

THE DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHINA AND LATIN AMERICA.

Tatiana Molina¹

Abstract: The Declaration on the Right to Development (DRTD) is a non-binding determination of the United Nations adopted in December 1986, and approved in 1993. Contested by some countries, the DRTD came in the wake of the decolonization process of the Global South and the call for international human rights that emerged with the end of the Second World War and the period of the Cold War. About to complete 38 years of existence, the DRTD is still an inalienable soft law of human rights. This article presents an explanation of the DRTD and its connection to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Group of 77, and the Millennium Development Goals show how they share the same ideas of as the DRTD. Another point is the examination of some speeches and documents from the People's Republic of China (PRC) that contribute to analyzing DRTD and how the guidelines of the Global Community of Share Future and the White Paper China's Philosophy, Practice and Contribution are in line with the ideals present in DRTD. Finally, a brief outline of the Chinese economic development was made from 1978 onwards, when detailed state planning propelled China to what is now the second largest economy in the world. Data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group show how the country lifted 800 million people out of poverty and achieved significant milestones in social, political and cultural development.

Key words: Declaration on the Right to Development, Right to Self Determination, Economic Development, China and Latin America.

Resumo: A Declaração do Direito ao Desenvolvimento (DRTD) é uma determinação não vinculativa das Nações Unidas, adotada em dezembro de 1986 e aprovada em 1993. Contestada por alguns países, a DRTD surgiu na esteira do processo de descolonização do Sul Global e do apelo por direitos humanos internacionais que emergiu com o fim da Segunda Guerra Mundial e o período da Guerra Fria. Prestes a completar 38 anos de existência, a DRTD ainda é uma lei inalienável de direitos humanos. Este artigo apresenta uma explicação sobre a DRTD e sua conexão com a Declaração Universal dos Direitos Humanos, o Movimento dos Países Não Alinhados (MNA), o Grupo dos 77 e os Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milênio, mostrando como eles compartilham as mesmas ideias da DRTD. Outro ponto é o exame de alguns discursos e documentos da República Popular da China (RPC) que contribuem para a análise da DRTD e como as diretrizes da Comunidade Global de Futuro Compartilhado e do Livro Branco sobre a Filosofia, Prática e Contribuição da China estão em consonância com os ideais presentes na DRTD. Por fim, foi feito um breve esboço do desenvolvimento econômico chinês a partir de 1978, quando um planejamento estatal detalhado impulsionou a China para o que hoje é a segunda maior economia do mundo. Dados do Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) e do Grupo

¹ Doctorate in Political Science (UFF). Professor at Center for Latin American and the Caribbean Studies (CLACS) of Southwest University of Science and Technology (SWUST). Vice-director at Center of Studies of Contemporary China and Asia (CSCCA-Brazil). ORCID 0009-0001-3853-5233.

Banco Mundial mostram como o país tirou 800 milhões de pessoas da pobreza e alcançou marcos significativos no desenvolvimento social, político e cultural.

Palavras-chave: Declaração sobre o Direito ao Desenvolvimento, Direito à Autodeterminação, Desenvolvimento Econômico, China e América Latina.

INTRODUCTION

The right to development appears, at first glance, to be an unquestionable right for every citizen and country. However, the debate has aroused contradictions and the real meaning of the topic still does not seem clear to the general agreement of the countries. The Declaration on the Right to Development (DRTD) was adopted without consensus on December 4, 1986 by United Nations (UN) Resolution 41/128². Approval would only come in 1993³, at the World Conference on Human Rights, where 171 States approved the Vienna Declaration and the Program of Action, which includes the DRTD. The declaration activates principles of equity, equality, and justice as primacy for human development⁴:

The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

The debates around the idea of development as one of the pillars of human rights started in the 1950s and 1960s, after the Second World War (1939-1945), in the wake of the Bandung Conference (1955), the Non-Aligned Countries Movement - NAM (1961)⁵, as well as at the outset of the Cold War (1947-1991). The NAM⁶, founded in Belgrade in 1961 at the height of the East-West conflict, is currently composed of 120 states, 26 from Latin American, with Brazil as an observer member, that together comprise of approximately 4.70 billion people, or 58.53% of the world's population.

