population, face capital scarcity, making it challenging to scale digitally.

Africa's digital infrastructure includes submarine internet cables, access points for urban connectivity, and last-mile internet providers. Efforts to improve bandwidth, such as laying fibre optic cables, have led to significant progress. However, average broadband consumption remains low, and capital investment remains challenging. The

expansion of mobile infrastructure has been crucial, and mobile subscriptions are steadily approaching the population size. Although this infrastructure has made strides, constant investment is needed to meet the growing demand for high-quality internet.

Mobile technology is a central access point to digital platforms in Africa. While the continent still faces a digital divide, mobile technology has bridged many gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of digital infrastructure as countries with advanced systems recovered faster than those without. Despite the progress, over 60% of the population remains offline, particularly in rural areas. However, online payment services have boomed, particularly during the pandemic, making Africa home to 46% of the world's online payment accounts. The rise of mobile technology has created new economic architectures, enabling digital transactions and financial inclusion, even in remote areas.

IMPACT OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS ON LOCAL ECONOMIES

Digital platforms are significantly impacting local economies, though their effects are nuanced. Small businesses benefit from increased efficiency and visibility, but often face trust issues with these platforms, high costs, and concerns about being disintermediated. The platform economy is not without friction, while local professionals worry about losing client relationships, and small suppliers fear becoming dependent on large platforms.

Africa is projected to create over

85 million jobs by 2030, yet youth unemployment remains a major challenge. Digital platforms, particularly in the gig economy, offer significant opportunities for young people, providing low-capital entrepreneurial avenues. Platforms like ride-hailing and e-commerce create thousands of jobs, while micro-learning platforms develop high-demand skills. These platforms are crucial in enabling entrepreneurship and reducing unemployment.

The growth of digital platforms of-

fers SMEs access to management tools and resources that enable them to thrive in the era of digital economy. Digital capabilities are about scaling up businesses and enhancing existing enterprises' productivity. The rapid growth of the platform economy has not resulted in the concentration of market shares, as predicted by economic theory. Instead, SMEs continue to play a crucial role in local economies, often driving innovation and exports. As digital platforms continue to grow, they can provide

SMEs with access to markets, networks, and resources that were previously inaccessible.

The rise of e-commerce platforms is transforming consumer behaviour across Africa. With increased access to goods and services, consumers are now more informed and able to compare prices, rate products, and identify promotions. This shift has led to an empowered consumer base that demands higher-quality products and services. E-commerce has allowed smaller busi-



Pupils in Zanzibar learn basic ICT skills. Enhancing teachers' skills through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to align with the 21st-century educational advancements should be a firm commitment by governments. (INTERNET SOURCES)

nesses to compete with larger ones, particularly in niche markets with less fierce competition. This change has also influenced how products are marketed, as transparency and customer engagement become more crucial. Several digital platforms have found success in Africa, serving as case studies for the potential of digital innovation.

A vivid example would be the M-Pesa, an online payment service launched by Vodafone and Safaricom in 2007, which has revolutionised financial inclusion in Tanzania and Kenya. M-Pesa boasts over 30 million active users in Kenya, facilitating more than \$300 billion in transactions annually, equivalent to nearly 50% of Kenya's GDP. Tanzania, the second-largest market for M-Pesa, has around 13 million active users, with mobile money transactions accounting for over 35% of the country's GDP.

Another case is Jumia that has been often referred to as the "Amazon of Africa." Jumia has become the leading e-commerce platform on the continent. Despite challenges, such as missteps in product strategy, Jumia has successfully connected local merchants with global markets, providing access to goods ranging from electronics to groceries.

There is also Andela that trains African software developers and connects them with international companies needing cost-effective talent. This initiative has provided valuable training to African youth and helped bridge the gap between African talent and the global tech industry.

CHALLENGES FACING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Despite the growth of digital platforms, challenges persist, particularly in infrastructure, cybersecurity, and regulation. Power outages, weak logistics, and high unemployment complicate the potential for digital platforms to achieve critical mass. Regulatory frameworks are still catching up, and data privacy, intellectual property, and consumer protection remain unresolved. The rapid growth of digital platforms has raised concerns over their lack of regulation. Issues like fake news, political interference, and the monopolistic behaviour of large platforms require careful policy attention.

