



AN OVERVIEW OF THE 19TH NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

By
Dr Ahmad Rashid Malik
Director

The China-Pakistan Study Center (CPSC), ISSI

Edited by
Najam Rafique

October 25, 2017

(Views expressed in the brief are those of the author, and do not represent those of ISSI)



China is the great hope for the world. It is the largest populated country with huge intake of world's Gross Domestic Product of over US\$ 12.1 trillion or 15 percent of global GDP. China has made steady progress under the dynamic leadership of President Xi Jinping after the 18th CPC Congress was held in 2013.

For instance, during 2013-2017, China's average contribution to world's GDP increased to 30 percent.¹ Its per capita increased from 18,311 Yuan in 2013 to 23,821 Yuan in 2017.² Growth in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was recorded at 3.1 percent during 2013-2016.³ Technological and scientific advancement also furthered Chinese economy in the past five years in many directions. After a small hiatus of slow growth in 2016-17, its growth rate is rebounding to 7 percent.⁴

China normally sets its goals to be achieved in a specific period of time. In this sense, Chinese domestic and foreign policies are pretty predictable. The Communist Party of China (CPC) held its 19th Congress in Beijing from October 18-24, 2017 to make crucial policy decisions for the next mid-term of five years. The Congress was attended by, 2,336 delegates.

¹ "China's economic achievements since 18th CPC National Congress", *Global Times* (Beijing), October 16, 2017.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Zhao Huanxin & Xin Zhiming, "7% GDP growth likely in second half", *China Daily* (Beijing), October 17, 2017.

President Xi has been emerging as the most powerful leader in Chinese history, next only to Chairman Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping and even more powerful than the latter.⁵ His leadership charisma will stay for quite some time. He is a great follower of Mao and Deng and strictly adheres to Socialism with changing Chinese characteristics of time. As a globalist, he floated the idea of the Belt and Road connectivity. A new powerful China is emerging under his leadership. Following his revolutionary zeal and fervent policies, the CPC Politburo endorsed President Xi for the second term along with Premier Li to assume charge till 2022. President Xi's thoughts are now enshrined in the constitution of the Party. This is a symbol of the integrity of his thoughts and policies pursued in the past five years., and the highest regard of his thoughts as endorsed by the CPC at this national Congress.

Fundamental Truths

The main points of President Xi's speech at the 19th Congress are as under:⁶

1. Socialism

China wants to continue with Socialism as its liberation philosophy in all spheres of life. Promotion of Chinese Socialism has been a top priority of the State in the past 68 years. Foremost is the sanctity of Chinese Socialism that has reached its climax in this new era. The first message given by President Xi in his speech at the 19th Congress was that the Party must adhere to its Socialist philosophy of Marxism-Leninist, Mao Zedong, and Deng Xiaoping in order to ensure peoples well-being in all circumstances under the changing circumstances along with conditions peculiar to China in the global era. The main task of Chinese Socialism is to try and bridge the gap between imbalance and un-equitable development and bring harmony among the people.

2. Economy

Since 1978, the main objective of the Chinese economy is high growth rate and high quality development. Chinese firms must be made capable of doing international business and meeting the competition. The Government keeps improving the regulatory framework under prudent macro policy based upon global market capitalism. Over 1,500 reform measures were introduced during 2013-2017. ⁷ Over 60 million people were lifted out of poverty in the last five years.⁸ This is an

⁵ Choi Chi-yuk & Sidney Leng, "The ultimate honour: will Xi Jinping be elevated to the same status as Mao Zedong?", *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), October 23, 2017.

⁶ Taken from Xinhua, "Highlights of Xi's report to 19th CPC National Congress", *Global Times* (Beijing), October 18, 2017.

⁷ "Xi calls for decisive victory for the new era in report to CPC National Congress", Embassy of China, Islamabad, October 19, 2017.

⁸ Ibid.

amazing development for China. The drive is competitive and cut-throat. China will continue with its open-door policy. The right of foreign investors will continue to be guaranteed by the Chinese Government. By 2050, China will emerge as the great socialist economy surpassing the United States.

3. Ecology

China will be sensitive to the ecological concerns to make it beautiful to create harmony between man and nature. More regulatory agencies will be created to ensure better environment. China will eye the long-term green plan to protect the environment including regular inspections and implementing regulations and laws.⁹

4. Armed Forces Mechanization

The people's armed forces will be transformed into world-class military by the mid-21st century. Military mechanization combined with Information Technology (IT) along with strategic capabilities will be achieved by 2020. The overall modernization of the national armed forces will be completed by 2035.

5. Global Power

China will never seek political hegemony or expansion in world politics and would adhere to its policy of peaceful co-existence. This means China's new era would herald a win-win cooperation under its policies including Belt and Road connectivity to bind humanity and all races across the globe and sharing China's successes. Avoiding war will govern Chinese policy in world's affairs. China would decrease its enmity with powers and would improve relations with the United States and Japan and others. This would be China's peaceful rise. This is how President Xi vows his country's global contribution in the next five years and beyond.

Conclusion

A broader policy framework to achieve salient goals in the next five years has been set out by the CPC in its 19th Congress. President Xi has been elevated to the highest stature and proved to be the strong leader. Efforts are being made at the Party level to make China a great and powerful nation in the future. The economic fundamentals are certainly impressive. To alleviate 60 million people out of poverty in the past five years is nothing less than a miracle. The return to a high growth rate too has steadily restored confidence to build an even stronger and sustained economy.

⁹ Liu Xin, "China eyes long-term green plan", *Global Times* (Beijing), October 24, 2017.