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The Chinese path to sustainable development

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- ***The 4 generations of Chinese leaders***
- ***Effects of economic reforms and challenges to the ‘Beijing Consensus’***
- ***The evolution of the ‘harmonious society discourse’ between Confucianism and politics***
- ***The 4th generation’s mantra***
- ***Future challenges***

First Generation: the Maoist Era

- **Inspiration to ‘Soviet style’**
- Under the PRC’s first **Five Year Plan** the areas **targeted for increased production were coal, steel and petro-chemicals (heavy industries)**
- **rapid collectivization in agriculture.** Land was taken from landlords and more wealthy peasants and given to poorer peasants.
- **Great Leap Forward, 1958.** Second Five Year Plan (1958-72): Continuation of industrialization. Fell far short of its production targets, collapse of food supply system →famine
- By the end of the Maoist era, Chinese economic structure was confronted by huge problems: **low productivity levels, mismatch allocation of resources**

Second Generation: the Reform Era

1978, marks the beginning of the economic reforms era

The new economic system, named as a ‘Socialistic market economy’, has the following characters:

- (1) Removing people communes and collective in rural areas;**
- (2) Opening door policy:** allowing private (foreign) ownership of enterprises in China;
- (3) Entering into world market and attracting incoming FDI by implementing “Special economic zones (SEZ);**
- (4) Reorganizing state-owned enterprises (SOEs);** “Grasping the big and letting go the small”.
- (5) Family Planning and the One Child Policy**

- **1989 Tiananmen facts**
- **Third Generation: '92 Jiang Zemin and the 3 representations theory:** enlargement of the representative platform: the party must represent the most advanced forces in society, in culture and in production. Traditionally these forces were the proletariat, subsequently they became entrepreneurs.
- **2001 Wto membership**

Fourth Generation: 'building an harmonious society' *in a disharmonic world*

- Regional economic disparities and growing income inequality between rural and urban areas
- Environmental disaster
- Ethnic tensions
- Corruption
- Quest for political reforms
- Social problems such as the lack of a welfare system within an ageing population

Regional disparities



Development of the 'harmonious society' discourse

- **2002, XVI CCP's Congress** the idea of harmonious society was first mentioned in public talks
- **2003, 3rd plenum of the XVI Central Committee of CCP**, "Decision on several issues in perfecting the socialist market economy" presented
- **2006, 11 five years plan (2006-2010)** harmony building is given the priority

Development of the 'harmonious society' discourse

- **2006,** **Hu Jintao released the "Eight Honors and Eight Shames"** as a set of moral codes to be followed by the Chinese.
- *Love the country; do it no harm.*
- *Serve the people; never betray them.*
- *Follow science; discard superstition.*
- *Be diligent; not indolent.*
- *Be united, help each other; make no gains at other's expense.*
- *Be honest and trustworthy; do not sacrifice ethics for profit.*
- *Be disciplined and law-abiding; not chaotic and lawless.*
- *Live plainly, work hard; do not wallow in luxuries and pleasures.*

XVII CCP Congress 2007, Hu Jintao's report

- ***II The Scientific Outlook on Development is a continuation and development of the important thoughts on development advanced by the previous three generations of central collective leadership of the CPC***
- ***II Scientific Outlook on Development takes development as its essence, putting people first as its core, comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development as its basic requirement...***
- ***V We have made steady progress toward the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects set at the Sixteenth Congress, and we will continue to work hard to ensure its attainment by 2020***
- ***V Social harmony is an essential attribute of socialism with Chinese characteristics.***
- ***V Scientific development and social harmony are integral to each other and neither is possible without the other***

Chapter 6 and practical output

- Enhance China's capacity for independent technological, scientific and managerial innovation
FISCAL REFORM
- Balance urban and rural development and build a new socialist countryside.
RURAL REFORM
- Improve energy, resources, ecological and environmental conservation and enhance China's capacity for sustainable development.
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT LAW

Diverging views on harmonious society

Leftists

Old stress on the rights of traditional working class and peasantry

New as Wang Hui, insist on new marginalized groups and on the negative effects of globalization

Rightists

Liberalists with pro-globalizations views, insisting on the 'harmonious world' version

Future challenges to the 'harmonious idea'

- **Dealing with the current economic**
 - Wen Jiabao in Davos, predicted that China's economy would **grow by 8% this year**
 - But: 20 million of the 130 million Chinese migrants working in urban manufacturing jobs have been forced to return to their rural homes
 - Roughly a quarter of last June's six million college graduates remain unemployed

- **Soothing Scenario:** democracy as a natural outcome
- **Upheaval Scenario:** current paradoxes will lead to collapse
- **Steady Scenario:** things can go on like this till something happens



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