

Chinese Global Politics in times of Covid





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The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the change of international dynamics and the world has entered a period of turbulent transformation. The international community is experiencing crucial multilateral and unilateral tests of openness and closure. Various unstable and uncertain factors have increased significantly, which will have a far-reaching impact on international cooperation.

First of all, the global multilateral governance system faces a severe impact. In 2020, China took the lead in controlling the pandemic, resuming production, and achieving economic growth from negative to positive. Also, its contribution to the world economy has risen from 16.3% in 2019 to around 17% in 2020. Furthermore, the Chinese GDP could eventually overtake the US economy. Chinese GDP grew by 2.3% by reaching US\$14.7 trillion, while the GDP of the United States fell to US\$20.9 trillion (Chen & Wang, 2021). Also, the question of how to achieve a balanced and stable power framework in the interactions between the major international forces faces some challenges. Moreover, uncertainty and instability in the transformation of the international system have increased, and the simultaneous growth of competition and cooperation among major countries has become the new normal.

Additionally, globalization is facing challenges. For example, the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of global governance and reflected the unequal status of various nation-states in the global governance system. China itself has become a vital participant in the world economy. In 2020, Sino-US relations entered a period of fierce strategic games. In addition, strategic competition and friction between major powers continue to escalate, and the US has significantly strengthened its export

controls and sanctions on the grounds of “security threats.” Also, the range of sanctions against China has expanded from technology companies to multiple areas of economic productivity. In the same way, the reach of sanctions extended by no longer focusing on companies but also on scientific research, universities, and international students. Under the impact of the pandemic, the transfer of international power (including global leadership, economic power, international public opinion, etc.) has accelerated, and decision-makers have strengthened their awareness of their countries’ external securities threats, thus planning for strategic competition (Xie & Xing, 2021).

Finally, China brings trust to the global tensions by taking the lead in controlling Covid-19 cases and by contributing to the world’s fight against the pandemic. In July 2021, China reached 5 billion doses in annual COVID-19 vaccine capacity. While effectively ensuring the domestic vaccination demand, it has supplied 570 million doses abroad. Currently, China has provided more than 800 million doses of vaccines to more than 100 countries and international organizations through various ways (Zhang, 2021).

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