

Chapter 1

The Path to the Socialist Modernization with Chinese Characteristics



Modernization has recently become the major trend in world historical development. However, there is no fixed pattern for the path to modernization—only when each individual country walks its own path that matches its national conditions can it be successful.

What is modernization? Modernization is the initiation of industrialization and the promotion of long-term sustained economic growth by beginning “a series of basic production functions (or combination of the factors of production) in the national economy that continuously undergo radical changes from low to high-level.”¹ This can initiate industrialization, promote long-term and continuous economic growth, boost the transformation of social productive forces, and then further promotes the fundamental transformation of both the social and economic structure. What are the elements of modernization? These include more than ten elements: population, labor force, capital, education, technology, science, information, digital technology, culture, energy, resource, environment, ecology, national defense, etc., all of which are important factors for the occurrence and completion of the above-mentioned modernization process on a regional, national and worldwide level.

1.1 Modernization with Chinese Characteristics and Its Main Features

In the centuries-old historical process of global modernization, different countries have different modes of modernization due to different national conditions, different paths taken, different outcomes, and different timing for beginning modernization. There are nearly 200 countries in the world today and thus there are nearly 200 patterns.

¹ Peigang (2002).

What is the modernization with Chinese characteristics? It is socialist modernization, which is essentially different from the northern countries that have achieved modernization (referring to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries), and the path taken is also different from the developing countries that are undergoing modernization (referring to non-OECD countries). It is the path to socialist modernization most suitable for China's national conditions.

In the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping summarized modernization with Chinese characteristics as: the socialist modernization led by the Communist Party of China, which not only has the common characteristics of the modernization of all countries, but also has Chinese characteristics based on national conditions. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is a modernization of a huge population. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is a path of modernization in which all people achieve common prosperity. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is a modernization in which material civilization and spiritual civilization have a coordinated development. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is the modernization with a harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is a modernization that takes the path of peaceful development.²

The modernization with Chinese characteristics possesses common features of the modernization of many countries around the globe. This manifests itself as follows: First, the continuous growth of per capita income has successively gone through several stages including the extremely low-income level (1949–1990), the low-income level (1990–2000), the lower middle-income level (2000–2010), the upper middle-income level (2010–2020),³ and will enter the high-income stage in the future.

Second, it also goes through the continuous accelerated process of industrialization: the stage of initially establishing an independent industrial and national economic system (1953–1978), the stage of accelerating industrialization (1978–2006⁴), and the stage of accelerating informatization (2000–2020⁵).

² Jinping (2022).

³ According to purchasing power parity per capita GDP (international dollar in 2017), China had a GDP of 1424 international dollars in 1990, equivalent to the average level of low-income countries (1378 international dollars), and 3712 international dollars in 2001, equivalent to the average level of lower middle-income countries (3758 international dollars). By 2021, China had a GDP of 17,503 international dollars, which is close to the average level of upper middle-income countries (18,195 international dollars). Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?locations=CN-XM-XT-XN>.

⁴ In 2006, the industrial added value accounted for the highest proportion of GDP, which was 42.0%. Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022).

⁵ China's Internet penetration rate has risen from 2% in 2000 to 70% in 2020, higher than the world's average penetration rate (60%), but lower than that of OECD countries (86%). Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=CN-1W-OE>.

Third, it goes through stages for continuous accelerated process of urbanization, from low urbanization (1949–1980) to accelerated urbanization (1980–2020⁶).

Fourth is the continuous improvement of the level of human capital, such as the increase in the average life expectancy, from 35 years before 1949 to 48 years in 1964, reaching the life expectancy level of lower middle-income countries (48 years). China's average life expectancy reached 63 years by 1974, which indicated reaching the level of upper middle-income countries (63 years).⁷ By 2021, it reached 78.2 years, which is close to the average level of high-income countries (80 years in 2020), and surpasses the life expectancy of the United States (77 years).⁸ Another example is the increase in per capita years of education, from one year in 1950 to 10.8 years in 2020.

Modernization with Chinese characteristics can be summarized into five factors: The First is the ever-increasing modernization factors, such as a country's total power generation and per capita power generation. The second is the ever-increasing socialist factors, such as the fundamental socialist political system, basic political system, important political system, basic socialist economic system, and social system. The third is the ever-increasing Chinese cultural factors, advanced socialist culture, core socialist values, national cultural soft power, and Chinese cultural influence. The fourth is the ever-increasing green ecological factors, including the construction of ecological civilization, adherence to the concept that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, green, circular, and low-carbon development, and building an ecological civilization system. The fifth is to comprehensively strengthen the political factors of the leadership of the Communist Party of China, adhere to the centralized and unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, improve the CPC's leadership system, ensure the authority and centralized and unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, and ensure that it fully exerts its core role in providing overall leadership and coordinating the efforts of all sides. Among the five factors, the leadership of the party has become the core factor, which greatly promotes the interconnection, interaction, mutual promotion and complementarity of the other factors. These together constitute the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. There are five major advantages, that is, in addition to the latecomer advantage of developing countries, China's unique advantages are: the advantages of the socialist system, the long-term advantages of Chinese cultural traditions, the advantages of green innovation and ecology, and the core advantages of the political leadership of the Communist Party of China, which is the biggest advantage.⁹

⁶ China's urbanization rate exceeded 20% in 1980, 50% in 2011, and reached 65% in 2021, surpassing the world's urbanization rate (57%). Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=CN-1W>.

⁷ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=CN-XM-XT-XN>.

⁸ Data Source: World Bank Database: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=XD-US-CN&most_recent_value_desc=false.

⁹ Hu et al. (2018a).

As General Secretary Xi Jinping said: The essential requirements of the modernization with Chinese characteristics are: adherence to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, adherence to socialism with Chinese characteristics, achievement of a high-quality development, development of a people's democracy, enrichment of the people's internal world, realization of common prosperity for all people, promotion of the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, promotion of the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and creation of a new era of human civilization.¹⁰

In the following section, in order to deeply analyze the path to the modernization with Chinese characteristics, I will summarize it and break down its ten main characteristics.¹¹

1. The Modernization Led by the Communist Party of China

The fundamental institutional conditions for China to realize socialist modernization are extremely unique. Modernization has become a worldwide trend. If developing countries want to realize modernization, one of the basic core issues they encounter is who will initiate and lead this modernization? **The Communist Party of China has become the leading core force and the biggest driving factor of the modernization with Chinese characteristics:** “adhering to the overall leadership of the Party and constantly improving the Party’s leadership”.¹² “The Party exercises overall leadership over all areas of endeavor in every part of the country.”¹³ This ensures that there will not be the flip-flop or countermeasure mechanism on party alternation and parties taking turns in power in China, and helps maintain the long-term, stable and continuous governance of the ruling party, while also constantly innovating and advancing the modernization with Chinese characteristics with the times.

The realization of socialist modernization has always been the historical mission of the Communist Party of China. In 1945, Mao Zedong envisioned in the Report to the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China: “After the political conditions for new democracy are obtained, the Chinese people and their government must take concrete steps to **gradually build up heavy and light industries within a few years, so that China will change from an agricultural country to an industrial country.**” He also pointed out: “**Without the efforts of the Communist Party of China and Chinese Communists as the mainstay of the Chinese people, China’s independence and liberation would be impossible, and China’s industrialization and agricultural modernization would also be impossible.**”¹⁴ Later, the historical facts of New China showed that without the Communist Party of China, there would be no New China; without New China, there would be no industrialization and

¹⁰ Jinping (2022).

¹¹ Hu (2022).

¹² Jinping (2021a).

¹³ On December 14, 1973, Mao Zedong said in a talk with some members of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee: The Party exercises overall leadership over all areas of endeavor in every part of the country. Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (2011b).

¹⁴ *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 3. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1991: 1081, 1098.

modernization with Chinese characteristics; without the modernization with Chinese characteristics, there would be no strong China.

In order to gain the power and opportunity for the launching and leading of modernization with Chinese characteristics, the Communist Party of China has paid a huge price. From the founding of the Communist Party of China in 1921 to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, in the 28 years, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, "revolutionary martyrs" whose names can be found out are more than 3.7 million, an average of 370 people dying per day. Many people have created the fundamental political and social conditions for China to realize socialist modernization. In this sense, if one can declare that "without the Communist Party, there would be no new China", then in a similar trend, after the founding of new China, "there would be no modernization with Chinese characteristics without the Communist Party."

From the perspective of the national development life cycle, from a traditional agricultural country to a modern country, the modernization with Chinese characteristics has gone through at least three stages of development: the period from 1949 to 1978 was the preparatory growth period, that is, on the foundation of intense poverty, the country first started industrialization and modernization. It did this through self-reliance, establishing a relatively independent and complete industrial system and national economic system, and establishing modern education, culture and healthcare system, investing in all people.

In the early days of the founding of New China, the modernization with Chinese characteristics began with the industrialization with Chinese characteristics. In 1953, Mao Zedong proposed the "one industrialization and three transformations", and declared, "It will be a transitional period from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the basic completion of socialist transformation. The Party's general line and mission in this transitional period is to gradually realize socialist industrialization and gradually realize the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft industry, and capitalist industry and commerce (referring to the "three transformations") by the state over a long period of time."¹⁵ This is different from Western-style industrialization, and is clearly a socialist industrialization. This was the starting point of industrialization and modernization in China's transition to socialism. At that time, the CPC Central Committee considered using three Five-Year Plans (that is a total of 15 years, from 1953 to 1968) to gradually transition to a socialist society. As a result, the "three transformations" were completed in advance in 1956 and the historical task of transitioning from a new democracy society to socialism has been basically achieved.¹⁶

In 1956, the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that the principal contradiction in China is the contradiction between the people's demand for the establishment of an advanced industrial country and the reality of an under-developed agricultural country, the contradiction between the needs of the

¹⁵ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 6. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999: 316.

¹⁶ Party History Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (2011).

people for rapid economic and cultural development and the current economic and cultural inability to meet those needs. Thus, the current main task of the Party and the people is to concentrate efforts to resolve this contradiction and to transform our country from an under-developed agricultural country into an advanced agricultural country as soon as possible.¹⁷ The Constitution of the Communist Party of China adopted by the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that the task of the Communist Party of China is to develop the national economy in a planned way, to realize the industrialization of the country as quickly as possible, to carry out the technological transformation of the national economy in a systematic and step-by-step manner, and to ensure China has a strong modern industry, modern agriculture, modern transportation system and modern national defense.¹⁸ This is the primary mission of the Communist Party of China for the realization of socialist modernization (shortly the “four modernizations”).

In 1964, Premier Zhou Enlai proposed in the Government Work Report at the first session of the Third National People’s Congress “to build China into a socialist power with modern agriculture, modern industry, modern national defense and modern science and technology, catching up with and exceeding the advance level established by global peers, and this was the ‘Strategic Objectives of Four Modernizations’”.¹⁹

In 1975, Premier Zhou Enlai, on behalf of the CPC Central Committee and Mao Zedong, reiterated the mission of realizing the “four modernizations” and the “two-step” strategic vision at the first session of the Fourth National People’s Congress: the first step was to build an independent and relatively complete industrial system and national economic system within 15 years, that is, before 1980; the second step was to fully realize agricultural, industrial, national defense and technological modernization allowing China to count itself among the world elite in the twentieth century.²⁰

By 1980, the first step of China’s strategic goal of “four modernizations”, was basically realized. As Comrade Ye Jianying, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, said, we have established an independent and relatively complete industrial system and national economic system on the basis of poverty and backwardness left over from old China. The fixed assets of enterprises of ownership by the whole people reached CNY 320 billion, which is equivalent to 25 times of the industrial fixed assets accumulated in old China in the past nearly 100 years. From 1952 to 1978, the average annual growth rate of China’s industrial output value reached 11.2%. Great achievements had been made in all sectors of the national economy.²¹ Additionally, calculated at constant prices, China’s annual average growth rate of GDP has reached 6.0%, and the average annual growth rate of

¹⁷ Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (2011a).

¹⁸ Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (2011a: 270).

¹⁹ *Selected Works of Zhou Enlai*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1984: 439.

²⁰ *Selected Works of Zhou Enlai*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1984: 479.

²¹ Ye (1979), *Selected Important Documents Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee* (Vol. 1), People’s Publishing House, 1982 Edition, pp. 212–213.

GDP per capita has reached 4.0%,²² much higher than any period before 1949. It is also higher than India's average annual growth rate of 4.0% of GDP and 1.8% of GDP per capita in the same period.²³ China's per capita life expectancy increased from 35 years in 1949 to 67.8 years in 1981, significantly higher than India's 54 years,²⁴ which already demonstrates the superiority of China's socialist system.

The new period of reform and opening up and socialist modernization can be regarded as the second stage of the life cycle of the development of a modern country with Chinese characteristics, that is, the period of economic take-off, to achieve sustained and high economic growth. The Communist Party of China has made it clear that the principal contradiction in China's society is the contradiction between the growing material and cultural needs of the people and the lagging social production. The primary task of Communist Party of China was still to achieve socialist modernization, and Deng Xiaoping made it clearer that it was to be a modernization with Chinese characteristics. The core question was, what stage of socialist modernization was China in, and how does one determine the long-term goals and implementation paths for modernization? In this regard, Deng Xiaoping's more liberal and pragmatic attitude allowed for a revision of Mao Zedong's four modernizations with Chinese characteristics by the end of twentieth century.

In 1979, Deng Xiaoping formally proposed the "Four Modernizations with Chinese Characteristics" based on the basic national conditions of China's weak economic base, large population and small amount of arable land.²⁵ This actually adjusted the original goal of realizing "Four Modernizations with Chinese Characteristics" in a comprehensive way by the end of the twentieth century and proposed the more practical goal of "providing a relatively comfortable life for the people" and "building a moderately prosperous society in all respects".

In 1982, the 12th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the strategic goals of taking "two steps": by the end of the twentieth century, the total output value of industry and agriculture will be quadrupled and people have reached a "well-off standard of living".²⁶ This was functionally intending to reach a lower-middle income country status.

In April 1987, Deng Xiaoping, for the first time, clearly put forward the strategic goal of China's economic construction. He roughly divided it into "three steps". He envisaged the following: from 1981 to the end of this century, it took 20 years

²² Computational Data Source: Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China: 70 Years of Glory: New China's Economic and Social Development Achievements 1949–2019, China Statistics Press, 2019 edition, p. 373.

²³ Angus Maddison, *Historical Statistics of the World Economy: 1–2008 AD*.

²⁴ World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?end=2020&locations=IN-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

²⁵ On December 6, 1979, Deng Xiaoping met with Japanese Prime Minister Masahiro Ohira and said: "The four modernizations we want to achieve are four modernizations with Chinese characteristics. Our concept of four modernizations is not the concept of modernization like yours, but instead is a represents the goal of a 'home of moderate prosperity'." GNP per capita reached USD 1000. *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994: 237.

²⁶ Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (1986).

to quadruple the per capita Gross National Product (GNP) and reach the well-off level, which means that the annual per capita GNP of from USD 800 to 1000. By the middle of the next century, we can reach the level of a medium-level developed country, with a per capita GNP of USD 4000 and an annual gross GNP of USD 6 trillion, allowing China to rank among the top nations in the world.²⁷ In October 1987, the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China further clarified that the strategic deployment of China's economic construction was to be roughly divided into three steps. The first step is to double the GNP level in 1980 and solve the problem of providing basic levels of food and clothing for the people. This task had been basically achieved. The second step is to double the GNP again, and ensure the people a well-off level by the end of the twentieth century. The third step is that by the middle of the twenty-first century, the per capita GNP will reach the level of medium-level developed countries, the people's life will be relatively prosperous, and modernization will be basically achieved. Then development will continue from this basis.²⁸

In 1992, the report to the 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the criteria of "Three Favorables" for the first time: whether what we do is conducive to the development of the productive forces of the socialist society, whether what we do is helpful for the enhancement of the comprehensive national strength of the socialist country, and whether what we do can contribute to the improvement of the people's living standards,²⁹ which can be viewed as strategic steps of the modernization with Chinese characteristics. At that time, the US gross domestic product (GDP) (the international dollar in 2017) accounted for 19.6% of the world (1990), which was 6.1 times that of China's GDP (3.2%).³⁰ The United States dominated the world, sanctioned China, the Soviet Union disintegrated, and Eastern Europe underwent drastic changes—the socialist movement was at a low, and the West was very strong.³¹ China has always adhered to the road of socialism and reform and opening up, has withstood the economic sanctions and political pressure from the West led by the United States. It is just as Jiang Zemin said: "International hostile forces are trying their best to implement a political strategy of Westernization and division of our country. Taiwan's separatist forces are going further and further

²⁷ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 3. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994: 224–225.

²⁸ Compiled by the Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (1991).

²⁹ Jiang Zemin: "Accelerate Reform, Opening up and Modernization and Achieve Greater Success in Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics", October 12, 1992, the Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee, People's Publishing House. *Selected Important Documents Since the Fourth CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995: 11.

