

A Community with A Shared Future for Mankind is Rooted in Chinese Worldview of “Tianxia”

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Ladies and Gentlemen

First and foremost, I would like to thank the organizers for inviting me to speak at this high-level think tank forum on "*Building A Human Community with A Shared Future*".

It is a privilege and an honor to share with you my perspectives on the noble concept of "A Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" expounded by President Xi Jinping in his address at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 2013.

In his speech, President Xi emphasized that mankind lives in the same global village where “everyone has in himself a little bit of others”, and thus mankind “have increasingly emerged as a community of common destiny”.

Since then, "A Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" has evolved into China's blueprint for global governance. It is China's worldview in the new era and serves as its guiding principle in international relations.

This concept has been written into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China in 2017 and incorporated into China's constitution a year later. It has been endorsed by the UN and enshrined in several UN resolutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As a matter of expediency, I will use the acronym "Comsfuture" to denote "A Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" for the remainder of my speech, given its frequent mention.

Comsfuture is more than just an aspiration and vision; its guiding principles underscore the critical importance of international cooperation, mutual respect among nations, and love for our common home, the planet Earth.

In an era marked by unprecedented connectivity, both virtual and physical, the concept of Comsfuture transcends geographical borders and underscores the interdependence of nations. It calls for a concerted effort to address global challenges, foster peace, and to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

At its core, Comsfuture resonates the timeless wisdom inherent in the Chinese worldview of "Tianxia."

The term "Tianxia" is Chinese traditional depiction of the world with no well-defined geographical borders. Often translated as "all under the heaven," it encapsulates the concept of a unified and harmonious global order where people of different ethnicities, with diverse cultures and civilizations, coexist. Tianxia embodies a universalistic worldview that envisions the world as a single entity, where all nations are interconnected, and all people share a common future under the Heaven. It represents a vision of unity amidst diversity, where the welfare of one is inextricably linked to the welfare of all.

In essence, "A Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" can be construed as internationalism infused with distinctive Chinese cultural values, emphasizing mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration. In simpler terms, "Comsfuture" is internationalism with Chinese cultural characteristics in the 21st century. It stands as China's proposition to address the challenges of a world beset by conflicts, unilateralism, hegemonic ambitions, and climate change.

Comsfuture vividly embodies the spirit of "sharing the benefits with the world when one prospers" (达则兼济天下) in the realm of international cooperation, providing an unequivocal attestation of China's peaceful rise as a major global power. In particular, China has helped many developing countries in achieving economic growth under its Belt and Road Initiative.

Tianxia underscores the significance of achieving harmony and cooperation among nations rather than fostering conflict and competition. It promotes the idea that nations should collaborate for the greater good and shared prosperity, i.e. "Tianxia in great harmony" (天下大同). This is

the ideal world pursued by Confucianism in which people live in peace and help each other, akin to the notion of Comsfuture.

Confucius articulated, "When the great way prevails, Tianxia belongs to everyone." (大道之行也, 天下为公). Tianxia is an all-inclusive world that excludes no one. It belongs to all. This is epitomised in the Confucius' saying: "All men are brothers within the four seas" (四海之内皆兄弟), meaning the world is one big family. China's rich history of valuing harmony, mutual consultation, and coexistence aligns perfectly with the spirits of Comsfuture. It represents a modern expression of the age-old belief that our destinies are interlinked, and the collective actions we take today can shape the world of tomorrow.

As mentioned above, the Belt and Road Initiative, which is a mammoth transcontinental development project that aims to foster global connectivity based on the principles of mutual consultation, joint development, and shared benefits, exemplifies China's commitment to mutual prosperity, echoing the essence of "Tianxia". It is the means and the platform to realise the building of a Community with a Shared Future.

Tianxia, deeply rooted in Confucianism, emphasizes ethical principles, benevolence, and the well-being of all people. Just as rulers of the past had a moral obligation to ensure the welfare of their subjects and promote global peace and harmony, contemporary governments must prioritize the well-being of their citizens, treat them fairly and justly, and promote global peace and prosperity.

Another distinct characteristic of the Chinese culture is the concept of unity between humanity and nature, which advocates harmonious coexistence of "all things under the heaven". According to an ancient Chinese saying: "Heaven and earth coexist with me, and all things and I are one" (天地与我并生, 而万物与我为一). The concept of Comsfuture explicitly upholds and elaborates on the idea of harmony between humanity and nature.

Recognizing that the planet Earth is home for humankind, we must heed the principle of "unity of nature and man" (天人合一) and "the law of nature" (道法自然) in our pursuit for sustainable development. Humanity must respect and conform to nature, living in harmony with it, while avoiding destructive development practices.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The post World War II international system, which was architected by the United States, has ushered in decades of peace and prosperity. But it is now flawed. This is due to its failure to take into account the rise of the global south and acknowledge their legitimate interests and rights.

The prevailing global order, which is dominated by Western values, carries historical biases and prejudices. It is in need of reform. Comsfuture embodies China's vision for a fair, equitable, and just global order based on the principles of openness, inclusiveness, mutual respect, and reverence for Mother Earth. It is China's concept of global governance which it hopes could redress the inadequacies, inequalities, and biases of the current global order.

As we navigate the intricate global challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change, pandemics, poverty, and technological advancements, the concept of Comsfuture takes on even greater significance. Humanity must rise above national differences and collectively focus on the pursuit for the common good of mankind.

Mr Peter Thomson, President of the 71st United Nations General Assembly, once stated in an interview with the media that the concept of building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, advocated by China, is "the only future for Mankind on this planet".

A Community with a Shared Future for Mankind is China's answer to the call of the time in a world divided by geopolitical tensions, and as humanity confronts existential threats due to climate change. It holds the promise of shaping a better world in the 21st century.

Thank you.

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