



International Development Cooperation: China's Practice

Second Issue | April 2023

COVID-19 Assistance



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In early 2020, the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 swept across the world, posing a major threat to human life and health and causing an incalculable impact on human society. For more than three years, the pandemic has kept resurging worldwide, claiming the lives of millions, and eroded decades of gains in global development. In the face of the multiple global challenges posed by the pandemic, China has always upheld the vision of a community of shared future and stood together with other countries around the world, doing its best to engage in international cooperation and provide assistance to combat the pandemic at multiple levels, in multiple ways and through multiple channels, and making an important contribution to global solidarity against COVID-19.

The purpose of this report is to explain China's approach to COVID-19 assistance and present China's specific practices and their effects when it comes to providing COVID-19 assistance.

01

International cooperation is the only feasible solution to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 is the most widespread global pandemic that has plagued humanity in nearly a century. It poses a major crisis and a severe test for the entire world, causing a major threat to human life and health.

1 The COVID-19 pandemic is the most serious public health emergency to hit the world in nearly a century

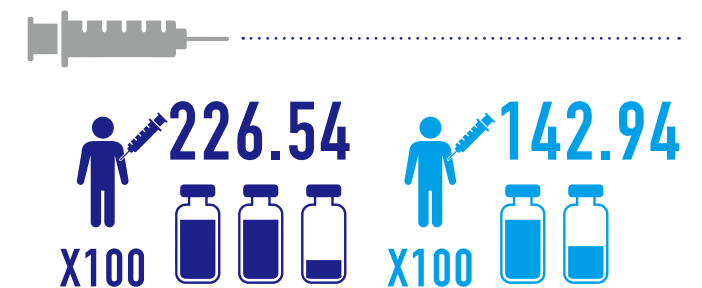
The COVID-19 is the most serious pandemic to hit the world in the past 100 years. SARS-CoV-2, a virus characterized by rapid transmission, high infectivity, and insidiousness, spread rapidly around the world after it was first identified in December 2019. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern

(PHEIC)”, the highest alert level that can be issued by an United Nations (UN) agency. On March 11 of that year, the WHO declared that COVID-19 constituted a global pandemic. According to the WHO, as of the end of January 2023, the cumulative number of confirmed cases worldwide reached 752.5 million and the cumulative number of deaths exceeded 6.8 million¹. Currently, although the global

situation of COVID-19 has seen some improvement, it remains a major global health threat as the virus strains frequently mutate, and humanity are not yet out of the shadow of the pandemic. The WHO has repeatedly called on countries around the world to further strengthen global cooperation and join forces to combat COVID-19, our common enemy.

2 The prominent issue of global “immunization gap” has become an important factor limiting the effectiveness of disease prevention and control

At the beginning of 2021, several countries began to release their COVID-19 vaccines, and immunization against COVID-19 gradually started in various countries. However, in this process, developed countries obtained disproportionately more COVID-19 vaccines. The problem of uneven distribution of vaccines globally has become increasingly prominent, and the global “immunization gap” has been widening. Statistics show that as of mid-March 2021, high-income countries received more than half of the world’s COVID-19 vaccines, yet their population is only one-fifth of the world’s total; while low- and middle-income countries, with 44% of the world’s population, received only 15% of the vaccines². In 2021, the



The number of vaccine doses administered per 100 people in high-income countries was 226.54

the number in low-income countries was 142.94

WHO set a target of 70% vaccination coverage of the global population for that year, but only 52 countries worldwide achieved the target, 69 countries had less than 40% vaccination coverage,

Source: 1.<https://covid19.who.int/table>
2.<https://www.kff.org/policy-watch/global-covid-19-vaccine-access-snapshot-of-inequality/>

and 21 countries failed to reach 10%. In low-income countries, only 11% of the population were vaccinated, compared to 73% in high-income countries³. According to the latest data from the WHO, as of the end of January 2023, the number of vaccine doses administered per 100 people in high-

income countries was 226.54, while the number in low-income countries was 142.94. The prominent “immunization gap” not only makes it difficult to effectively control the pandemic globally, but also creates new challenges in the economic and social spheres.

3 The COVID-19 pandemic severely hinders global development, and overcoming the pandemic is key to global recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only caused a global public health crisis, but also triggered a series of global challenges that have hit the global economy even harder than the international financial crisis in 2008. Since the outbreak, the global Human Development Index (HDI) has regressed for two consecutive years, with 90% of the countries experiencing a decline in their HDI. The number of people falling into poverty globally in 2020 increased by about 120 million, and the rate of extreme poverty has risen for the first time since 1998. As countries have different economic bases and COVID-19 response strategies, this has resulted in a “fragmented” and uneven recovery, with widening development gaps between countries. The economies of many developing countries have become more vulnerable under repeated disruptions

by the pandemic, exacerbating the “fault lines” in the economic recovery of various countries. Such “fault line” effects not only widen the gaps between developed and developing economies, leading to serious regional polarization, but also seriously threaten the resilience and sustainability of the global economic recovery.

At the same time, given the strong correlation between the impact of the pandemic on employment and the skill levels of workers, vulnerable groups are hit more severely than others, which further exacerbates the inequality within societies. A World Bank report shows that in 2021, the average income of the bottom 40% of the global income distribution is 6.7% lower than the pre-pandemic projections, while the top 40% is only 2.8% lower. The World Bank study also shows that the pandemic



In April 2020, Chinese medical experts invited by the Kazakhstani government arrived at Nur-Sultan, the capital city of Kazakhstan, with humanitarian aid supplies



Friendship that transcends the “Mountains of Heaven” – Chinese medical expert group leaving for Kazakhstan

3.WHO and World Bank, Accelerating Covid-19 vaccine deployment: removing obstacles to increase coverage levels and protect those at high risk.

has plunged about 70 million people into extreme poverty worldwide, with 719 million people living on less than US\$2.15 a day by the end of 2020⁴. In the face of the

global challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the only way out is for the international community to stand together and join forces to fight the pandemic.

02

China puts into practice the vision of a community of shared future for mankind in providing foreign assistance to combat COVID-19

Epidemic diseases know no borders or races and are the common enemy of humanity. Effective international cooperation is a top priority in defeating epidemics. To actively provide foreign assistance within one's capacity is an important part of international cooperation in combating epidemics. Upholding the sound values of justice and benefit, China puts into practice

the vision of a community of shared future and actively provides assistance within its capacity to other countries. Through its solid actions, China showed its moral righteousness, fulfilled its responsibility as a major country for helping other countries and taking on the challenge in solidarity, and demonstrated its traditional virtue of reciprocity.

