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International Community' s Evaluation of China' s High-Quality Development

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Abstract

The Communiqué of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China mentions high-quality development on ten occasions, particularly emphasizing that economic and social development during the “15th Five-Year Plan” period must “take promoting high-quality development as the central theme.” To further comprehend the development landscape and bolster confidence in development, we have systematically compiled representative viewpoints from foreign scholars, think tanks, and media regarding China' s economic and social development since the beginning of this year, for reference.

Full Text

International Perspectives on China' s High-Quality Development

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Abstract The Communiqué of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China mentions high-quality development ten times, particularly emphasizing that economic and social development during the “15th Five-Year Plan” period should “take promoting high-quality development as the main theme.” To better understand the development landscape and strengthen confidence in our progress, we have compiled representative viewpoints from foreign scholars, think tanks, and media outlets regarding China' s economic and social development since 2025 for reference.

[Keywords] China; Economy; Science and Technology; International Public Opinion; International Communication; Think Tanks; Innovation

International Perspectives on China's Economic, Scientific, and Technological Development

Since 2025, international scholars, think tanks, and media have offered extensive commentary on China's development trajectory. Their analyses reveal broad recognition of China's growing technological competitiveness, expanding global influence, and complex economic transformation.

Strategic Influence and Infrastructure Development

On February 12, 2025, Sylvia Sinkari, a senior researcher at the Ghana-based Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory (ACCPA), published an article titled *The Waning Western Influence in Africa and the Rise of China*. Sinkari argues that Western influence on the African continent has noticeably declined in recent years, creating space for alternative powers, particularly China. China's expanding presence is profoundly reshaping the political and economic landscape of many African nations, driven primarily by massive investments in infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and energy initiatives. Additionally, China's approach involves deepening trade relations and fostering diplomatic ties, often through programs like the Belt and Road Initiative designed to create a modern Silk Road. These efforts have not only boosted trade volumes but have also secured China strategic footholds in key markets and access to vital resources [2].

On March 26, 2025, Prerna Gandhi, an associate fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), an Indian think tank, published *No "Peak China": Reanalysing China's Economic Model*, challenging the so-called "Peak China" narrative. Gandhi contends that this narrative rests on oversimplified assumptions and selective economic indicators. Despite facing certain challenges, China remains the world's largest industrial power. Rather than being in decline, China is undergoing a complex economic transformation to adapt to both domestic and global pressures [3].

Technological Leadership and Industrial Competitiveness

On May 5, 2025, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, America's largest business organization, released an independent research report by Rhodium Group concluding that China has achieved remarkable success in reducing import dependence over the past decade. Chinese firms have developed global competitiveness across numerous high-tech sectors, including information and communication equipment, clean technology, electric and connected vehicles, agricultural machinery, ships, drones, and high-speed rail. The report projects that China's trajectory in technological leadership may accelerate in the coming years, profoundly impacting global industries [4].

On May 20, 2025, Bruegel, a European think tank based in Belgium, published a working paper by Alicia García-Herrero, Michal Krystyanczuk, and Robin

Schindowski titled *Radical Novelties in Critical Technologies and Spillovers: How Do China, US and EU Fare?* The paper analyzes frontier innovation evolution in quantum computing, semiconductors, and artificial intelligence across China, the United States, and the European Union. It finds that China and the EU are roughly on par in quantum computing; China demonstrates outstanding performance in several important AI subfields; and China dominates in more semiconductor subsectors [5].

On June 3, 2025, *Carbon Brief*, a UK-based website, published an analysis by Lauri Myllyvirta, senior fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute and chief analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA). The article, titled *Analysis: Clean Energy Puts China's CO₂ Emissions into Reverse for First Time*, notes that China's carbon emissions fell by 1.6% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2025 and declined by 1% over the preceding twelve months. Clean energy generation is growing faster than current and long-term average electricity demand growth, thereby reducing fossil fuel consumption. In the twelve months through March 2025, power sector emissions decreased by 2% year-on-year. If this trend continues, it suggests that China's power sector emissions may have peaked and begun a sustained decline [6].

Belt and Road Initiative and Global Investment

On July 17, 2025, the Griffith Asia Institute at Griffith University in Australia released the *China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2025 H1* by Christoph Nedopil, director of the institute. The report indicates that the first half of 2025 set a record for BRI engagement, with construction contracts totaling \$66.2 billion and investment reaching approximately \$57.1 billion. Notably, 2025 BRI investment has been primarily driven by private enterprises [7].