³⁰ Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?locations=US-1W-CN>.

³¹ Jiang Zemin stated at an Enlarged Meeting of the Central Military Commission in December 1991: based on the comparison of overall international political and economic forces, the West is strong and our socialist countries are weak, and this situation will last over a long period. For a long time, we will face a relatively severe situation. The key is to do well in our country's domestic affairs, concentrate our efforts on economic development, and consolidate China's socialist position. Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (2010).

down the road of ‘Taiwan independence’, and the situation in the Taiwan Strait is becoming increasingly severe.”³² Finally, China has tided over this toughest time. China still maintained rapid economic growth. During the period from 1990 to 2000, the average annual growth rate of GDP reached 10.4%, which was higher than the world average growth rate (2.9%), ranking among the top in the world. China’s GDP (international dollar in 2017) accounted for 3.2% of the world in 1990 to 6.4% in 2000,³³ doubling that of 1990.

China realized the strategic vision of the second step of the “three-step” strategy for modernization as scheduled. Calculated at constant prices, in 2000, China’s GDP was 6.55 times that of 1980, and the per capita GDP was 5.09 times that of 1980, reaching 3452 international dollars,³⁴ which greatly exceeded the expected target in the Reports to 13th and 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In November 2002, the report to the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China officially announced: China’s economic aggregate has ranked sixth in the world from eleventh in 1990, and peoples’ lives have achieved a historic leap from secure access to food and clothing to moderate prosperity. It is also clear that we have successfully achieved the goals of the first and second steps of the “three-step” strategy for the modernization, and people’s lives have generally reached a moderately prosperous level. To this end, in the first 20 years of this century, China will concentrate its efforts on building a moderately prosperous society at a higher level that will benefit more than one billion people. On the basis of optimizing the structure and improving efficiency, the GDP will be quadrupled by 2020 compared to 2000, and the overall national strength and international competitiveness will be significantly enhanced.³⁵ To this end, the party concerned proposed that by 2020, the average annual growth rate of GDP will be about 7.2%; GDP per capita will reach more than USD 3000; the urbanization rate will be over 50%; and the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture dropped from 50% in 2000 to about 30%.³⁶

In October 2007, the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China further proposed that the GDP per capita will quadruple by 2020 compared with the 2000 level, and China will become a country with basically realized industrialization, significantly enhanced comprehensive national strength, and the overall size of the domestic market ranking among the top in the world.³⁷ The party concerned proposed that by 2020, China’s per capita GDP will be about USD 5000, the proportion of employment in primary industry will drop to roughly 30%, and the urbanization rate

³² *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*: Vol. 3, People’s Publishing House, 2006 edition, p. 604.

³³ Source of calculation data: World Bank database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?locations=CN-1W>.

³⁴ GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international \$)—China. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?locations=CN>.

³⁵ *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*: Vol. 3. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2006:532, pp. 542–543.

³⁶ *Tutorial for the Report to the 16th CPC National Congress*. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2002:80.

³⁷ *Selected Works of Hu Jintao*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2016 edition, pp. 627–628.

may be close to 60%.³⁸ In fact, by 2020, China's per capita GDP (current USD) was USD 10,409,³⁹ the proportion of employment in the primary industry dropped to 23.6%, and the urbanization rate increased to 63.9%.⁴⁰

In November 2012, the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly proposed to ensure that by 2020, the GDP and per capita income of urban and rural residents will double from 2010. For the first time, the reform objectives and requirements of speeding up the establishment of an ecological civilization system were clearly put forward. This ensured that the construction of an ecological civilization and economic construction, political construction, cultural construction, and social construction could be combined, and the goal of struggle fully reflects requirements of the Five-sphere Integrated Plan of socialism with Chinese characteristics.⁴¹

In October 2017, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly stated that by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party, a moderately prosperous society will be built with a more developed economy, a more robust democracy, a more advanced science and education, a more prosperous culture, a more harmonious society, and there will be a better life for the people. The period from 2017 to 2020 will be the decisive period for building a moderately prosperous society.⁴²

In addressing this, I systematically evaluated and summarized the comprehensive construction of a moderately prosperous society according to the method of goal congruence, including four main goals and quantitative indicators of economic development, innovation, people's livelihood and well-being, and resources and environment. By 2020, calculated at constant prices, China's GDP will be equivalent to 5.28 times that of 2000, with an average annual growth rate of 8.7%. The per capita GDP (the international dollar in 2017) will reach 16,316 international dollars, equivalent to 4.72 times that of 2000. The average growth rate ended up being 8.1%,⁴³ and the urbanization rate reached 63.9%, both exceeding the quantitative expectations and targets set forth in the Reports of the 16th and 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The basic conclusions of my assessment are: in the first 20 years of the twenty-first century, China was able to take advantage of a period

³⁸ *Tutorial for the Report to the 17th CPC National Congress*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2007 edition, pp. 92–93.

³⁹ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2020&locations=CN&start=1960>.

⁴⁰ Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022, pp. 19, 41).

⁴¹ *Tutorial for the Report to the 18th CPC National Congress*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012: 97.

⁴² Xi Jinping. "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."//The Institute of Party History and Literature of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (2019).

⁴³ Data Source: World Bank Database: GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international \$)—China | Data (worldbank.org).

of valuable strategic development opportunities, had comprehensive rapid development, and achieved the historic and overall transformation and progress, making it one of the world's great powers.⁴⁴ The great rejuvenation of Chinese nation go hand in hand with major changes unseen in a century. At the same time, China has made commitments to lift the whole population from absolute poverty, promote economic growth, promote industrialization, promote trade growth, increase global investment, promote technological innovation, increase patented inventions, promote scientific research, develop green energy, promote green development, and promote world peace development and nine other global contributions.⁴⁵

On July 1, 2021, General Secretary Xi Jinping solemnly announced to the world at the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China: “We achieved the first centenary goal, built a moderately prosperous society in all respects in the land of China, and solved the problem of absolute poverty.”⁴⁶ This has been recorded in the history of modernization in contemporary China and the world.

In short, the Communist Party of China is the core leading force leading the modernization of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the Party represents the highest level of political leading force. Achieving socialist modernization has always been the core goal of the Communist Party of China. After more than 70 years of long-term efforts and struggles, the first centenary goal had been fully achieved, and a new journey to realize the second centenary goal was in progress. This marks China entering the third stage of its national development life cycle, that is, the development period for becoming a world power. To this end, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017 proposed to basically realize socialist modernization by 2035; and develop China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful by 2050.⁴⁷ In 2020, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China will take into account the “14th Five-Year Plan” and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035, and draw a blueprint for China’s future development. In the Communiqué of the Fifth Plenary Session and CPC Central Committee’s Proposals for Formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035, the “powerful country” were noted “11 + 1” times: China will become a powerful country in terms of culture, education, human capital, sports, manufacturing, quality, network, science and technology, transportation, trade, oceans, etc., and ultimately a powerful modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful. The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2022 reaffirmed the above goals: China’s overall development objectives for the year

⁴⁴ Ray Dalio’s judgment: “China is a power (second among major countries today) is rising rapidly.” Dalio (2022).

⁴⁵ Hu (2021b).

⁴⁶ Jinping (2021a).

⁴⁷ Jinping (2017).

2035 are as follows: Significantly increase economic strength, scientific and technological capabilities, and composite national strength; substantially grow the per capita GDP to be on par with that of a mid-level developed country; Join the ranks of the world's most innovative countries, with great self-reliance and strength in science and technology; Build a modernized economy; form a new pattern of development; basically achieve new industrialization, informatization, urbanization, and agricultural modernization; Basically modernize the system and capacity for governance; improve the system for whole-process people's democracy; build a law-based country, government, and society; Become a leading country in education, science and technology, talent, culture, sports, and health; significantly enhance national soft power; In addition, the report also proposed that we will move faster to boost China's strength in manufacturing, product quality, aerospace, transportation, cyberspace, and digital development, build China into a strong maritime country and elevate our people's armed forces to world-class standards. For the first time, the goal of moving faster to build up China's strength in agriculture was proposed.⁴⁸ As a result, the "one plus fifteen" goal system for strengthening the country has been formed, and it will become a strategy of modernization with Chinese characteristics for strengthening the country for the next fifteen years. These have become two signposts on the road to becoming a modern socialist power and realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and will have a large impact on the major changes of the world.

2. The Basic National Conditions and Conditions of Modernization with Chinese Characteristics

China has very particular fundamental national conditions. Compared with western developed countries, China started its industrialization and modernization late, at least one or two hundred years behind, and its development starting point was extremely low. In 1950, China's per capita GDP (the international dollar in 1990) was only equivalent to 4.7% of the per capita GDP of the United States and 9.8% of the per capita GDP of Western Europe.⁴⁹ It was a backward and poor country from a global perspective.

At that time, China was still a country with very typical traditional agriculture. In March 1949, Mao Zedong pointed out at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China that China's scattered, individual agricultural economy and handicraft economy still accounted for 90% of the national economy, which is outmoded and very similar to system used in ancient times. The output value of China's modern industry still only accounts for about 10 percent of the total output value of the national economy.⁵⁰ This is a typical "1:9" feature of modern industry and traditional agriculture. In 1956, Mao Zedong called China's basic national conditions "poverty and blankness".⁵¹ The "poverty" referred

⁴⁸ Jinping (2022, p. 15, 17–18).

⁴⁹ Maddison Database 2010. <https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/historicaldevelopment/maddison/releases/maddison-database-2010>.

⁵⁰ *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* (Vol. 4), People's Publishing House, 1991 edition, pp. 1430–1431.

⁵¹ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 7. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999: 43–44.

to the fact that there was not much industry and agriculture was underdeveloped. The “blankness” referred to the level of education and technology is not high. Mao Zedong specifically put forward the way of governing the country involving “overall planning and consideration, and each having its own place”, which is reflected in his famous “On the Ten Major Relationships.” For this reason, the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, based on the situation after China’s socialist transformation had been completed, pointed out that the principal contradiction in the country is no longer the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie, but the people’s needs for rapid economic and cultural development and the current economic and cultural inability to meet those needs. The main task of the people of the whole country is to concentrate on the development of social productive forces, realize the industrialization of the country, and gradually meet the growing material and cultural needs of the people.⁵² The resolution of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on the political report also specifically mentioned the strategic vision of building a functionally complete industrial system.⁵³ After implementing five five-year plans, China has established the independent and relatively complete industrial system and national economic system. Additionally, the agricultural production conditions had changed significantly, and education, science, culture, health, and sports made great progress.⁵⁴ During this period, China basically achieved the initial goal of national industrialization, quickly completing the primitive accumulation required for national industrialization. In particular, at the end of 1964, China repaid various loans and interest owed to the Soviet Union,⁵⁵ and independently established a relatively independent and complete industrial system. China effectively laid the foundation of physical capital, human capital, social capital and technological capital for the subsequent economic take-off.

⁵² “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century”. People’s Daily. 2021–11–17(1).

⁵³ “Resolution of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on the Political Report” (adopted by the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on September 26, 1956), edited by the Literature Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: *Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China: Book Nine*. Central Party Literature Press, 2011 edition, p. 296.

⁵⁴ “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century”. People’s Daily. 2021–11–17(1).

⁵⁵ In December 1964, Premier Zhou Enlai of the State Council pointed out in the “Government Work Report” of the First Session of the Third National People’s Congress: We owed the Soviet Union a total of 1.406 billion new rubles in various loans and interest payables (a large part of which is the loan and interest of military materials used and consumed in the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea), and 1.389 billion new rubles were repaid on schedule. The figure remaining is 17 million new rubles. We have already proposed to the Soviet side to use part of this year’s trade surplus with the Soviet Union to pay off all of it in advance. Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee: *Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China: Book Nineteen*. Central Party Literature Press, 2011 edition, pp. 410–411.

In 1978, after the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC, China entered a new era of reform, opening up and socialist modernization. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping pointed out that China's basic national conditions were: weak economic base, a large population and little arable land—80% of the population are farmers, and China still one of the poorest countries in the world.⁵⁶ To this end, he proposed the innovative, long-term strategic goal of “modernization with Chinese characteristics”, and pointed out that “by the end of this century, China will build a moderately prosperous society. This construction of a moderately prosperous society can be called the modernization with Chinese characteristics. Quadrupling the output value, a society of moderate prosperity, the modernization with Chinese characteristics—these are our new concepts.”⁵⁷ Based on an assessment of China's national conditions, the report to the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1987 added, for the first time, “GNP per capita still ranks behind the world” in its basic judgment of China's national conditions.⁵⁸ This was the starting point for the development of innovative modernization with Chinese characteristics after China's reform and opening up.

At the beginning of the new period of reform and opening up and socialist modernization, the basic characteristics of China's national conditions could be summarized as follows: first, China has a super-large population. In 1978, it was 956 million people (mid-year population), accounting for 22.3% of the world's total population (4.281 billion people), slightly lower than the total population of OECD countries (36 countries) (1 billion people). This means that once China achieves modernization, it is equivalent to more than one-fifth of the world's population entering the ranks of modernization, fundamentally changing the world's geographical distribution of modernization. Second, the main resources per capita in China are significantly lower than those in OECD countries. The per capita agricultural land is less than half of that of OECD countries, only 43.3%⁵⁹ and the per capita freshwater resources in China are only 26.9% of that of OECD countries.⁶⁰ This means that in the future, a new kind of green modernization must be innovated on the basis of China's much lower per capita resources. Third, the starting point of modernization with Chinese characteristics development is very low. In 1978, China's per capita gross national income ranked 175th among 188 countries and regions in the world,⁶¹ ranking in the last 7%. However, China has the advantage of being a latecomer and has a rapid development speed. China belongs to a classic “catch-up” modernization model—with an abundant labor force, so it can create greater economic, social, ecological

⁵⁶ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994: 163–164.

⁵⁷ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 3. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994: 54.

⁵⁸ Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee (1991: 10).

⁵⁹ In 2016, China's agricultural land accounted for 10.9% of the world's total, and OECD countries accounted for 25.2% of the world's total. <https://data.worldbank.org.cn/indicator/AG.LND.AGRI.K2?end=2018&locations=1W-CN-OE&start=1981>.

⁶⁰ China's freshwater resources account for 6.6% of the world's share, and OECD countries account for 24.5% of the world's share. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ER.H2O.FWTL.K3?end=2020&locations=1W-CN-OE&start=1990&view=chart>.

⁶¹ Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022, p. 204).

and cultural wealth. By 2020, the per capita gross national income will rise to 64th of 187 countries and regions in the world, ranking in the top 34% of the world.⁶² Calculated in purchasing power parity (PPP), the international dollar in 2017,⁶³ the per capita GDP rose from 1424 international dollars in 1990 to 16,316 international dollars in 2020,⁶⁴ and the average annual growth rate will be at the forefront of the world, reaching as high as 8.7% from 1990 to 2020, which is equivalent to the U.S. per capita GDP level from 4.7% in 1990, rising to 27.2% in 2020. The average life expectancy of the population increased from 67.8 years in 1981 to 77.93 years in 2020, and the relative U.S. level increased from 91.6% in 1981 (74.0 years) to 100.7% in 2020 (77.4 years, the U.S.). The expected years of education of the population increased from 52.5% of the U.S. level in 1990 to 68.9% of the U.S. level in 2020, and the Human Development Index (HDI) increased from 57.7% in 1990 to 82.2% in 2019 relative to the U.S. level (see Table 1.1). This fully reflects that China, as a socialist country, has been able to blaze new trails, innovate new models of modernization with Chinese characteristics; creating a unique path of modernization, and achieving sustained high-speed economic growth, high levels of economic well-being, increased human capital investment, social equity, ecological development, and high levels of people well-being. China has taken the lead in realizing the catch-up to international standards of human capital, which in turn promoted the catch-up of China's per capita GDP.

The essence of the modernization with Chinese characteristics is the modernization of all the people, which highlights the investment in people's education. This represents a transition from a country with just the largest population in the world to the country with the largest level of human capital and human resources in the world. According to the data of the third and seventh national population census, the population with university (junior college or above) education in the country has increased from 6.2 million in 1982 to 218.36 million in 2020, with an average annual growth rate of 9.8%. This amount of people exceeds the total population of Brazil (212.56 million people), the sixth most populous country in the world and is close to the total population of Pakistan (221 million people), the fifth most populous country in the world. The population with high school (including technical secondary school) education has increased from 68.91 million in 1982 to 213.01

⁶² National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022: 204).

⁶³ **The main basis for this book's use of purchasing power parity for international comparisons is: The five institutions of the United Nations, the European Commission, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank clearly require the International Comparison (ICP) to be based on the purchasing power parity method (PPP, constant price international dollar).** For details, please refer to System of National Accounts 2008 (Chinese version, China Statistics Press, 2012 edition, p. 6). The CIA also uses this method to estimate the GDP of countries around the world. For details, see the CIA website: The World Factbook.

⁶⁴ GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international \$)—China.<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?locations=CN>.