² Kirchmeier, Felix. "The Right to Development - where do we stand? State of the debate on the Right to Development." *Dialogue on Globalization* no. 23 (July 2006), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/50288.pdf>.

³ Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. 1993. A/CONF.157/23. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b39ec.html>.

⁴ Declaration on the Right to Development, United Nations General Assembly Resolution, 41/128 of 4 December 1986. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development#:~:text=The%20right%20to%20development%20is%20an%20inalienable%20human%20right%20by,freedoms%20can%20be%20fully%20realized>.

⁵ Piron, Laure-Hélène. 2002. "The Right to Development: A Review of the Current State of the Debate for the Department for International Development". Right to Development Report. DFID's Social Development Department. <https://odi.org/en/publications/the-right-to-development-a-review-of-the-current-state-of-the-debate/>

⁶ Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). <https://nam.go.ug/member-states/Asia-and-Pacific>

The DRTD was considered an ambitious document and a political declaration⁷, it functions as the realization by States of the practice of Human Rights, which is uncontested. The DRTD builds the economic, social, cultural and political structures for the process of improving and obtaining results from policies that give priority to citizens' rights. DRTD impels States to design national and international policies that will influence the improvement of the quality of life of its population, requiring concrete measure on the part of States with the creation of high-level laws and regulations for basic rights. Working on DRTD displaced from Human Rights would take away the responsibility of States to create national policies and seek international cooperation for actions that improve people's quality of life.

Article 55 of the United Nations Charter expresses this context in a broader sense of economic and social cooperation between States. It highlights the importance of creating “conditions of economic progress and development” and “solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems”, through Article 56, “to take joint and separate action” in cooperation with the United Nations “for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55”. Therefore, it is clear that the bases of DRTD had already been explored and approved by the Charter of the United Nations itself in 1945⁸.

INTEGRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT THEORY ASPECTS

DRTD in its 10 articles addresses issues such as comprehensive approach to development; respect for all human rights and interdependence of economic, social and cultural rights; participation in the formulation of development policies; social justice for all; “fair distribution of the benefits” of development for individuals and “equality of opportunity for all”; international co-operation; respect for the right to self-determination; promotion of the establishment, maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security, and adoption and implementation of policy, legislative and their measures⁹.

⁷ Subedi, Surya. “Interrelationship between the Right to Development and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”. Working Group on the Right to Development. 25th Session of the Intergovernmental. United Nations: Geneva, May 14 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/development/session25/statement-by-Surya-Subedi.pdf>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The Right to Development. 2001. General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/56/50, . <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development#:~:text=The%20right%20to%20development%20is%20an%20inalienable%20human%20right%20by,freedoms%20can%20be%20fully%20realized.>

Although States are not directly mentioned in the DRTD¹⁰, they are seen as right-holders¹¹ responsible for the appropriate formulation of national and international development policies. The State is responsible for mitigating poverty since it is intrinsically linked to economic issues that will be reflected in the social, cultural and political life of the citizen. Low productivity and lack of recognition for work, along with the absence of essential services that should be provided by the State, are some of the root causes of poverty. This includes inadequate access to decent housing, healthcare, education, food, and employment, which ultimately leads to the violation of human rights.¹²

However, despite the contradictory nature of the topic, DRTD has had an impact on the international development agenda¹³. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), that was held in Rio de Janeiro, on June 1992, had a great deal of support from the States, unlike the DRTD. The United States expressed itself, in a separate declaration, in opposition to development as a right due to the normative nature of the provisions of principle 3 of the UNCED¹⁴, but approved the text. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992 reinforces the status of the right to development, but some developed countries still fear what they consider impositions of the DRTD.

The definition of the term “development”, in the context of DRTD, as “social and economic development” of developing countries in general and less developed countries in particular¹⁵ has been unanimous. However, in 1978, it was not easy to reach an understanding of the definition of development, which may

¹⁰ Kirchmeier, Felix. 2006. “The Right to Development - where do we stand? State of the debate on the Right to Development.” *Dialogue on Globalization* no. 23. <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/50288.pdf>.

¹¹ Individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to specific duty-bearers. In general terms, all human beings are rights-holders under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (UNICEF). <https://www.unescwa.org/sd-glossary/rights-holders>.