On March 1, 2025, Kyle Chan, founder of the *High Capacity* website, postdoctoral researcher at Princeton University, and adjunct researcher at the RAND Corporation, published *China is Trying to Reshape Global Supply Chains*. Chan argues that China is constructing a new China-centered, China-friendly global production network through initiatives like "industrial diplomacy." While tariffs and trade relationships may fluctuate over time, this expanding production network opens more robust market access channels for Chinese companies, particularly when local employment opportunities are closely linked to Chinese factories. This represents what can be considered the third phase of China's global supply chain development: the first phase ensured resource access; the second phase, the Belt and Road Initiative, focused on building global production and transportation infrastructure; and the current third phase secures market access. Both developed and Global South countries eagerly anticipate Chinese firms establishing factories in their markets, as this promises new jobs and advanced technology [15].

On May 27, 2025, the Economics Observatory at the University of Bristol published an article by Linda Calabrese, senior research fellow at the Overseas De-

velopment Institute (ODI), titled *The Belt and Road Initiative: What Impact on China and the Global Economy?* Calabrese observes that China’s external economic engagement has evolved into an era of active participation in global affairs, with the BRI as its most ambitious manifestation. The initiative continues to support the internationalization of Chinese enterprises while responding to domestic economic needs. It has provided significant opportunities for infrastructure development and economic growth in recipient countries. As the BRI enters its second decade, it is undergoing notable adjustments, refocusing on quality, sustainability, and addressing partner countries’ concerns within a complex global landscape [16].

Innovation Ecosystems and Industrial Coevolution

On January 22, 2025, Kyle Chan published *China’s Overlapping Tech-Industrial Ecosystems*, attributing China’s success to what he terms “industrial coevolution.” Chan argues that China has developed multiple overlapping technology-industrial ecosystems involving overlapping enterprises and technologies. Progress across interconnected sectors—including electric vehicles, batteries, LiDAR, drones, robotics, smartphones, and artificial intelligence—is creating a mutually reinforcing virtuous cycle. China’s major technology companies are increasingly becoming the Swiss Army knives of the tech world—starting in a single industry before rapidly expanding into multiple adjacent technological domains [8].

On June 25, 2025, Jacob Dreyer, editor for business, economics, politics, and law at Springer Nature, published *Here’s Why China’s Science and Innovation Model is Thriving*. Dreyer notes that “government planning, academic ambition, and bold entrepreneurship complementing each other constitute the distinctive features of China’s success” [11].

Geopolitical Positioning and Regulatory Dynamics

On March 9, 2025, Cobus van Staden, executive editor of the *China Global South Project* in South Africa, published *Trump, China, and the Big, Baffling World*. Van Staden argues that following the start of Trump’s second presidential term, the United States’ information-gathering network in the Global South is disintegrating while China’s central position in the Global South becomes increasingly prominent. China is simultaneously shaping technology, norms, and discourse across hundreds of domains in the Global South—from development to plastic standards to space travel [9].

On April 29, 2025, the *China Observers in Central and Eastern Europe* (CHOICE) website operated by the Czech think tank Association for International Affairs (AMO) published an article by Georgian scholar Irakli Machaidze titled *EU’s War on US Big Tech is Handing China the Future*. Machaidze contends that while the EU has long cracked down on American tech giants—viewing this as a victory for competition and consumer rights—the real winner is China. EU antitrust efforts, particularly the widely criticized Digital Markets Act, Digital Services Act, and AI Act, are inadvertently paving the way for

Beijing. As the US and EU argue over trade and regulatory issues, China is strategically expanding its high-tech influence [10].

Emerging Technologies and Strategic Ambitions

On January 23 and February 3, 2025, the American Foreign Policy Council (AFPC) released two consecutive policy papers assessing China's capabilities in artificial intelligence and low-earth orbit satellites. The papers argue that China has designated AI as a key area for technological innovation, aiming to lead global AI innovation by 2030 [12]. As China rapidly expands its low-earth orbit satellite network, its information power continues to strengthen, potentially enabling it to achieve dominance in global connectivity and significantly expand the reach and impact of its information, propaganda, and influence operations [13].

On February 18, 2025, the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF) published a report by Emily Jin, China analyst at the private intelligence firm Datenna, titled *A Policymaker's Guide to China's Technology Security Strategy*. Jin concludes that China temporarily lags in certain technology areas, is rapidly catching up in others, and already leads in many [14].

Urban Innovation and Globalization Models

On July 3, 2025, the World Economic Forum website published an article by Mark Greeven, professor of innovation and strategy and dean of IMD Asia at the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, titled *Cities Like Hefei, Changsha, and Wuxi Are Rewriting the Rules of Globalization*. Greeven argues that Chinese cities such as Hefei and Changsha are rewriting globalization's rules by emphasizing decentralized local operation models co-created with local partners. This model can be replicated outside China to establish regional hubs for global operations. The next wave of globalization is not approaching—it has already arrived, emerging from cities like Hefei [17].

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