Table 1.1 The catch-up coefficient of China's main per capita indicators relative to the United States (1950–2020) Unit: United States = 100%

Years	GDP per capita (PPP)	Mean year of schooling	Expected years of schooling	Average life expectancy of the population (years)	Human development index (HDI)
1950	4.7	20.4		60.1	
1960	5.8	29.1		62.7	
1970	5.2	37.5		83.4	
1980	5.7	46.8	58.9	90.8	
1990	3.5	52.5	58.6	91.9	57.7
2000	6.9	59.4	63.4	93.2	66.4
2010	16.3	62.3	75.6	94.7	76.3
2020	27.2	68.9	85.3 (2018)	100.7	82.2 (2019)

Data sources GDP per capita data: use international dollar in 1990 for the 1950–1980 period, from Maddison Database 2010. <https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/historicaldevelopment/maddison/releases/maddison-database-2010>; use the international dollar in 2017 for the 1990–2020 period, from the World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?end=2020&locations=CN-US&start=1990>

Population life expectancy data: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?end=2019&locations=CN-US&start=1960>.

Mean year of Schooling data: Barro and Lee: Educational Attainment for Total Population, 1950–2015, vol. 3.0, September 2021. <http://barrolee.com/>; The data of 2020 is estimated by the authors
Human Development Indicators Data: UNDP database: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/137506>

million in 2020, with an average annual growth rate of 3.0%. The population with above a high school (including technical secondary school) education has increased from 75.11 million in 1982 to 431.37 million in 2020,⁶⁵ which is already higher (by 100 million) than the total population of the United States, the third most populous country in the world (329.48 million in 2020). It is equivalent to 2.62 times the total U.S. labor force (165 million in 2020). As General Secretary Xi Jinping said: “**Our country’s modernization is a modernization of a huge population. Our country’s population of 1.4 billion will enter a modern society as a whole, and its scale will exceed the sum of the existing developed countries. It will completely rewrite the world’s geographical distribution of modernization, which is a major event with far-reaching influence in human history.**”⁶⁶ This shows that over 1.4 billion Chinese people can realize the modernization of human capital in a relatively short period of time, and then greatly promote the modernization of the entire society

⁶⁵ The data is calculated based on the third and seventh national population census data.

⁶⁶ Xi Jinping. “Unswervingly Walk Down This Bright Road”. People’s Daily.

and the country, from falling behind to catching up, and then catching up with great strides! (See Table 1.1).

3. The Basic Nature of Modernization with Chinese Characteristics is Socialist Modernization with Chinese Characteristics

The particularity of China's national conditions lies in adhering to the socialist road. Therefore, China's modernization is different from American capitalist modernization. It is socialist modernization, but it is not Soviet-style socialist modernization. It is the socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics, which is also called the Chinese-style modernization. Deng Xiaoping had a high degree of political consciousness and clear standards for this. In 1980, he innovatively put forward three requirements: "Our socialist modernization is to catch up with the developed capitalist countries economically, to create a higher and more practical democracy politically than that of the capitalist countries, and to create more and better talent than these countries. To meet the above three requirements, the time we spend can be shorter, or sometimes longer, but as a big socialist country, we can and must meet them. Therefore, whether the various systems of the Party and the state are good or not, whether they are perfect or not, must be tested by whether they are favorable to the realization of these three points."⁶⁷ The author refers to these three requirements as the "Standards for the modernization with Chinese characteristics" for measuring the quality of China's system, put forward by Deng Xiaoping. It is not the "Standards for American-style Modernization" or "Standards for Soviet-style modernization" but the "Chinese Standards of Practice" for testing and comparing the quality of China's system.⁶⁸

In 1992, Deng Xiaoping further put forward the "Three Favorables" criteria in his south tour Speeches, which won a high degree of political consensus of the whole Party, the whole army, and was officially included in the report to the 14th National Congress of the CPC.⁶⁹ I call these three standards "China's (socialist modernization) standards." This is different from the so-called "Western democracy" standard. At this time, the Soviet Union, the first socialist country, had disintegrated. "It broke up into 15 independent states." This proved that the modernization with Chinese characteristics was the best methodology. We can further analyze this.

From the perspective of the nature of the country, China is a socialist country, not a capitalist country, which determines that it is impossible for China to rely on the world capitalist system headed by the United States, and China is a truly independent world socialist country. From the perspective of the national governance system, China is a country led by the Communist Party of China and implementing the National People's Congress system and the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation, which indicates that it is impossible for China to copy the presidential system, parliamentary system, two-party system or multi-party system of Western countries. From the perspective of the concept of state governance, the modernization with

⁶⁷ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994: 322–323.

⁶⁸ Hu and Yang (2013: 5).

⁶⁹ *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*: Vol. 1. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2006: 219.

Chinese characteristics is based on a modernization centered on all the people, not modernization centered on a few monopoly capital groups. From the perspective of national development tasks, the essence of socialism is to liberate productive forces, develop productive forces, eliminate exploitation and polarization, and ultimately achieve common prosperity.⁷⁰ From the perspective of national development goals, the purpose of modernization with Chinese characteristics was to realize the modernization of the whole people with the common participation, common development, common sharing of resources for all people, and common prosperity, rather than the modernization of severe social divisions, confrontation between parties and political contradictions between political parties. From the perspective of the relationship between the country and the world, China is an advocate for joint construction of a community with a shared future for mankind in the world powers, a country that implements win-winism among world powers, but opposes the implementation of colonialism, imperialism, and hegemonism.⁷¹

In conclusion, as General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: “For governing a country and promoting a country to achieve modernization, the Western model is not the only path. Every country can go its own way”.⁷² The path to modernization with Chinese characteristics is a socialist modernization road, not a copy of the Western capitalist modernization road, much less following Western countries’ steps. It is precisely because of this that China can quickly catch up with Western countries in industrialization, modernization, and urbanization, and create a road of modernization with Chinese characteristics which is accelerating beyond the speed of Western modernization and opening up a new path for the modernization of southern countries.

4. The Essence of Modernization with Chinese Characteristics is to Gradually Realize the Modernization of Common Prosperity for All the People

China has special social and national conditions, not only has a large population, a large number of ethnic minorities, a vast territory, and great differences in natural and geographical conditions, but also extremely unbalanced regional development, unbalanced urban and rural development, and large income gaps between residents. If China adopts the capitalism, it can only make a few people rich. This must exacerbate the gap between the rich and the poor, polarization, ethnic confrontation, the country’s break-up, and China will retreat into the old China before 1949. When New China was founded, Mao Zedong made a far-sighted vision of innovation in the national system. Instead of establishing a Soviet-style federal republic, that is, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, he innovatively established a “pluralistic integration” system of regional ethnic autonomy according to the general trend of China’s historical development, that is, the People’s Republic of China is a unified multi-ethnic state,

⁷⁰ *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*: Vol. 1. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2006: 219.

⁷¹ Hu and Lu (2017).

⁷² Xi Jinping. “Speech at the Seminar on the Study and Implementation of the Spirit of the 3rd Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Provincial and Ministerial Leading Cadres to Comprehensively Deepen Reform”. <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/29583383>.

and the state adheres to the principle of equality, unity and common prosperity of all ethnic groups. This fully demonstrates that China can not only become a unified country with the largest population and many ethnic groups in the world, but also establish a super-large scale, diversified and networked domestic unified market, and implement a socialist political system. This demonstrates the obvious “multiplier effect” of the superiority of the socialist system and a large-scale market economy.

The Communist Party of China unswervingly adhered to the path of socialist common prosperity, which can be roughly divided into three historical periods: The first is the period of socialist revolution and construction (1949–1978). In this period the main task facing the Party was the realization of the transition from new democracy to socialism, carrying out socialist revolution, initiating industrialization of the country, promoting socialist construction, and laying the fundamental political premise and institutional foundation for the achievement of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. China had basically completed the socialist transformation of private ownership of the means of production, basically realized public ownership of the means of production and distribution according to work, and established a basic socialist economic system. After implementing five five-year plans,⁷³ among major developing countries in the world, China is the only one that has established an independent and relatively complete industrial system and national economic system. Additionally, the agricultural production conditions had changed significantly, and education, science, culture, health, and sports made great progress.⁷⁴ This has laid the institutional foundation, economic foundation, human capital foundation and industrialization foundation for the economic take-off brought by the reform and opening up.

The second period was the new period of reform and opening up and socialist modernization (1978–2012). The main task facing the Party at this point was to continue to explore the correct path for building socialism in China, liberate and develop social productive forces, and enable the people remove themselves from poverty and become prosperous as soon as possible. It will provide institutional guarantees full of new vitality and material conditions for rapid development for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China first put forward the “theory of being rich first”, that is, to encourage some regions and some groups to get rich first. China would take the lead in breaking through the “poverty trap” among developing countries with over 100 million people and solve the problem of food and clothing for farmers. Furthermore, it would achieve a moderately prosperous level first, and then concentrate efforts from all sectors of the country to finally eliminate absolute poverty in rural areas. According to the 2010 rural poverty line standard (living standard of CNY 2300 per person per year (constant

⁷³ For detailed analysis, see: Editor-in-Chief Liu Guoguang, Associate Editors Zhang Zhuoyuan, Dong Zhikai, and Wu Li: *Research Report on China's Ten Five-Year Plans*, People's Publishing House, 2006 edition.

⁷⁴ “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century”. People's Daily, 2021-11-17(1).

price in 2010)), the rural poor population decreased from 770.39 million in 1978 to 98.99 million in 2012, and the incidence of poverty dropped from 97.5% to 10.2%.⁷⁵ The equalization of basic public services for all the population in poverty-stricken areas has been realized, and the absolute poverty population in rural areas has been substantially eliminated. According to the poverty line of 2.15 international dollars per person per day by the World Bank, the incidence of poverty in China has dropped from 72% in 1990 to 0.1% in 2019.⁷⁶ This demonstrates that China is taking the lead in realizing the complete eradication of absolute poverty in developing countries.

In 1992, Jiang Zemin established the reform goals and basic framework for the socialist market economic system in the report to the 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. He also established the basic economic system for the primary stage of socialism under which public ownership is the mainstay and diverse forms of ownership develop together and the distribution system whereby distribution according to work is dominant and a variety of modes of distribution coexist. By 2001, China's GDP (according to the current USD) ranked sixth in the world.⁷⁷ Calculated in international dollar in 2017, China's GDP surpassed that of Japan, ranking second in the world.⁷⁸ 1.2 billion people's lives have changed from food and clothing shortage to initial prosperity.

By 2012, it has laid a solid foundation for building a moderately prosperous society. China's economic aggregate has jumped from No. 6 in the world to No. 2. Social productivity and scientific and technological strength have also increased to a new level. People's living standards, residents' income levels, and social security levels have been similarly upgraded. The comprehensive national strength, international competitiveness and international influence have also risen to an unprecedented level. China's international status has been improved, demonstrating the great superiority and strong vitality of socialism with Chinese characteristics.⁷⁹ The third period is the period which began with the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. It represented a time where socialism with Chinese characteristics entered a new era of development. The main task facing the party at this point was to realize the first centenary goal, and begin to implement the second centenary goal, and continue to move forward toward the overall target of realizing the great rejuvenation of the

⁷⁵ National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021).

⁷⁶ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY?end=2019&locations=1W-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

⁷⁷ Jiang Zemin: "Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Creating a New Situation for the Cause of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics — Report at the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China" (November 8, 2002), *Selected Important Documents Since the 16th CPC National Congress*, Vol. 1, Central Party Literature Press, 2004, p. 5.

⁷⁸ Data Source: World Bank Database: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?end=2001&locations=1W-CN&most_recent_value_desc=true&start=1990&view=chart.

⁷⁹ Hu Jintao: "Advance unswervingly along the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and strive to build a well-off society in an all-round way — Report at the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China" (November 8, 2012), Edited by the Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPCPC: *Selected Important Documents Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China* (Vol. 1), CCCPC Party Literature Publishing House, 2014 edition, p. 5.

Chinese nation. By 2020, all rural poor people were functionally eliminated, and the international community's 2030 Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of eliminating absolute poverty were achieved 10 years ahead of schedule. The number of people participating in the national basic medical insurance reached 1.361 billion, and the insurance participation rate was as high as 95%. Among them, the number of people participating in basic medical insurance for employees was 340 million people. The number of people participating in the basic medical insurance for urban and rural residents is 1.02 billion, the number of people participating in the basic endowment insurance for urban employees nationwide is 467 million, and the number of people participating in the basic endowment insurance for urban and rural residents is 547 million. The total number of basic old-age pensioners in the country was 1.014 billion,⁸⁰ reaching the goal of the insurance participation rate exceeding 90%. The world's largest two systems of basic medical insurance and basic pension security covering the entire population has been established. The total population covered has exceeded that of OECD countries (1.38 billion people), and is also equivalent to 4.25 times the population of the United States. In the highly developed United States, there are still 27 million people who do not have medical insurance.⁸¹ This basic medical insurance system in China has played a great role in responding to the sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. China has successfully built a moderately prosperous society that can benefit 1.4 billion people on schedule.

General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly stated that the modernization with Chinese characteristics is a path of modernization in which all people achieve common prosperity.⁸² To this end, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee put forward an even more ambitious goal: "Achieving more obvious and substantial progress for common prosperity of all people". Common prosperity itself is one of the most important goals and tasks of socialist modernization. This is the biggest difference between China's socialist modernization and Western capitalist modernization, and it is also China's greatest political and institutional advantage. Implementing the strategy of common prosperity has always been the guiding principal of the Communist Party of China. It will use the power of the whole country to make long-term strategic arrangements and take effective measures to continuously narrow the regional development gap step by step, urban-rural development gap, and residents' income gap, so that more development achievements can benefit all people in a more equitable way. This is the biggest difference between modernization with Chinese characteristics and American modernization.

⁸⁰ State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China's Human Rights". *People's Daily*. 2021-08-13(10).

⁸¹ During the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, the number of people covered by medical insurance has dropped sharply. The United States has been unable to achieve universal health insurance due to political polarization, and the number of people enjoying health insurance has shrunk sharply due to the epidemic. Between March and May 2020, an estimated 27 million Americans, or 8.2% of the total population, lost health insurance due to the pandemic. State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2020 Report on Human Rights Violations in the United States.

⁸² Jinping (2021b).

In short, China completed the planning process that took developed countries hundreds of years in only a few decades, creating the two miracles of realizing rapid economic development and long-term social stability. The Communist Party of China led more than one billion people to successfully walk out of the path to modernization with Chinese characteristics, creating a new form of human civilization, and expanding the variety of paths available for other developing countries.⁸³

5. The economic foundation of modernization with Chinese characteristics is the realization of industrialization, informatization, networking, digitization, and intelligence

In 1953, Mao Zedong proposed “one transformation (socialist industrialization) and three transformations (gradually realizing the country’s socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, and capitalist industry and commerce)”⁸⁴ and began to launch national industrialization in the context of an extremely low level of development. In 1956, the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed a long-term goal that use three five-year plans to initially realize the country’s industrialization, and then use decades to approach or catch up with the world’s most developed capitalist countries.⁸⁵ In 1964 and 1975, on behalf of Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai twice proposed the grand goal of realizing the “four modernizations” by the end of the twentieth century, especially focusing on the establishment of a relatively independent and complete industrial system and national economic system. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping put forward the idea of achieving a moderately prosperous level, and in 1987, he put forward the “three-step” strategy for China’s socialist modernization. The report to the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed that by 2020, the goal of industrialization will be basically realized, and a new road of industrialization will be taken, that is to say, “China will adhere to driving industrialization with informatization, promote informatization with industrialization, and develop a new industrialization path with high technological content, good economic benefits, low resource consumption, little environmental pollution and full use of human resource advantages”.⁸⁶ And then the “China Manufacturing 2025”⁸⁷ plan was issued. The first step: China will strive to enter the ranks of manufacturing powers within ten years. The second step: in 2035,

⁸³ “Communique of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China” (Adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on November 11, 2021). Xinhua News Agency, Beijing, November 11, 2021.

⁸⁴ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 6. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1999: 316.

⁸⁵ Party History Research Center of the CPC Central Committee. *The History of the Communist Party of China (1949–1978)*: Vol. 2: Book One. Beijing: Party History Publishing House of the CPC, 2011: 397.

⁸⁶ Jiang Zemin: “Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Creating a New Situation for the Cause of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics — Report at the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China” (November 8, 2002), *Selected Important Documents Since the 16th CPC National Congress*, Vol. 1, Central Party Literature Press, 2004, p. 16.

⁸⁷ “Notice of the State Council on Issuing the ‘China Manufacturing 2025’” (Guo Fa [2015] No. 28). http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2015-05/19/content_9784.htm.

the manufacturing industry as a whole will reach the middle level of the world manufacturing power camp. The third step: by the 100 years of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the manufacturing power will be further consolidated. China will become one of the strongest world manufacturing powers. These strategic visions of and basic paths to modernization have been maintained throughout the passing of different generations and have kept pace with the times, that is, higher ambitious goals have been set based on new starting line of development.

