

## ***CHINA'S NEW SILK ROAD — THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACEFUL WORLD DEVELOPMENT***

**Duško Dimitrijević**

Professorial Fellow and former Director, Ph.D Institute of International  
Politics and Economics, Belgrade

The strategic concept of the New Silk Road is not a new one. This idea was seriously taken into consideration in the 1990s after the disintegration of Soviet Union. At that time, Deng Xiaoping confirmed his vision of economic reforms based on China's coastal development (especially through special economic zones in coastal provinces, open coastal cities, eastern comprehensive development zones).<sup>1</sup> In this idea, there was no provision for the development of the inland parts of China. Therefore, at the beginning of the 21st century, China made deeper reforms in order to coordinate the development of all of its regions by adopting the concept of market economy. With the implementation of regional development strategies of the “Develop the West“, “Revitalize the Northeast“and “Rise of Central China“, and with the establishment of innovative “state pilot zones for overall reform“, China has greatly managed to balance its regional development and improve competitiveness, which enabled it to continue with the implementation of comprehensive economic reforms and the rapid opening of its internal market.

This was particularly visible in the period after China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This period represented a period of major changes since China opened up in all its economic sectors, expanding and deepening its ties with the world, which enabled it to make a bigger impact on foreign direct investment, as well as to strengthen its own export-oriented trade and overseas investment. This development resulted in the internationalization of Chinese production and consumption, trade and investment, as well as the

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<sup>1</sup> In 1978 when China began its economic structural reform, it also implemented a policy of gradual opening up. According to Deng Xiaoping proposal, in May 1984, the CPC Central Committee decided to designate 14 coastal port cities to open to foreign investment and trade — Tianjin, Shanghai, Dalian, Qinhuangdao, Yantai, Qingdao, Lianyungang, Nantong, Ningbo, Wenzhou, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Zhanjiang and Beihai. In February 1985, the CPC Central Committee decided to open the Yangtze River Delta, the Pearl River Delta and the Triangle Area of Southern Fujian, Xiamen and Quanzhou to be coastal economic open areas. See: L. Hongyuan, G. Yun, S. Qifa, *China's Road*, Huangshan Publishing House, 2012, p. 128.

deregulation and internationalization of the Chinese economic system. In spite of the extremely accelerated economic and social growth that was channeled through political decisions and the thirteen Five-Year Development Plans, China remained the developing country according to economic structural indicators. However, this did not significantly affect its further development and transformation from traditional agricultural into a modern industrial society. Through a series of reform measures, China has succeeded in improving its industrial structure and achieving high-quality economic growth, which enabled it to take the place of one of the world's leading economies. Today China is the first trading power in the world with the highest purchasing power parity, the first country in foreign exchange reserves and the second largest country in terms of nominal GDP.<sup>2</sup> It owns 33 percent of shares in three global pillars –military pillars of "China-Russia and United States", and in economic pillars of the "China-Europe-United States".<sup>3</sup>

However, despite these positive economic indicators, China faces the consequences of the global financial crisis and industrial overcapacity that burden its economic model based on export-oriented economy and foreign direct investment. Hence, China has a need to find new markets and to preserve existing ones, and then to provide participation in new forms of international economic cooperation which would enable balanced development of its eastern, central and western regions and its urban and rural areas.

For China, cooperation and development are two main pillars of its development and foreign policies. These pillars represent the very essence of its economic and social reforms in which people play a key role. As a country with a large number of neighbors, China is striving to apply the principles of a Good Neighborly Policy that should enable the creation of a harmonious, secure and prosperous community. Also, China is striving to apply well-known tactics of Smile Diplomacy while working to foster mutually beneficial cooperation with neighboring countries and to improve the current regional and sub-regional cooperative mechanisms of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, 10 + 3 (10 member countries of the ASEAN and China, Japan and Republic of Korea), 10 + 1 (ASEAN and China) and the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Economic Cooperation (GMS).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Report for Selected Countries and Subjects: China", World Economic Outlook, International Monetary Fund. April 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Wang Yiwei, *The Belt and Road Initiative, What will China Offer the World in its Rise*, New World Press, Beijing, 2018, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Paul White, David Ferguson, Han Qingyue (edit), *China*, Foreign Languages Press Co, Beijing, 2013, p. 103.