1 Upholding and practicing the vision of a community of shared future for mankind

The COVID-19 pandemic has once again demonstrated that humanity is a community with a shared future where all people rise and fall together. The

pandemic has not only triggered a global public health crisis, but also magnified many shortcomings and deficits in the global governance system. Since the



In March 2020, Chinese aid supplies arrived in Manila, capital of the Philippines. The supplies contained 100,000 testing kits, 100,000 surgical masks, 10,000 N95 masks, and 10,000 pieces of medical protective clothing



In August 2022, Chinese aid supplies arrived at the Phnom Penh International Airport in Cambodia

4. <https://www.shihang.org/zh/news/press-release/2022/10/05/global-progress-in-reducing-extreme-poverty-grinds-to-a-halt>

outbreak, the rise of unilateralism, protectionism and extremism, and the worsening of differences among countries have greatly limited substantive progress in global solidarity against the pandemic and have also highlighted the urgency of building a community of shared future for mankind.

Practicing the vision of a community of shared future, China has been actively cooperating with others in pandemic response, sharing with them good practices, conducting joint research and development on drugs and vaccines, and providing assistance within its capacity to countries where COVID-19 has been spreading. Back at the 73rd World Health Assembly held in May 2020, Chinese President Xi Jinping made

it clear that China hoped the international community would unite and cooperate to build a global community of health for all. To move this initiative forward, China announced a series of major measures such as providing US\$2 billion in international aid over two years, working with the UN to set up a global humanitarian response depot and hub in China, establishing a cooperation mechanism for its hospitals to pair up with 30 African hospitals, making COVID-19 vaccine development and deployment in China, when available, a global public good, and working with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) for the poorest countries, thus doing its utmost to support global cooperation in COVID-19 response.

2 Demonstrating the principles of putting people and their lives first and promoting international humanitarianism

China has put people and their lives first when it comes to providing foreign assistance to combat the pandemic. The pandemic has claimed the precious lives of millions and caused irreparable wounds to human society. The foundation of the fight against COVID-19 is to protect the right to life and health of people all over the world. We must put people's lives and health at the top priority and respect the value and dignity of each person's life. The Chinese government has shown strong

humanitarian concern for the countries and regions deeply affected by the pandemic. When COVID-19 was rapidly spreading across the world, Chinese President Xi Jinping repeatedly expressed his sympathies for and support to the people of the countries concerned, emphasizing China's willingness to proactively provide assistance and strengthen cooperation with the international community to jointly maintain global and regional public health security and protect the lives, safety and

CASE 1: The Chinese government provides anti-epidemic supplies to Bhutan, with which China has no diplomatic ties

In early 2021, at the request of the Bhutanese government, China, despite the difficulties, announced to provide vaccines to Bhutan. In October of the same year, COVID-19 resurged in Bhutan, and China again provided it with urgently needed anti-epidemic supplies. In April 2022, China delivered a new batch of anti-epidemic supplies to Bhutan, including testing kits, oxygen generators, pulse oximeters, etc., to help Bhutan effectively combat the pandemic

and to contribute to its economic and social recovery.

Article 3 of the Measures for the Administration of Foreign Aid promulgated in 2021 clearly stipulates that "the recipients of foreign aid mainly include developing countries that have established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and have the need to receive assistance, as well as international organizations comprising mainly developing

countries. Under emergency or special circumstances such as humanitarian assistance, developed or developing countries without diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China may also become aid recipients."

Bhutanese media Kuensel reported on China's COVID-19 assistance, saying that China's goodwill and friendly support will help Bhutan's efforts to fight the pandemic.

health of people around the world. When attending the G20 Leaders' Summit, the World Health Assembly, the China-Africa Extraordinary Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19 Pandemic and other occasions, Chinese President Xi Jinping has repeatedly called for putting people and their lives first, for resource coordination,

unity and cooperation, and for making the greatest efforts to protect people's lives and health and minimize the negative impact of the pandemic. Protecting people's lives and health is the keyword of China's foreign assistance against the pandemic, reflecting the Chinese government's unremitting pursuit of the ideal of putting life first.

3 Reciprocating the support and assistance from the international community

At the beginning of 2020, when China was at a critical juncture in its fight against COVID-19, the international

community provided invaluable support to China in a variety of ways. Leaders of more than 170 countries, heads of 50

international and regional organizations, and more than 300 foreign political parties and organizations expressed condolences and support through letters and phone calls to the Chinese leadership. Seventy-seven countries and 12 international organizations provided donations to the Chinese people to support the fight against COVID-19, including medical masks, protective clothing, goggles, respirators and other emergency medical supplies and equipment. Local governments, enterprises, private institutions, and individuals from 84 countries provided in-kind donations to China.

As the epidemic situation at home gradually improved, the Chinese government made it clear that “for countries that previously

provided assistance to China to fight COVID-19, we will definitely reciprocate the kindness if needed.” Since then, China has actively fulfilled this promise, not only by providing medical supplies to these countries, but also by taking the initiative to establish long-term multilateral and bilateral public health cooperation mechanisms, strengthening joint pandemic response, and sharing China’s COVID-19 treatment protocols and experience through various means. In addition to inter-governmental aid between countries, local governments, private businesses, and civic groups in China have also spontaneously donated goods to countries that had assisted China, further fulfilling China’s promise of reciprocating the kindness of others through its anti-epidemic assistance efforts.

03

Specific practices and characteristics of China’s COVID-19 assistance

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, China has been participating in global cooperation in the fight against the pandemic whilst coordinating epidemic control with economic and social development at home. It has done its utmost to support the global response to the pandemic and carried out the longest and most extensive global humanitarian operation since the founding

of the People’s Republic of China. Considering the severity of the epidemic, the health care capacity and conditions of the recipient, and the recipient’s specific request for assistance and own capabilities, the Chinese government provided emergency humanitarian assistance to developed countries with serious epidemics and developing countries with weak

CASE 2: China Repays the Union of the Comoros’s Support for China’s Fight Against COVID-19

The Comoros, an African island country with a population of about 870,000, is one of the world’s least developed countries. It donated 100 euros to

China in early February 2020 to show its support for China’s fight against the epidemic. In return for this act of kindness, China later provided 700,000 doses of

vaccines, 230,000 testing kits, 10,500 protective suits, 36,000 N95 masks, 350,000 surgical masks and other anti-epidemic supplies to the Comoros.

