

Global Order Poised between Promise and Chaos

The Role of China

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Whatever kind of world...ordered or disordered, a new or the old order, a diversified world or a Western-dominated one, the next five years are still of key importance. It could be the turning point of a new world order. It could also be a key moment for the West to regain the dominant position with all its might. Or perhaps, it will be a transition into a more chaotic world.

[O]nly when we can properly handle China's relationship with the European countries and the US, and promote a shift from a Western-dominated world to a world shared by all nations, which means a world governed by global rules and including Chinese participation, can the relations between China and the West fundamentally shift.

The next five years are a key moment of the evolution of the world order, and for China's own governance as well.

Due to suffering from the crisis and a lack of effective plans to solve the problems, the positions Western nations hold in the international pattern have slipped. Western nations generally believe in the "power transition" theory. They worry the current world order will either be replaced by a pluralistic, diversified, multipolar world, or a more disordered, chaotic one.

Though the G20 is organized and led by the West, it could be the beginning point of a new multipolar world order. In regard of the monetary system, the US dollar, euro, yen, yuan and the pound sterling can co-exist. In addition, besides the World Bank, the development banks and regional monetary finance plans, organized by the new big powers, have also burgeoned. After the decline of regionalism in Europe, other regional cooperation organizations, such as ASEAN and similar South American groups may be further enhanced.

In 2012, several large powers will have presidential elections or witness changes of leadership. The diplomatic policies of their new administrations will be key factors to evolve a world order for the future. If the EU cannot turn around its decline in five years, its influence and position in the world order will be gravely weakened.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has just returned to his former office. The national strength of Russia is expected to rise along with its international status.

For the 2012 US presidency, whoever wins the presidential campaign, the US will make all efforts possible to retain its leadership and hegemony. Unavoidably influenced by the crisis of the West, the BRICS will be less influential on the world order, which will result in a lack of

strength for them to promote a new order.

Whatever kind of world China asks for, ordered or disordered, a new or the old order, a diversified world or a Western-dominated one, the next five years are still of key importance. It could be the turning point of a new world order. It could also be a key moment for the West to regain the dominant position with all its might. Or perhaps, it will be a transition into a more chaotic world.

Whether China can become a more influential country largely depends on to what extent we can take advantage of the crisis of the West. The West's crisis can be taken as an opportunity. Whether or not we can take advantage of the crisis can decide the role China will play in the future world order.

Meanwhile, the evolution of China's domestic situation, including the economic transformation, social progression, political reform, military reform and the diplomatic changes can be the basis for China to fight for the building of a new world order and seek a better position in it.

To deal with the changes of the international and domestic circumstances, some principles in China's diplomatic policies, such as "never become the leader," "non-alignment," and "non-interference" need to be revised. Rethinking and adjusting the principles and priorities of our diplomatic policies do not necessarily mean giving up the current ones, but making them more flexible and applicable.

In the next five years, China should emphasize strengthening cooperation with new powers, of various sizes, and deal with their possible conflicts properly. At the same time, only when we can properly handle China's relationship with the European countries and the US, and promote a shift from a Western-dominated world to a world shared by all nations, which means a world governed by global rules and including Chinese participation, can the relations between China and the West fundamentally shift.

To make this happen, China needs to introduce more appealing and inspiring proposals and targets for a new world order, as well as possible solutions that can address global issues.

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