

SCO: Key Platform for Peace, Prosperity, Development

Voice of the World

By GONG Qian

Over the past two decades, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has emerged as a key platform for peace, prosperity and development in the entire Eurasia region, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO, which was held virtually in India on July 4.

The major outcomes of this year's SCO summit included the New Delhi Declaration and two other joint statements on fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism, as well as the cooperation in digital transformation.

An extended family

Modi said he did not only see the SCO as an extended neighborhood, but rather as an extended family.

With Iran being accepted as a full member during this summit, the SCO currently comprises nine member states, four observer states and 14 dialogue partners. The SCO is the world's largest regional organization in terms of covering almost half of the world's population, with a combined GDP of 20 percent of the global GDP. Growing membership of the SCO is matched by its growing influence on the global stage, said UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his remarks at this year's summit.

"New countries joining the group underlines the importance of the group," said Modi. Iran's entry as a full member can strengthen its security foundations and cultural connections and contribute to its economic development, considering its capabilities in



The SCO Industrial and Supply Chains Forum and the 2023 SCO International Investment and Trade Expo kicks off in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province, on June 15, 2023. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

counteracting of terrorism and its geographic position, Mandana Tishehyar, faculty member at the ECO College of Insurance at Allameh Tabataba'i University in Iran, wrote in an article published on Valdai Discussion Club website, a Moscow-based think tank.

Committed to security and development

Since its establishment in 2001, the SCO has steadily evolved into a steadfast forum dedicated to promoting regional stability in both political and economic realms, said Dr Imran Khalid, political analyst based in Karachi, in his letter to *Pakistan Observer*.

In the modern world, the SCO is a unique organization, uniting a variety of countries, despite their differences in economic, political and ideological features. The accession of Iran and appeal to other

countries demonstrate the unique and advantage of the SCO. Its resilience stands as a testament to its ability to transcend political and cultural differences, including territorial disputes and ideological divergences. It signifies a departure from the outdated Cold War mindset, embracing a world of increasing diversity and dissimilarities, said Dr Imran Khalid.

Making the pie of win-win cooperation bigger

"Within the framework of SCO cooperation, the emphasis is not on competition with each other, but on the complementarity of economies based on their competitive characteristics. And this approach has already proven its advantages," Obid Khakimov, director of the Centre for Economic Research and Reforms under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan,

wrote for EU Political Report website.

Meanwhile the SCO has achieved success in the development of trade and economic cooperation. The total trade volume of SCO member countries increased to 6.06 trillion USD in 2020, from 667.09 billion USD (not including India and Pakistan) in 2001. Its proportion of total global trade increased to 17.5 percent in 2020 from just 5.4 percent in 2001, according to the *Report on Trade Development over 20 Years Since the Establishment of SCO* released by China's Qingdao Customs and Ocean University of China in February 2022.

The SCO will remain an active organization in Eurasia irrespective of turmoil in any specific country with its significance growing in the region as China becomes more active and engaged, according to Financial Express Online.

Scientific Development Should Not Be Politicized

Comment

By QI Liming

According to some websites, ten republican lawmakers wrote a letter to the U.S. State Department in late June, calling on Washington not to renew the four-decade-old science and technology cooperation agreement with China, which will expire on August 27.

The pact, called *The US-China Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology (STA)*, was first signed by the two countries in 1979 and supposed to be renewed every five years.

According to analysts' opinions released on *South China Morning Post*, if the agreement was not renewed it would be proof of Washington's attempt to decouple from Beijing and could lead to an even more fragmented, as opposed to globalized, scientific research environment.

During the past four decades, *STA* has fostered a sound environment for China-U.S. sci-tech collaboration, and boosted mind-breaking innovation, thus greatly advancing the progress and de-

velopment of humanity.

So, what prompted U.S. lawmakers to break this cooperative cornerstone with China, and is smearing and suppressing China at all costs the only way for the U.S. to remain influence in the sci-tech arena? According to *Physics World* magazine, the notorious "China Initiative" (U.S. program which sought to fight economic espionage) has led to many Chinese scientists in the U.S. to consider leaving the country under enormous pressure of fear and anxiety, even though it was suspended in early 2022.

