

RESEARCH PAPER

**20TH NATIONAL CONGRESS:
PROSPERITY & DEVELOPMENT
LESSONS FOR THE REGIONAL
COUNTRIES**

OCTOBER 2022

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Published by:

IICR



**ISLAMABAD INSTITUTE
OF CONFLICT
RESOLUTION - IICR**

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Research Paper

20th National Congress: Prosperity & Development Lessons for The Regional Countries

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IICR 2022

Abstract

Development and prosperity with a collective consciousness not only for people of China rather for entire region has been a long-cherished goals of Peoples Republic of China. It has been successful in translating the vision and mission of prosperity and development into practice to a larger end. The soul of National Congresses, held periodically after every five years, is to ensure a sustained development along with the shared prosperity. The Republic of China has emerged as a symbol of successful strategic initiatives by virtue of its proper mechanism of comprehensive consultations and policy management. The present paper investigates the impressive progress and advancement of The Republic of China both at local and international levels as a consequence of National Congress deliberations and resolutions with special focus on 17th, 18th and 19th National Congresses. The researcher shows how China has been making its way to emerge as a global leader in the 21st century. The argument is supported by proper statistical data in the discussions and findings segment. The research highlights the relevance of CPC's integrity of policy framing mechanism and how it can help to its neighboring countries. The paper concludes with set of recommendations to be implemented/considered in the upcoming 20th National Congress as a way forward.

The National Congress of Republic of China At A Glance

The National Congress appears to be the soul and flesh of Chinese national power and authority. It is constitutionally authorized to draw the full-fledged canvass for the country in terms of economy, politics, development, law, Overall policy framework, foreign affairs, Taiwan, national security, internet, military, Civic organizations, ethnic minority affairs, Government operations, policy implementation, economic reform, climate change, Party organization, ideological doctrine, propaganda, Strategic initiatives, mega-projects, Internal regulations, party discipline, anti-corruption and all other necessary domains of statecraft (O'Brien, 1988). It has been considered to be the largest legislative body in the world with an approximate number of 3000 members (Xia, 1998). As has been enshrined in the constitution of Republic of China that people constitute to be the center of power and the makers of countries fortune. The National People's Congress (NPC) and the local people's congresses at different levels comprise of the bodies by virtue of which people exercise State power. It is the People's congresses which are responsible for structuring over-all mechanism of Judiciary, administration, supervisory and Procurator ambits of the State (Castelucci & L., 2007).

Structure and Function of NPC

The structure of the National congress has been meticulously drawn by its peers. It comprises of multiple tiers like national council, state councils, Military commissions, Commissions of supervision, Autonomous Organs of Ethnic Autonomous Areas and People's Courts and People's Procuratorates (Yuan, 1995).

The national people's Congress has been constitutionally delegated to take the country to the path of progress and development. The function of NPC within the borders has been reflected in the newly amended constitution which reads as to:

“...promote coordinated material, political, cultural-ethical, social and ecological advancement, in order to build China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful, and realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation (Jones, 1985).”

There has been a plethora of National Congresses convened since its inception but we will restrict our study to the assessment and appraisal of previously held National Conferences i.e 17th, 18th and 19th National Conferences.

There is a long story of struggle, consistency, unwavering commitment and a sustained effort of CPC to take the country to the zenith of economic prosperity and provide a lasting security to its citizens. It is not an enigma rather an ostensible mechanism of National Congresses that helped China achieve its set goals. We offer an appraisal of the last 17th, 18th and 19th National Congresses that proved to a precursor of what China stands today.

An Assessment of 17th National Congress Resolutions

The Great Hall of People in Beijing witnessed the 17th National Congress of Communist Party of China from 15 to 21 October 2007. The National Congress proved to be a presage of an imminent shift in the political arena of the country. The Congress meticulously paved the way for a smooth and sustained transition of political leadership and authority to the fifth generation by hiping political geniuses like Li Keqiang and Xi Jinping to Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) which is de facto supreme decision-making circle in the country (Chia-Chou, 2013). Hu Jintao, the then President of Republic of China, highlighted the basic structure or sum and substance of 17th National Congress as

“The Seventeenth Congress is one of vital importance being held at a crucial stage of China's reform and development. The theme of the congress is to hold high the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, follow the guidance of Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of Three Represents, thoroughly apply the Scientific Outlook on Development, continue to emancipate the mind, persist in reform and opening up, pursue development in a scientific way, promote social harmony, and strive for new victories in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects (Hu, 2007).”