China had basically achieved industrialization and become the most powerful industrial manufacturing country in the world. Calculated at constant prices, China's industrial added value has increased by 1052 times from 1952 to 2020, with an average annual growth rate of 10.8%, setting a new record in the history of world industrialization. China established a complete and powerful industrial system with a range of world industries. It has industries representing 41 major industrial categories, 207 medium categories, and 666 subcategories. It is the only country in the world that has all the industrial categories present in the United Nations Industrial Classification.⁸⁸ Among the more than 500 major industrial products in the world, China ranks first in the world with an output of more than 220 products. Calculated in current USD, China's share of the world's added value of manufacturing increased from 8.6% in 2004 to 28.3% in 2019, equivalent to 1.63 times that of the U.S.⁸⁹ The proportion of China's industrial added value in the world increased from 4.4% in 1994 to 22.1% in 2019, equivalent to 1.46 times that of the United States (14.6%).⁹⁰ According to the "International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics" issued by the United Nations, among the 22 manufacturing sectors in the world that are tracked and monitored, China ranks first in the world in 16 categories. In the textile, clothing and leather industries, China accounts for more than 50% of the world's total manufacturing. It also accounts for more than 40% of the world's total in industries such as electrical equipment, basic metals and computers. By contrast, the United States only ranks first in the world in six manufacturing categories, and ranks second in the other 13 categories.⁹¹ As General Secretary Xi Jinping said: in a few decades, we have completed the process of industrialization that developed countries have gone through for hundreds of years.⁹²

China has created a new path of industrialization for the countries of the South. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated: "Western developed countries represent a 'serial' development process, with industrialization, urbanization, agricultural modernization, and informatization developing in sequence. The completion of development

⁸⁸ Through constant effort, China has caught up begin to lead on the world stage — performing an industrialization miracle. China News. 2019-09-27 (B16).

⁸⁹ Data Source: World Bank Database:

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.MANF.CD?locations=CN-US>.

⁹⁰ Data Source: World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.TOTL.KD?locations=CN-IW-US>.

⁹¹ Quinlan (2022).

⁹² Xi Jinping. "Speech at the Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Reform and Opening up". People's Daily. 2018-12-19(1).

has taken more than 200 years to the present. We want to overtake our competitors and this means that our development must be a ‘parallel’ instead of ‘serial’ process, and the processes of industrialization, informatization, urbanization, and agricultural modernization must occur simultaneously.”⁹³ China has not only already become the world’s largest industrial value-added country and manufacturing value-added country, but also the country with world’s largest Internet society, and the world’s most mobile phone and fixed mobile broadband Internet users. The proportion of China’s mobile phone users in the world has increased from 4.0% in 1995 to 23.2% in 2020.⁹⁴ The proportion of China’s fixed mobile broadband Internet users in the world increased from 0.9% in 2001 to 40.2% in 2020.⁹⁵ China’s digital economy has risen from CNY 4.8 trillion in 2008 to CNY 45.5 trillion in 2021, and the proportion of GDP it occupies has increased from 15.2% to 39.8%,⁹⁶ realizing the parallel and leapfrog development of industrialization, informatization, networking, digitization and intelligentization.⁹⁷ It has become a new driving force for China’s economic development, and has become an innovator and leader of the fourth industrial revolution, providing a new path for southern countries to realize the “five modernizations (industrialization, informatization, networking, digitization and intelligentization).”

6. Modernization with Chinese Characteristics is the Joint Achievement of Urbanization and the Modernization of Agriculture, Rural Areas and Farmers

Modernization with Chinese characteristics is a transformation from a typical traditional urban–rural dual structure (1:9) to a modern urban–rural modernization layout (2:1). On the one hand, urbanization has been accelerated, and the urbanization rate has increased from 10.6% in 1949 to 64.7% in 2021, which has exceeded the world’s average urbanization rate (56.2% in 2020). The proportion of the world’s

⁹³ The Publicity Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. “An outline for the study of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”. Beijing: Learning Publishing House, People’s Publishing House, 2019(60).

⁹⁴ Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.CEL.SETS?locations=1W-CN>.

⁹⁵ Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.BBND?locations=1W-CN>.

⁹⁶ Data of 2008 come from China Academy of Information and Communications Technology, China Commercial Industry Research Institute, April 26, 2019; Data of 2021 come from China Academy of Information and Communications Technology: “China Digital Economy Development Report (2022)”, July 2022, Xinhuanet: <http://www.xinhuanet.com/techpro/20220712/6a013c95b81248e78dfabe9337a57f51/c.html>.

⁹⁷ The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly stated that “move the manufacturing sector toward higher-end, smarter, and greener production.” According to the information provided by the China Electronics and Information Industry Development Research Institute, the influence of China’s artificial intelligence industry in the world continues to increase. From 2017 to 2021, the scale of China’s artificial intelligence industry has increased by 2.6 times, accounting for 16.8% of the world’s total. The proportion of patent applications in the world continues to expand, from 13% in 2012 to 70.9% in 2021. China News Service, Nov. 18, 2022. China News Network: <https://chinanews.com.cn/cj/2022/11-18/9897611.shtml>.

total urban population has risen from 10.6% in 1960 to 19.8% in 2020,⁹⁸ representing the world's largest modern urban society has been established. On the other hand, modernizations of agriculture, rural areas and farmers are promoted. The proportion of China's agricultural added value (USD in 2015) in the world's total has increased from 18.6% in 1970 to 30.3% in 2020. This is not only much higher than the proportion of China's agricultural land in the world (11.1%),⁹⁹ but it is also higher than the proportion of China's total population in the world (18.1%),¹⁰⁰ and it has continuously ranked first globally. It is also equivalent to 4.85 times the United States' agricultural added value.¹⁰¹ China's agricultural labor productivity (USD in 2010) relative to the world's agricultural labor productivity level rose from 51.4% in 1991 to 112.7% in 2019, higher than the world average level, but significantly lower than that of OECD countries (equivalent to only 23.3%).¹⁰² This shows that China has considerable room to improve agricultural labor productivity, which is also one of the important signs of agricultural modernization. China's per capita output of major agricultural products and food consumption are both higher than the world's per capita level.¹⁰³ In 2020, China's per capita food stores exceeded 474.7 kg, which is higher than the international food safety standard of 400 kg per person.¹⁰⁴ The agricultural comprehensive production capacity has been steadily improved, and China has registered bumper grain harvests year after year, with the output continuously maintaining at more than 1.3 trillion catties. Among them, China's grain output accounted for 20.6% of the world's share in 2018 from 14.8% in 1961, which is equivalent to double India's Fig. (10.7%),¹⁰⁵ achieving basic self-sufficiency in

⁹⁸ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL?locations=1W-CN>.

⁹⁹ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/cn/indicator/AG.LND.AGRI.K2?end=2020&locations=1W-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

¹⁰⁰ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?end=2021&locations=1W-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

¹⁰¹ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.KD?locations=1W-US-CN>.

¹⁰² Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.EMPL.KD?locations=1W-CN-OE>.

¹⁰³ According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization database, 2004–2006 was 100%. In 2016, China's agricultural production index was 139.2%, the world average was 127.3%, China's food was 139.8%, and the world average was 127.8%. (National Bureau of Statistics of China. (National Bureau of Statistics of China. *China Statistical Abstract 2021*. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2019:928).

¹⁰⁴ State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China's Human Rights". People's Daily. 2021–08-13(10).

¹⁰⁵ Cereal production data relate to crops that are used only as dry grain after harvest, except cereal crops harvested for use as hay after harvest or harvested immaturely for food, fodder or silage or for pasture. Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/cn/indicator/AG.PRD.CREL.MT?end=2018&locations=CN-1W-IN&start=1961>.

grain; The three major indexes that reflect the progress of my country's agricultural modernization have increased significantly, becoming an important symbol of building up China's strength in agriculture: First, the crop production index has risen from 15.71 in 1961 to 106.1 in 2020, which is already higher than that of the United States (99.0).¹⁰⁶ There is a large variety and supply of meat, egg, milk, aquatic products, fruit, vegetable and tea—ranking first in the world in these respects. Second, the food production index rose from 11.76 in 1961 to 103.0 in 2020, slightly lower than that of the United States (104.5).¹⁰⁷ Third, the animal husbandry production index has increased from 3.52 in 1961 to 95.8 in 2020, which is still lower than the 111.1¹⁰⁸ in the United States. In 2020, the contribution rate of China's agricultural scientific and technological progress has reached 60.7%. The total power of agricultural machinery in the country increased from 117 million kilowatts in 1978 to 1.056 billion kilowatts in 2020,¹⁰⁹ and the comprehensive mechanization rate of crop cultivation and harvesting exceeded 80% in 2021.¹¹⁰ The essence of rural modernization is to achieve full coverage in households for modern amenities, and to fully implement comprehensive road access, electrification, informatization, and broadband access. The per capita disposable income of rural residents has risen from CNY 43.8 in 1949 to CNY 17,131 in 2020, which is 391 times the value of 1949. In 2020, it was equivalent to a daily income of 11.2 international dollars per person, which is entering the international middle-income level (10–100 international dollars). The Engel coefficient of rural households has dropped from 68.6% in 1954 to 32.7% in 2021, which is close to the Engel coefficient of urban households of 28.6%. China has transitioned from absolute poverty to affluent consumption structure.¹¹¹ By the end of 2020, the penetration rate of sanitary toilets in rural areas across the country has exceeded 68%, and the proportion of administrative villages where household waste was collected, transported and treated exceeded 90%. The level of rural domestic sewage treatment has been improved, with over 95% villages has conducted cleaning actions. Since 2005, the country has been implementing a rural drinking water safety project. By the end of 2015, drinking water safety problems

¹⁰⁶ The crop production index shows annual agricultural production relative to the base period 2004–2001, including all crops except forage crops. The sum of regions and income groups of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) production index is calculated in terms of potential value in international dollars, normalized to the base period 2004–2006. Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org.cn/indicator/AG.PRD.CROP.XD?end=2020&locations=CN-US&start=1961>.

¹⁰⁷ The Food Production Index covers food crops that are considered edible and contain nutrients. Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org.cn/indicator/AG.PRD.FOOD.XD?end=2020&locations=CN-US&start=1961>.

¹⁰⁸ The Livestock Production Index includes meat and milk from all sources, dairy products such as cheese, eggs, honey, raw silk, wool and leather. Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org.cn/indicator/AG.PRD.LVSK.XD?end=2020&locations=CN-US&start=1961>.

¹⁰⁹ National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021: 111).

¹¹⁰ The comprehensive mechanization rate of cultivation and harvesting of staple crops in China exceeds 80%. *People's Daily*, March 15, 2021.

¹¹¹ National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021: 57).

have been alleviated for a total of 520 million rural residents and more than 47 million rural school teachers and students in their immediate area. The penetration rate of tap water in poverty-stricken areas increased from 70% in 2015 to 83% in 2020.¹¹² The acceleration of urbanization drove urban–rural integration and the urban–rural population layout increased from “2:1” to “3:1” and “4:1”. This is more conducive to promoting the overall rural revitalization with the strength of urban modernization so as to effectively realize urban–rural joint modernization. This helped continuously narrow the development gap between urban and rural areas, which provides a new path for developing countries to realize urban–rural modernization.

7. Modernization with Chinese Characteristics is the Modernization of Harmonious Coexistence Between Man and Nature

Although the land area is 9.6 million square kilometers, most of the land is unusable and the ecological environment foundation is fragile. Due to the limitation of natural and geographical conditions, the total area of arable land only accounts for 14.1% of the total land area, and the area of forest land only accounts for 26.3%. China’s total resources are abundant, but the per capita resources are far below the world average. In 2017, the amount of cultivated land in China ranked third in the world, but the per capita cultivated land area was less than 1.5 mu—which is less than half of the world average. In 2018, China’s water resources amounted to 591.8 billion cubic meters, about 15.0% of the world’s total,¹¹³ and the spatial and temporal distribution was extremely unbalanced. China’s oil reserves accounted for 1.5% of the world’s total, natural gas reserves accounted for 4.5% of the world’s total, and coal reserves accounted for 13.3% of the world’s total. The amount of resources is significantly lower than China’s oil, natural gas, and coal consumption, which account for 16.6%, 9.4%, and 53.8% of the world’s share.¹¹⁴ The per capita reserves of bulk minerals such as iron and copper are also far below the world average level, and the general dependence on foreign countries is high. The per capita forest area is only 1/5 of the world average. The conflict between man and nature, and the conflict between development and resources is very prominent. These two conflicts have been steadfast companions of China’s throughout its modernization process.

Under the hard constraints of the above-mentioned natural and national conditions, China’s modernization cannot follow the traditional path of European and American modernization characterized by high consumption of per capita resources. China must make innovations and implement the green modernization suitable with its national conditions of natural resources. As General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, when China builds a modern country, it will be impossible to follow the old road of the United States and Europe. Even if there were several earth’s resources available, it would not be enough to cover the consumption of China’s population. It is this fact

¹¹² State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. “Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China’s Human Rights”. People’s Daily. 2021–08-13(10).

¹¹³ World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ER.H2O.FWTL.K3?end=2021&locations=IW-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

¹¹⁴ Data Source: bp Statistical Review of World Energy June 2022.

which results in the situation that China must innovate a green modernization, that is, modernization in which man and nature coexist in harmony.¹¹⁵

The modernization with Chinese characteristics must find a unique way to transition from an unsustainable to sustainable development strategy and then further implement a “green” development strategy. This is the road China must walk on to modernize effectively.¹¹⁶ The “Eleventh Five-Year Plan” set mandatory resource and environmental indicators for the first time. It also clarified and strengthened government responsibilities, and required the government at all levels to ensure the achievement of the set mandatory indicators through rational allocation of public resources and effective use of administrative power. These indicators include green development indicators, such as the reduction of energy consumption per unit of GDP, the reduction of water consumption per unit of industrial added value, the effective utilization coefficient of agricultural irrigation water, the comprehensive utilization rate of industrial solid waste, the amount of cultivated land, the total reduction of major pollutant emissions, forest coverage and accumulation volume. After the practice and efforts of the three five-year plans of the “Eleventh Five-Year Plan”, “Twelfth Five-Year Plan” and “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan”, the three major action plans for the prevention and control of air, water and soil pollution were implemented, and the battle to defend the blue sky, clear water and pure land had resulted in victory. China’s ecological environment protection had undergone a historic turning point and tremendous overall changes.¹¹⁷ By 2020, 59.9% of the 337 prefecture-level and above cities in the country met air quality standards. 83.4% of the 1940 surface water sections monitored by the state showed excellent and good quality (meeting Class I to Class III surface water quality standards), and only 0.6% of sections suffered from poor water quality below Class V. The proportion of offshore waters reaching Class I and Class II sea water quality standards has risen to 77.4%, and the proportion of offshore waters worse than Class IV has dropped to 9.4%; in 2020, the domestic sewage treatment rate also reached 25.5%.¹¹⁸ The installed capacity of hydropower, wind power and solar power generation in China currently accounts for 30.8%, 29.3% and 30.5% of the world respectively.¹¹⁹ China has become the largest green energy country in the world.

China has spearheaded the Paris Agreement on global climate change, with President Xi Jinping promising: by 2030, China’s carbon dioxide emissions per unit of

¹¹⁵ Speech by General Secretary Xi Jinping during his inspection tour in Guangdong in December 2012. Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee. An excerpt of Xi Jinping’s discussion on the construction of socialist ecological civilization. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2017: 34.

¹¹⁶ Hu and Wang (2005).

¹¹⁷ “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century”. People’s Daily, 2021–11–17(1).

¹¹⁸ State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. “Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China’s Human Rights”. People’s Daily, 2021–08–13(10).

¹¹⁹ Calculation Data Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2021, BP website: <https://www.bp.com/>. Date of visit: October 24, 2021.

GDP will drop by more than 65% compared with the 2005 level, the proportion of non-fossil energy in primary energy consumption will reach roughly 25%, the forest volume will increase by 6 billion cubic meters compared with the 2005 amount, and the total installed capacity of wind power and solar power generation will reach more than 1.2 billion kilowatts.¹²⁰ China has become an innovator and contributor to launch and lead the world's green industrial revolution, green energy revolution, green innovation revolution and green consumption revolution in the twenty-first century. China is innovating to lead the world's green modernization in the twenty-first century, that is, the modernization of harmonious coexistence between man and nature.

