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Background Guide

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Promoting Inclusive International Cooperation and Global Value Chain Coordination

1. Background

In today's fast-changing world, global value chains (GVCs) play an important role in helping countries grow their economies, work together on industry, and share new technologies. A global value chain means that products are made in different parts of the world. For example, one country might make parts, another might assemble them, and another might sell them. However, this system is now facing big problems. COVID-19, conflicts between countries, rising protectionism, and more technology rules are making countries focus more on producing things locally or with nearby partners. This makes global cooperation harder and more divided. At the same time, many developing countries—especially the poorest ones—are not deeply involved in these value chains. They are at risk of being left out.

Because of this, promoting **inclusive international cooperation and global value chain coordination** has become a very important topic. Inclusive cooperation means all countries—especially developing ones—should have a fair

chance to join in global decisions and benefit from economic growth. Value chain coordination means countries should work closely together in trade, investment, technology, standards, and environmental rules. These two ideas help us reach the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).

But there are still many challenges. Some countries don't have enough technology, money, or trained people, so they can't join the value chain fairly. Also, rich and poor countries often have different rules on the environment, digital trade, and workers' rights, making cooperation more difficult. In some places, countries are even trying to separate from global trade systems in the name of "national security," which hurts teamwork across borders.

To solve these problems, countries need to talk more and agree on fair, clear, and equal global rules. We also need to strengthen international organizations that help countries work together—such as those that help set industry policies, create shared technology standards, and support green development. In

today's world, where international cooperation is becoming more important and developing countries are speaking up more, building inclusive international cooperation and better global value chains is not only necessary for global economic growth and peace, but also a key step in reaching the SDGs and building a shared future for all people.

2. Key Term

Global Value Chain (GVC)

A global value chain means that making a product is done in many countries. One country might design it, another might make parts, another might put it together, and another might sell it. This way, countries share work, technology, and markets.

Inclusive International Cooperation

This means countries of all sizes and development levels work together to solve global problems. Everyone, especially small or developing countries, should have a fair chance to join the conversation and share the benefits.

Community of Common Destiny for Mankind

This is a Chinese idea that all countries should work together in

peace. It says we should respect each other and build a world that is fair, safe, and helpful to everyone.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

This is a plan from China that started in 2013. It helps build roads, railways, trade, and friendly connections between China and over 150 countries, so they can grow together.

Digital Silk Road (DSR)

This is part of the Belt and Road Initiative. It helps countries build better internet, online trade systems, smart cities, and other digital tools to connect and share technology.

Green Finance

Green finance means money that helps protect nature and fight climate change. This includes green loans and green bonds, which support clean energy, recycling, and other eco-friendly projects.

Multilateralism

This is when three or more countries work together to solve problems. They use international rules and organizations so that everyone has an equal voice, instead of just one or two big countries making decisions.

South-South Cooperation (SSC)

This is when developing countries help each other by sharing skills, technology, and ideas. It helps them grow stronger together and speak up more in global decisions.

Supply Chain Resilience

This means that when something bad happens—like COVID-19, war, or a disaster—countries can still get the materials and products they need. It works better if there are many sources and good planning.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

This is an agreement between countries to reduce taxes and rules on buying and selling goods and services. It helps products move more freely and supports better cooperation in trade and business.

3. International Action

To build better global value chains and make international cooperation more inclusive, countries should work together through global organizations and regional groups. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and

the World Trade Organization (WTO) can help countries by creating fair rules in trade, investment, technology sharing, and legal protection. Countries can create a shared declaration and set up a “Value Chain Cooperation Platform” that tracks important data, shares good practices, and helps developing countries fix trade problems like high shipping costs or hard digital rules. Big banks like the World Bank and regional banks can also help by offering money and training.

Regional partnerships are also important. Agreements like RCEP in Asia and AfCFTA in Africa help countries work together on trade and industry. They make it easier to invest, improve transport rules, and build digital connections. China supports this through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which gives money for green and smart infrastructure. China’s Belt and Road projects also connect local factories and support training and safety programs. Other teamwork examples include China’s cooperation with Japan and South Korea, and with Arab countries, to improve energy use, shipping, digital trade, and shared policies.

Digital tools are becoming a big part of international cooperation. China’s “Digital Silk Road” helps countries build

better internet, smart ports, and online trade systems. This helps move products faster and supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Countries can work together to build digital systems, protect data privacy, and train people in computer and internet skills so they can join the global digital economy. Helping countries close the "digital gap" is very important.

Green development is also key to fair global value chains. China has started a "Green Belt and Road" program and uses green finance to help countries follow low-carbon and environmental standards. The United Nations' 2030 Agenda says that clear rules and teamwork are needed for big projects to protect the climate. China supports this by helping create systems for green products and offering green loans. Countries can also work together to share clean energy and farming tools and build water and transport systems that are better for the planet.

Another idea is to build a system to watch and study global value chains. This helps countries get real data, understand risks, and make better plans. Organizations like the UN, UNCTAD, and the OECD can work together to publish reports and hold

yearly meetings where governments share ideas and learn from each other.