Tanzanian government-backed innovation hubs offer hope to jobless youth (The Citizen.html)



The digital divide, on the other hand, remains a significant barrier to inclusive growth in Africa. Many people still lack access to affordable devices and reliable internet connections, excluding them from digital platforms. While mobile phones are getting increasingly common, many users still struggle with high data costs and limited access to the internet. Bridging this divide is essential for ensuring that digital transformation benefits all population segments, including women and low-income groups.

Cybersecurity is a growing concern as digital platforms become more pervasive. The risk of cybercrime, including phishing, ransomware, and data breach-

es, is particularly high in Africa, where many businesses and individuals lack adequate security measures. Governments and companies must prioritise cybersecurity and raise awareness about the risks of cybercrime. Digital platforms must also ensure that their users are protected from malicious activities.

GOVERNMENT AND POLICY INITIATIVES

Governments play a crucial role in supporting digital innovation. By investing in digital infrastructure and creating a favourable business environment, governments can help stimulate the growth of local digital platforms. Public-private

partnerships are essential in this process, as many digital platforms emerge from university research labs or small startups. However, governments must ensure that their policies do not stifle innovation while protecting consumers and promoting fair competition.

Digital literacy is essential for enabling people to participate in the digital economy. Programs that teach digital skills to users and developers are needed to bridge the skills gap. STEM (namely science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education is critical, as African youth must have the skills to thrive in a technology-driven world. Governments and private sector com-

panies must collaborate to ensure that the education system produces the talent needed to support the digital economy.

Generally, the future of digital platforms in Africa will be shaped by advances in AI, blockchain, and the gig economy. AI is expected to revolutionise platforms' operation, enabling more innovative services and improving efficiency. Blockchain technology can potentially disrupt the financial sector, providing decentralised transaction solutions. The gig economy will continue growing, creating new self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Digital platforms are transforming Africa's economies, creating new opportunities for entrepreneurship, creation of jobs, and innovation. However, significant challenges remain, including infrastructure gaps, regulatory issues, and the digital divide. Governments, businesses, and consumers must work together to ensure that the benefits of digital transformation are widely shared, and the risks are managed effectively. The future of Africa's digital economy depends on the ability to build inclusive, sustainable digital platforms that empower local communities and foster long-term growth.

Economic Diplomacy: A Catalyst to Economic Prosperity of Local Tanzanians

The purpose of this article is to provide analysis and recommendations to regional and national policymakers to guide the implementation of Tanzania's economic diplomacy in a manner that realistically benefits Tanzania's local populace.

By Bruno D. Sakalani, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim Centre for Foreign Relations (SAS-CFR), Tanzania



Tanzania Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Hon. Ambassador Mahmoud Thabit Kombo (Right) met with Ambassador of the Republic of Burundi in Tanzania, Hon. Leontine Nzeyimana. (Source: Tanzania Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation)

The emphasis of the foreign policy of the Tanzania officially shifted from political diplomacy to economic diplomacy in 2001 under the late President Benjamin William Mka-pa. This shift was because of Tanzania's

need to secure benefits as new opportunities in technology, export markets, foreign direct investment, grants and concessional loans, tourism and creation of employment were emerging.

Bayne and Woolcock relate eco-

economic diplomacy to how states and non-state actors conduct their external economic relations in the international arena. Their book, *The New Diplomacy*, dives deeper to expound on how the practice of economic diplomacy does

not solely lie on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a particular state but rather each ministry, members of parliament as well as NGOs. Economic diplomacy is built upon the pillars of trade and investment promotion, negotiations on economic agreements and development cooperation.

The United Republic of Tanzania has been building its "house" of economic diplomacy on these pillars, this

vestment and Special Economic Zones Authority (TISEZA), TISEZA has become a flyer detailing the why and the where in matters of investment in Tanzania. Its official website is an epitome of a billboard highlighting economic diplomacy and the potential opportunities it encompasses.

Moreover, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East Africa Cooperation has been expanded to accommodate the growing number of diplomatic missions being opened abroad. From the 179.9 billion Tanzanian shillings that the ministry received in the fiscal year 2024/2025 to this fiscal year's (2025/2026) 340.5 billion Tanzanian shillings the ministry has been allocated, the budget aims to equip the ministry with infrastructure upgrades, digital systems, strategic initiatives, employees' salaries, operational costs, and maintenance of embassies and consulates, all of which contribute to the seamless implementation of economic diplomacy in pursuit of national development.