In relations with neighboring countries, as well as in relations with the world, China insists on applying the concept of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (the Pancha Sila), which was once proclaimed by the Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, along with the principle of “harmony without uniformity” through which China succeeded in establishing sincere and friendly relations with states that did not accept its ideological and political commitment. This foreign policy concept involves the application of the principles of mutual respect of territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and co-operation and peaceful coexistence. Since the principles permeate the modern Chinese Constitution and are embedded in the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter, they also represent a solid legal basis for Chinese foreign policy actions. Taking into account that China’s foreign policy attitude is much different from foreign policy approaches of other great powers, which are mainly based on the expansionist division of the sphere of interest or the hegemonic empowerment of the sphere of influence, it is quite logical why China refuses the Policy of force in international relations and why it advocates a practical approach in addressing the most important international issues. For her, the military-bloc division of the world is unacceptable, and the Policy of non-alignment paves the way to achieving the goals outlined in the strategically important United Nations instruments — Millennium Development Goals,<sup>5</sup> and Agenda for Sustainable Development,<sup>6</sup> which are the foundation of creating a modern welfare state and much more just, more prosperous and happier world. This direction of Chinese foreign policy stems from the new international circumstances in which China is making great efforts to democratize international relations. China, in fact, encourages the international community to more resolutely address the issue of humanity’s progress, which is related to the resolution of crucial problems in the economic and social sphere, such as poverty, pandemics, natural disasters, environmental pollution, proliferation of weapons, terrorism, international crime, international and internal conflicts. Due to this proactive approach, China is identified in some foreign policy estimates as a “potential super power” or “emerging super power”.<sup>7</sup> In spite of this, China does not perceive itself as such. China’s political discourse until recently explicitly emphasized that China is the largest de-

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<sup>5</sup> “United Nations Millennium Declaration”, *General Assembly Resolution 55/2*.

<sup>6</sup> “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, *General Assembly Resolution 70/1*.

<sup>7</sup> Barry Buzan, *The United States and the Great Powers*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 70.

veloping country and a respectable regional power with increased global influence and soft power in international relations. This foreign policy direction is changing in the latest period, so it is increasingly emphasized that China is becoming “responsible power” in international relations (Fu zeren de daguo).<sup>8</sup>

This is best reflected precisely in its activities in the United Nations where it stands for a multipolar international order and multilateralism in international relations in which the United Nations should play a primary role.<sup>9</sup> As a global political actor and permanent member of the Security Council, China is becoming an increasingly binding factor in achieving global development goals. Respect for dignity and equality, solidarity and tolerance for China is an additional incentive to continue advocating for realization of peaceful and harmonious global development.

By doing this, China actually contributes to the understanding of its concept of Chinese dream, which according to its ideology means the “rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”, through successful implementation of long-lasting social reforms dedicated primarily to the establishment of a modern Chinese society with “typical Chinese characteristics”. Relying on the Confucian learning and oriental philosophy that brings hope and the ability to establish a harmonious society through its tolerance, benevolence, integrity and order, China also, supports the realization of the idea of the World Dream, which means creating inclusive, harmonious, balanced and peaceful international society that is not only a “community of common interests”, but also a “community of common destiny and responsibility”. According to the current interpretation of this concept, the “new international community” must take into account the legitimate interests of all countries, their harmonious common development to be pursued in the seek for their own national interests, as well as harmonized and equal