¹² Pedone, Luiz. 1996. “Agravamento da pobreza e direitos humanos: pobreza, direitos e políticas públicas” in *A incorporação das normas internacionais de proteção dos direitos humanos no direito brasileiro*, edited by Antonio Augusto Cançado Trindade, 509-529. <https://www.lexml.gov.br/urn/urn:lex:br:rede.virtual.bibliotecas:capitulo.livro:1996;1000165306>.

¹³ Subedi, Surya. “Interrelationship between the Right to Development and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”. Working Group on the Right to Development. 25th Session of the Intergovernmental. United Nations: Geneva, May 14 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/development/session25/statement-by-Surya-Subedi.pdf>.

¹⁴ Its integral link to sustainable development was recognized in the Rio Declaration and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action: “The right to development should be fulfilled so as to meet equitably the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations.” “The right to development presents a vision for transformative development, as it demands an enabling environment at both the national and international level, for development that addresses root causes, systemic issues and structural challenges. (UN, 1992). https://www.iau-hesd.net/sites/default/files/documents/rio_e.pdf.

¹⁵ Ibid

vary according to each discipline. At that time, development was only related to economic development. This caused discomfort not only to developed States that had already been carrying out financial aid actions, but also to developing countries, which did not want to find itself in the position of receiving “assistance” when what they were asking for was a fairer global order.

Until 1990 it permeated the thinking of Walt Rostow¹⁶, an American economist and political thinker prominent for his opposition to Communism and belief in the efficacy of capitalism and free enterprise, that “all countries should be able to replicate the same development path as Western countries, without the need for a specific DRTD”¹⁷. He also based his reasoning on the fact that industrialized nations had developed on the basis of access to low-cost colonial resources and comparatively unlimited capital. Rostow's perspective was formulated on a model of capitalist economic growth, different from the concept of development, proposed by DRTD, as a human right. Walt Rostow's thought is considered to be deficient by contemporary economic thinkers¹⁸.

The DRTD aims to integrate the right to development with human rights, acting with normative prescriptions that are reflected in development policies and practices as long as such measures do not impose themselves on human rights guidelines. It seems contradictory that there is consensus regarding Human Rights but not to the Right to Development. The DRTD is not a legal instrument, but it has a legal basis with conventions linked to human rights¹⁹, seen as a soft law, accepted under the premise of human rights, but not under the status of law.

“Right to everything”.

The great fear of developed countries was that the DRTD could become a “right to everything” and it will require them to commitment with obligations that are justified based on the DRTD. Then, in order to achieve the DRTD, developed countries would be forced to undertake cooperation to which they do not agree. The United States is convinced of individual rights to achieve development, but not of States' rights with development as the goal²⁰.

¹⁶ Walt Rostow (October 7, 1916-February 13, 2003) was a prominent economic historian who advised both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. Appointed first by Kennedy to the position of Deputy National Security Advisor, then by Johnson as National Security Advisor, Rostow helped formulate U.S.'s posture towards Israel, particularly on issues involving nuclear policy. (Wilson Center) <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/walt-rostow>.

¹⁷ Kimber, Norman R., "The Human Right to Development: Historical and Contemporary Linkages to Colonialism" (MA thesis, University of Western Ontario, 2023).

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Kirchmeier, Felix. “The Right to Development - where do we stand? State of the debate on the Right to Development.” *Dialogue on Globalization* no. 23 (July 2006), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/50288.pdf>.

²⁰ Ibid.

For developing countries, the subject has been neglected since its adoption even though it was discussed in working groups subsequently created. Without the unanimous approval of the United States, England and Germany, for example, an international environment conducive to the real practical implementation of DRTD could not be achieved.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

In September 2000, leaders from 189 countries met at United Nations headquarters in New York and approved the Millennium Declaration, a commitment to work together to build a safer, more prosperous and a fairer world. The Millennium Development Goals was developed with eight objectives: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 3) Promote gender equality and empower women, 4) Reduce child mortality, 5) Improve maternal health, 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7) Ensure environmental sustainability, and 8) Global partnership for development.

The 8th goal creates support for others and is aligned with DRTD when it establishes its objectives:

- Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.
- Address the special needs of least developed countries.
- Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.
- Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries.
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

China approved and implemented the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and was the first country to express support for the sustainable development strategy. It also helped and implemented the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by issuing the China Position Paper on the Implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the China National Plan on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the G20 Hangzhou Summit (2016), China joined other countries to formulate the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development and the G20 Initiative on Supporting Industrialization in Africa and in Less Developed Countries. In September 2015, China and UN Women co-hosted the Global Women's Summit.