Despite all these steps taken to pragmatize its essence in Tanzania's economy, it is yet vague to a Tanzania local living in rural Nkasi or in the outskirts of Mbaba Bay how economic diplomacy can be a potential catalyst to raise their standard of living. This article attempts to highlight what the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) has been doing to do to leverage economic diplomacy, in this case, bilateral relations and strategic partnerships to boost the economic prosperity of a local Tanzanian in the sectors of agriculture, education and health.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

In 2024, the agriculture sector alone accounted for 26.3% of Tanzania's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite this notable dominance, obstacles such as soaring prices of seeds, crop and animal diseases, the unreliability of government subsidies as well as the ever-changing nature of global market prices still drag the agricultural sector behind hindering its potential to achieve more. Economic diplomacy can therefore be utilized to strike bilateral

agreements and strategic partnerships that can help both farmers and animal keepers to increase their produce while adhering to sustainable development goals.

In this instance, the Tanzanian government has maintained partnerships with several partners specifically "Team Europe" (the European Union, its Member States, and Institutions) that has been implementing agricultural projects in the country. Evidently is the Funguo Innovation Programme that was co-funded by the European Union, the Republic of Finland and the British Government (FCDO) which has played a vital role in boosting the agricultural produce of coffee farmers in Kilimanjaro through pest control and by collaborating with the Tanzania Coffee Board (TCB) and other stakeholders the European Union has continued to offer technical assistance and capacity building, ensuring that farmers and exporters can benefit from international markets.

EDUCATION SECTOR

It is widely accepted that education is particularly important to the economic development of any nation, as it is through formal education that the populace becomes skilled and specializes in various disciplines that help the economy of an individual and the nation flourish simultaneously.

Tanzania has been leveraging the economic partnerships she has with countries like China to make possible the transfer of knowledge to and from her population, evidently via formalising the teaching of Kiswahili in Chinese institutes such as the Beijing Foreign Studies University which has a Kiswahili department and organizations like the Kiswahili Learning Centre (Kilece) in Shanghai that offers Kiswahili classes to Chinese locals. Moreover, in Tanzania through the Belt and Road Initiative, the Chinese language is being taught at the Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam.

The prevalent educational cooperation between Tanzania and China has not only promoted cultural diplomacy between the two countries whose national languages have a total of around

A coffee farmer in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania inspects his farm.
(Source: Perfect Daily Grand)



1.6 billion speakers but has also become a very vital tool in the matters related to economic relations between them as the mastery of either of the two languages has enabled a lot of Tanzanians to be in a suitable position to contest for opportunities inside and outside Tanzania that require the mastery of the Chinese language – such is the deployment

of Kiswahili teachers to China and Chinese teachers to Tanzania.

The reciprocation of this partnership has become a huge opportunity that a considerable number of Tanzanians with the mastery of the Chinese language benefit from hence potentially contributing to Tanzania's Gross National Product (GNP) and the better-

ment of their individual standards of living.

HEALTH SERVICES

Vivid in its securing of the \$2.5 billion concessional loan portfolio from South Korea which includes funding for health among other sectors, Tanzania utilises international partnerships

to secure funds for its health sector. Furthermore, Tanzania maintains strategic collaborations with foreign conglomerates like Abbott which has been operating in Tanzania's health sector for nearly two decades investing more than \$130 million that has helped accomplish the shared goal of bringing positive change to Tanzania's healthcare

system by influencing the modernizing the Central Pathology Laboratory (CPL) building at Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) and developed sustainable improvements in the quality of testing, treatment and care across the country in general.

A healthy population conceives a labour force that is physically and

mentally fit to guarantee the expected productivity that will contribute to the desired economic outcome. Inasmuch as, the United Republic of Tanzania applies international negotiations with partner states and relevant international organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the Fleming Fund. These organizations collaborate with the Tanzanian government on various initiatives such as developing national action plans, strengthening surveillance and laboratories, and raising public awareness of health issues in the aspects of Tanzania's National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (NAP-AMR) and Maternal and Child health as well as communicable diseases.