However, there were many apprehensions, after the conclusive session of 17th Congress, expressed by the experts, University of California at San Diego professor S.L Shirk in her book *China: Fragile Superpower*, that the economic and environmental challenges may impede the process of development and which could potentially generate rifts and might fray CCP integrity and unity (Shirk, 2008). The experts had also expressed expected disagreement of the Coram over the engineering of political reform. However, the performance of the Party and its commitment splayed all pre-conceived notions and apprehensions. the goals and milestones set by the 17th Congress recorded new vistas of progress and development in the later years as we shall see in the discussion and findings section.

An Appraisal of 18th National Congress Proceedings

The great walls of the Great Hall of People hosted the 18th National Congress of Republic of China held in Nov 8-15, 2012. The changes to the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party were ratified by the Congress. The congress endorsed and incorporated ‘the Scientific outlook on Development’ to the erstwhile Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, and Three Represents as a "guiding ideology" of the party (Guoping, Guangsheng, Jingjun, & Zhejiang–Politics, 2015). The emphasis was on translating the ideology, enshrined in the constitution in 2007, into effective and emphatic practice. The Congress declared ‘the Scientific Outlook on Development’ as ‘the latest product Marxism being adopted in the Chinese context," and the result of the "collective wisdom of the party membership (Peng & Zongshi, 2013). It was for the first time that the concept of ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’ as a vibrant system was incorporated in the Constitution (Qian, 2019). The constitution also anchored ‘the construction of ecological Civilization’ to be one of the priority goals of the Party. This unmasked the new goals and interests set by the Party in terms of paying a cognizant attention to the environmental issues.

An Appraisal of 19th National Congress Session

Following the tradition of discussions and setting new goals of socio-economic and political developments, around 2280 members of the 19th National Congress of Republic of China gathered within the walls of The Great Hall of People, Beijing from 18 to 24 October 2017. The 19th

Congress gave nod to write down a novel guiding ideology ‘Xi Jinping thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era’ in the Constitution (Backer & Worster). The 19th National Congress delineated Xi Jinping’s vision of “socialism with Chinese characteristics”. The underpinnings of the vision give importance to expand soft and hard power and a potential boom of new economy. The vision of an enhanced economy exploits big data and stresses upon e-commerce and high-tech gadgets and products like robotics, Artificial intelligence, electric cars etc.

Finding and Discussions

The over-all development within internal and external framework of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has been a ‘Sustained Cause’ that involves the entire Party. The periodic 17th, 18th and 19th National Congresses have incredibly led the country to the path of enormous potential and development. The Republic of China has emerged as a global trend setter in showing the path of achievable development through sustained discussions and Party commitment. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC in 2012, highlighting his personal commitment and guidance, General Secretary Xi Jinping has given a series of important expositions of major theoretical and practical issues concerning the Party’s internal and external work including its definition, purpose, content and modus operandi.

In the wake of series of sustained and meaningful Congresses as mentioned hence before, The Republic of China witnessed the new heights of development in terms of rising graph of GDP, Employment and innovations based on extensive research. The data issued by the National Bureau of Statistics on 10th of October 2017, just ahead of 19th Congress, revealed that GDP expanded by an average annual rate of 7.2 percent during 2013-2016, compared with 2.6-percent average global growth and the 4-percent growth of developing economies (Morrison, Northern, & Asia, 2019). Calculated at 2015 prices, average annual GDP growth was valued at 4.44 trillion yuan (\$670 billion) in 2013-2016. In H1 2017, GDP growth was 6.9 percent, within the 6.7-6.9 percent range for eight quarters in a row. China’s 2016 GDP of \$11.2 trillion accounted for 14.8 percent of the world economy, up 3.4 percentage points from 2012. China’s average contribution to world growth in 2013-2016 was about 30 percent, the largest among all countries and higher than the total contribution from the United States, the eurozone and Japan (Morrison et al., 2019).

The Employment sector created more than 13 million new urban jobs annually for four consecutive years in 2013-2016 (Easterlin, Wang, & Wang, 2021). New jobs created in the first eight months of this year stood at 9.74 million in China. The surveyed unemployment rate in 31 large cities was about 5 percent. In September, the figure was 4.83 percent, the lowest since 2012. The number of rural residents working in cities rose at an annual rate of 1.8 percent in 2013-2016 (Yi, Lei, & Conditions, 2021). Therefore, the milestones set by the National Congress for achieving a significant success found its applied and ostensible expression. In Research and Development field, the expenditure augmented 52.2% from 2012 to 1.57 trillion Yuan in the year 2016. The Research and Development expenses in GDP augmented from 1.91% to 2.11% in the same timeline.