In 2023, China Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Li, in his speech for the Opening Ceremony of the International Symposium Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Beijing, declared that the U.N. should be a “platform for dialogue and cooperation instead of an arena for confrontation or for exerting pressure, to play a truly positive role in promoting international human rights²¹”, and proposed the following steps:

- I. First, we must promote common security and create a secure and tranquil international environment for realizing human rights.
- II. Second, we must prioritize development to provide a more solid material foundation for realizing human rights.
- III. Third, we must engage in exchanges and mutual learning to provide more choices of routes to human rights advancement.
- IV. Fourth, we must uphold equity and justice to provide a more effective platform of cooperation for realizing human rights.

The program is seen as a great opportunity for developing countries to boost their international trade and thereby create better economic and social conditions through international cooperation.

We are committed to make the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the human race from want. We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the object and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected²².

THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT: CHINA'S PHILOSOPHY, PRACTICE AND CONTRIBUTION

A Shared Common Society

The principle of a *community* of a *common* future for mankind was expressed in the document A Global Community of Shared Future: China's

²¹ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2016. The Right to Development: China's Philosophy, Practice and Contribution. Xinhua. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2016/12/01/content_281475505407672.htm

²² United Nations Millennium Declaration. 2000. General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/55/2. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/united-nations-millennium-declaration>.

Proposals and Actions²³ and launched by China in September 2023. It includes actions such as:

- I. Humanity at a Crossroads
- II. An Answer to the Call of the Times and a Blueprint for the Future
- III. Deep Roots in History and Cultural Traditions
- IV. Direction and Path
- V. China's Action and Contribution

In the preface the text states:

The vision of a global community of shared future bears in mind the wellbeing of all humanity. It is based on both observation of the present and visionary planning for the future. It lays out goals, charts the path, and offers action plans to achieve them. It concerns the future of humanity and the destiny of every human being.

In 2013, during Moscow State Institute of International Relations, President Xi Jinping first raised the vision of a global community of shared future. He would discuss the concept again in 2017 in his speech at the United Nations Office in Geneva. As a proposal, Xi Jinping presented five objectives:

We should build a world of lasting peace through dialogue and consultation. We should build a world of common security for all through joint efforts. We should build a world of common prosperity through win-win cooperation. We should build an open and inclusive world through exchanges and mutual learning. We should make our world clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low-carbon development.

As advocated by Julius Nyerere²⁴ in 1974, "The complaint of poor nations against the current state is not just that we are poor (...). It is also that, within existing structures of economic interaction, we must remain poor and get relatively poorer, whatever we do (...)". Nyerere also demanded a New International

²³ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2023. A Global Community of Shared Future: China's Proposals and Actions. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202309/t20230926_11150122.html#:~:text=The%20vision%20of%20a%20global%20community%20of%20shared%20future%20is,challenges%20in%20the%2021st%20century.

²⁴ Julius Nyerere (1922-1999) was a political theorist, the first president of the new state of Tanzania (1964) and considered to be one of Africa's most influential leaders. He was also the main force behind the Organization of African Unity (OAU; now the African Union). He advocated peaceful change, social equality, and racial harmony and rejected tribalism and all forms of racial and ethnic discrimination. He was a strong advocate of economic and political measures to address South Africa's apartheid policies. (East African Community). <https://www.eac.int/about-ncpr/julius-nyerere-biography>.

Economic Order (NIEO) where each country is capable of developing according to its interests and benefitting from the efforts they make.

The debate between morality and legality permeates the discussion about human rights and their legitimacy as an international prescription. How can a right be transformed into a duty and made legally effective, particularly when there is no consensus among countries? In 1993, based on the Vienna Declaration and the Program of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Right to Development became universal, with the responsibility of States and the international community to “promote an effective international cooperation for the realization of the right to development and the elimination of obstacles to development”.