CASE 3: China Repays Italy’s Support for China’s Fight Against COVID-19

Italy was one of the first countries to provide assistance to China in the fight against COVID-19. As the epidemic situation in Italy became more serious, the Chinese government continuously offered its help and repaid Italy’s support at the outset of the pandemic with a “hundredfold” return. On March 12, 2020, the first medical expert group sent by the Chinese government arrived in Italy, carrying with them on their plane 31 tons of medical supplies; on March 14, 26.4 tons of anti-

epidemic supplies put together by Zhejiang Province arrived in Italy; on March 18, the second medical expert group to Italy brought with them on their plane 9 tons of supplies donated by the Chinese side; on April 25, the third group of experts brought another batch of urgently needed medical supplies to the country, such as respirators, protective clothing and Chinese patent medicines; on April 6, the anti-epidemic supplies from China to the EU were directly allocated and delivered to Italy

by the EU Emergency Response Coordination Center. Assistance from China undoubtedly became one of the important sources for Italy to obtain anti-epidemic supplies in the early days of the pandemic. When questioned in the Chamber of Deputies in early April, Italy’s then Foreign Minister Di Maio noted that since the outbreak of COVID-19, “Italy has received a total of about 30 million masks from overseas, 22 million of which came from China.”

CASE 4: China Repays Czech Support for China’s Fight Against COVID-19

Czech President Milos Zeman and all sectors of the Czech society came to China’s aid at the critical moment of China’s COVID-19 response. The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra recorded the song “Jasmine Flower” for the Chinese people, which touched countless Chinese people. In

return for this friendship, when the Czech side urgently needed to ship back the supplies it purchased in China to fight the epidemic at home, China quickly provided support by helping to build an “air corridor” to ensure the timely arrival of the supplies, and provided other assistance

for Czech’s COVID-19 response. In a televised address in March 2020, President Zeman said, “I would like to thank the People’s Republic of China because China is the only country that provided medical supplies to the Czech Republic.”

public health systems. China's COVID-19 assistance operations, characterized by the richness and diversity of the aid forms, the global recipient coverage, and efficient

aid mechanisms, closely synergized with regional and international organizations and were an indispensable force in global cooperation to combat COVID-19.

1 China's COVID-19 assistance is mainly in the form of material assistance, technical assistance and cash assistance





In terms of assistance forms, China's COVID-19 assistance mainly includes material assistance, technical assistance, and cash assistance. Among them, the material assistance includes regular supplies and vaccines, while the technical assistance includes sending medical experts and organizing experience exchange on anti-epidemic knowledge.

(1) Anti-epidemic material assistance

The rapidly changing dynamics of the pandemic brought serious challenges to various countries concerning the provision of medical supplies. Whilst overcoming the various difficulties at home, the Chinese government organized enterprises to resume work and production, making an important contribution to the stability of the global supply chain for medical supplies. Furthermore, it increased the provision of medical supplies to relevant countries and international organizations. As early as mid to late February 2022, China donated

in batches protective clothing, masks and testing kits to Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK). Over the past three years, China has provided billions of pieces of test kits, protective clothing, masks and other anti-epidemic supplies to 151 countries and 13 international organizations around the world and has shipped a total of 5,246 tons of materials. The regular supplies donated by China include: testing kits for 7.0265 million tests, 3.4794 million pieces of protective clothing, 72.4717 million masks, 2.2453 million isolation eye masks, 10.2225 million pairs of medical gloves, 1.7562 million pairs of medical shoe covers, nucleic acid extraction reagents for 675,800 tests, 188,400 surgical gowns, 82,345 infrared thermometers and 665,600 protective masks, 2,714 respirators, 7,181 oxygen generators, 5,820 oximeters, 302 monitors, and 350 units of medical equipment such as hospital beds. In terms of the provision of testing kits, protective clothing, masks and other important anti-epidemic supplies, Asian countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia, Malaysia, Laos, and Mongolia are the main

Table 1
Largest recipients of various types of anti-epidemic supplies by country (region)

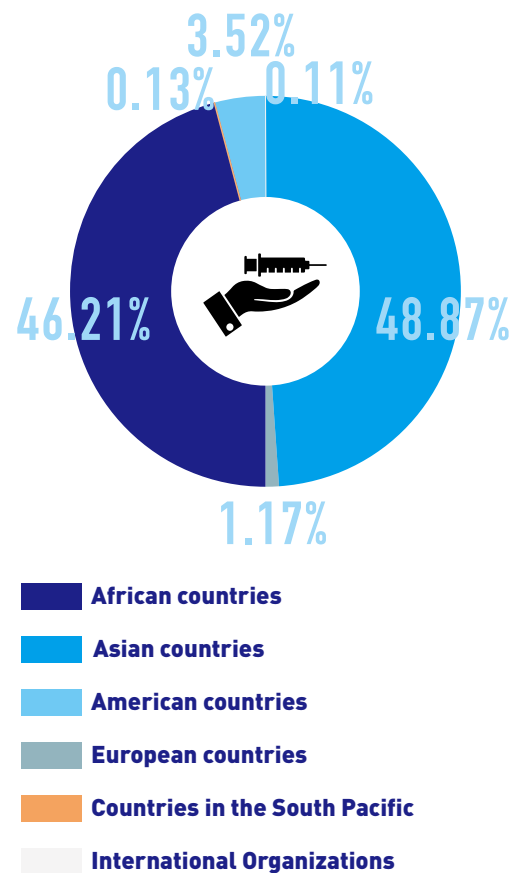
 Country/testing kits (10,000 tests)	 Country/protective clothing (10,000 pieces)	 Country/surgical masks (10,000 pieces)	 Country/N95 masks (10,000 pieces)
Myanmar (52.95)	Russia (25)	Myanmar (430)	Mongolia (50.5)
Bhutan (40.008)	Pakistan (21)	Laos (335)	Myanmar (43)
Cambodia (35.7)	Cambodia (18.5)	Cambodia (290)	Russia (40)
Solomon Islands (32.07)	Myanmar (15.8)	Russia (240)	Cuba (25.2)
Niger (31)	Malaysia (12)	Pakistan (230)	Uzbekistan (25)
The Philippines (25)	Saudi Arabia (10)	Bolivia (203)	Algeria (20.5)
Malaysia (25)	Costa Rica (10)	ROK (200)	Japan (20)
Laos (23.01)	Egypt (9)	EU (200)	Kazakhstan (20)
Comoros (23)	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (9)	Malaysia (180)	Saudi Arabia (20)
Sierra Leone (23)	Laos (8.99)	Mongolia (179.5)	EU (20)

recipients. In addition, developed countries (regions) such as the EU, ROK, Japan, and Saudi Arabia are also the main recipients of assistance in terms of surgical masks and N95 masks (see Table 1).