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<sup>8</sup> Professor Yu Hongjun comprises five essential elements of this new China foreign policy approach: 1. The path of the peaceful development; 2. Independent nature of the development; 3. Scientific nature of development; 4. Cooperative nature of development; 5. Mutual development. See: Yu Hongjun, “Sincere Dialogue for Conductive Cooperation”, In: *The Changing World and China in Development*, Papers from: “The Contemporary World Multilateral Dialogue”, China Centre for Contemporary World Studies, China Foundation for Peace and Development, Beijing, 2013, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> It is very encouraging that the UN Resolutions has recently welcomed and urged further efforts to strengthen the process of regional economic cooperation, including measures to facilitate regional connectivity, trade and transit, including through regional development initiatives such as the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative. See: “Efforts Urged to Implement Belt and Road Initiative”, *China Daily*, March 17, 2017.

partnerships that imply mutual respect and trust, fairness and justice, “win-win” cooperation and common and sustainable development. In this regard, the Chinese president Xi Jinping in his famous speech: “Work Together to Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind”, explained that:

“Pass on the torch of peace from generation to generation, sustain development and make civilization flourish: this is what people of all countries long for; it is also the responsibility statesmen of our generation ought to shoulder. And China’s proposition is: build a community of shared future for mankind and achieve shared and win-win development (...). Great visions can be realized only through actions. Actions hold the key to building a community of shared future for mankind. To achieve this goal, the international community should promote partnership, security, growth, inter-civilization exchanges and the building of a sound ecosystem (...). Building a community of shared future is an exciting goal, and it requires efforts from generation after generation. China is ready to work with all the other UN member states as well as international organizations and agencies to advance the great cause of building a community of shared future for mankind.”<sup>10</sup>

Starting from the above visionary context, China has moved proactively to realizing concrete goals. In that respect, it is evident that she leaves more and more the previous Low Key Strategy, according to which it must remain self-contained, passive and defensive in its international relations. This change came with transformation of international relations as well as with internal reforms that led to the idea that China must cooperate with all countries of the world, regardless of their size, ideological and political orientation and the level of economic development. This new, pragmatically approach has determined China’s new position in the Global Economic Governance and in the New World Order. China today advocates for greater and balanced cooperation between developed and developing countries, it promotes co-operation in the South-South and South-North directions, and it’s also working to fulfill its commitments globally. This positioning arose from a new foreign policy approach that anticipates China’s active participation in the creation of a good regional environment based on peace, stability, sustainable development and prosperity. Hence, the positive perception of Chinese economic growth at the regional level became the precondition for accepting the Chinese model of development on a global

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<sup>10</sup> “Work Together to Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind”, Speech by H.E. Xi Jinping President of the People’s Republic of China at the United Nations Office at Geneva, Geneva, 18 January 2017. Retrieved from: [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/19/c\\_135994707.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/19/c_135994707.htm)

level. Such a foreign policy tactic, in practice, was accompanied by a gradual growth of Chinese “hard power” with an attractive narrative about the growth of “soft power”, which in the doctrine of international relations is explained by the premise that China, by “smart power”, seeks to convey the idea of its “peaceful rise” in order to eliminate the possibility of a countervailing balance of power.<sup>11</sup> In changing international circumstances, leading the new foreign policy doctrine, China has changed its earlier priority of “peaceful rise” with “peaceful development”, which in the diplomatic dictionary sounded much more receptive to achieving foreign policy goals.<sup>12</sup>

That led to the concept of peaceful and harmonious world that has become the basis of China's foreign policy and its attempt to respond the challenges of globalization. It is positively illuminated the growth of Chinese power for which foreign policy doctrine and practice provides legitimate justifications. Following this foreign policy course, China has also adopted a new development strategy for the New Silk Road which was symbolically named by its historical example from ancient times. This, of course, is not the only reason for acceptance and further implementation of this strategic concept whose program frameworks were covered by two foreign policy initiatives: the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road colloquially named: Ji Dai Yi Lu — One Belt, One Road Initiative (OBOR).