WHITE PAPER

The China's State Council Information Office on Dec 1st 2016 instituted a White Paper The Right to Development: China's Philosophy, Practice and Contribution²⁵. In its preamble the text mentions:

Development is the top priority of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in governance and national revitalization, and the key to resolving all other problems. Based on its prevailing conditions, China adheres to the Chinese socialist path and to the philosophy that development is of paramount importance. China integrates the principle of universal application of human rights with the country's reality. While striving to enhance the people's well-being through development and materialize their right to development, China endeavors to achieve higher-level development by protecting their right to development.

The White Paper emphasize the traditional Chinese culture and its concepts such as “moderate prosperity” (*xiao-kang*), “great harmony” (*Datong*), “having ample food and clothing” (*fengyi zushi*) and “living and working in peace and contentment” (*anju leye*). The aspiration of Chinese people's for and pursuit of a better and happier life.

On the 30th anniversary of the publication of the “Declaration on the Right to Development by the United Nations,” China, dedicated to advocating, practicing and promoting the right to development, is willing to join the international community to share its philosophy and experience in this regard and to boost sound development of global human rights.

²⁵ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2016. *The Right to Development: China's Philosophy, Practice and Contribution*. Xinhua. First Edition, https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2016/12/01/content_281475505407672.htm.

In the last 70 years, China has made a leap never before witnessed that has significantly increased the standard of living of its population (800 million people rising above the poverty line) with the development of the economy, strengthening of its politics and culture, and generating policies aimed at protecting the environment. According to the document:

(...) the rights to subsistence and development are primary and basic human rights, with poverty being the greatest obstacle to human rights. Without the production and supply of material goods, it is difficult or even impossible to realize any other human right.

The development of any country, if applied precisely to improving the quality of life of its citizens, is a means of reducing and perhaps eliminating poverty. Only through this will be create necessary conditions for the realization of other human rights. Safeguarding the right to development is a *sine qua non* precondition for the realization of economic, cultural, social and environmental rights and for obtaining civil and political rights. The document highlights that China appreciates the UN Declaration on the Right to Development, which guarantees that the “right to development is an inalienable human right”.

The White Paper also declared that the protection of the right to development must be sustainable as a prerequisite for intergenerational equity. On the other hand, uncoordinated and unequal development will reflect an unbalanced development that would create more difficulties and problems for life in society. The first national working conference on environmental protection in China was held in 1973, which culminated in the Law on Environmental Protection of 1979. In 1983, China made environmental protection a basic state policy and was the first country to formulate and implement a national sustainable development strategy when it launched China's Agenda 21, in 1994. In 2000, environmental protection was incorporated into a national economic and social development program for the first time.

For China, global economic governance must be based on equality as it better reflects the new global economic pattern, with more voice for emerging markets and developing countries. It would be the most effective way to ensure equitable development with a focus on win-win cooperation and the premise of a shared future.

The White Paper emphasizes China's participation in international dialogue channels with a focus on global economic governance. Within the scope of North-South economic cooperation, the country highlights actions with financial commitment and without counterparts perceived as unfair taken by bodies such as

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group. Cooperation includes bilateral and multilateral forms with the country's presence even in forums where China is not an official member.

THE QUEST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ITS DIMENSIONS

The end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War marked a phase of dispute between the two great powers of the time. In the midst of this dispute, 120 countries declared themselves non-aligned and having the right to seek their independence and development. The objectives of the NAM were to promote peace, independence and self-determination while guaranteeing sovereignty and territorial integrity. Among the main goals were economic development and social progress based on environmental sustainability and more effective poverty reduction. The NAM called for the creation of a just international economic order, the NIEO, mentioned in the 1986 Declaration. Country members advocated development as a human right and used United Nations mechanisms to try to influence international economic relations and the international human rights system²⁶.

In 1964, the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was held in Geneva, where developing countries could discuss problems related to their economic development. There was a list of issues that aimed to foster broad international cooperation as a means for those countries to achieve collective economic security in relation to developed countries. Thus, another movement was born, the Group of 77, initially composed of 77 countries from the Non-Aligned Movement²⁷. China is currently part of the G77+ and defends the interests promoted by the group, the largest UN intergovernmental organization of developing nations.

In January this year, representatives of China and the Group of 77 met in Kampala, Uganda, for the Third Southern Summit²⁸. Under the theme of “Leaving No One Behind,” the forum was designed to promote the collective economic interests of its members and seek joint negotiation within the UN framework.