Since 2021, China has provided 2.2 billion doses of vaccines to more than 120 countries and international organizations to support global COVID-19 response and close the global immunization gap. China was the first to commit COVID-19 vaccine as a global public good, to

support intellectual property rights (IPR) exemption for vaccine research and development, and to work with developing countries on vaccine production. To date, China has delivered 520 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to 110 countries and 4 international organizations, including the Arab League, the African Union (AU), UN peacekeepers, and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. At the height of the pandemic in 2021, China donated 125,111,000 doses of vaccines.

Figure 1
Geographic Distribution of
China's Donated Vaccines



Counting by vaccine doses, the vast majority of vaccines were provided to African and Asian countries. In breakdown, Asian countries received 253.102 million doses of vaccines, accounting for 48.87%; African countries received 239.35 million doses of vaccines, accounting for 46.21%; American countries received 18.21 million doses of vaccines, accounting for 3.52%; European countries received 6.08 million doses of vaccines, accounting for 1.17%; and South

Pacific countries received 650,000 doses of vaccines. China also donated 549,000 doses of vaccines to international organizations.

(2) Technical assistance

China dispatched medical expert teams to recipient countries to provide technical support and share experience. China also organized technical exchanges with other countries and international organizations on epidemic prevention and control and medical treatment.

On 29 February 2020, a group of medical experts from Shanghai departed for Iran to help with epidemic control, marking the first medical team sent from China since the outbreak of COVID-19. In March 2020, China sent three medical teams to Italy to support COVID-19 response. In the past three years, China has dispatched 311 people in 38 groups to 34 countries for COVID-19 control, reaching 4 Asian countries, 15 African countries, 2 American countries and 3 European countries.

The Chinese experts are mainly from the centers for disease control and prestigious hospitals, specializing in respiratory and critical illness, infectious disease control, and laboratory testing, etc. They are well-equipped with professional skills and rich front-line treatment experiences. Their main tasks are to share in details Chinese experience in epidemic control to the recipient countries, conduct training activities, and propose specific prevention



In March 2020, Chinese aid supplies arrived at the Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport in France. The supplies contained surgical masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment requested by the French government

and control measures and treatment plans based on situations on the ground. For example, considering the multiple outbreaks in Iraq and the lack of community control measures, Chinese experts advised to establish a joint prevention and control mechanism, issue a unified prevention and control plan and clinical treatment guidelines, build designated hospitals, and implement a classified treatment system. These suggestions were highly valued by the Iraqi side. In addition, the medical experts also provided guidance and assistance to Chinese embassies, workers of Chinese enterprises, international students, and overseas Chinese in these countries.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

has also played an active role in China's medical assistance. Given the effectiveness of TCM in treating COVID-19 in China, the Chinese government included TCM in its overseas medical assistance. For example, the expert team sent to Cambodia in January 2022 was composed of 10 medical workers with rich clinical experience and professional proficiency, from the departments of pulmonology, cardiovascular sciences, and acupuncture. With its TCM application and treatment, the expert group played a unique role in COVID-19 response in Cambodia.

In addition, China has jointly held around 1,500 video conferences with more than 180 countries and regions and over 10



In April 2020, the 3rd batch of Chinese aid supplies containing protective clothing, masks, gloves and other medical equipment arrived at the Bagdad Airport in Iraq



In May 2020, the Handover ceremony of Chinese aid supplies held in Columbia



Chinese vaccines safeguard the health of medical workers in Vanuatu

international and regional organizations to share experience in protection, treatment, and vaccine and drug development. China has also made multilingual videos to spread knowledge on COVID-19 prevention and control in more than 120 countries around the world.

(3) Cash assistance and debt forgiveness

The COVID-19 pandemic has put developing countries with weak health care systems under great risk and strain.

To help these countries strengthen their public health systems and enhance their COVID-19 response capacity, China has provided US\$56 million in cash assistance through multilateral and bilateral channels. The Chinese government announced a US\$20 million donation to the WHO on 7 March 2020, followed by an additional US\$30 million donation on 23 April. On 18 May, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced at the 73rd World Health Assembly that China will provide US\$2 billion in international aid in the next two years to support COVID-19 response

and economic and social recovery and development in countries struggling with the pandemic, especially developing countries. On June 17, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced at the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity against COVID-19 that “Within the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) framework, China will cancel the debt of relevant African countries in the form of interest-free government loans that are due to mature by the end of

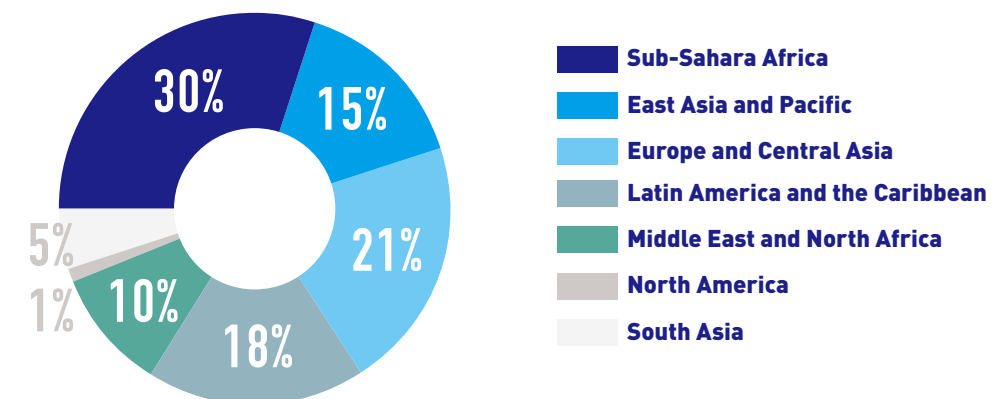
2020. For those African countries that are hardest hit by the coronavirus and are under heavy financial stress, China will work with the global community to give them greater support, by such means as further extending the period of debt suspension, to help them tide over the current difficulty.” These moves reflect China's holistic approach to assistance that integrates COVID-19 response capacity with the recovery of economic and social development.