China plays three roles in this cooperation: it makes policies, leads real projects, and provides money and support. In 2025, China's government said it would continue to open its service industries, make investing in China easier, and invite more foreign businesses to join its supply chains. China is building many projects under the Belt and Road, like new railways and trade routes, and small local programs like water systems, farming centers, and solar energy. These projects are designed to be green, flexible, and helpful to people's daily lives.

China also works with other developing countries through South-South cooperation. It supports countries with money and training through the AIIB and the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund. In digital areas, China is building projects with other countries in online shopping, smart logistics, and financial technology. It also joined open science platforms with countries like Brazil and South Africa to help more countries share science and enter high-tech parts of the global value chain.

China is also active in making international rules. In 2021, China launched the Global Development Initiative to support the

2030 Agenda and build stronger, greener, and healthier development. Many countries joined, and the initiative helps everyone work better together.

In short, to make global value chains fair and helpful to all, the world needs cooperation in areas like investment, digital tools, and green development. China supports this goal by making policies, leading projects, and building international partnerships. In the future, China will keep working with other countries on shared goals, open development, and a peaceful, fair world for all.

4. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

This goal wants to make sure people have fair jobs and the economy keeps growing in a way that helps everyone. By building a “Value Chain Cooperation Platform” and using help from global programs like WTO’s Aid for Trade, developing countries can trade more easily and grow their businesses. This helps people find stable jobs and reduces unfair work conditions or job gaps between men and women. In China’s Belt and Road

Initiative, many projects like new roads, railways, and factories have helped local areas grow and created many jobs. This supports SDG targets 8.3 and 8.5.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

This goal is about building better roads, factories, and using new ideas and technology. China's Belt and Road projects, like the China-Europe Railway, trade zones, and smart infrastructure, are great examples. They help different countries build stronger industries and work better together. China's "Digital Silk Road" also helps other countries improve their internet and technology so they can join the global economy and create new inventions.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

This goal encourages people and companies to use resources wisely and protect the planet. Countries working together in global value chains need to follow green rules and create systems for recycling and clean production. China has started green finance programs in its Belt and Road work and built platforms to support eco-friendly products. It also gives green loans to help countries with high carbon pollution change to cleaner ways of making things, which supports SDG target 12.2.

SDG 13: Climate Action

This goal wants the world to fight climate change together. In global value chain work, green projects should come first, like renewable energy, eco-friendly buildings, and clean transport. In 2024, China's Belt and Road projects invested \$11.8 billion in clean energy—60% more than before. These green investments help meet goals like 13.2 and 13.a, where countries team up to stop global warming and support green growth.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

This goal is about working together to make all the other SDGs possible. The topic of global value chain cooperation is itself a way to build better global teamwork and shared rules. Actions include linking international systems like UNCTAD and WTO, agreeing on digital trade rules, and building tools to track risks. These steps help both rich and poor countries join forces. China also supports global ideas like the “Global Development Initiative” and “Open Science Platform” to help countries share technology and work together, supporting SDG targets 17.16 and 17.17.

5. National Positions

China

China supports multilateralism and the idea of “working together, building together, and sharing together.” It uses the idea of a “Community of Shared Future for Mankind” in its global work. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, the Green Silk Road, and the Digital Silk Road, China works with over 100 countries to improve infrastructure, support industry partnerships, and promote green development. In 2025, China promised to open more of its markets, make it easier for foreign companies to invest, and set up special zones for trade. China also created special funds and green finance tools to help other countries join global value chains and grow together.

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)

BRICS countries want to give developing countries in the Global South a stronger voice in international trade. They support South-South cooperation, technology sharing, and digital infrastructure building. BRICS works together on projects like artificial intelligence (AI), digital payments, and joint production with African countries.

European Union (EU)

The EU wants to build global value chains that follow fair rules

and support green and digital growth. In 2025, the EU shared its digital strategy focusing on safe internet systems, AI, quantum networks, and microchips. It created the Global Gateway plan, investing €300 billion by 2027 to build green infrastructure and digital tools, especially in Africa. The EU also wants strong rules to protect workers' rights and the environment in trade deals.

United States

The U.S. uses laws like the Inflation Reduction Act to support green energy and make its supply chains more secure. It works with partners through the CPTPP and QUAD groups to promote shared trade rules and supply chain strength. However, the U.S. focuses more on protecting its own industries and working with trusted allies.

Africa

African countries want to move beyond just exporting raw materials. They hope to build stronger industries and create more jobs. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) started in 2021 to help countries trade more with each other and connect their industries. Africa also calls for changes to the

global financial system to make sure loans are fair and support real development.

Southeast Asia

Southeast Asian countries want to work more closely with others through regional and global partnerships. ASEAN countries use the RCEP trade agreement and cooperate with China, Japan, and Korea. Countries like Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Thailand want open and stable supply chains. They also aim to grow in high-tech fields like AI, chips, and digital trade. Malaysia's cities like Kuala Lumpur and Penang are now global chip-making centers.