8. Modernization with Chinese Characteristics is the Modernization of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation

The long history and excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation endow the modernization with Chinese characteristics with unique historical and cultural characteristics. China is inheriting and carrying forward the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation for more than 5000 years, continuously innovating the revolutionary culture and advanced socialist culture created by the Chinese revolution, socialist construction, reform and opening up, and promoting cultural prosperity and revival. This continuously improves the country's cultural soft power, international influence, charisma, and constantly demonstrates the unique charm of Chinese culture to the world. "To fully implement the socialist thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and to adhere to the combination of the basic principles of Marxism with China's specific conditions and with the excellent traditional Chinese culture." "Promoting the coordinated development of material civilization, political civilization, cultural-ethical standards, social civilization, and ecological civilization", "creating a new form of human civilization", and making great contributions to human civilization.¹²¹

The historical development process of the modernization with Chinese characteristics itself is the long march of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The great victory of the new democratic revolution solemnly declares to the world: the Chinese people have stood up and created fundamental social conditions for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. As Mao Zedong predicted: winning a national victory is only the first step in a long march of ten thousand miles. Although this step is also worth being proud of, it is relatively small, and there is more to be proud of yet to come. If in the future one looks at the victory of the Chinese people's democratic revolution after several decades, it will make one feel as if it was just a short prelude to a much longer performance. "A story must begin with a prologue, but the prologue is not the climax."¹²² This means that the socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics is like the Long March, and it is also substantiated by the recent 70-year history of New China.

¹²⁰ Jinping (2020).

¹²¹ Jinping (2021a).

¹²² *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 4. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991: 1438.

The construction and socialist revolution was a great victory, as echoed by Mao Zedong solemnly declaring to the world as early as 1949: the Chinese people are “good at not only destroying an old world, but also building a new world”,¹²³ laying the fundamental political premise and institutional foundation for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The great victory of reform and opening up and socialist modernization has provided a system guarantee full of new vitality and material conditions for rapid development for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, socialism with Chinese characteristics entered a new era of development, which solemnly has declared to the world: China would realize the first centenary goal, begin to implement the second centenary goal, and continue to move forward toward the overall target of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly stated that “From this day forward, the central task of the Communist Party of China will be to lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization.”¹²⁴

9. The Modernization with Chinese Characteristics Creates a Path of Peaceful Development for a World Power

Up to this point, Western countries conducted oversea primitive accumulation of capital for their commencing and completion of industrialization and modernization by the way of foreign wars of aggression and incursions. The launching of the colonialist wars, the imperialist wars, World War I, World War II—in all these cases China has always been the biggest victim. After World War II, the United States was the country who initiated the most foreign wars, and this can be especially seen in the Korean War, which directly endangered the newly established New China. The United States directly interfered in the internal affairs of other countries and safeguarded the world hegemony. It first supported Chiang Kai-shek’s government in exile in Taiwan, and then encouraged the “Taiwan independence” and “Hong Kong independence” forces—publicly supporting the separatist forces in Tibet and Xinjiang. In contrast, China has established a strategy for promoting world peace since its founding. In the 1950s, it advocated the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” in international relations. From opposing imperialism to opposing superpowers and hegemonism,¹²⁵ and to taking the path of peaceful development in the twenty-first

¹²³ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 4. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1991: 1439.

¹²⁴ Jinping (2022).

¹²⁵ In 1973, the report to the 10th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stated: today, it is mainly the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, competing for hegemony. They call for disarmament every day, but in fact they are expanding their army constantly. Their purpose is to dominate the world. They compete and collude. The purpose of their collusion is for a bigger competing. Their competing is absolute and long-term; their collusion is relative and temporary. In the international arena, our Party must adhere to proletarian internationalism, adhere

century,¹²⁶ as President Xi Jinping pointed out during the video conference with US President Joe Biden, the Chinese people have always loved peace and advocated peace. There is no gene for invading others and becoming global kings in our blood. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, China has not initiated a war or conflict on our own initiative, nor have we invaded an inch of other countries' land.¹²⁷ China has actively promoted economic globalization and trade liberalization, and vigorously advocated the "Belt and Road", providing important public goods for the world¹²⁸; China has eradicated absolute poverty, has taken the lead in implementing the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and then fulfilled¹²⁹ China's commitment to "increase aid to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, and helped narrow the development gap between the North and the South."¹³⁰; China has supported developing countries in their fight against the pandemic and has taken the lead in advocating the building of a community with a shared future for human health.¹³¹ All of these actions fully reflect China's reliance on peaceful development to enrich the people and strengthen the country, and further show that "the stronger China is, the more the world will benefit." As

to the Party's consistent policy, strengthen its unity with the proletariat, the oppressed people and nations of the world, and strengthen its unity with all those affected by imperialist aggression, subversion, interference, control and bullying. There must be a unity of the countries, forming the broadest united front against imperialism and old and new colonialism, especially against the hegemonism of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Zhou Enlai. Report at the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China. 1973-08-28.

¹²⁶ China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development. China opposes all forms of hegemonism and power politics, and will never seek hegemony or expansion. *Selected Works of Hu Jintao: Vol. 2*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2016: 650-651.

¹²⁷ "Xi Jinping held a video meeting with US President Joe Biden". Economic Information Daily. 2021-11-16(1).

¹²⁸ State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "China's international development cooperation in the new era". People's Daily. 2021-01-11(14).

¹²⁹ Xi Jinping. "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."//The Institute of Party History and Literature of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (2019: 42).

¹³⁰ China will provide USD 2 billion over two years to help with COVID-19 response and with economic and social development in affected countries, especially developing countries. State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "China's international development cooperation in the new era". People's Daily. 2021-01-11(14).

¹³¹ On March 21, 2020, when President Xi Jinping called French President Emmanuel Macron, he proposed the initiative to "build a community of health for mankind" for the first time. President Xi Jinping pointed out that public health security is a common challenge faced by mankind. China is willing to work with France to jointly promote international cooperation in pandemic prevention and control, and support the United Nations and the World Health Organization in playing a central role in improving global public health governance and building a community of health for mankind. "President Xi Jinping calls French President Emmanuel Macron".

http://www.xinhuanet.com/2020-03/21/c_1125748121.htm, 21 March 2020.

General Secretary Xi Jinping said: the modernization with Chinese characteristics is a modernization that takes the path of peaceful development.¹³²

10. **Modernization with Chinese Characteristics Shares and Supports a Common Destiny with Mankind**

China's position towards the world is consistent, that is, to make great contributions to human development. As early as 1956, Mao Zedong boldly predicted, "When we enter the twenty-first century, the face of China will change greatly. China will become a powerful socialist industrial country"; "China should make great contributions to mankind".¹³³ Xi Jinping has always advocated China's responsibility to the world and role in the global landscape: "China has always been a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order. It has always adhered to the path of peaceful development, promoted the building of a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind, and provided new opportunities for the world. And it has always carried forward the common values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy and freedom for all mankind."¹³⁴ The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China once again reiterated: "Promoting world peace and development and building a human community with a shared future."¹³⁵ This is the international logic of "win-winism" advocated by China, resolutely opposed to the American logic of hegemonism of "a strong country must dominate." Our logic will help build a community of common development and common destiny for all mankind.

China has currently entered the center of the world stage and now proactively provides public products globally. China has become a major trading partner of more than 140 countries and regions, the total volume of trade in goods ranks first in the world, and it ranks among the top in the world in attracting foreign capital and foreign investment.¹³⁶ The most classic example of this is the "Belt and Road" initiative. So far, China has signed more than 200 cooperation agreements with 140 countries and 32 international organizations to jointly build the "Belt and Road" project. The total trade volume of goods with countries along the route has reached USD 10.4 trillion, and the non-financial direct investment in countries along the route exceeding USD 130 billion.¹³⁷ The initiative promoted policy coordination, connectivity of infrastructure and facilities, unimpeded trade, financial integration of relevant countries, strengthened people-to-people ties and made active contribution to building the "Belt and Road" of peace, prosperity, openness, innovation and

¹³² Jinping (2021b).

¹³³ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 7. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999: 156.

¹³⁴ Jinping (2021a).

¹³⁵ Jinping (2022).

¹³⁶ Jinping (2022).

¹³⁷ Xi Jinping. "Aiming at high standards and sustainable benefits for people's livelihood, we will continue to promote the high-quality development of the 'Belt and Road' initiative". *People's Daily*. 2021-11-21(1).

civilization. According to the report of “Belt and Road Economics” released by the World Bank, the construction of the “Belt and Road” will increase the real income of countries and regions along the “Belt and Road” by 1.2–3.4%, and the global real income by 0.7–2.9%, thus promoting the realization of common prosperity. The full implementation of the “Belt and Road” initiative will increase trade between participating countries by 4.1%, and the total foreign direct investment of countries and regions along the “Belt and Road” will increase by 4.97%. In addition, BRI-related investments can help lift as many as 34 million people out of moderate poverty and 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty.¹³⁸ China has also become an important foreign aid country in the world. From 2013 to 2018, China’s foreign aid amounted to CNY 270.2 billion, including free aid, interest-free loans and preferential loans.¹³⁹ China actively promoted the establishment of international cooperation mechanisms such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the BRICS New Development Bank, formally established the China International Development Cooperation Agency, and carried out unprecedented breadth and depth of international cooperation for mutual benefit and win–win cooperation. China has also actively contributed to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by supporting poverty reduction in other developing countries, improving agricultural development, promoting education equity, improving infrastructure, and advancing the process of industrialization.¹⁴⁰

To summarize, the modernization with Chinese characteristics is “people-oriented” modernization, not material-oriented modernization. It is the people-centered modernization, not the capital-centered one. “Only by sticking to the notion that development is for the people, depends on the people, and its fruits should be shared by the people can we have a correct outlook on development and modernization.”¹⁴¹ It is not the capital-oriented modernization. It is the modernization of all people, ethnic groups, and regions, not the modernization of a minority of groups, just a specific few ethnic groups, and few regions. It is the real modernization of democracy for all people, common prosperity, equality, freedom and happiness, not the modernization of false democracy, polarization, extreme inequality, freedom for a few, and happiness for a few. The modernization with Chinese characteristics is a comprehensive modernization, a Six-sphere Integrated Plan of

¹³⁸ Wang Huiyao. “The Belt and Road Initiative is an actual practice of building a community with a shared future for mankind”. *Guangming Daily*. 2021–11–21(8).

¹³⁹ State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. “China’s international development cooperation in the new era”. *People’s Daily*. 2021–01–11(14).

¹⁴⁰ State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. “China’s international development cooperation in the new era”. *People’s Daily*. 2021–01–11(14).

¹⁴¹ Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the opening ceremony of the seminar on the study and implementation of the spirit of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for leading cadres at the provincial and ministerial levels. 2021–01–11. *People’s Daily Online: Database of Xi Jinping’s series of important speeches* (people.cn).

economic construction, political construction, cultural construction, social construction, ecological civilization construction, and national defense construction.¹⁴² The Five-pronged Comprehensive Strategy consists of completing the building socialist modernization in all respects, comprehensively expanding in-depth reform, comprehensively promoting law-based governance, comprehensively enforcing strict Party self-governance, and full participation in global governance. The Plan and Strategy constitute “two layouts” for the modernization with Chinese characteristics. The Five-pronged Comprehensive Strategy serves the Six-sphere Integrated Plan. Both of two complement each other, support each other, and lead the effort of the modernization with Chinese characteristics. Economic modernization is the economic foundation of comprehensive modernization, social modernization embodies the superiority of the socialist system, green modernization is the basic requirement of China’s national conditions, political modernization provides an effective political guarantee for it, cultural modernization is the great support for realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and national defense modernization is the security guarantee for modernization of the country. The modernization with Chinese characteristics has always shared the development goals and overall destiny with the whole of mankind, and has continuously made significant contributions to worldwide human development.¹⁴³

From the perspective of international comparison of global modernization, China’s “Six-sphere” modernization model has surpassed Western modernization marked by economic modernization, capital-based modernization, materialistic modernization, and democratization featuring supremacy of election, and has also provided the important experience for southern countries to innovate and realize the comprehensive modernization.¹⁴⁴ It is mutually promoted and coordinated with the socialist modernization of Five-pronged Comprehensive Strategy, and has become the grand strategy of the modernization with Chinese characteristics.

1.2 The Principal Contradiction of Chinese Society in the New Era and the Major Changes in Its Development Stage

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, China has entered a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as its core has made new major judgments on China’s basic national conditions, principal contradiction, developmental stages and central missions. This requires a correct understanding of: China’s basic national conditions

¹⁴² The author suggests that the modernization of national defense and the army should be incorporated into the “Six-sphere” overall modernization strategy. Hu et al. (2018a: 91).

¹⁴³ Hu et al. (2018a, pp. 91–92).

¹⁴⁴ Written by Hu Angang. *Chinese Road and Chinese Dream*. Hangzhou: Zhejiang People’s Publishing House, 2013: 91.

and dynamic changes, the principal contradictions of the primary stage of socialism and Chinese society in the new era, how to basically realize socialist modernization by 2035, and how to actively promote the development of socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics.

1. The Primary Stage of Socialism

China is currently in the primary stage of socialism and will be in this stage for a relatively long period of time. As early as the late 1950s, Mao Zedong pointed out: “Socialism may be divided into two stages, the first stage is underdeveloped socialism, and the second stage is relatively developed socialism. The latter phase may take longer than the former.”¹⁴⁵

Since the reform and opening up, our party has gained a profound and comprehensive understanding of China’s national conditions. In particular, Comrade Deng Xiaoping put forward the major era proposition of modernization with Chinese characteristics. Shortly after the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Deng Xiaoping pointed out that one issue was China has a weak economic base. The second issue is China’s large population and little arable land. These have become features that must be considered in China’s modernization. He formally proposed that “The modernization with Chinese characteristics must proceed from the specific characteristics of China.”¹⁴⁶ He stressed that China’s modernization must be a long-term project for hundreds of years. In fact, China’s total population accounted for 22.3% of the world’s total at that time,¹⁴⁷ and it was still the country with the lowest per capita gross national income in the world. In 1978, among the 188 countries and regions in the world, China’s per capita gross national income ranked 175th,¹⁴⁸ equivalent to the bottom 6.9%.

In 1980, the “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Historical Issues of the Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China” (passed by the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China) proposed for the first time that China’s socialist system is in its early, primary stage. However, there is no doubt that China has established a socialist system and entered a socialist society, and it would be wrong to deny this basic fact.¹⁴⁹

On the eve of the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Deng Xiaoping emphasized: “The 13th National Congress of our Party will explain what stage China’s socialism is in, that is to say, it is in the primary stage. Socialism itself is the primary stage of communism, and China is in the primary stage of socialism,

¹⁴⁵ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 8. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1999: 116.

¹⁴⁶ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 2. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1994: 163–164.

¹⁴⁷ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=CN-1W>.

¹⁴⁸ Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022, p. 204).

¹⁴⁹ *Selected Important Documents Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee* of the Communist Party of China: Vol. 2. People’s Publishing House, 1982:838.

that is, an underdeveloped stage. Everything must proceed from this fact and we must make plans according to this reality.”¹⁵⁰

In 1987, the report to the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China made a basic judgment of China’s basic national conditions: “With a large population and a weak economic base, the per capita GNP still ranks behind in the world. China’s more standout qualities are as follows: with a population of more than one billion, among which 800 million are in rural areas, the population still basically used hand tools to make food; some modern industries co-exist with a large number of industries that are decades or even hundreds of years behind the modern level; some economically developed areas coexist with the vast underdeveloped areas and poverty-stricken areas; China has a small amount of world’s advanced science and technology with generally backward science and technology level; a small amount of the population has advance levels of science and technology education. But generally, the population has a low level of science and technology education, and illiterate and semi-literate people still account for nearly a quarter of the population.” “The report’s basic judgment on the principal contradiction in our society still follows the formulation of the ‘Resolution on Certain Historical Issues of the Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic’” passed by the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, pointing out: “the current principal contradiction in China’s society is the contradiction between the growing material and cultural needs of the people and the lagging social production.” The report to the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China systematically expounded the theory of the primary stage of socialism, and believed that, “China’s socialist society is still in the primary stage. We must proceed from this reality and cannot somehow skip this stage of development.” “The stage of socialism in our country is the stage of gradually getting rid of poverty and lagging development.” “It is a stage in which an agricultural country based on manual labor with the majority of the agricultural population gradually transforms into a modern industrial country with a non-agricultural majority; it is a stage in which the natural economy and semi-natural economy account for a large proportion, and the commodity economy is highly developed.” “From the basic completion of the socialist transformation of the private ownership of the means of production in the 1950s to the basic realization of socialist modernization, it will take hundreds of years for our country, which all belong to the primary stage of socialism.”¹⁵¹ The theory of the primary stage of socialism provides a theoretical basis for how to realize the socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics, pointed out a development path, and also stipulates that it will take hundreds of years to functionally achieve it.

In 1997, the report to the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China summarized the process characteristics of the historical development of the primary stage of socialism from nine aspects (see Box 1.1).

¹⁵⁰ *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*: Vol. 3. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1999: 252.

¹⁵¹ Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee. *Selected Important Documents Since the Thirteenth CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1991: 10–13.