2 China's COVID-19 assistance has reached every region in the world and countries of all income levels

In terms of the geographical location of the recipient countries, China's COVID-19 assistance has reached every region in the world, mainly in Africa and Asia, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean. Specifically, of the 156

recipient countries, 24 are in East Asia and the Pacific, 33 in Central Asia, 28 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 15 in the Middle East and North Africa, 1 in North America, 8 in South Asia, and 47 in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Figure 2
Geographical Locations of Recipient Countries**



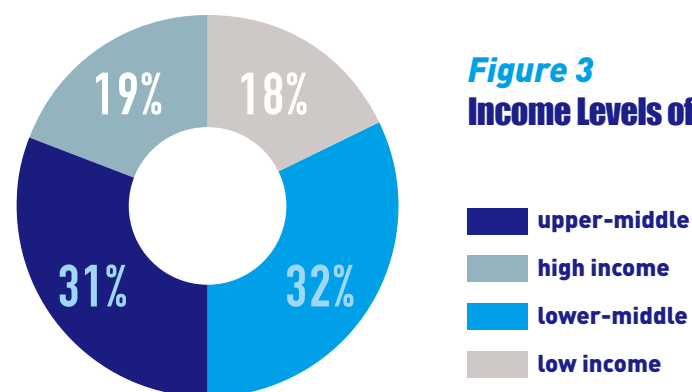


Figure 3
Income Levels of Recipient Countries

In terms of the income levels of the recipient countries, lower middle-income and upper middle-income countries occupy a large proportion, with 28 low-income countries, 50 lower middle-income countries, 48 upper middle-income

countries and 30 high-income countries⁵. More specifically, China offered assistance to all 28 low-income countries, 92.59% of lower middle-income countries, 88.89% of upper middle-income countries, and 37.03% of high-income countries.

3 China's COVID-19 assistance mechanism ensures smooth and efficient implementation

China's COVID-19 assistance operations are underpinned by a set of smooth and efficient implementation mechanisms. Specifically, they are governed by the State Council Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism against COVID-19 (known as the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism), supported by the inter-ministerial coordination mechanism for foreign assistance and the inter-ministerial working mechanism for international

humanitarian emergency assistance, led by the China International Development Cooperation Agency, and implemented by a dozen of departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce, the National Health Commission, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Finance, and the General Administration of Customs.

4 China's COVID-19 assistance is closely aligned with regional and international organizations

The Chinese government has also actively engaged in cooperation with international organizations and various regional organizations around the world to fight the pandemic, and has implemented COVID-19 assistance, especially vaccine assistance, under corresponding frameworks.

At the global level, China is strongly supportive of the work of the UN and the WHO in tackling COVID-19, in particular by taking an active part in the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (Gavi) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), as well as COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX). In March and April 2020, echoing the appeals of the UN and WHO, China provided US\$50 million cash assistance to the WHO for capacity building and public health system development in interested countries, and has actively engaged in the ACT-Accelerator initiative. In September 2020, in order to support the central role of the UN in international affairs, China announced US\$50 million in contribution to the UN COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan. In February 2021, China signed an agreement with Gavi to donate US\$100 million to COVAX for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to developing countries. China also proposed a G20 COVID-19 assistance initiative for better information sharing and policy and

action coordination with the support of the WHO.

Under the auspice of the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF), China worked with the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help with COVID-19 response among vulnerable groups, such as women, children, refugees, and migrants, and improve their food and nutrition and the health of women and children.

At the regional level, China has worked with major regional organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen policy coordination and provided assistance to these organizations. In June 2020, China and the AU convened the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity against COVID-19 under the FOCAC framework, and issued the Joint Statement of the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19. In the joint statement, China proposed to provide more in-kind, technical, financial and humanitarian support to African countries through the AU to help them overcome the impact of COVID-19. In Asia, China has played an active role in COVID-19 response through the ASEAN Plus Three and China-ASEAN

5. The regional classification and income levels are based on the relevant World Bank criteria. <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>

cooperation mechanisms, providing assistance to ASEAN countries in the fight against COVID-19. China has also provided anti-viral supplies to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) through regional

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China has provided 45,000 doses of vaccine and 12,000 testing reagents to the AU; 50,000 testing reagents, 200,000 N95 masks and 2 million surgical masks to the EU; 75,000 surgical masks and 35 infrared thermometers to ASEAN; and 4,000 doses of vaccine to the League of Arab States.

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5 China's sub-national governments, social organizations and enterprises have actively participated in COVID-19 assistance

China's sub-national governments, social organizations and enterprises have also played an important role in collective COVID-19 response by actively engaging in COVID-19 assistance and providing vital support to many countries. Such assistance reached RMB2.2 billion between January 2020 and March 2021. Nearly 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities in China have provided

mechanisms such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. At the special video conference of China and Latin American and Caribbean Countries' Foreign Ministers on COVID-19 in July 2020, China proposed a series of initiatives to help LAC countries fight the epidemic, including the dispatch of medical expert teams. China has also provided assistance to regional organizations themselves. Statistics show that China has provided 45,000 doses of vaccine and 12,000 testing reagents to the AU; 50,000 testing reagents, 200,000 N95 masks and 2 million surgical masks to the EU; 75,000 surgical masks and 35 infrared thermometers to ASEAN; and 4,000 doses of vaccine to the League of Arab States.

COVID-19 assistance. For example, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan province have actively provided assistance to Southeast Asian countries. In April 2020, the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region provided nearly RMB4 million in medical supplies to Cambodia and over BND100,000 in medical supplies to Brunei. In May, the People's Government



CASE 5: Sub-national governments of China have actively provided COVID-19 assistance to other countries

As COVID-19 raged around the world, many regions in China, while focusing on their own epidemic response, have also provided support and assistance to other countries through various means to the best of their ability. For example, Beijing held a video conference in March 2020 to share with its sister cities the effective

measures and experience in epidemic control, treatment, and approaches to resume work and production, which was well received by the participants. Shanghai provided assistance and support to countries and sister cities in the Asian region, which was highly appreciated by Busan, ROK, and Yokohama, Japan, and other sister cities.