Another important reason is derived from the Chinese Global Economic Strategy that seeks to overcome the negative consequences of the globalization process and the obvious gaps that exists in the international economy and global development. In this regard, China is still committed to achieving the goals of its Open Door Policy and Opening-up Strategy, which served as a “driver” for its extensive economic reforms and its social transformation from agrarian to industrial country and from regional and continental to global and maritime civilization.

As the ideological concept of Chinese foreign policy, the New Silk Road Strategy advocates the realization of its previously planned goals in the Policy of Peaceful Development which accepts the idea of stable international relations with a peaceful international environment and the harmonious world development. In this respect, the New Silk Road Strategy although abstractly determined, with quite widely defined geographical, temporal, functional and institutional

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power*, Public Affairs, New York, 2011, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Wen Jiabao, “Our Historical Tasks at the Primary Stage of Socialism and Several Issues Concerning China’s foreign Policy”, *People’s Daily*, February 27, 2007.

determinants, does not accept a geopolitical approach, but affirms a geo-economics one based on ideas of common and peaceful coexistence, “win-win” cooperation and comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development. Such an approach is surely complementary to the Chinese position that regional integration contributes to economic globalization, and that greater connectivity between different regions accelerates the development of global supply, industrial and value chains.<sup>13</sup>

This rationalization follows from the content of the document of the National Commission for Development and Reform and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce published under the title “Vision and Actions on the Joint Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”, from March 28, 2015.<sup>14</sup> Referring to previously proposed One Belt, One Road Initiative, this document essentially defines the development plans of the New Silk Road Strategy, which includes guidelines for all-round opening and improving economic, financial, cultural, scientific and technological cooperation with the countries of Asia, Africa and Europe, in turn to achieve overall progress, regional security (especially in Central Asia), internal political stability and economic prosperity. For the purpose of implementing this document, the National Development and Reform Commission, adopted the “Action Plan for Harmonization of Standards along the Belt and Road (2015-2017)” on 22 October 2015. It has confirmed the obligation to achieve the planned goals of the New Silk Road Strategy in practice.<sup>15</sup>

The realization of the New Silk Road Strategy will depend largely from implementation of program framework of the One Belt, One Road Initiative presented by the Chinese President Xi Jinping during his official visit to four Central Asian states: Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, in September 2013, and then in Indonesia in early October 2014. Namely, it is

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<sup>13</sup> Hu Yi, “China’s ‘One Belt/One Road’ Policy Is Open to All Nations”, E.I.R., March 20, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> “Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road”, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, Beijing, 28 March 2015, Retrieved from: [http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsrelease/201503/t20150330\\_669367.html](http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsrelease/201503/t20150330_669367.html)

<sup>15</sup> “Action Plan for Harmonisation of Standards Along the Belt and Road (2015-2017)”, National Development and Reform Commission, 22 October 2015, Accessed on 4 June February 2016, Retrieved from: <http://china-trade-research.hktdc.com/business-ews/article/One-Belt-One-Road/Action-Plan-for-Harmonisation-of-Standards-Along-the-Belt-and-Road-2015-2017/obor/en/1/1X000000/1X0A443L.htm>

well known that on this occasion, President Xi in his speech in Astana and then on the 13th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek, emphasized the need of “jointly building the Silk Road Economic Belt with innovative models of cooperation”, between China, Central Asia and Europe. In order to implement this Initiative, President Xi suggested that it would be necessary to start work first in specific areas in order to connect them within the entire region.<sup>16</sup>

