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Opinions on Jointly Promoting Green Development of the Belt and Road

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by National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and Ministry of Commerce

Translated by BRI International Green Development Coalition (BRIGC)

Promoting green development of the Belt and Road is an inherent requirement for practicing the concept of green development and promoting the building of an ecological civilization. It is a major measure to actively address climate change and safeguard global ecological security, and an important vehicle for boosting high-quality development of the Belt and Road and building a community of life for man and nature. Since jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was put forward, especially in the past five years since President Xi Jinping proposed to build a Green Silk Road, positive progress has been made in the green development of BRI: the guiding role of green development concept has been enhanced, communication mechanisms have improved, and practical cooperation has deepened. China has become an important participant, contributor, and leading power in

the development of a global ecological civilization. At the same time, the risks and challenges faced by the green development of BRI remain prominent, international cooperation on ecological and environmental protection needs enhancing, and we are seeing tightening regulation over climate change. In order to further promote the green development of BRI and make green the underlying theme of BRI, with the consent of the Leading Group for Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative, the following opinions are hereby brought forth.

I. Overall Requirements

(I) Guiding Thought.

Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, we will fully implement the guiding principles of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and all plenary sessions of the 19th CPC Central Committee, and thoroughly implement Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization and the guiding principles in Xi Jinping's series of important speeches on the joint pursuit of the BRI. We will adhere to the general principle of pursuing progress while ensuring stability, and implement the new development philosophy in the new development stage in full, in the right way, and in all fields of endeavor. We will build a new development paradigm, with stability as the top priority and pursuing progress while ensuring stability. We will follow the instructions of the Third Belt and Road Construction Symposium and practice the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. We will aim for high-standard, sustainable and people-centered progress, stay true to the principle that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, preserve harmonious co-existence between humanity and nature, build a closer partnership for green development, and speed up the progress of building a community of life for man and nature.

(II) Basic Principles.

Highlight the leading role of green development and guarantee mutual benefits and win-win cooperation. Guided by the concept of green development, we will focus on the coordination between social-economic development and ecological and environmental protection, and constantly enrich and improve the philosophical understanding and conceptual system of the Green Silk Road. We will adhere to multilateralism, adhere to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and fully respect the realities and conditions of BRI participating countries. China and BRI participating

countries will learn from each other, work together to promote the coordination between social-economic development and ecological and environmental protection, and share the fruits of green development.

With the government's guidance, let enterprises play the principal role. The government will actively play the guiding role in improving policies to support green development, establish a platform for communication and cooperation on green development, and build an environmental risk prevention and control mechanism. We will enable enterprises to take the principal role, articulate and reinforce enterprises' responsibility for ecological and environmental protection. We will, improve market mechanisms to motivate enterprises to join in the BRI green development, and encourage engagement of the whole society.

Promoting coordinated efforts and lead by demonstration projects. By adhering to a systematic and holistic approach, we will consolidate the cooperation and coordinated action among government departments, local governments and enterprises, further improve the top-level design and standard system for the green development of BRI, and facilitate cooperation among sectors such as green infrastructure, green energy, green transport, and green finance in a coordinated manner. We will improve the cooperation platform for green development and carry out key green projects with a practical and effective approach to exemplify and drive green development.

Observing laws and regulations for risk prevention. We will urge the businesses to strictly abide by the laws, regulations, rules, and standards of the host countries on environmental protection and prioritize the local communities' concern over green development and environmental protection. Enterprises shall restrain themselves from places of danger or unrest, and take strict precautions against unregulated competition overseas. We will step up efforts in strengthening environmental risk prevention and control of overseas projects, and help enterprises build corresponding capacities, so as to guarantee ecological security.

(III) Major Objectives.

By 2025, international exchanges and cooperation on environmental protection and climate change in building the BRI will be deepened. The concept of Green Silk Road will be acknowledged by all parties. Solid progress will be witnessed in promoting the practical cooperation in fields including inter alia green infrastructure, green energy, green transport, and green finance. Green demonstration projects will play a greater role in leading green development. There will be a significant improvement of capacity for environmental risk prevention in overseas projects. Notable results will be produced in the green development of BRI.

By 2030, the concept of BRI green development will be more widely recognized by the public, and green development partnerships will become closer. The green development capacity of businesses "going global" will be substantially enhanced. The environmental risk prevention and control framework for overseas projects will be further improved. Overall, a BRI green development pattern will have basically taken shape.