Box 1.1 The report to the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on the primary stage of socialism (1997)

The primary stage of socialism is a historical stage in which it gradually gets rid of underdevelopment and basically achieves socialist modernization; It is a historical stage in which a country with a large proportion of the agricultural work population and mainly relying on manual labor gradually transforms into an industrialized country with a non-agricultural population accounting for the majority—with an inclusion of modern agriculture and modern service industries; It is a historical stage in which the natural economy and semi-natural economy account for a large proportion of the overall market and there is a gradually transformation into a relatively high degree of economic marketization; It is a historical stage in which large illiterate and semi-literate population decreases and the underdeveloped science, technology, education and culture gradually transform into relatively developed science, technology, education and culture; It is a historical stage in which poverty-stricken people account for a large proportion with a low standard of living and there is a gradually transformation into the situation where all people are relatively prosperous; It is a historical stage in which the regional economic and cultural gap is gradually narrowed by orderly development based on unbalanced regional economic and cultural development; It is a historical stage in which a relatively mature and dynamic socialist market economic system, a socialist democratic political system and other systems are established and improved through reform and exploration; It is a historical stage in which the people firmly establish the common ideal of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, strive for self-improvement, forge ahead, work hard, build the country with diligence and thrift, and strive to build cultural-ethical standards while also building material foundations; It is a historical stage in which the gap with the world’s advanced level is gradually narrowed and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is realized on the foundation of the system of socialism. Such a historical process will take at least a hundred years.

Selected Works of Jiang Zemin, Vol. 2, People’s Publishing House, 2006 Edition, pp. 14–15.

In 2012, the report to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out: the basic national condition that our country is still in and will remain in the primary stage of socialism for a long time has not changed, and the principal social contradiction between the people’s growing material and cultural needs and lagging social production has not changed. China is still the largest developing country in the world. This fact has also not changed.¹⁵² It is referred to as “Three Facts that Have not Changed”.

¹⁵² *Selected Important Documents Since the 18th CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2014:12–13.

Chinese socialist society is always developing and changing, and it will never halt completely at a certain level. But the changes are eternal, and there will always be a quantitative change and qualitative change, as well as a gradient and sudden change. In fact, the “Three Facts that Have not Changed” even as they remain unchanged are changing. The scale of change can be small or large, and the speed of change can be slow or fast. It all depends on the interaction between the mobilizing factors and restricting factors, favorable factors and unfavorable factors of modernization. The general trend is that there are more mobilizing factors than restricting factors, and more favorable factors than unfavorable factors. This is also in line with the development logic of Deng Xiaoping’s “every few years China takes a big step”, and it is more in line with the results that every “Five-Year Plan” pushes China to a new stage. This fully reflects the development path and logic of modernization with Chinese characteristics.

2. Socialism with Chinese Characteristics Has Entered a New Era

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China: after long-term efforts, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, representing a new historical direction for China’s development.¹⁵³ Significant changes have taken place in China’s basic national and developmental conditions, reflecting China’s historic transformation—from standing upright to becoming prosperous and growing in strength.

From the perspective of social productive forces, China has basically changed from a country with underdeveloped production abilities to achieving a major leap towards more advanced social production. The basic structure of socialist productive forces with Chinese characteristics can be defined as a productive system with “one center and five dimensions”: taking the people as the center is the starting point, the foothold and the core point of developing the productive forces in an all-round way. The “five dimensions” of productivity are economic productivity, scientific and technological productivity, social productivity, cultural productivity and ecological productivity. The roles of the five productive forces are as follows: economic productivity signifies the material foundation of development. Scientific and technological productivity supports intellectual endeavors. Social productivity guarantees people’s basic livelihood. Cultural productivity provides spiritual guidance for the people and ecological productivity is the premise of sustainable development. Five productive forces are correlative and integrated, promoting each other. Synchronized development, parallel development, and win–win development of five productive forces are unified to serve the overall people-centered development goal. Furthering the comprehensive deepening of the reform is ultimately the key to promoting the leap-forward development of the five productive forces.¹⁵⁴

In 2017, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China made a new major judgment on China’s national conditions: “The overall

¹⁵³ *Selected Important Documents Since the 19th CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2019:7–8.

¹⁵⁴ Hu et al. (2018b).

level of social productivity in China has been significantly improved, and China's social productivity has become some of the best in the world in many aspects."¹⁵⁵ This is in line with what Mao Zedong said about the law of human development, that is, "The history of mankind is a history of continuous development from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. This history will continue without end."¹⁵⁶ Therefore, China's socialist society will not always stay in the primary stage. After more than 70 years, it will inevitably transition to a higher stage of development, reflecting its regular quantitative changes to partial qualitative changes, from extremely low income to low income. From low income to lower-middle income, to upper-middle income, and then to high-income. This change in income reflects multi-stage development. Transitioning from quantitative changes to qualitative changes, from the primary stage to the second stage of moderately developed socialism, to the relatively developed stage, and then to the developed stage represent the qualitative changes in socialism development. As the largest socialist country in the world, China will not stay in the primary stage forever. It will always innovate the socialist road and model, always be able to actively create and adapt to a new stage of development gradually, and gradually transition to a new stage of moderately developed socialism in a gradualism manner.¹⁵⁷

China has entered a new historical stage of socialist development. To this end, I mainly examine discussions on the primary stage of socialism in the report to the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (see Box 1.1), and have conducted both quantitative analysis and international comparison.

From the perspective of employment structure, China has stopped having its entire economy be composed of the agricultural industry—which stood at 50.0% of the overall economy in 2002 and dropped to 22.9% in 2021. In parallel, the proportion of non-agricultural employment has risen to more than 3/4 of the overall economy.¹⁵⁸ During the period from 2000 to 2020, the average annual growth rate of agricultural employment was -3.5%, the average annual growth rate of agricultural added value was 3.9%, and the average annual growth rate of agricultural labor productivity reached 7.4%. This was much higher than the average annual growth rate of the world agricultural labor productivity (USD in 2015) in the same period (3.8%), exceeded the world average,¹⁵⁹ and was only 1.1 percentage points behind the national average labor productivity growth rate (8.5%). China has gradually transformed from an economy dominated by the natural economy and a semi-natural economy to a stage

¹⁵⁵ Xi Jinping. "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era". *Selected Important Documents Since the 19th CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2019:7-8.

¹⁵⁶ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 8. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999: 325.

¹⁵⁷ Written by Hu Angang. "Correctly understanding the new stage of Chinese socialism: 2020-2035" [J/OL]. *Journal of Beijing University of Technology (Social Science)*: 1-13[2022-07-30]. <http://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/11.4558.G.20220510.1605.006.html>.

¹⁵⁸ *China Statistical Abstract 2021*. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2021: 41.

¹⁵⁹ Data Sources: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.EMPL.KD?locations=IW-CN&start=1984&view=chart>.

with a relatively high degree of economic marketization, and has established one of the largest market economies in the world. The total volume of retail sales is CNY 44.1 trillion by 2021 from CNY 430.5 billion in 1985, which is equivalent to 102 times the value in 1985.¹⁶⁰ One can take the consumption expenditure of Chinese residents as an example, it has risen from CNY 462.7 billion in 1985 to CNY 38,717.7 billion in 2020, which is equivalent to 83.7 times that the 1985 level.¹⁶¹ Calculated in USD in 2015, the consumption expenditure of Chinese residents has surpassed that of Italy (1999), France (2000), the United Kingdom (2004), Germany (2004), Japan (2008), jumping to the second place in the world, from USD 934.8 billion in 1995 to USD 7.87 trillion in 2020 and its proportion of the world's total increased from 3.0% to 13.2%.¹⁶² Judging from the comparison of gross domestic product by expenditure approach, in 2019, China's household consumption accounted for 39.1% of GDP, government consumption expenditure (mainly used for public services) accounted for 16.6%, and the total capital formation of non-financial corporate sector accounted for 26.1%. It is significantly higher than that of the general government sector, accounting for 4.4%,¹⁶³ and it is also the world's largest non-government investor.

China has fundamentally changed its previous situation of lagging in its development of science, technology, education and culture, has become a great country in science, technology, education and culture, and is moving towards a world power in all these areas. For example, according to the information provided by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, in 2020, the added value of the national culture and related industries has reached CNY 4.50 trillion, accounting for 4.43% of GDP. If the tourism and related industries (4.01% of GDP) and the sports industry (1.06%) are added, the cultural tourism and sports industry accounts for a total of 9.50% of GDP.¹⁶⁴

China has eliminated the world's largest population existing in absolute poverty. Based on the poverty headcount ratio at per capita consumption expenditure of 1.90 international dollars per day defined by World Bank, China's poverty headcount ratio dropped from 66.3% in 1990 to 0.5% in 2016¹⁶⁵; According to the poverty headcount ratio at daily consumption expenditure of 1.90 international dollars per person, the moderate poverty headcount ratio in China has dropped from 90% in 1990 to 5% in 2016,¹⁶⁶ and it has been completely eliminated as of 2020; According to the poverty headcount ratio at 1.90 international dollars per person per

¹⁶⁰ *China Statistical Abstract 2021*. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2021: 145.

¹⁶¹ *China Statistical Abstract 2021*. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2021: 33.

¹⁶² Data Sources: World Bank Database: Final consumption expenditure (constant USD in 2015)—China, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France, Italy | Data (worldbank.org).

¹⁶³ Calculation data source: *China Statistical Abstract 2021*, China Statistics Press, 2021 edition, pp. 34, 37.

¹⁶⁴ *China Statistical Abstract 2022*. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2021: 13.

¹⁶⁵ Data Sources: World Bank Database: Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population)—China | Data (worldbank.org).

¹⁶⁶ Data Sources: World Bank Database: Poverty headcount ratio at \$3.20 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population) — China | Data (worldbank.org).

day, it has dropped from 89% in 1999 to 16% in 2019¹⁶⁷; According to the 2010 standard of the national rural poverty line (that is, the annual living standard per person is CNY 2300 (constant price in 2010), there was 98.99 million people in poverty in 2012, and there was zero by 2020.¹⁶⁸ After 2020, the state will step up measures to provide basic living security for the poor. By the end of June 2022, a total of 40.62 million people in urban and rural areas will receive subsistence allowances, accounting for 2.9% of the country's total population. Among them, there are 7 million people receiving urban subsistence allowances, accounting for 0.8% of the country's total urban population, and 33.62 million people receiving rural subsistence allowances, accounting for 6.7% of the country's total rural population. The national urban subsistence allowance level is CNY 734 per person per month, and the rural subsistence allowance level is CNY 554 per person per month, which is equivalent to a daily subsidy of 5.8 international dollars and 4.4 international dollars per person, respectively. The actual per capita daily consumption expenditure exceeds the high poverty line defined by World Bank—5.5 international dollars. Regardless of the standard employed, China has eliminated the severe and moderate poverty, and will soon eliminate the mild levels of poverty in its population.

The position of China's per capita GDP ranking low internationally has also fundamentally changed. China has moved from a low-income level (1978–2000) to a lower middle-income level (2000–2010), and then to an upper middle-income level (2010–2020). Calculated in USD in 2015, China's per capita GDP will reach USD 11,200 by 2021, higher than the world average (11,057 international dollars).¹⁶⁹ Calculated in purchasing power parity, the international dollar in 2017, China has reached 17,484 international dollars, which is higher than the world average (17,081 international dollars),¹⁷⁰ and will soon enter the stage of high-income development.

China has rapidly narrowed the gap between it and more the world's advanced standards. Calculated in purchasing power parity, the international dollar in 2017, the relative gap between China's per capita GDP and the United States has narrowed from 28.4 times in 1990 to 3.6 times in 2021.¹⁷¹

China has entered a historical stage of gradually narrowing the regional development gap, however development imbalance still exists. China previously entered the stage of social development dominated by a rural population (before 2010) and entered the stage of social development dominated by an urban population (after 2011), becoming the world's largest modern urban society. The proportion of China's

¹⁶⁷ Data Sources: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.UMIC?locations=IW-CN&start=1984&view=chart>.

¹⁶⁸ China Statistical Abstract 2022. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2022: 69.

¹⁶⁹ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD?locations=CN-IW>.

¹⁷⁰ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?locations=CN-IW>.

¹⁷¹ Computational Data Sources World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?end=2021&locations=CN-US&start=1990&view=chart>.

urban population in the world has increased from 13.2% in 1990 to 19.9% in 2020.¹⁷² It has entered a green development stage (post 2010) transitioning from a condition of environmental degradation and ecological deficit to comprehensively controlling environmental pollution and improving ecology.

It can be expected that, on this basis, with the implementation of the three five-year plans, **China will enter a higher stage of socialist development by 2035, that is, the moderately developed stage.** This fully reflects the continuous development, innovation, self-reform, self-breakthrough and self-upgrade of a socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics. China has not only achieved the two miracles of sustained and rapid economic development and long-term social stability, but also innovated a miraculous, new form of the modernization with Chinese characteristics. As Mao Zedong said, “within the scope of production struggles and scientific experiments, human beings are always developing, and nature is always evolving, and will never stop. Therefore, human beings must constantly accumulate their experiences, discover, invent, create new things, and make progress. The arguments of stop, pessimism, inaction and complacency all represent incorrect paths forward.¹⁷³ This is the theoretical basis and practical basis for China’s transition into a new stage of socialism. It was the first time in the history of Marxism that the scientific concept of the primary stage of socialism was clearly put forward in the Party’s Program.”¹⁷⁴ This is Deng Xiaoping’s contribution to socialist theory and practice.

3. From the Primary Stage of Socialism to an Even Higher Stage

It is the first time in the history of Marxism that China will move from the primary stage of socialism to a higher stage, that is, a moderately developed stage. This represents both the theoretical and practical contribution to the new era of socialism.

First, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China made a new major judgment on China’s place in the world: “Our country’s economic strength, scientific and technological strength, national defense strength, and comprehensive national strength have entered the forefront of the world’s ranking.”¹⁷⁵ This is the basis of strategic goals of basically realizing socialist modernization by 2035 and developing China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful by 2050. To this end, I further made quantitative calculations, international comparisons, and ex-post evaluation from the perspectives of economic strength, agricultural production capacity, industrial manufacturing strength, scientific and technological

¹⁷² Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL?end=2020&locations=CN-1W&start=1990&view=chart>.

¹⁷³ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 8. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1999: 325.

¹⁷⁴ *Selected Important Documents Since the 15th CPC National Congress* (Vol. 1), People’s Publishing House, 2000 Edition, p. 15.

¹⁷⁵ Xi Jinping. “Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”. *Selected Important Documents Since the 19th CPC National Congress*: Vol. 1. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2019:7–8.

strength, infrastructure modernization, human resources, trade strength, comprehensive national strength, international influence, and international status. My basic research conclusions are as follows: **By 2020, the most demonstrative indicator is that China's GDP, calculated by the World Bank in international dollars (in 2017), surpassed that of European Union in 2016 and that of the United States in 2017,**¹⁷⁶ after the United States' GDP (1990 international dollars) surpassed China in 1890—127 years previously.¹⁷⁷ **This marks that China has transformed from the world's largest developing country to the world's largest emerging economy and a power with comprehensive national strength—entering the center of the world stage.**¹⁷⁸ **This is an unprecedented major change in China's position in the world, which in turn has triggered a major change in the world unseen in a century.**

4. The Principal Contradiction Presented by China's Unbalanced, Insufficient and Incomplete Development

The above-mentioned major changes in China's basic national conditions, development level, economic strength, scientific and technological strength, trade strength, national defense strength, comprehensive national strength, and status in the world will inevitably lead to major changes in the social principal contradiction present in Chinese society. In this regard, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China firstly made a new major judgment on the change of the principal contradiction present in Chinese society: "Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and the principal contradiction in our society has been transformed into the contradiction between the people's ever-growing needs for a better life and unbalanced and inadequate development."¹⁷⁹ The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China reaffirmed this basic judgment, "and we have made it clear that closing this gap should be the focus of all our initiatives. With these efforts, we have made constant progress in enriching and developing a new form of human advancement."¹⁸⁰

The changes in the principal contradiction in Chinese society today are reflected in the fact that all kinds of contradictions are undergoing major historic changes. **China's prominent contradictions of unbalanced, inadequate, and incomplete development in economy, culture, society, and ecology** can be seen in three main aspects:

¹⁷⁶ Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?locations=US-EU-CN>.

¹⁷⁷ According to the world economy (GDP, international dollars in 1990) database provided by Angus Maddison, in 1890, the US GDP (214.7 billion international dollars) surpassed China (205.4 billion international dollars), becoming the world's largest economy. Angus Maddison: *Historical Statistics of the World Economy: 1–2008 AD*.

¹⁷⁸ Hu Angang: "How China's Comprehensive National Strength Entered the Top in the World (2000–2020)", *China Study*, No. 1, 2021, January 29, 2021.

¹⁷⁹ Jinping (2017). *Institute of Party History and Literature of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China* (2019: 8).

¹⁸⁰ Jinping (2022, p. 7).