In spite of all the efforts that Tanzania has been putting to utilize bilateral relations and strategic partnerships to create opportunities for investment to Tanzanians at home and abroad, enhanced interministerial coordination is very key in the process of an amalgamated effort to pragmatize the implementation of economic diplomacy in Tanzania's economy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot by itself shoulder this responsibility, it still needs inputs from experts in specific sectors to ensure sound actions and reactions from Tanzania in the management of bilateral and multilateral relations as they bear the prospects and potential to affect the lives of local Tanzanians.

The dynamics of Tanzania's economic diplomacy tend to lean towards the symptoms of the dependency syndrome; foreign companies and international donors provide more than what Tanzania offers in these relations. It is therefore important for the Tanzanian government to promote local industries and protect its natural resources so as to reduce overdependence on loans and foreign aid that rarely comes without strings attached. This is not an overnight miracle, it is a long complex process whose fruition can only come because of the aggregation of intersectoral and as expounded above, interministerial efforts through the proper channels and platform.

SADC and Julius Nyerere's Vision: Reviving Regional Integration and Pan-African Solidarity

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) stands as a testament to Julius Kambarage Nyerere's enduring influence on Pan-Africanism. Nyerere championed the idea that true independence extends beyond political sovereignty to encompass economic liberation. This article by Adili Zela gives a background and reasons why the body is still relevant.

By Adili Y. Zela, Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania

Founded in 1980 to reduce Southern Africa's economic dependence on apartheid South Africa, SADC has evolved into a formidable coalition of 16 member states, representing over 360 million people and boasting a GDP exceeding \$700 billion.

Today, SADC's mission has expanded to include political stability, peace-building, and social development, reflecting Nyerere's vision for a united Africa. As global dynamics shift and economic globalization intensifies, revisiting Nyerere's principles becomes increasingly vital. The region continues to grapple with economic dependency and trade imbalances.

NYERERE'S LEGACY: PILLARS OF REGIONAL UNITY AND COOPERATION

Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Tanzania's first president, remains a pivotal figure in shaping Africa's post-independence landscape through his steadfast commitment to Pan-Africanism and economic self-reliance. His leadership was instrumental in establishing the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980, which aimed to reduce economic dependence on apartheid-era South Africa and promote regional solidarity. Nyerere believed that true independence transcended political sovereignty, emphasizing that economic cooperation among African states was essential for genuine autonomy.

In his influential work, "Freedom and Unity," he argued for collective action to break free from neo-colonial economic constraints. Nyerere envisioned a self-reliant regional economy that could withstand external shocks and reduce

dependency on foreign aid. His advocacy for political solidarity was evident in his support for liberation movements across Southern Africa, which later became key players in SADC.

Today, Nyerere's legacy is reflected in SADC's ongoing initiatives aimed at fostering regional economic integration and political stability, inspiring contemporary leaders to pursue a more equitable and prosperous Africa. His vision continues to resonate, underscoring the importance of unity and cooperation in the continent's development.

EMPIRICAL INSIGHTS: THE BENEFITS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

As regional economic integration gains traction globally, Southern Africa stands at a crossroads with SADC. Despite its transformative potential, intra-SADC trade remains a mere 19% of the total trade volume, starkly contrasting with the European Union's 60% and ASEAN's 25%. This underperformance stems from persistent challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and regulatory inconsistencies, which stifle economic growth and job creation.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) emerges as a pivotal opportunity to enhance regional integration, aiming to create a single market across 54 nations by eliminating tariffs on 90% of intra-African goods. Projections suggest that AfCFTA could boost intra-African trade by 52% by 2025, fostering new trade corridors and expanding market access.

For SADC nations, particularly landlocked countries like Malawi and Zimbabwe,

improved trade connectivity could diversify their economies and alleviate logistical challenges. Furthermore, strengthened economic ties may bolster regional peace and political stability, echoing Julius Nyerere's vision of solidarity through cooperation. To harness these benefits, SADC must prioritize infrastructural investments and align with continental strategies, paving the way for a more integrated and prosperous future.