II. Promote Cooperation in Key Areas of Green Development with a Holistic Approach

(IV) Improving the connectivity of green infrastructure.

We will guide enterprises to promote green norms, environmental protection standards, and best practices for infrastructure, to select suitable sites and routes at the design stage to reduce impact on nature reserves and environmentally sensitive and vulnerable areas, and to make effective efforts in environmental impact assessment. During the construction and operation period of projects, we will guide enterprises to implement feasible and practical measures on environmental protection to constantly pursue green and low-carbon development in the operation, management and maintenance processes. We will guide enterprises to adopt energy-saving and water conservation standards in the construction of overseas projects to reduce material, energy and water waste. In doing so, enterprises will improve resource use efficiency, reduce waste discharges, and better waste disposal performance.

(V) Bolstering green energy cooperation.

We will deepen cooperation on green and clean energy, and promote the green and low-carbon transition in international energy cooperation. We will encourage solar and wind power businesses to "go global" and build a number of 'best practice' green energy projects. We will expand cooperation in energy technology and equipment, and carry out joint research, exchanges and training with a focus on areas including inter alia high-efficiency and low-cost renewable energy power generation, advanced nuclear power, smart grids, hydrogen, energy storage, carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS).

(VI) Enhancing green transport cooperation.

We will consolidate international cooperation to help BRI participating countries develop green transport. We will actively facilitate low-carbon development in the international shipping and aviation sectors. We will promote new energy and clean energy

vehicles and vessels and other energy-saving and low-carbon transport, and share China's smart transport experience. We will encourage enterprises to participate in overseas projects on the electrification and upgrading of railways, consolidate the sound development of China Railway Express, and develop multimodal transport and green logistics.

(VII) Reinforcing green industry cooperation.

We will encourage enterprises to carry out investment and cooperation in areas such as renewable energy industries and new energy automobile manufacturing, and facilitate the green and low-carbon development of businesses "going global". We will encourage enterprises to set up overseas equity investment funds with focus on green and low-carbon sectors and carry out investment and cooperation in green industries in a flexible manner and by multiple approaches.

(VIII) Promoting green trade cooperation.

We will continuously optimize the trade structure and fully develop trade in high quality, high technology and high value-added green products. We will expand the import and export of energy-saving and environmentally-friendly products and services.

(IX) Strengthening cooperation in green finance.

Under frameworks of multilateral cooperation such as the United Nations and the G20, we will promote voluntary guidelines and best practices related to green investment and financing, and boost capacity building in the field of green finance. We will make good use of loans from international financial institutions, leverage private green investment, and encourage financial institutions to implement the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road (GIP).

(X) Reinforcing cooperation in green science and technology.

We will strengthen the scientific and technological research, promotion and application of green technologies, promote basic research and the layout of frontier technologies, accelerate the development and dissemination of advanced and applicable technologies, and encourage enterprises to prioritize the use of low-carbon, energy-saving, water-saving and environmentally-friendly materials and technical processes. Give full play to mechanisms such as the Belt and Road Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan to support people-to-people exchanges, joint research and building cooperation platforms in

the field of green technology. We will carry out special initiatives on technology transfer for sustainable development, establish the BRI green technology reserve, and boost the construction of green technology cooperation networks and bases.

(XI) Strengthening cooperation on green standards.

We will actively participate in the development of international green standards, enhance the alignment of green standards in China with those in BRI participating countries, and encourage industry associations and other organizations to formulate and publish green industry standards, codes and guidelines that are in line with international ones.

(XII) Enhancing cooperation in addressing climate change.

China will facilitate the full implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement among all parties, actively build the greatest common ground in addressing climate change with BRI participating countries, strengthen dialogues, exchanges and cooperation with relevant countries, and promote the establishment of a fair and reasonable global climate governance system with win-win cooperation. We will continue to implement the Belt and Road South-South Cooperation Initiative on Climate Change, push forward the construction of low-carbon demonstration zones and implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, provide assistance and green, low-carbon, energy-saving and environmentally-friendly supplies to tackle climate change and help BRI participating countries enhance their capacity to cope with climate change.

III. Promote Green Development of Overseas Projects in a Coordinated Manner

(XIII) Regulating the overseas environmental behavior of enterprises.