According to a new study themed "Caught in the Crossfire: Fears of Chinese - American Scientists" published on *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the sentiment has stopped Chinese scientists from applying for U.S. government grants. The study's authors warned that if the situation is not resolved, the U.S. will lose "scientific talent to China and other countries."

"Returning to normality will not be easy," said Junming Huang from Princeton's Center on Contemporary China who co-authored the study.

Meanwhile Kai Li, a computer scientist from Princeton University, who was not involved in the study, said "The China Initiative and its chilling effects were caused by some policy-makers talking about national security."

Li pointed out that the pending cases of the initiative are continuing to have "a chilling effect." As a result, scientists and researchers, particularly in engineering and computer science, are not applying for federal grants for their research over fears of reprisals.

Instead of learning from experience and lessons mentioned above, U.S. politicians have once again launched provocations, which can be traced to the blind "imaginary enemy" speculation on China.

For one thing, according to Josef Gregory Mahoney, a politics professor at East China Normal University in Shanghai, lawmakers did not believe the U.S. could gain anything by continuing this agreement, because of a lack of respect for Chinese ingenuity. He said the letter, signed by 10 Republicans, was an "exploitative tactic" for them to garner support by fueling more "anti-China fear mongering" amid growing polarization

in American politics.

Looking ahead, there will be a scientific landscape in which no single country dominates publications or sets the research agenda. "We're seeing a multi-polar world where new powerhouses are coming to the picture," said Xin Xu, a higher-education researcher at the University of Oxford, adding that, "It's a more diversified picture of global science."

China's scientific achievements are not intended to dominate the world or contain the development of other countries. Instead, China's initiatives, such as "Building a community with a shared future for mankind" and "Global Development Initiative," have always been committed to the well-being and development of all of humanity.

If U.S. politicians do not want to look at science and technology in a calm and objective manner, at least they should not politicize science and technology. Social development requires global cooperation, including China-U.S. cooperation, in science and technology. It is absolutely incorrect to campaign for more votes at the expense of human development.

Opinion

Developed Countries Must Cease Climate Hypocrisy

By LIANG Yilian

The world is currently witnessing a surge in extreme weather events, such as droughts, wildfires and heat waves, which has intensified concerns about climate change. Amidst global efforts to combat this crisis, a fundamental question arises: Who should bear the financial burden?

A recent study led by the University of Leeds, published in the journal *Nature Sustainability*, has provided a resolute answer, revealing the climate hypocrisy of developed countries. The study exposes that nearly 90 percent of excess carbon emissions originated from these nations, potentially making them liable for a staggering 170 trillion USD in climate reparations to low-emitting countries.

Since the Industrial Revolution, developed countries, including the U.S. and those in Europe, have been the primary contributors to heat-trapping emissions that saturate our atmosphere. In contrast, developing countries like India and China, despite having lower per capita emissions, bear the brunt of a rapidly warming climate.

"It is unjust and it is immoral," said Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley at the COP 26 summit, adding that "It is wrong." Mottley wants richer countries to stop throwing garbage in her yard and then telling her to clean it up. Given the geography of Barbados, the nation is vulnerable to Atlantic hurricanes and tropical storms, which are projected to increase in intensity due to climate change. Mottley is leading a push for richer countries to compensate poorer ones for the "loss and damage" caused by climate change.

"Loss and damage is still a taboo for developed countries," Alpha Oumar Kaloga, one of the lead negotiators of the Africa Group at COP26 and representative of Guinea in the Least Developed Countries bloc (LDC), told the BBC. The

majority of the 46 countries in the LDC bloc are in Africa.