First, the **“unbalanced development” is specifically reflected in:** First, there will be a long-standing imbalance in the development between urban and rural areas, and the gap between urban and rural residents’ income and consumption is also still very large.¹⁸¹ As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: “It is an objective law, but under the national conditions of my country’s population of more than 1.3 billion, no matter what stage of industrialization and urbanization progresses, we must develop agriculture, and rural areas will not die out and instead there will be continued coexistence between urban and rural areas. This is also an objective law.”¹⁸² Second, there will be a long-standing imbalance in regional development. Although the imbalances in regional development have been present for a long time, the regional development gap has narrowed. At the same time, the trend of differentiation is still obvious, that is the trend of increased differentiation in the four major economic plates. The economic growth in the south is faster than that in the north and there is also an obvious trend of differentiation in such economic plates.¹⁸³ Third, there will be a long-standing imbalance in industrial development. During the period from 2000 to 2020, the average annual growth rate of the primary industry was 3.9%, and the average annual growth rates of the secondary and tertiary industries were 9.0% and 9.4% respectively.¹⁸⁴ The internal development of the industry is also unbalanced. The proportion of agricultural added value in GDP and the proportion of labor force are also not balanced.¹⁸⁵ The latter lags behind the former, and the proportion of the added value of manufacturing in GDP is declining too fast.¹⁸⁶ Fourth, there will be a long-standing imbalance in social development. China has formed a large-scale floating population. The national floating population has risen from 121.07 million in 2000 to 375.82 million in 2020, exceeding the total population of the United States (329 million). The proportion of the total population has increased from 9.6% to 26.6%, an increase of 17 percentage points. There is a large gap in the basic public services of floating population between urban and rural areas and among different regions. Fifth, there will be a long-standing imbalance in ecological development. From the perspective of economic geography, the population density and economic density on the east and west sides of the “Hu Huanyong Line” are very

¹⁸¹ In 2020, the urban–rural per capita disposable income gap will be 2.56 times, and the per capita consumption expenditure gap will be 1.96 times. Calculation Data Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021: 56–57).

¹⁸² Xi’s speech at the eighth group study session of the Political Bureau of the 19th CPC Central Committee. September 2018.

¹⁸³ Series Writing Group of National Development and Reform Commission. *Implement the Strategy for Regional Development*. Beijing: China Planning Press, China Market Press, 2020: 28–30.

¹⁸⁴ National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021: 10).

¹⁸⁵ By 2020, the proportion of China’s agricultural added value in GDP has dropped to 7.7%, while the proportion of agriculture in total employment is as high as 23.6%, and the average agricultural labor productivity is equivalent to 32.6% of the national average. Calculation Data Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2021: 25, 41).

¹⁸⁶ The share of China’s manufacturing industry in GDP has dropped from 32.1% in 2011 to 26.2% in 2020. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.MANF.ZS?locations=CN>.

different. 94% of the population resides in the southeast of the line. The southeast, 43% of the national land, bears a huge environmental pressure. While the northwest, 57% of the national land, is dominated by grasslands, the Gobi desert, oases and snow-covered plateaus. The ecological environment is very fragile, which directly affects the imbalance between urban and rural areas of China's economic, social and ecological environment. **These five imbalances will continue to exist. They are interrelated and interacting with each other, and will become the main long-term constraint to fulfillment of the 1.4 billion people's ever-growing needs for a better life.**

From a more proactive perspective, five coordinated development strategies are needed: an urban and rural coordinated development strategy, a regional coordinated development strategy, an industrial coordinated development strategy, an economic and social coordinated development strategy, and a green development strategy. For example, relatively underdeveloped regions need to take advantage of the gap, give play to their late-mover and comparative advantages, and work to gradually narrow the gap. Developed regions and relatively less underdeveloped regions should provide support as well. During the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, 6 cities in Guangdong province helped 66 poverty-stricken counties in 8 cities and prefectures in Guizhou province except for Guiyang city. In 2021, the GDP of Guangdong province reached CNY 12.44 trillion, and that of Guizhou province was 1.96 trillion. The former is 6.3 times that of the latter, which can boost the sustained economic growth of Guizhou province, and can directly help Guizhou province enter the world market through economic and trade integration with Guangdong province.

Secondly, the so-called "inadequate development" is specifically reflected in the insufficient development of regions with development potential. First, compared with the southern regions, the northern regions are underdeveloped. Second, compared with economic development, social development is relatively lagging. Third, when comparing general development with the level of ecological environment protection, the lack of ecological environment protection has become the biggest stumbling stone in building a beautiful China. Fourth, compared with economic development, cultural construction is lagging, and cultural soft power is at an insufficient level. Fifth, the national defense strength is relatively insufficient compared with China's status as a major power in the world. In 2020, military expenditure (current USD) will account for 13.1% of the world's share, which is lower than the world proportion occupied by China's GDP (current USD) (17.4%), and only equivalent to 1/3 of the US amount.¹⁸⁷ In the face of long-term threats and severe challenges from the United States and other countries, it is even more necessary to accelerate the modernization of national defense and the military. It is especially necessary to increase investment in national defense construction, including basic defense expenditures, scientific and technological research expenditures, defense equipment expenditures, and defense personnel expenditures. Sixth, compared with high-income countries, China has entered into the ranks of them. According to the

¹⁸⁷ Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.CD?end=2020&locations=1W-CN-US&start=1990&view=chart>.

World Bank's per capita GDP of high-income countries (48,000 international dollars in 2020),¹⁸⁸ China is still a country with a low per capita level. This shows obvious underdevelopment, room for improvement, and late-comer advantage.

Insufficient development of these six major areas has become the top priority for China's economic, technological, social and cultural, ecological and national defense modernization development. Specifically, it is necessary to develop economic productivity, scientific and technological productivity, cultural productivity, ecological productivity, and to improve the national defense strength. **The fundamental dynamic changes of the principal contradiction in our society are promoting the transition from the primary stage of socialism to a higher stage of moderate developed socialism. The leapfrogging of our economic strength, scientific and technological strength, trade strength, national defense strength, and comprehensive national strength is promoting China to transition from the world's largest developing country to the world's largest emerging economic country, and then to the world's largest high-income country and medium-level developed countries in the future—this represents a major transition in the international status.**

Thirdly, the “unbalanced development” referenced is reflected in the follow aspects: from a micro-perspective, according to Marx's theory of comprehensive development of the human being, it means that a human's development is not being implemented in a comprehensive way. From a macro perspective, according to Deng Xiaoping, the essence of socialism is to achieve common/mutual prosperity, which implies that currently the world has yet to reach this state, thus development is incomplete. Mutual prosperity is not a statistical “average” state of prosperity. Its core is the “mutual” adjective, so that more than one billion people can all have the opportunity to participate in development together, jointly improve the development capacity, jointly promote the level of development, and jointly share the fruits of development. The bottom line of common prosperity is to prevent polarization and prevent excessive social differences from causing social instability.¹⁸⁹ From the perspective of the overall layout of socialist modernization, the CPC Central Committee has proposed the “Five-sphere Integrated Plan” and “Four-pronged Strategy.” The Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China reiterated this strategic goal of “basic realization of modernization of national defense and army by 2035 and building the people's army into a world-class army in an all-round way by mid-century” proposed at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.¹⁹⁰ To this end, the “Five-sphere Integrated Plan” can be further expanded into “Six-sphere Integrated Plan”, reflecting the fact that it has become even more necessary to speed up the modernization of national defense and the army.

It is very important to correctly understand and grasp the principal social contradictions, development stages, and the dynamic changes and development trends of

¹⁸⁸ Data Sources: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.KD?end=2020&locations=CN-XD&start=1990&view=chart>.

¹⁸⁹ Hu (2012).

¹⁹⁰ Jinping (2022, p. 15).

China's international status. Among them, the major changes in the principal social contradictions have played a key role in long-term development.

The fact that China is the country with the largest population in the world and the third largest country in terms of land area determines the unique nature of China's socialist modernization development, that is, the main long-term issues of unbalanced, insufficient and incomplete development will still exist for a long time. These factors have always intertwined, influenced and interacted with each other, bringing about various social contradictions and problems, which are the main causes of various social contradictions at different development stages of China's socialism. And it is still difficult and complicated to solve these contradictions over a longer time period. From the perspective of dialectical materialism, we must not only objectively recognize the "contradiction between the people's ever-growing needs for a better life and unbalanced, inadequate and incomplete development", but also subjectively strive to make full use of and resolve this major social contradiction, as Mao Zedong said: "Once this principal contradiction is grasped, all problems will be solved easily." "The nature of things is primarily determined by the main aspect of the prevailing contradiction. The primary and secondary aspects of contradictions mutually transform each other, and the nature of things changes accordingly."¹⁹¹ The impetus to promote China's social development is precisely from the constant solution of social contradictions, that is, solving the principal contradiction in our society has become the driving force for the modernization of political, economic, social, cultural, ecological and national defense development. The process of solving contradictions is itself the process of modernization development and efforts should be made to realize the mutual transformation of the primary and secondary aspects of the contradiction and form a positive cycle of mutual interaction. For example, to solve the contradiction between urban and rural areas one must continuously increase the population of cities and towns, especially to absorb the rural transfer population on a large scale. The ratio of urban population to rural population stood at 2:8 in 1980 (19.4% and 80.6% in 1980), changing to 2:1 (64.7% and 35.3% in 2021). In the future, it will be further transformed into 8:2 (after 2035), which will help the whole country to revitalize agriculture and rural areas in an all-round way, so that all farmers and the urban population can be prosperous together. This is a mutual adaptation process of continuous development and gradual reform, and it is also a long-term process of continuously solving the principal contradiction in society. Once old contradictions are solved, new contradictions will arise and need to be solved again. Actively promoting the transformation of the main aspects of contradictions, making full use of favorable conditions, actively overcoming unfavorable conditions, and constantly turning disadvantages into advantages: this is the theory of practice and contradiction that correctly handles the principal contradiction in the new stage of China's new era socialism.

¹⁹¹ *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 1. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991: 322–323.

To summarize, the major changes in the principal contradiction of our society will inevitably lead to and promote the major transition of our country from the primary stage of socialism to the stage of moderately developed socialism, of which the basic realization of socialist modernization by 2035 has become a major turning point.

1.3 The World Is Undergoing Major Changes Unseen in a Century¹⁹²

1. Mao Zedong's Great Prophecy

Comrade Mao Zedong was the first to foresee the great changes in China. In 1962, he made a centenary prophecy at the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference: from now on, within 50 years (referring to 2012) to a hundred years (referring to 2062), it will be a great era of complete changes in the social system in the world, an era of earth-shaking events, unparalleled by any historical era in the past. In such an age, we must prepare for a great struggle with many different characteristics from past struggles. For this cause, we must do our best to combine the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the reality of China's socialist construction, as well as with the reality of the future world revolution and learn the laws of the struggle step by step from actual implementation.¹⁹³

This is Mao Zedong's unique outlook on China, the world, the times, and the future. At the Enlarged Working Conference of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (Seven-thousand People Congress) in 1962, he predicts that, from now on, China can build a powerful socialist economy in 50 years (referring to 2012) to 100 years (referring to 2062), and can catch up with and exceed the most advanced capitalist country in the world (referring to the United States). The author calls it "Mao Zedong's prophecy", which has been verified by the great implementation and reality of Chinese style modernization.

2. The World Today Has Undergone Great and Unprecedented Changes¹⁹⁴

Xi Jinping's report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stated: "The Party Central Committee has pursued a strategy of national rejuvenation amid global changes of a magnitude not seen in a century." "At present, momentous changes of a like not seen in a century are accelerating across the world. A new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation is well under way, and a significant shift is taking place in the international balance of power, presenting China with new strategic

¹⁹² Written by Hu (2021c).

¹⁹³ *The Writings of Mao Zedong*: Vol. 8. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999: 302.

¹⁹⁴ Written by Hu (2021c).

opportunities in pursuing development. At the same time, however, the once-in-a-century pandemic has had far-reaching effects; a backlash against globalization is rising; and unilateralism and protectionism are mounting. The global economic recovery is sluggish, regional conflicts and disturbances are frequent, and global issues are becoming more acute. The world has entered a new period of turbulence and change.”¹⁹⁵ The author calls it the “Xi Jinping Prophecy.”

Today’s world is going through great unprecedented changes and the trend of the world landscape of “rising in the south and falling in the north” is more obvious. China is rising rapidly on an extremely large scale, which has become the biggest independent and dependent variable in the overall world landscape. This has fundamentally altered the world’s economic landscape, manufacturing landscape, trade landscape, science and technology landscape, globalization landscape and world modernization landscape previously dominated by “northern countries” (referring to OECD countries).

The world economic landscape is undergoing major changes. According to the data provided by the World Bank, calculated in terms of purchasing power parity,¹⁹⁶ the share of GDP (the international dollar in 2017) of OECD countries in the world dropped from 63.0% in 2000 to 46.4% in 2020, of which the share of US GDP in the world dropped from 20.8% to 15.8%, while the proportion of GDP of southern countries (referring to non-OECD countries) in the world has increased from 37.0% in 2000 to 53.6% in 2020. Of this amount, China’s GDP proportion has increased from 6.4% to 18.3%.¹⁹⁷ The ratio of southern countries’ GDP to northern countries’ GDP has changed from 4:6 to 5:5, **and to 6:4 in the future, so that the world economic landscape previously dominated by northern countries will be changed.**

The world industrialization landscape is also undergoing major changes. The share of the world’s manufacturing value added (current USD) in OECD countries dropped from 77.7% in 2000 to 51.9% in 2019, while the share of the world’s manufacturing value added in the southern countries rose from 22.3% to 48.1%, with the ratio of the latter to the former changing from 2:8 to 5:5. China’s proportion has risen from 8.6% in 2004 to 28.6% in 2020.¹⁹⁸ This shows that the industrialization of the southern countries is accelerating, and China has become the biggest driving force. The implementation of the “Belt and Road” initiative has been conducive to boosting

¹⁹⁵ Jinping (2022, pp. 5, 15–16).

¹⁹⁶ The World Bank and other international institutions stipulate that: GDP calculated in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is gross domestic product converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. An international dollar has the same purchasing power over GDP as the USD has in the United States. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources. These Data are calculated in constant international dollar in 2017.

¹⁹⁷ Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?end=2020&locations=CN-US-OE-1W&start=2000>.

¹⁹⁸ Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.MANF.CD?end=2020&locations=CN-US-OE-1W&start=2000>.

the industrialization development of the southern countries, becoming a new trend of world industrialization, changing the long-term monopoly of the northern countries. Eventually, there will be new manufacturing landscape of the southern and northern countries, that is, the ratio of the former to the latter will be 6:4. China's manufacturing industry will account for more than 1/3 of the world's manufacturing industry, which will drive the industrialization of the southern countries and **accelerate the change of the world industrialization landscape.**

The world trade landscape is undergoing major changes. The share of OECD countries' exports of goods in the world has dropped from 72.3% in 2000 to 57.2% in 2020. At the same time, the proportion of goods exported by southern countries in the world has continued to rise, from 27.7% to 42.8%, and the ratio of southern countries' exports of goods to OECD countries' exports of goods has changed from 3:7 to 4:6. The proportion of China's exports of goods in the world has increased from 1.8% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2020.¹⁹⁹ As the world's largest trader of goods, China is also the largest trading partner and stakeholder of more than 140 countries and regions in the world, and a major trading partner of other countries and regions. Comprehensive opening to the outside world and various free trade agreements will greatly help to promote the export growth of the southern countries.²⁰⁰ These will also change the ratio of OECD countries' exports to southern countries' exports from 4:6 to 5:5, even 6:4 and **the long-term monopoly of the northern countries on the trade is being changed.**

The world's technological innovation landscape is undergoing major changes. Calculated in terms of the number of domestic resident patent applications,²⁰¹ the proportion occupied by the southern countries in the world has increased from 8.6% in 2000 to 55.4% in 2020, of which China's proportion in the world has increased from 3.0% to 51.9%. The proportion of northern countries in the world has increased from 91.4% in 2000 down to 44.6% in 2020.²⁰² In terms of the number of articles published in scientific and technological journals,²⁰³ the proportion of southern countries in the world increased from 17.4% in 2000 to 55.7% in 2018,

¹⁹⁹ Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.GSR.MRCH.CD?end=2020&locations=CN-US-OE-1W&start=2000>.

²⁰⁰ So far, China has signed 19 free trade zone agreements. In particular, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) covers a market of 2.2 billion people (nearly 30% of the world) and nearly 28% of global trade (figures in 2019).

²⁰¹ According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): a patent application is a patent application filed worldwide through the Patent Cooperation Treaty procedure or to a national patent department for the purpose of possessing an exclusive right granted for an invention, which is a product or a process that provides, in general, a new way of doing something, or offers a new technical solution to a problem. A patent right protects the patent owner's invention for a limited period of time, typically 20 years.