We will reinforce enterprises' responsibility over their overseas environmental behavior, guide businesses to strictly comply with the laws, regulations, standards, and norms of the host countries on environmental protection, and encourage them to carry out environmental protection efforts with reference to the generally accepted international rules and standards or higher Chinese standards. We will strengthen capacity building for enterprises to ensure they operate in compliance with legislations and encourage enterprises to publish environmental reports on a regular basis. We will guide relevant industry associations and

chambers of commerce to establish codes of conduct for environmental performance in overseas investments by enterprises, so as to lead the enterprises to regulate their environmental behavior via industry-wide self-discipline.

(XIV) Promoting the green and low-carbon development of coal power and other projects.

China will stop building new coal-fired power projects abroad and prudently proceed with existing ones that are under construction. We will push forward the green and low-carbon development of overseas coal-fired power plants that have already been built. Relevant enterprises are encouraged to strengthen clean and efficient coal utilization, adopt advanced technologies such as efficient desulphurization, denitrification, dust removal, as well as carbon capture, utilization and storage, and upgrade energy-saving and environmental protection facilities. We will study and promote international cooperation on green and low-carbon development in steel and other industries.

IV. Improve the Support and Safeguard System for Green Development in a Coordinated Manner

(XV) Improving financial support and safeguards.

We will promote the two-way opening of the green finance market in an orderly manner, encourage financial institutions and relevant enterprises to carry out green financing in international markets, and support international financial organizations and multinational companies to issue green bonds and carry out green investments in China.

(XVI) Improving support and safeguards for cooperation platforms on green development.

We will further improve the **BRI International Green Development Coalition** (BRIGC) to actively build a platform for policy dialogue and communication on the green development of BRI and constantly expand its international outreach. We will improve the development of the **BRI Environmental Big Data Platform**, strengthen cooperation on information sharing and technology exchange for eco-environment and climate change related issues, and enhance studies on laws, regulations and generally accepted international rules pertinent to eco-environmental protection. We will give full play to the cooperation platforms such as the Belt and Road Energy Partnership (BREP) and the Belt and Road Sustainable Cities Alliance to create diversified platforms for exchange and cooperation.

(XVII) Improving support and safeguards for capacity building on green development.

We will support the development of platforms including environmental technology exchange and transfer bases, environmental technology demonstration and promotion bases, and green science and technology parks, strengthen capabilities for scientific and technological innovation, and enhance the demonstrative role of the **Belt and Road Environmental Technology Exchange and Transfer Center (Shenzhen)**. We will implement the **Green Silk Road Envoys Programme** and strengthen communication and exchange among environmental management personnel and technical personnel to improve the environmental protection capacity and status in BRI participating countries. We will carry out thematic training programs on the green development of BRI to reinforce support to human resources in participating countries. We will build new types of think tanks for Green Silk Road and establish an intellectual supporting system for the green development of BRI.

(XVIII) Improving support and safeguards for environmental risk prevention and control in overseas projects.

We will guide enterprises to raise the awareness of environmental risks, to strengthen environmental management of overseas projects, to fully implement environmental impact assessments before the investment and construction of overseas projects, to identify and prevent environmental risks in a timely manner, and to take effective measures for ecological and environmental protection. We will organize the compilation of green and sustainable development guidelines for key industries, and guide enterprises to effectively manage the environmental impact of overseas projects. We will reinforce environmental guidance and services during project construction and operation through various measures such as positive guidance and follow-up services.

V. Overall Implementation of the Opinions

(XIX) Enhancing guiding role.

The Communist Party of China will enhance its guiding role in promoting the green development of BRI. The Office of the Leading Group for Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative shall strengthen the overall coordination and promotion of BRI green development with a systematic approach. Local governments and relevant departments shall put BRI green development high on the agenda, strengthen their guidance, and make coherent arrangements to ensure effective implementation of key tasks in a timely manner and with solid progress.

(XX) Strengthening publicity and guidance.

We will enhance and improve international dissemination of the Belt and Road, promptly clarify and refute misinformation and false messages, and guide the establishment of a sound foundation for positive public opinions to tell compelling Chinese stories of BRI green development.

(XXI) Strengthening monitoring and evaluation.

The Office of the Leading Group for Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative shall enhance its guidance and roll out norms for various tasks related to the green development of BRI, keep track of the progress in a timely manner, and organize assessment when appropriate. Local governments and relevant departments shall timely update their implementation progress to the Office of the Leading Group for Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative.

National Development and Reform Commission
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Ecology and Environment
Ministry of Commerce
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