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From Cooperation to Systemic Rivalry: Europe and China in A New Global Order

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Abstract

We are the privileged witnesses of a profound geopolitical, economic and cultural shift that happens at a mind-blowing pace, during a generation time. A New World Order is emerging.

For half a century, EU-China relations have weathered the storms of the Cold War and withstood numerous tests, maintaining an overall positive development trend. Facts have proven that the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership has not only brought tangible benefits to nearly 2 billion people in the EU and China, but has also made significant contributions around the world, setting a model for mutually beneficial cooperation in an era of economic globalization. Amidst the persistently intensifying global governance (perceived) deficits—encompassing peace, development, security, and institutional efficacy—China’s President Xi Jinping has pioneered the Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI), Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), and Global Governance Initiative (GGI) under the paradigm of building a community with a shared future for mankind. These frameworks seek to address systematically structural inequities, while championing reforms that balance multilateralism with developmental pragmatism. It is paradigm shift that has been embraced by the Global South and generated unprecedented opportunities for transnational knowledge collaboration, particularly in advancing equitable development paradigms. The paper analyses the global governance concepts proposed by the Chinese leadership, that need to be defined properly and (re)evaluated, through the lenses of European interests, in an attempt to forge a wisely-crafted future for EU and China, based on mutual respect, prosperity and support for multilateralism.

Keywords: Development; Dialogue of Civilizations; Global Governance; Paradigm Shifts; Security