Middle East

Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE are trying to move away from oil and focus on technology and new industries. They are investing in AI, digital networks, and green energy. They have also signed free trade deals with Asia and Europe, and created the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) to promote fair and inclusive digital growth worldwide.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are focusing more on green trade and upgrading their value chains. Their

regional development bank CAF plans to invest \$2.5 billion in ocean protection and green transport by 2030. Though they make up only about 5–6% of world trade, they have many important resources like lithium and copper. The Pacific Alliance (Chile, Colombia, Peru, Mexico) is opening markets, building digital trade, and working with Asia to bring in more technology and investment.

6. Current Challenges and Possible Solutions

Today, global value chains face many challenges. One big problem is that developing countries are not very involved. They mostly provide raw materials or do simple manufacturing, but they don't take part in the more advanced steps like designing or high-tech production. In some places like Africa, local industries are not strong, and countries mainly rely on exporting raw materials. This makes it hard for them to grow their economies and create good jobs. It also increases the gap between rich and poor countries.

Another problem is that the rules for global trade and investment are not the same everywhere. Organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO) are not working as well as before. Many new trade agreements are made between just a few

countries, and these often don't include the poorest ones. There are also different standards for technology, digital trade, and environmental protection. This makes it more expensive and difficult for small businesses in developing countries to take part in global trade.

Green rules are also becoming stricter. Rich countries are now asking for things like carbon footprint tracking, eco-friendly production, and recycling systems. These are good goals, but many developing countries don't have the money or skills yet to meet these standards. Without support, they might not be able to export products anymore. This means there is a need to create shared green standards and financial tools to help them keep up.

Digital transformation brings more challenges. Ideas like the Digital Silk Road give developing countries chances to join the digital economy. But many countries still have weak internet systems, no data privacy laws, and trouble using digital trade tools. Also, rich countries usually set the digital rules, which makes it hard for poorer countries to have a say. If we don't help with training and technology sharing, the digital divide will only get worse.

Foreign investment can also cause problems. Some countries that receive funding under the Belt and Road Initiative have built up large debts. There are concerns about “debt traps” or “new colonialism.” In some cases, projects were delayed or caused environmental damage, or there were worker rights issues. This can make people in those countries lose trust in global cooperation.

Geopolitical competition is another serious issue. Tensions between countries like China and the U.S. or China and the EU have made it harder to work together. Some countries think value chain cooperation is being used as a political tool. Others worry about cultural differences or legal conflicts. Without fair rules and local participation, international projects may not last.

Funding is also a challenge. Countries like the U.S. and U.K. have reduced their international aid. Organizations like the UN and World Bank now have less money to help poorer countries. But these countries still need funding for green energy, internet systems, and training. Without better funding and easier loan systems, many important projects might not happen.

There is also a lack of trust. Some rich countries think poor countries will use weak rules to compete unfairly. On the other

hand, poor countries worry that rich countries only invest in what they want, not what the local people really need. Also, many countries depend on selling raw materials, which are risky because their prices change a lot.

To fix these problems, countries can work together on better coordination. There should be shared rules at the national, regional, and global levels. Groups like the UN, WTO, and UNCTAD can help lead this. Countries could also sign agreements on value chain cooperation and green digital trade.

Developing countries need help with building infrastructure, internet, and training people. Banks and big companies should help fund these efforts. It is also important to create shared sustainability standards and train small businesses so they can meet green and digital rules. Countries should allow workers, companies, and community groups to help manage value chains together—this is called multi-stakeholder governance.

The committee suggests improving digital inclusion. Countries can expand projects like the Digital Silk Road, build smart ports and digital payment systems, and make sure privacy and cybersecurity rules are in place. They should also train young

people and women in digital skills, so everyone can benefit from global value chains.

Questions for consideration

- What rules or policies in your country make it harder to join global value chains? For example, are there high taxes on imports or exports (tariffs), complicated trade rules, poor infrastructure, or restrictions on foreign investment?
- In your opinion, which part of your country's value chain is the weakest? Is it low digital development? Not enough green technology? Or trouble getting loans and funding?
- When working on global value chain cooperation, should your country focus more on green development (like green finance and eco-friendly certification) or on digital development (like e-commerce and online trade)? Why? How can both be supported together?
- In international cooperation, how can the smallest and poorest countries be included fairly? Do we need special rules or funds to support them, such as “development country quotas” or “review mechanisms”?
- How can your country connect better with global organizations like the United Nations, WTO, and UNCTAD?

Should countries sign a “Global Value Chain Cooperation Declaration” or create systems to track progress and make sure rules are followed?

- Does your country already have enough training, technology, and funding support to improve green and digital industries? Should it consider using ideas like the “Green and Resilient Fund” model?
- While building better value chains, how should your country deal with global political tensions and supply chain safety concerns? Does choosing “trusted allies first” go against the idea of open cooperation? How can this be balanced?

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