²⁰² Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IP.PAT.RESD?end=2015&locations=1W-OE-CN&start=1981&view=chart>.

²⁰³ Articles in scientific journals refer to scientific and engineering articles published in the following fields: physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, clinical medicine, biomedical research, engineering and technology, as well as earth and space sciences. National Science Foundation: "Science and Engineering Indicators".

of which China's proportion in the world rose from 5.0% to 20.7%. However, the proportion of northern countries in the world dropped from 82.6% in 2000 to 44.3% in 2018, and the proportion of the United States in the world dropped from 28.6% to 16.6%, after China.²⁰⁴

The world modernization landscape is undergoing major changes. From the perspective of modernization factors, I adopted the physical indicator of power generation, which better reflect the great changes in the world modernization landscape than other various value indicators. The proportion of power generation in the southern countries in the world has risen from 36.3% in 2000 to 59.4% in 2020, exceeding the proportion of OECD countries (40.6%). The ratio of southern countries' power generation to northern countries' power generation has changed from 1:2 to 6:4. Among them, the proportion of China's power generation in the world has increased from 8.7% in 2000 to 29.0% in 2020, which has exceeded the proportion of the United States (16.0%), equivalent to 1.81 times that of the United States,²⁰⁵ and significantly higher than the proportion of China's GDP (the international dollar in 2017) in the world (18.3%). This is equivalent to 1.16 times the proportion of US GDP in the world (15.8%),²⁰⁶ **which reflects the accelerated modernization development trend of southern countries, which has changed the long-term monopoly of northern countries in the world modernization landscape. Behind this change China is both the largest independent and dependent variable.**

As early as more than 100 years ago, Lenin clearly stated: "The imbalance of economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism."²⁰⁷ This is the objective law of the imperialist era in the twentieth century, in which the unbalanced development of the United States and the United Kingdom is particularly prominent.²⁰⁸ More than 100 years later, the fact of unbalanced economic and political development is the objective law of the era of peaceful development in the twenty-first century. The representative of this is the countries in the south rising rapidly and countries in the north entering a period of decline. Of the overall changes, the imbalance of economic development between China and the United States is the most prominent,²⁰⁹ the US hegemony has entered a period of decline, and the northern countries have entered a period of slow growth, which has fundamentally altered the

²⁰⁴ Calculation data source: World Bank Database: https://data.worldbank.org.cn/indicator/IP.JRN.ARTC.SC?locations=CN-OE-1W-US&most_recent_value_desc=false.

²⁰⁵ Calculation data source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2021.

²⁰⁶ Calculation data source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?end=2020&locations=1W-CN-US&start=1990&view=chart>.

²⁰⁷ Lenin pointed out: "The imbalance of economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism." Lenin. "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe". Selected Works of V.I. Lenin: Vol. 2. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995: 709.

²⁰⁸ According to the Angus Maddison World Economic Database, during the period 1870–1913, the average annual growth rate of UK GDP (the international dollar in 1990) was 1.9%, while the average annual growth rate of US GDP was 3.9% during the same period, surpassing the UK in 1872. Calculation Data Source: Angus Maddison: Historical Statistics of the World Economy: 1–2008 AD.

²⁰⁹ According to the World Bank database, from 1990 to 2021, the average annual growth rate of China's GDP (the international dollar in 2017) was 9.2%, while that of the United States was

world political and economic landscape long dominated by northern countries. Great and unprecedented changes unseen in a century have been dramatized.

The outbreak of COVID-19 and the pandemic have accelerated the great division, great change, and great reorganization of the world. First, the world economy has entered a period of deep recession; second, the world unemployment rate has risen to a record high; third, world trade has entered a period of severe recession, with anti-globalization prevailing and unilateralism and protectionism on the rise; fourth, the world poverty headcount ratio is on the rise²¹⁰; fifth, humanity faces a growing peace deficit, development deficit, security deficit and governance deficit; sixth, global hegemony, highhandedness, and bullying held by some countries (with the America as the representative) prevail; seventh, global climate change has been the greatest challenge the world is facing. At the same time, China's leading role in world economic growth, industrial and manufacturing growth, trade growth, and technological innovation has become more prominent, which has greatly accelerated the rise of southern countries (non-OECD countries) and presented a new pattern of "rising in the south and falling in the north (OECD countries)." This has functioned to make the international power more balanced and global development more sustainable overall.

Peace and development are still the major global themes of the current period.

China advocates for a path of peaceful coexistence and win-win results, which is in line with the historical law of "a just cause enjoys abundant support." It also works to promote world political multi-polarization, economic globalization, cultural diversity, the reform and balance of the world governance system, and better respond to global challenges. For example, global climate change, global pandemic prevention and control, global and regional peaceful coexistence, and actively promoting the realization of the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs) of the international community are all more conducive for the sustainable development of southern countries. Obviously, the U.S. national policy of hegemony and war are contrary to the trend of the world, and it conforms to the objective historical law of "an unjust cause cannot find support." This is the inevitable result of the continuous decline of the United States, and it is also the fundamental reason why the United States challenges China constantly.²¹¹ The stronger China is, the more able it is to

2.4%. China's GDP surpassed the US GDP in 2017. In 2021, China's GDP was 119% of the US GDP. Calculation Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?end=2021&locations=CN-US&start=1990>.

²¹⁰ Written by Hu (2021a).

²¹¹ I believe that with the substantial improvement of China's comprehensive national strength, the shared interests between China and the United States have increased and the space for competition and cooperation between the two countries has also increased. Due to the nature of domestic capitalism and the world hegemony of the United States, the United States will still challenge China with a confrontation-based strategic. China is the leading party in promoting win-win cooperation between the two countries and managing and controlling differences. It actively responds and makes great achievements to lead the peaceful development of the world and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. Hu et al. (2022).

stop wars. Even if the United States launches an economic blockade or military intervention, China will be able to defeat American hegemony.

The world has entered an unprecedented period of technological innovation. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, global scientific and technological innovation has entered an intensive and active period, and a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation has had a profound impact on the global economic structure.²¹² Especially with the accelerated development of the fourth industrial revolution and the rapid rise of emerging industries, China has become not only an innovator, but also a leader. This can be seen particularly in China actively promoting the dissemination, diffusion and sharing of new technologies, new models and new forms with other southern countries.

3. China Enters the Center of the World Stage

China's international status and influence have been greatly improved, and China has increasingly stepped into the center of the world stage. The rapid rise of China's comprehensive national strength has profoundly changed the world's political, economic, trade, and technological landscape. From the perspective of comprehensive national strength (see Table 1.2), in the first two decades of the twentieth century, China has accelerated its pace of becoming a world power from a big country, especially achieving an overall accelerated catch-up with the United States in terms of economic, technological and overall national strength. Among the 21 major indicators of China summarized by the author, in 2000, China ranked first in the world in 4 indicators, in 5 indicators in the world in 2010, and in 6 indicators in the world in 2020 and has a ranking of second in the world for 16 indicators. China's comprehensive national strength has leapt to the forefront of the world, and its status as a world power has been consolidated.

Development is overriding importance, and strength is also overriding importance. The next 15 years will still be a period of strategic opportunity for China's development. China needs to adhere to high-quality development and continuously improve its scientific and technological strength, industrial strength, trade strength, national defense strength, and comprehensive national strength on the basis of doubling its total economic output.

4. China: "Global Development Initiative" and "Global Security Initiative"

The great changes in the world and the pandemic of the century are superimposed on each other, the global political economy is more turbulent, and hegemonism is more prevalent, exacerbating the severe challenges of global development deficit, security deficit, and climate deficit. To this end, Chinese President Xi Jinping clearly answered the question of the times, the question being asked all over the world, and put forward two major "China initiatives" in time.

The first is the "Global Development Initiative". On June 24, 2022, at the high-level dialogue on global development, President Xi Jinping advocated the "Global

²¹² Xi Jinping sends a congratulatory letter to the Greater Bay Area Science Forum 2021. People's Daily. 2021-12-12 (1).

Table 1.2 Years in which China's main indicators ranked third, second and first in the world

Number	Main indicators	3rd	2nd	1st	Data sources
1	Total urban population (10,000 people)			1975	World Bank
2	GDP (exchange rate method, current USD)	2007	2010		World Bank
3	GDP (PPP, the international dollar in 2017)	1994	2001	2017	World Bank
4	Agricultural value added (USD in 2015)			1990	World Bank
5	Industrial value added (current USD)	1999	2006	2011	World Bank
6	Merchandise exports (current USD)	2004	2007	2009	World Trade Organization
7	Merchandise imports (current USD)	2003	2009		World Trade Organization
8	Exports of services (current USD)	4th place 2021			International Monetary Fund
9	Imports of services (current USD)	2009	2013		International Monetary Fund
10	Total foreign exchange reserves (excluding gold) (current USD)	1995	1996	2006	International Monetary Fund
11	Number of domestic invention patent applications	2003	2009	2010	World Intellectual Property Organization
12	Number of trademark applications filed directly by local residents		1997	2001	World Intellectual Property Organization
13	Number of scientific and technical journal articles	2003	2004	2016	National Science Foundation
14	Railway passenger traffic (million passengers-km)			1999	World Bank
15	Highway (km)	2000	2001	2012	
16	Air transport (passenger)	1993	2004		International Civil Aviation Organization
17	Port container throughput (20-foot equivalent)			2000	"International Yearbook of Containerization"

(continued)

Table 1.2 (continued)

Number	Main indicators	3rd	2nd	1st	Data sources
18	Energy consumption (oil equivalent)	1985	1993	2009	BP World Energy Statistics
19	Power Generation (KWh)	1994	1996	2011	BP World Energy Statistics
20	Renewable energy consumption (oil equivalent)	2011	2012	2018	BP World Energy Statistics
21	Military spending (current USD)	2005	2007		Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Development Initiative”, which aimed to “promote the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to start again and promote the building of a global development community”.²¹³ As the world’s largest developing country, China has provided a large amount of foreign aid to developing countries. From 2013 to 2018, China’s foreign aid amounted to CNY 270.2 billion, including free aid, interest-free loans and preferential loans. Of the total aid, CNY 127.8 billion of free aid was provided, accounting for 47.30% of the total foreign aid.²¹⁴ In this regard, President Xi Jinping solemnly promised: China will increase resource investment in global development cooperation, integrate and upgrade the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund to become the “Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund”, and beginning with a base amount of USD 3 billion, increase the capital by USD 1 billion. China has become the world’s second largest foreign investor. In 2020, China’s foreign direct investment in the whole industry reached USD 132.94 billion²¹⁵; China is also the world’s largest foreign project contracting country.²¹⁶ During the “13th Five-Year Plan” period, the turnover of foreign contracted projects reached USD 825.9 billion. 52 African countries have signed cooperation documents with China to jointly build the “Belt and Road” Initiative, achieving full coverage. The “Belt and Road” construction has become a classic global public product provided by China to the world, and the “Global Development Initiative” is the largest public product provided by China to the world—this represents a re-mobilization of global development cooperation.²¹⁷

²¹³ Xi Jinping: “Building High-Quality Partnerships to Open a New Journey of BRICS Cooperation—Speech at the 14th BRICS Leaders’ Meeting”, June 23, 2022, People’s Daily Online: <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/32455215>.

²¹⁴ State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China: “China’s International Development Cooperation in the New Era” (White Paper), January 2021, Chinese government website: <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zfbps/32832/Document/1696685/1696685.htm>.

²¹⁵ Ministry of Commerce: “Report on Development of China’s Outward Investment and Economic Cooperation 2020”, February 2021, Chinese government website: http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-02/03/content_5584540.htm.

²¹⁶ Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2022, p. 103).

²¹⁷ Ma (2022).

The second is the “Global Security Initiative”. On April 21, 2022, President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022 and delivered a speech. The Global Security Initiative advocated by President Xi Jinping would adhere to the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and jointly maintain world peace and security. It would adhere to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and respect for the development path and social system independently chosen by the people of each country. It would follow purposes and principles of the UN Charter, abandon the Cold War mentality, oppose unilateralism, and refrain from bloc politics and camp confrontation. It would adhere to taking seriously all countries’ legitimate security concerns, uphold the principle of indivisible of security, build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, and oppose basing national security on the insecurity of other countries. It would additionally focus on the peaceful settlement of differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation, support all efforts that are conducive to the peaceful resolution of crises, do not practice double standards, and oppose the abuse of unilateral sanctions and “long-arm jurisdiction.” It would follow the overall strategic plan to maintain security in traditional and non-traditional areas, and jointly address regional disputes and global issues such as terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity, and biosecurity.²¹⁸ It aimed to “advocate a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, follows the philosophy that humanity is an indivisible security community, and aims to create a new path to security that features dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance and win–win over zero-sum.”²¹⁹ Since 1990, the contingent of Chinese peacekeeping military professionals represented by military observers, staff officers, and contract officers has continued to grow. The Chinese military is a key force in UN peacekeeping operations. Over the past 30 years, the Chinese military has dispatched 2064 peacekeeping military professionals to 25 peacekeeping missions and headquarters of the UN. Chinese officers and soldiers have conducted peacekeeping operations in more than 20 countries and regions, and actively performed their functions in monitoring ceasefires, stabilizing the situation, protecting civilians, escorting security, and supporting guarantees.²²⁰

Third, China has always adhered to multilateralism and win-winism, supported multilateral political systems such as the United Nations, and the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. It has built an open world economy, trade, technology, and opposed unilateralism, protectionism, and hegemonism. It also opposes exclusive political alliances, opposes the politicization

²¹⁸ “Xi Jinping Proposes Global Security Initiative”, April 2022, Xinhuanet: http://www.news.cn/world/2022-04/21/c_1128580296.htm.

²¹⁹ Xi Jinping: “Building High-Quality Partnerships to Open a New Journey of BRICS Cooperation—Speech at the 14th BRICS Leaders’ Meeting”, June 23, 2022, People’s Daily Online: <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/32455215>.

²²⁰ State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China: “China’s Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations” (White Paper), September 18, 2020, Chinese government website: http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2020-09/18/content_5544398.htm.

and weaponization of economic, technological and trade issues, and opposes various forms of proxy warfare and military intervention.

The above initiatives are aimed at realizing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implementing the outcomes of the Conference of the Parties to Article 26 of the “United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”. China not only takes the lead in fulfilling the responsibility for emission reduction, but also supports the United Nations’ proposal that developed economies should take the lead in fulfilling the responsibility for emission reduction and implement publicly committed financial (bring USD 100 billion a year) and technical support.

Both history and the future will prove that among more than 240 countries and regions, there has never been as much interconnectedness as today—all countries have a shared destiny. There can be no global development without global security, and no sustainable security without global development. Only with common global development can all countries develop; only with common global security can all countries be safe. Global security and development are the real “righteous path in the world”.

In the first 20 years of the twenty-first century, the world economic landscape, industrialization landscape, science and technology landscape, trade landscape, urban landscape, and modernization landscape has undergone major changes, ranging from quantitative changes to qualitative changes. Emerging economies like China and India are rapidly on the unprecedented rise. Divergence of OECD and non-OECD countries has turned to great convergence,²²¹ and the pandemic shock has undoubtedly accelerated the great changes in the world political landscape and global governance landscape. China itself is the biggest variable in the world’s recent unprecedented changes. It is both an independent variable and a dependent variable. The interaction between these two variables has led to great changes in China and the world, and has become a great opportunity for China to achieve its second century goal.

In short, China will still have in its possession an extremely rare, auspicious chance for development in the future, as General Secretary Xi Jinping judged: “Time and momentum are on our side, which is where our strength and confidence lie, as well as where our determination and confidence lie.”²²² China is more powerful and capable of proactively responding to foreseeable and unforeseen external challenges—especially hegemony challenge led by the United States. China must coordinate both

²²¹ The GDP of the countries of the South (the international dollar in 2017) will increase its proportion of the world total from 37.2% in 2000 to 54.2% in 2021, while the countries of the North (OECD) will drop from 62.8% to 45.8%. Among them, the proportion of China and India’s GDP in the world will increase from 10.4% in 2000 to 25.5% in 2021, an increase of 15.1 percentage points. The GDP of the countries of the South (the international dollar in 2017) will increase its proportion of the world total from 37.2% in 2000 to 54.2% in 2021, while the countries of the North (OECD) will drop from 62.8% to 45.8%. Among them, the proportion of China and India’s GDP in the world will increase from 10.4% in 2000 to 25.5% in 2021, an increase of 15.1 percentage points. Among them, China’s GDP surpassed that of the United States in 2017, and India surpassed Japan in 2009, ranking third in the world. Data Source: World Bank Database: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.KD?locations=IN-JP-US-IW>.

²²² Jinping (2021b).

domestic and international situations, firmly seize the important period of strategic opportunities, actively create a favorable international environment, promote the building of a new type of international relations, promote the building of a community of shared future for mankind, and create a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other.²²³ China will ensure that the grand goal of socialist modernization is basically achieved by 2035.

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²²³ Men (2022).

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