CASE STUDY: INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

SADC has showcased the transformative power of regional cooperation through its Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP). This strategic initiative aims to address infrastructure deficits across member states, echoing Julius Nyerere's vision of collective effort for economic independence and sustainable development. A standout achievement of RIDMP is the Kazungula Bridge, completed in 2021, which connects Zambia and Botswana over the Zambezi River. This 923-meter structure has revolutionized trade by significantly reducing border crossing time from days to

mere hours, thereby lowering transaction costs and enhancing cross-border mobility.

The bridge not only facilitates trade but also fosters regional integration, promoting inclusive economic growth and improving access to markets for landlocked nations like Zambia and Zimbabwe. Funded collaboratively by Zambia, Botswana, and development partners such as the African Development Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency, the project exemplifies successful multilateral collaboration. The Kazungula Bridge serves as a model for future infrastructure initiatives, highlighting the importance of political will and synchronized planning in achieving regional impact. Ultimately, it embodies Nyerere's Pan-Africanist ideals, illustrating how infrastructure can bridge nations toward collective prosperity and unity.

PERSISTENT CHALLENGES TO REGIONAL INTEGRATION

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has made notable progress in enhancing regional infrastructure and connectivity; however, achieving full eco-



Mwalimu Julius Nyerere

economic and political integration remains a complex endeavor. Persistent political fragmentation across member states poses a significant barrier, as varying levels of stability hinder policy alignment and collaborative decision-making. Countries grappling with governance crises often struggle to fulfill regional commitments, eroding trust essential for effective integration.

Economic disparities further complicate the integration landscape. Wealthier nations like South Africa and Botswana possess greater resources, creating tensions with less developed states such as Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This imbalance can slow collective progress, as wealthier countries may resist shouldering disproportionate burdens, while poorer nations often lack the capacity to implement integration frameworks effectively.

Financial constraints also play a critical role, with many SADC nations facing tight fiscal conditions that limit investment in regional projects. Additionally, the influence of external actors, particularly from China and the EU, risks undermining intra-African trade potential and diluting SADC's negotiating power. To realize Julius Nyerere's vision of unity and collective prosperity, SADC must renew its commitment to mutual support, shared growth, and sustainable financing.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS: REVITALIZING NYERERE'S VISION

To address the multifaceted challenges hindering regional integration, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) must recalibrate its strategies, echoing Julius Nyerere's transformative aspirations. Central to this endeavor is the reinforcement of political commitment and regional cohesion, urging member states to prioritize collective goals over national interests. High-level dialogues and mutual accountability mechanisms are vital for fostering trust and ensuring the consistent implementation of regional agreements.

Infrastructure development stands as a critical pillar for achieving economic convergence. The Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) should guide investments in the transport,

energy, and digital sectors, enhancing intra-regional trade and stimulating private sector engagement. Harmonizing trade and regulatory policies is equally essential; aligning customs regimes and simplifying border procedures will reduce transaction costs and bolster local industries.

Moreover, SADC must adopt a unified foreign policy to amplify its voice on global issues, while deepening civic and institutional engagement to ensure inclusive policymaking. By operationalizing these strategies, SADC can revitalize Nyerere's vision, paving the way for a sustainable and equitable development trajectory in Southern Africa.

CONCLUSION: RENEWING COMMITMENT TO REGIONAL SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION

Julius Kambarage Nyerere's enduring legacy continues to serve as a guiding light for Southern Africa, emphasizing unity, self-reliance, and collective prosperity. His vision for regional integration was not just aspirational; it was a pragmatic approach to ensure that Africa's political independence translates into economic strength and social justice. In the face of contemporary challenges include economic fragmentation, infrastructure deficits, and political instability, SADC must recommit to Nyerere's ideals of Pan-African solidarity.

To effectively tackle these issues, SADC needs to promote political unity among its member states, invest in coordinated infrastructure, harmonize trade frameworks, and present a unified diplomatic front on the global stage. Achieving these goals requires renewed political will, citizen engagement, and robust institutional accountability. Visionary leadership is essential to prioritize long-term regional benefits over short-term national interests.

As advocates for these principles, The Leadership Magazine emphasizes that the journey toward deeper regional cooperation and authentic Pan-African unity is both necessary and achievable. By embracing Nyerere's legacy and translating it into actionable strategies, SADC can emerge as a model of integration and resilience, demonstrating that Africa's strength lies in its unity and collective future.



Dr Kenneth Kaunda first President of independent Zambia (right), Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Tanzania (middle) and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (left)



Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School.