In his later speech in the Indonesian Parliament and on the 10th anniversary of the ASEAN-China strategic partnership he emphasized the importance of stronger regional integration and maritime cooperation, as well as the promotion of regional interconnectivity for the purpose of improvement of maritime economy, environmental protection, science, technology and security. In this regard, he pledged for establishment the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), with the purpose of financing infrastructure projects along the maritime routes.<sup>17</sup> Also, he stressed that China is fully prepared to cooperate with ASEAN countries and, in that respect; he supported the effective use of the China-ASEN Maritime Cooperation Fund to develop partnerships in the field of maritime cooperation and joint construction the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Realization of this Initiative should become the “strategic propeller for the hinterland development”, or in other words, the trigger for the creation of a new type of maritime civilization based on harmonious co-existence and sustainable development.<sup>18</sup>

In line with the One Belt, One Road Initiative, President Xi he also proposed certain priorities for their realization in practice. These priorities relate to establishing policy consultation, which can help advance regional cooperation; improving road connections with the idea to establish a great transport corridor from the Pacific to the Baltic Sea, and from Central Asia to the Indian Ocean, then gradually build a network of transport connections between eastern, western and southern Asia; promotion trade facilitation, with a focus on eliminating trade barriers and taking steps to reduce trade and investment expenses; support monetary cooperation, with special attention to currency settlements that could

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<sup>16</sup> “Promote Friendship between Our People and Jointly Build Silk Road Economic Belt“, *People’s Daily*, September 8, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> “China Focus: China Sketches out Priorities of ‘Belt and Road’ initiatives“, *Xinhua*, February 14, 2015.

<sup>18</sup> “Join Hands to Write a New Chapter of China-Indonesia Relations, and Works together to Create a Bright Future of China-ASEN Community of Common Destiny“, *People’s Daily*, October 3, 2013.

decrease transaction costs and lessen financial risk while increasing economic competitiveness, and increase people-to-people relation which is the key to good relations between states.<sup>19</sup>

The aforementioned priorities over time have grown into five key vectors of connectivity that are at the core of the New Silk Road concept. They include:

- Policy coordination;
- Facility-connectivity;
- Unimpeded trade;
- Financial integration;
- People-to people bond.

The connectivity constitutes the basic content of the construction of the One Belt, One Road. At the same time, it promotes cooperation between different countries and peoples of different regions and from different continents. The realization of the connectivity does not mean taking the leading position in mutual relations, but before the position of the motivator of voluntary cooperation, which is of mutual benefit and interest. In this respect, connectivity projects of cooperation that would be covered by the One Belt, One Road Initiative, should contribute to the realization of the Chinese Global Economic Strategy and Going Out and Bringing in Policy, in other words, the New Silk Road Strategy development goals which are manifested in faster flow of goods, services, labor and capital, productivity increase, and a more viable allocation of resources necessary for the integration of regional markets. Hence, policy coordination appears as a guarantee for the achievement of these objectives. Countries along the Belt and Road in accordance with this vector of connectivity need to harmonize their economic policies as well as strategies and action development plans.

The second vector of connectivity implies facility connectivity which is a priority for implementing the One Belt, One Road Initiative and which is mainly based on development of transport, port and energy infrastructure and communication networks. In this sense, of all the countries involved in the projects is required that improve the connectivity of their infrastructure construction plans and technical standard systems, jointly push forward the construction of international trunk passageways, and form an infrastructure network connecting all sub-regions in Asia, and between Asia, Europe and Africa “step by step”. At the same time, efforts should be made in promotion of green and

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<sup>19</sup> “Central Committee’s Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms”, *Xinhua*, November 15, 2013.

low-carbon infrastructure construction and operation management, taking into full account the impact of climate change on the construction.

Unimpeded trade cooperation is a third vector of connectivity and the major task in realization of the connectivity projects. In this regard, realization of the One Belt, One Road Initiative implies the promotion of trade and investment benefits, then the removal of trade and investment barriers for the creation of a sound business environment in the regions and in all related countries.