Under the dynamic leadership and remarkable guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy and General Secretary Xi Jinping's important expositions of the Party's comprehensive internal and external work in particular, and due appreciation and applauds goes to the generous support of all the localities, departments and institutions, historic achievements have been accomplished in the Party's exhaustive accomplishments featuring high-quality development. The international prestige of General Secretary Xi Jinping, as the champion of around two billion people, an able leader of a major political party and a major country, has been growing steadily. The international influence of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era has dolled up significantly. The CPC's "international circle of friends" keeps on splaying and broadening. Undoubtedly, a historic paradigm shift has appeared in the relationship between the CPC and the different countries of the world.

Of other important achievements, the BRI mega project, the term BRI was coined by president of Republic of China in 2013, espouses a Silk Road Economic Belt which is a trans-continental passage connecting China with South Asia, East Asia, South East Asia, central Asia, Russia and European countries. Moreover, the Mega initiative comprises of a 21st century Maritime Silk Route which serves as copula for coastal regions of China with that of South Asia, South East Asia, the South Pacific, the Middle East and Eastern Africa and all along the sea route to Europe. The BRI project triggers an immense program of huge investments in infrastructure development of roads, railways, airports, ports, telecommunication networks and a web of power plants. The BRI has

potentially emerged as an important Umbrella mechanism for China's bilateral trade with her BRI partners. Following the tradition of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, the Republic of China has engaged in open, green and clean Belt and Road cooperation to deliver high-standard and sustainable outcomes beneficial to people's livelihood. According to the recent World Bank report on Belt and Road economics, once the transport corridors are fully completed, travel time along the corridors will shrink by 12 percent, trade will be up by 2.8 to 9.7 percent, people's real income will increase by 1.2 to 3.4 percent and 7.6 million people will be lifted out of extreme poverty in participating countries (Zhai, 2021). This shows that Belt and Road cooperation is an effective contributor to the economic growth, higher living standards and infrastructure connectivity of countries and regions that are part of the Mission.

The success story of economic accomplishments of the Republic of China hosts a plethora of lessons for the regional counterparts. Lack of national consensus, political instability, growing poverty graph, lack of party discipline, rising economic disparity, foreign debts, illiteracy, poor health infrastructure, food security issues, energy crises and other social, political and economic issues have engulfed the countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal and other countries in the region. There lies a great opportunity for the countries mentioned above to strengthen their politico-economic relationship with China to muster their dented economies and robustly challenge the Western capitalist hegemony which seeks to further humpback the bumped structure of developing countries.

The regional countries have a lot of lessons in the rising stature of China at the global screen and can expedite their efforts towards achieving the national goals of shared prosperity and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Republic of China has been crossing milestones of success and development by virtue its able leadership, national consciousness, well managed projects and well-knit policies. Though the achievements of CPC in diverse fields of local and international arena are applaudable but there are a few milestones to emerge as an unchallenged global leader and superpower. In the wake 20th National Congress, it is an imperative upon all the stake holders of the Republic of China to discover new horizons of success, learn from the mistakes of the bygone time, set new goals and objects for the future and work tirelessly in the present. This research paper offers a few recommendations that may prove to be instrumental in translating the vision and mission of CPC into practice.

1. The Green or Ecological civilization

The ecological deficit in foreign trade mounted an immense pressure upon the China's energy and environmental issues which necessitates the country to alter the high input, high consumption of the extensive growth mode and optimize the structure of foreign trade and green trade transformation. The green trade transformation can be achieved through enhancing the scientific and technological structure of products. The export products have to be encouraged from resource intensive to technology intensive. Energy utilization has to be improved and energy-saving emission reduction needs to be promoted.

2. The proper enactment of laws

It is incumbent to improve the environmental protection laws and regulations, and promote the export of cleaner production. In order to establish a sound energy-saving emission reduction and environmental protection, long-term mechanism, to the comprehensive use of economic policies, market mechanisms, supervision and management mechanism, to ensure effective use of energy, improve environmental pollution.

3. Foreign policy revisions

The Republic of China need to foster an ambiance of friendliness and shoulder the immaculate responsibility of convincing the world community that the mega development projects refer to contributions and opportunities to the world. It has to be ensured that her trajectory to advancement and shared prosperity should not take as a threat or challenge rather a noble effort of realizing a better world with equal opportunities to all inhabitants of the world.

4. Advanced defense mechanism and treaties

A strong and comprehensive defense mechanism has become one the essential requirements of security and safety of the citizens of a country. The Republic of China has to gear up its defense partnership and ties with Pakistan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Russia including central Asian countries like Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Iran. The Republic of China must concentrate on building treaties with the countries mentioned erstwhile so that it can successfully rebuttal any military exercise due to Indian military intervention in Aksai China, Taiwan issue, South China sea dispute, Senkakus and other border and policy related issues. in the context of South-East Asia, China needs to have a proper check and balance of security and defense against India as Indo-US growing relationship may trigger an unprecedented challenge.

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