The medical team to Uzbekistan, sent from Jiangxi province, held lectures on diagnosis and therapeutics, explaining the key points in clinical observation, demonstrating the ventilator operation procedures, and making suggestions on the renovation of designated hospitals. Such help was highly appreciated by Uzbekistan.

of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region donated 50,000 medical surgical masks, 1,000 sets of protective gears, 500 sets of medical protective coveralls, 500 thermometers to the Ministry of Health and Sports of Myanmar, and 500 sets of protective gears to the Yangon provincial government. Yunnan Provincial Government also donated respirators, personal protective equipment, masks and other supplies to the Yangon Provincial Government of Myanmar and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos.

Civic assistance is an important part of China's COVID-19 assistance, which mainly includes assistance from Chinese public welfare organizations, Chinese enterprises and overseas Chinese enterprises. The Chinese Red Cross Foundation has actively participated

in international aid and provided anti-epidemic supplies to foreign countries multiple times. It has donated 800,000 doses of vaccine and injectors worth RMB12.12 million to Nicaragua and Cambodia, while also helping many other countries to fight the epidemic and protect the life and health of local people. The Shenzhen Mammoth Foundation also provided a large number of supplies to Southeast Asian and African countries. In March 2020, Shenzhen Mammoth Foundation donated 1,000 testing kits developed and produced by BGI to the Philippines and Brunei. As they promote economic cooperation, overseas Chinese enterprises have also shouldered the responsibilities for supporting COVID-19 response in their communities, providing a large amount of in-kind assistance and technical support to their host countries, and making remarkable contributions to the fight against COVID-19.



In March 2020, Chinese government and the Red Cross Society of China sent a group of 9 medical experts and about 9 tons of supplies from Shanghai to Rome, Italy



Traditional Chinese Medicine helping Laos fight COVID-19

6 Main characteristics of China's COVID-19 assistance and cooperation

First, China can meet the urgent needs of other countries with speedy actions. China treated COVID-19 assistance with a great sense of urgency and took a case-by-case approach. In as early as March 2020, despite the limited production capacity and huge demand at home, the Chinese government provided 100,000 N95 masks, 1 million medical surgical masks, 10,000 sets of personal protective equipment and other anti-epidemic supplies to ROK. In February 2021, the Chinese government donated 500,000 vaccines to Pakistan, marking the first consignment of vaccines donated by the Chinese government. At

the end of April 2021, facing the rebound of the epidemic caused by the Delta variant in China's neighbors in South and Southeast Asia, China promptly launched the Emergency Support Program for COVID-19 Response, under which China overcame the short of supply and production pressure and coordinated the emergency supply of oxygen cylinders, oxygen machines, ventilators and other emergency supplies to Nepal, Afghanistan, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka.

Second, China provided not only in-kind

assistance, but also experience sharing. After the outbreak of the pandemic around the world, China not only provided medical supplies, vaccines and dispatched medical experts, but also held virtual meetings to share experience and set up a reservoir of anti-epidemic supplies for South Asia. Despite disruptions from the epidemic, China started the construction of the headquarters of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) in Addis Ababa ahead of schedule, demonstrating the commitment to a China-Africa community of health for all with concrete actions.

Third, China upholds fairness and justice in promoting fair distribution of vaccines. China repeatedly emphasized that COVID-19 vaccines should be offered as a global public good, and delivered vaccines to countries around the world despite the enormous demand and supply shortage at home. In October 2020, China

officially joined COVAX. Chinese vaccines are the first vaccines available to many developing countries, from Southeast Asia to Latin America to Africa, and are likened to “timely rains” by these countries. In order to alleviate the global vaccine shortage, China not only “gives fish to others”, but also “teaches others how to fish” --building vaccine filling bases in 15 countries, creating local vaccine production centers, and actively supporting vaccine IPR exemption for developing countries. By doing so, China has made important contributions to the accessibility and affordability of vaccines in developing countries. In addition, China has launched the Initiative for Belt and Road Partnership on COVID-19 Vaccines Cooperation, with the participation of 31 countries, and convened the international forum on vaccine cooperation to promote the establishment of cooperation mechanisms between the international community and vaccine producers.

CASE 6: China's COVID-19 assistance to Laos with “China speed”

On March 29, 2020, a 12-member Chinese medical team arrived in Vientiane, Laos with medical supplies worth 4.17 million RMB. This was less than five days after Laos announced the first confirmed

case and requested Chinese assistance. Before the arrival of the expert group, 5,000 sets of protective clothing, 5,000 N95 masks, 400,000 ordinary medical masks and testing kits, donated by the Chinese government,

had already been delivered to Laos. The “China speed” has hit another record, fully demonstrating the commitment to a community with a shared future for mankind and strong support to its neighbors and friends.

04

Effects of China's COVID-19 Assistance

Over the past three years, China's large-scale COVID-19 assistance has injected confidence into global collective COVID-19 response, effectively helped developing countries in need enhance their epidemic response capacity, and greatly contributed to closing the global immunization gap and increasing the accessibility and affordability of vaccines in developing countries. In addition, China

has also integrated humanitarian assistance with development assistance, committed to helping developing countries tackle economic and social challenges caused by the epidemic and reduce its negative impact on their development. China's active efforts in the global cooperation against COVID-19 have been highly valued and recognized by the international community.

1 Injecting confidence and hope to global solidarity against COVID-19

The recurrent COVID-19 pandemic has cast a shadow on global development. To address the global challenge that shapes the future of mankind, it's crucial to maintain strong confidence and solidarity. In the fight against COVID-19, China has fully demonstrated its sense of responsibility as a major nation, and has engaged in and led global COVID-19 response with firm positions and strong determination. China's COVID-19 assistance, at multiple levels and through multiple channels, has brought confidence and hope to global solidarity.