Developed countries consistently fail to uphold their climate finance commitments, even failing to fulfill a 100 billion USD-a-year pledge to developing nations, as analyzed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

It is particularly frustrating that developed countries, behind closed doors, resist acknowledging "loss and damage" while simultaneously advocating for transparency in the climate negotiation process. Developed countries not only fail to recognize the losses faced by developing countries, but they also exert pressure on them to reduce carbon emissions. While urgent action is necessary to address climate change by curbing fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, it is unjust to increase the burden on developing countries without acknowledging the unequal contributions to the climate crisis.

"It is a matter of climate justice that if we are asking nations to rapidly decarbonize their economies, even though they hold no responsibility for the excess emissions that are destabilizing the climate, then they should be compensated for this unfair burden," said Dr. Andrew Fanning, who led the study.

Empty promises are no longer acceptable. The time has come for developed countries, with their deep pockets and comfortable lifestyles, to acknowledge their historical responsibility and rectify the injustices they have inflicted upon the world. The future of our planet and the lives of millions depend on it.

It is imperative that they not only fulfill their financial obligations, but also commit to tangible and meaningful actions that address the climate crisis. The world cannot afford further hypocrisy; it demands genuine accountability and transformative change.



A family sits near their submerged house at a flood affected village in Barpeta, India on June 24. (PHOTO: VCG)

Why Does So Much of the World's Manufacturing Still Take Place in China?

Research Box

Though there's been much talk about moving global manufacturing out of China, many companies are still not moving more of their production out of China.

Why not? As it turns out, China has mastered the craft of manufacturing.

China's manufacturing industry has access to a high level of agglomeration economies - or ecosystem. Take the example of producing a hoodie. It's not just about the textiles needed to cut and sew into a hoodie. It is also about the trims, dyes, zippers, cords and other necessary pieces that are required for assembling the prod-

uct, said Joseph Eiger, an executive in a global sourcing company that manufactures consumer products.

If a retailer in the U.S. or Canada wants to move the production of the textiles it sells out of China, it would have to move the entire ecosystem with it. Either that, or they would need to source the inputs needed from China into other countries like Bangladesh, where final production would take place.

It turns out that the costs associated with leaving China are simply too high. As long as the ecosystem for manufactured goods remains in China, then so will its significant share of the world's manufacturing.

Walid Hejazi & Bernardo Blum, *The Conversation*, 14-06-2023

Portable, Powerful AR Glasses Make Fashion Statement

Hi! Tech

By QI Liming

INMO Air, the newly fashion-forward smart AR glasses, weigh only 76g, with lenses as thick as regular lenses. Its lightweight and pocket-size body is comfortable enough to be worn anywhere.

As integrated AR glasses, INMO Air is equipped with a sensor to provide interactive operation and augmented reali-

ty visuals. The AI sensor embedded in the camera makes it an excellent smart assistant for everyday use.

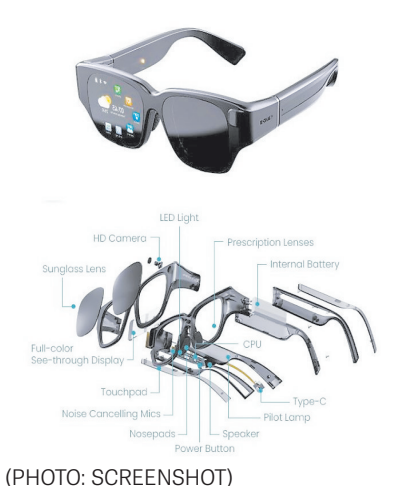
The glasses have smart and safe wearable technology equipped with a powerful processor, advanced optical wave-guide see-through display, BT and WiFi connection.

There are multiple operational methods, such as touch control with fingers to swipe back and forth to access applications, voice control with the voice recognition feature, and remote control.

No matter where you are, INMO

Air can be operated totally independent from other devices. With an Android-based system, INMO Air's functionalities can be extended with Apps just like smartphones. The App enables the Air easy setup and customization, and manages the communication link between the Air and the smartphone.

In addition to these innovations, it can take photos and videos, provide visualized detailed navigation, answer a phone call, watch movies and TV, play music and read lyrics and so on.



(PHOTO: SCREENSHOT)