The fourth vector of connectivity represents financial integration. This is one more important pillar for implementing connectivity projects. It includes deepening of financial cooperation between the countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative. The new model of regional cooperation requires a new model of international financial institutions that would be an alternative to existing ones. In this sense, a series of reform measures are proposed, from promotion the establishment the currency stability system, investment and financing system and credit information system in Asia, to give support to establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the BRICS New Development Bank, and the financial fund the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as well as the Silk Road Fund. In order to encourage monetary circulation, the countries involved in the One Road, One Belt projects should implement agreements on currency conversion and settlement, which would result in a reduction in capital costs and financial risks and which would result in increased competitiveness of regional economies.

People-to people bond is the fifth vector of connectivity. Its significance in the implementation of connectivity projects along the Belt and Road, involves fostering understanding among peoples from different countries through the expansion of the spirit of friendly cooperation, good-faith and cultural, scientific, educational, technological, health, tourism and any other cooperation that includes inclusiveness, exchange and integration.

In addition to the five aforementioned vectors, the connectivity contains appropriate guidelines such as political mutual trust, economic integration, and cultural inclusion that give direction to cooperation based on principles of wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits.

Although the extent of connectivity and the spatial dimension of its effect can change over time, it is important to note that its current implementation under One Belt, One Road Initiative relates to the construction of geostrategic important land and maritime routes. Thus, the land line of the Silk Road Economic Belt starts from Xi'an, through Lanzhou in the provinces of Gansu, Urumqi and Khorgas in the province of Xinjiang, continued southwest through Central Asia and the Middle East all the way to northern Iran, and then west-

ward through the territories of Iraq, Syria, to move further along the Bosphorus Strait in Turkey to further the Marmaray railroad crossing the territories of Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic, finishing in the German port of Duisburg, then proceeding further to Rotterdam to finally continue along the route to the south to Italy where he meets in Venice with the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The Maritime Route of the New Silk Road starts from Quanzhou in Fujian Province, Guangzhou in Guangdong, Beihai Province in Guangxi Province and Haiku in Hainan Province, heading towards the Malacca Strait, then proceeding from Kuala Lumpur to Calcutta, moving along the Indian Ocean in the south direction towards Nairobi, from there, then proceeding to the direction of the Horn of Africa, and then proceeding to the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, stopping in Athens before than joining Silk Road Economic Belt in Venice. The route will deliver Chinese goods and services to ASEAN countries, Sri Lanka, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

Through the network of infrastructure projects (which currently include the construction of the China-Mongolia-Russia Corridor, New Eurasian Land Bridge, China-Central Asia-West Asia Corridor, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Maritime Economic Corridor), China tends to deepen ties with neighboring countries and, together with them, build a sub-regional or inter-regional network within Asia, and connect it with the regional and sub-regional infrastructure networks of other continents, building on this the world's longest-running World Land-Bridge, which according to the current plan involves 68 countries on different continents.<sup>20</sup> In essence, the New Silk Strategy seeks to overcome the weaknesses of the current global economic order and accelerate the revitalization of a large part of the world that covers a wider area with more than 4.6 billion people with a production capacity of 21 trillion US dollars (almost one third of world GDP).<sup>21</sup> According to the agenda, the realization of this development strategy should take place in stages. The first stage encompasses the period until 2021, when the CPC celebrates its anniversary, and the other stage encompasses the period until 2049 when PR China celebrates its birthday.

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<sup>20</sup> "The 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Peoples Republic of China (2016-2020)", Compilation and Translation Bureau, Central Committee of Communist Party of China, Beijing, 2016, p. 210.

<sup>21</sup> Aleksandar Janković, 'New Silk Road — New growth engine', *Review of International Affairs*, 2016, No. 1161, p. 6.

Implementation of the New Silk Road Strategy should contribute to greater engagement of all participating countries for the purpose of their wider integration into existing development initiatives of regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SOS), the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC), ASEAN plus China, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), the Asia-Pacific Dialogue (APD), the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), the Conference on Interaction and Conference Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, the Strategic Dialogue between China and the Gulf Cooperation Committee and the Economic Community of Brazil, Russia, India, China and the South African Union (BRICS).