Since March 2020, on important international occasions, from G20 Leaders'

Summit, the World Health Assembly, to the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19, and Global Health Summit, Chinese leaders have put forward major initiatives for COVID-19 assistance, which bolstered the confidence in fighting COVID-19 around the world. China has not only provided COVID-19 assistance to fellow developing countries, but also offered medical supplies and assistance to developed countries, including Italy, Japan, ROK and Canada, as well as international and regional organizations such as the WHO, AU, and Arab League, demonstrating China's determination and confidence in supporting the global



In March 2020, Chinese aid supplies arrived at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Malaysia

fight against COVID-19. UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed appreciation for China's assistance to countries in difficulties, and China's efforts to share epidemic control experience with developing countries and donate medical supplies, vaccines and medicines. China's support is considered to be essential to multilateralism.

Some scholars and experts also spoke highly of China's efforts to inject confidence to global COVID-19 response. Former Bolivian Health Minister Anibal Cruz said that "by sharing anti-epidemic knowledge and experience, China has conveyed a clear message of solidarity against COVID-19, and demonstrated its

sense of responsibility as a major nation". Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director of Pakistan-China Institute, said that in global COVID-19 response, China has taken a range of measures in an open and cooperative manner, providing support to other countries in exploring COVID-19 control methods, proof of the importance of solidarity and cooperation. Robert Lawrence Kuhn, chairman of the Kuhn Foundation, believed that "a community with a shared future for mankind" is a concept with vision and great significance. As countries struggle to tackle COVID-19, this concept has provided an urgently needed new way of thinking, and brought hope to the world. Some scholars believed that in Asia, Africa, and Latin America,

China has provided effective and broad assistance to developing countries, gaining wider recognition for its image as a responsible major country.

According to Tencent's big data analysis of the reports by foreign media on China's COVID-19 assistance and the comments of foreign netizens from March 1 to April 12, 2020, when countries like Italy, Serbia and Hungary were facing raging pandemic but could not obtain other international assistance, it was China's assistance that

met their urgent needs, and was applauded by local media. Juba Monitor published the joint statement of the diplomatic envoys of 13 countries in East Africa, affirming that China has taken firm measures to support COVID-19 response in other countries, and won the respect of the world. ASEAN countries believed that China's efforts in promoting international COVID-19 response reflect China's sense of responsibility as a major nation, and injected confidence and strength into the joint efforts to fight COVID-19.

2 Helping to bridge the international immunization gap

China's COVID-19 vaccines have played an important role in helping to raise global vaccination rates. As of January 2023, China had supplied more than 2.2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine to more than 120 countries and international organizations worldwide. China, the second

largest donor of COVID-19 vaccines in the world, has provided vaccine assistance to a total of 110 countries. In the first half of 2021 when vaccines were most needed, China provided far more vaccine assistance than any other country. China actively advocated and carried out the Global Vaccine Cooperation Action Initiative. It is the first country to propose and promise to make vaccines a global public good once they have been developed and applied. China has transferred technology to more than 20 countries and cooperated with them in producing vaccines, fostering an annual production capacity of 1.9 billion doses overseas. At the beginning of 2021, Chinese vaccines came onto the market, and Sinopharm vaccines were included

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As of January 2023, China had supplied more than 2.2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine to more than 120 countries and international organizations worldwide.
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Warm Assistance Slogans

China attached slogans to the packages of assistance supplies to show encouragement and support to the recipient countries. Most of these slogans are drawn from traditional Chinese poems and local proverbs.

Laos: *Brotherhood like blooming Champa flowers; Everything is possible with China-Laos cooperation.*

Cambodia: *China and Cambodia stand together in difficult times; China and Cambodia support each other with mutual trust.*

Myanmar: *Pauk-phaw friendship with mutual assistance.*

The Philippines: *Pull together through thick and thin; Friendship can keep us together though we are miles apart.*

Indonesia: *Be together through thick and thin; Remain close even far apart.*

Thailand: *China and Thailand are as one family.*

Malaysia: *Climb mountains and cross rivers together.*

Brunei: *China and Brunei stand together in difficult times.*

Singapore: *Overcome difficulties through mutual support.*

Timor-Leste: *Rock-solid friendship can beat anything.*

Argentina: *Brotherhood is about solidarity.*

Brazil: *Join hands through thick and thin.*

ROK: *Pull together through difficulties with mutual assistance.*

Japan: *Pull together as close neighbors.*

These slogans carry the spirit of solidarity and cooperation to fight COVID-19, and reflect China's willingness and determination to work with all countries to overcome the difficulties. These slogans have deepened the friendship between China and the world, strengthened cultural exchanges, and bolstered the determination in fighting the pandemic. They have also expressed the vision for a community with a shared future for mankind.



in the WHO's Emergency Use Listing and approved for registration or use by 119 countries (regions) and international organizations. People in 196 countries have been inoculated with Chinese vaccines.

China's vaccine assistance has been widely praised by recipient countries and the international community. The presidents of Serbia, Peru, Chile and Senegal, among others, went to the airport in person for the arrival of Chinese vaccines, and at least eight heads of state or government received Chinese vaccine jabs. Among them, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić said that Serbia was the first European country to procure, approve and receive Sinopharm vaccines. In September 2022, with the help

of China and the UAE, the groundbreaking ceremony for the first Chinese vaccine factory in Europe was held in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. The vaccine factory project is a new model of cross-border healthcare cooperation against COVID-19. Pakistan is the first recipient of the Chinese government's vaccine assistance, and the Pakistani government also procured several batches of vaccines from China. Thanks to this, the COVID-19 vaccination rate in Pakistan keeps rising. Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said that China shared its scientific and technological achievements with many countries, including his own, and that Pakistan and China always reached out a helping hand to each other in the face of difficulties.

China has provided 240 million doses of vaccine to 50 African countries and the AU. Chinese vaccines were the first ones received by many African countries. Cavince Adhere, a Kenyan international relations scholar, described Chinese vaccine aid as "timely rain". Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa said in his speech that since the outbreak of COVID-19 in his country, the Chinese government and people had provided great support for Zimbabwe's COVID-response. In addition to vaccine cooperation, China also provided a large amount of medical supplies assistance and sent a team of medical experts to Zimbabwe, which the Zimbabwean government and people bear in mind gratefully. Since February 2021, China has provided Zimbabwe with multiple batches of vaccine assistance,

and the Zimbabwean government has also procured batches of vaccines from China. More than 95% of the COVID-19 vaccines administered in the country were produced in China.

