



President Xi stressed that political parties in the states are responsible for initiating modernization. As per this concept paper, today's world is in a flux. There are conflicts going on in the contemporary world on different levels ranging from wars in the regions coupled with slow economic growth and environmental challenges. Therefore, the urge of need of modernization by every state is a complex phenomenon that requires world attention.

While presenting GCI, President Xi highlighted its main principle; i.e. states must adopt 'People-first approach' before moving further on the path of modernization.<sup>4</sup> He linked modernization with the benefit of the people and civilizations. However, while considering modernization, the political parties serving the country must try to achieve political integrity, cultural enrichment, social stability, and stable life for the people. In his view, this is the only way to promote sustainable development of the masses – by not only addressing their needs but also protecting the rights of the coming generations.

President Xi also said that while pursuing the path of modernization, there is a need to uphold the principles of sovereignty and independence of the civilizations and states.<sup>5</sup> This is a very important component of the GCI in order to promote a better world. Likewise, states must not use modernization and development as a tool to undermine the security of other states. Furthermore, while moving towards modernization, it should be the people's choice as to what kind of modernization suits them. Therefore, the developed states must respect the choice of the developing nations while they are choosing different models of modernization based on their challenges and realities.

President Xi also supported the continuity of the modernization process by removing the barriers such as slow processes and stale thinking. Moreover, there is a need to work together for making the governance system more strong, equitable, and based on equal opportunities for all with fair rules.<sup>6</sup> While ensuring its continuity, there is a need to develop a mechanism that the outcome of this continuity should be enjoyed by the whole humanity. The idea of 'community with shared future' is for strengthening humanity where we rise and fall together. In the path of modernization, the aim of development may be achieved through cooperation and collaboration on the principles of joint contribution, sharing benefits and win-win outcome. As President Xi stated, "one will not be

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4 Zhang Hui, "Always Putting the People First," China Today, October 22, 2021, [http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/2018/hotspots/2022spdh/china\\_today\\_exclusive/202210/t20221021\\_800311083.html](http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/2018/hotspots/2022spdh/china_today_exclusive/202210/t20221021_800311083.html)

5 "Dialogue Among Civilizations," China Focus, June 8, 2024, <http://www.cnfocus.com/dialogue-among-civilizations/>

6 Xin Ge, "Global Civilization Initiative to bolster humanity's modernization," CGTN, March 16, 2023 <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-03-16/GCI-to-bolster-humanity-s-modernization-1idRu7Kk46s/index.html>

seen in a more favourable light after blowing out other's lamp; nor will they go farther by blocking other's path".

Some scholars in the West, particularly in the U.S., are critical of this initiative, since the concept uses principles of equality, peace, prosperity, dialogue and inclusiveness among different civilization in contrast to the Western notion of 'clash of civilizations'. For their part, Chinese scholars view GCI as a Chinese solution through cultural exchanges to transcend the ongoing conflicts around the globe with the aim that with the unity in diversity of cultures would bring civilizations closer to each other resulting in a more prosperous world.<sup>7</sup>

In Chinese tradition, people and cultures play a significant role. Chinese advocacy for people-to-people exchanges is to push countries towards exploration of global civilization dialogue and cooperation leading towards expansion of cooperation avenues to promote mutual understanding among nations for the progress and prosperity of human civilization. The GCI stresses the integration of diversified cultures to make the 'garden of world civilizations colourful and vibrant', as noted by President Xi Jinping.

To conclude, the GCI is also how China views the world in the context of 'soft power'. It (soft power) is used to enhance and expand the influence of the state in such a way that the culture of mutual learning and the progress of human civilization may be promoted. As underscored by President Xi: "A single flower does not make spring, while one hundred flowers in the full blossom bring spring to the garden". The promotion of common values of humanity, peace, justice, development, democracy and freedom are necessary. However, states must refrain from imposing their own values or norms on other states as there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the global challenges. Colonization and seeking hegemony in the global order are now considered to be old path of conflicts whereas China aims to adopt the path of peaceful development through "building a community with a shared future for mankind".

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<sup>7</sup> He Yin, "The three initiatives China put forward have resonated warmly with the world," People's Daily Online, January 23, 2024.  
<http://en.people.cn/n3/2024/0123/c90000-20125608.html>