Fulfilling of the planned goals of the New Silk Road Strategy should contribute to broader engagement of participating countries to the activities of international and regional financial institutions, primarily in the activities of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the (BRICS) New Development Bank (NDB), the China, Central & Eastern Europe Investment Co-Operation Fund (CEEFund) and the Silk Road Found (SRF), which represent a pandam to the transatlantic system monetary economies carried out by the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).<sup>22</sup>

It is important to note that the New Silk Road Strategy does not deny the application of existing structures and the development of completely new mechanisms of cooperation among the participating countries, as is shown by the establishment of the 16 + 1 mechanism, between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and China. This cooperation (which covers various areas — from finance, trade, transport, agriculture, energy and telecommunications, to scientific, technological, cultural cooperation and exchange) should take place within the One Belt, One Road Initiative which. From the aspect of the official Chinese foreign policy discourse, cooperation within the 16 + 1 mechanism is an important factor for strengthening China's partnership with the EU. Emphasizing this factor in the context of improving EU-China relations implies a comprehensive harmonization of the China-European Strategic Partnership, as well

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<sup>22</sup> These financial institutions were created just as a reaction to the lack of functionality of existing financial institutions that lost legitimacy in the new economic environment caused by the global economic crisis. See: H. Zepp-LaRouche, "The New Silk Road Leads to the Future of Mankind!" In: *The New Silk Road becomes the World Land-Bridge*, E.I.R. News Service Inc., Washington, 2015, pp. 3, etc.

as the fulfillment of the objectives of the China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation.<sup>23</sup>

As history shows, each country must follow world trends in order to achieve its prosperity. Otherwise, it will be out of the world. The question is then what are the current trends? For China, this is definitely peace, development, cooperation and mutual progress. It does not accept the overcoming models of international relations based on imperialism, neo-colonialism and hegemony. As mentioned before, China stands for multilateralism in international relations and for multipolar world order in which peaceful development has no alternative. Therefore, it is understandable why Chinese new development strategy of the New Silk Road emphasizing the favorable historical momentum for the progressive development of the whole of humanity and why it promotes the open-minded ideas of the “New Normal”, which deepen the earlier ideological concepts of global economic development and reform of international society into the “community of common interests, destiny and responsibility” or in other words, into the “community of shared future for mankind”.

Hence, in our opinion, it is indeed a prophetic statement from the esteemed Mrs Helga Zepp-LaRouche that the New Silk Road which becomes the World Land-Bridge is the basis for a peace order for the 21st Century, which requires a new paradigm of thinking.<sup>24</sup> This new paradigm can only be one that proceeds from the common aims of mankind. These aims of mankind can be achieved exclusively through the dialogue between the different civilizations. In this regard, one should always have in mind profound and far-reaching thoughts of the Chinese president Xi Jinping who in his public address pointed out the following:

“Countries may have differences and even encounter problems with each other, which is to be expected. But we should not forget that we all live under the same sky, share one and the same home planet and belong to one and the same family. People across the world should be guided by the vision that all the people under the heaven are of one family, embrace each other with open arms, enhance mutual understanding, and seek common ground while setting aside differences. Together, we should endeavour to build a community with a shared future for mankind (...). Numerous tiny streams converge to make a vast ocean, and countless radiant stars illuminate the Galaxy. I am convinced that so long

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<sup>23</sup> Dragan Pavličević, “China’s New Silk Road Takes Shape in Central and Eastern Europe”, *China Brief*, 2015, Volume XV, Issue 1, p.12.

<sup>24</sup> Helga Zepp-LaRouche, “The need of Global Public Works—The New Silk Road becomes the World Land-Bridge”, Shiller Institute, December 7, 2015.

as we share this goal, plan together, work together, move toward it step by step, day by day, we will surely succeed in building a community with a shared future for mankind”.<sup>25</sup>

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