China also provided many batches of vaccine assistance to countries in Latin America and the South Pacific. On behalf of President Guillermo Lasso, Ecuadorian Vice President Alfredo Borrero said that since the outbreak of the pandemic, Chinese vaccine makers had provided a large amount of vaccine to Ecuador, and the Chinese government had also provided valuable support. At present, vaccines provided by China account for about 53% of all the vaccines received by Ecuador, laying a solid foundation for Ecuador's fight against the coronavirus and economic recovery.

3 Effectively helping developing countries in greatest need to improve their COVID-19 response capacity

Faced with the rapid spread of the coronavirus, developing countries with weak public health systems and short of medical supplies became the key to fighting COVID-19 globally. Against such a backdrop, China, in offering assistance, focused on developing countries that were most in need and provided material, technical and personnel support, effectively helping these countries improve their response capacity. Many recipient countries

have expressed their sincere gratitude for and high recognition of China's assistance. Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić expressed their gratitude on many occasions to China for its COVID-related assistance. President Vučić said that "at such a challenging time, China brings us the medical equipment and supplies that will help save the lives of the Serbian



Iraq received Chinese vaccines amid global vaccine shortage



In April 2020, Chinese aid supplies to 18 African countries arrived in Ghana. The supplies for the other 17 countries will be transferred from Ghana

people. The arrival of Chinese experts brings us hope and confidence to overcome COVID-19". African National Congress Member of the National Assembly of South Africa Tshilidzi Munyai said that during the trying times in fighting COVID-19 in Africa, the Chinese government and enterprises organized virtual meetings and provided African countries with supplies to fully support Africa with the most timely and selfless help, making new progress in Africa-China solidarity and cooperation in combating the virus.

Media outlets in many countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Solomon Islands, Seychelles and Tunisia, reported on COVID-response assistance from China. Among them,



Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić welcomes Chinese medical experts

Jamaica Information Service reported that Jamaican Minister of Health and Wellness, while receiving donation from China, said that China's assistance was of great significance to Jamaica's fight against COVID-19; Papua New Guinea Post Courier reported that Prime Minister James Marape said Chinese aid greatly improved PNG's ability to cope with the pandemic; Peruvian news agency Andina reported that Peruvian Health Minister Victor Zamora said the assistance from the brotherly country of China brought Peru not only experience but also important technology, which would help the Peruvian people fight against the virus.

4 Effectively helping developing countries to address development challenges caused by the pandemic

Apart from helping developing countries reduce the huge impact of the pandemic through assistance, China is also committed to helping them cope with the various economic and social challenges caused by COVID-19. In September 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Development Initiative (GDI) at the UN General Assembly to address global development issues, including COVID-response and issues arising from the pandemic. The GDI underlines the necessity of directing attention to the special needs of developing countries, and the employment of such means as debt suspension and development aid to help developing countries, particularly vulnerable countries facing greater difficulties, with emphasis on addressing imbalanced and insufficient development between and within countries. More than 100 countries and multiple international organizations, including the UN, have expressed support for the initiative, and nearly 70 countries have joined the "Group of Friends of the GDI". Regarding China's propositions, Børge Brende, President of the World Economic Forum, said that global issues require global solutions, and that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the GDI proposed by China are crucial.

For developing countries that are severely hit by the pandemic such as those in

Africa, the Chinese government has actively participated in the G20's DSSI and signed debt suspension agreements or reached similar understanding with 19 African countries. Among G20 members, China has suspended the largest amount of debt. China has also actively engaged itself in dealing with the debt of Chad, Ethiopia and Zambia on a case-by-case basis under the G20 Common Framework. Chinese President Xi Jinping announced at the 8th Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC that China would channel to African countries USD10 billion from its share of the International Monetary Fund's new allocation of special drawing rights. Sound progress has been made in related efforts. On top of this, China also pledged that it would support Africa in its effort to develop the African Continental Free Trade Area and to enhance connectivity and strengthen industrial and supply chains, and explore broader cooperation with Africa in such new business forms as digital economy, smart city, clean energy, and 5G to help African countries overcome the obstacles in economic development caused by COVID-19 at an early date. During the 8th WTO trade policy review of China, representatives of 65 WTO members made positive comments on China.

05

Conclusion and Outlook

As the ancient Roman philosopher Seneca once said, we are waves of the same sea. The history of human civilization is one of fighting disease and disaster. People around the world can only win the final victory over COVID-19 by looking out for each other and pulling together as one. Confronted by this unprecedented and world-changing pandemic, the international community has fought a tenacious battle. Reality has once again proved that amid the raging torrents of a global crisis, countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship, on which our shared destiny depends. This pandemic once again shows that the interests of all countries are closely interwoven and that humankind shares a common stake. Indeed, our world is an indivisible community with a shared future. To defeat the virus and promote global recovery, the international community must close ranks and jointly respond to this crisis and meet the challenge.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, China, despite facing its own difficulties, has stayed committed to building a community with a shared future for mankind, put people and lives first, and advocated international humanitarianism. It has offered emergency humanitarian assistance to countries badly affected by COVID-19 through donating supplies and vaccines, sending medical experts and providing funds. China's assistance has been commended by the international community for its contribution to the global fight against COVID-19, especially in bridging the international immunization gap.

At present, the COVID-19 pandemic still drags on with cases resurging around

the world. Humanity has yet to emerge from the shadow of the pandemic. As the pandemic evolves, however, more and more countries have shifted their attention to economic recovery. In such context, China will work together with countries around the world to achieve economic and social development and common prosperity.

Firstly, guided by the GDI, China will stay committed to prioritizing development, putting people front and center, leaving no countries and no individuals behind, and pursuing harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. China will put people's right to life and health first, strengthen international health cooperation, and help developing countries build a resilient health system.

Secondly, China will diversify the content and forms of its assistance to support COVID-response. As the demand for international cooperation against COVID-19 evolves in the future, China will increase investment in the development of public health institutions, disease testing and monitoring, infrastructure, and local production of pharmaceuticals, as well as training programs to help developing countries improve their capacity to prevent and combat potential outbreaks.

Lastly, China will further strengthen multi-party collaboration and expand partnership networks. It will cooperate with developed countries and various international organizations on healthcare assistance and step up efforts to share experience regarding expertise, information channels and international cooperation norms to make international health cooperation more efficient. China will encourage more private enterprises, social forces, and research institutions to take part in international health cooperation. It will give better play to the important role of social organizations in international assistance to combat COVID-19.

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