²⁶ In 2020, member countries held virtual meetings focused on establishing a task force to develop a database containing the medical and humanitarian needs and requirements of their member states to be submitted by the NAM presidency to all donor countries, international humanitarian organizations, international financial institutions and transnational private entities for possible support and assistance. (Ungerer, 2020). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347760131_Movimento_dos_nao_alinha_dos_e_G77_o_sul_global_e_a_Covid-19.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Mugabo, Mubarak, “G77+: China has left no one behind”. CGTV. Opinion. January 22, 2024, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-01-22/G77-China-has-left-no-one-behind-1qzF21bUShW/p.html>.

Although China is not a member of the group, it has provided political support and made financial contributions since the early 1990s.

The reforms implemented from 1978 onwards in China, and reinforced in the Great Compromise of 1992, such as decentralization of planning, concentration of markets, commercial opening (Special Economic Zones - SEZs) and peaceful evolution, were the cause and consequence of the internal and external conditions that led to China's economic miracle.

At the beginning of 1979, with the adoption of the Four Modernizations, China defended a project focused on long-term development covering four spheres to modernize: industry, agriculture, the armed forces, science and technology. The People Republic of China (PRC) had a set of comparative advantages that allowed it to successfully achieve most of its objectives. In this sense, the country had a considerable industrial base (steel, machinery and consumer goods), although insufficiently modernized, an energy production system, a reasonable transport network and some satisfactory technological centers to initiate development. Chinese government policies aimed at growth ranged from macroeconomic (monetary, fiscal and exchange rate), through the process of reforms and privatizations, subsidized credit, lower tariff barriers, stimulation of high technology areas and instruments, which encouraged the creation of national companies²⁹.

In 2009, the model chosen by China transformed the country into the second largest economy in the world, with a GDP growth rate of 9%. The elements of its development strategy are based on high rates of investment and public spending, expansion of the internal market, primary surpluses, a moderately devalued currency and the imposition of controls in the face of liberalizations³⁰. With this, China directed investments towards gross fixed capital formation, internalizing industrial technological processes, and thus managed to diversify its productive structure. This time, the country set out to internationalize its economy and assumed a privileged international position³¹. To understand the reform process that prevailed and still takes place in China today, it is important to be aware that what guides Chinese internal and external policies is economic growth focused on development³².

According to the World Bank Group, China's economic growth in 2023 was 5.2% and is expected to grow 4.8% in 2024, 0.3 points above the forecast in

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Raimundo, Lício da Costa and Azevedo, César Augusto Lambert de. 2011. "A emergência da China e suas relações com América Latina e África". *Observatório de fenômenos transnacionais nas Américas*. (CERI-OFTA), São Paulo.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Marti, Michael E. 2007. *A China de Deng Xiaoping*. Rio de Janeiro. Ed. Nova Fronteira.

December 2024³³. Still due to the impact of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the economic sector, vulnerable in relation to lower global demand and economic tensions, is more positive in China than in most countries which are expected to grow at an average of 3% this year³⁴.

Some of the reasons cited by experts for China's healthy economic development have been the rise in exports and fiscal spending. "Structural reforms could help China both sustain growth momentum in the short term and pursue long-term objectives," said Mara Warwick, World Bank Group Country Director for China, Mongolia, and Korea³⁵. Elitza Mileva, World Bank Group Lead Economist for China, highlighted the right moment for the digital and green transformations with China's great capacity for growth in these areas.

China is already the global leader in deploying renewable energy, and is making rapid progress in green mobility. Its continued leadership is vital to addressing the global climate crisis. Building on progress in recent years to sell a greater share of electricity at market prices would make China's decarbonization even more efficient.

What experts from the World Bank Group and IMF highlight is a shift from quantitative growth to high-quality growth. This will require decisive action to reduce the stock of unfinished homes and resolve current problems in the real estate sector to increase consumer and investor confidence. "Another issue is China's social security system, which covers more people than any other on the planet, but there is still the possibility of expansion with increased benefits," said Kristalina Georgieva, IMF Managing Director. And complete. "Domestic consumption also depends on income growth, which in turn depends on the productivity of capital and labor". As a developing country, investments in human capital — education, lifelong learning and reskilling — and quality healthcare will deliver greater labor productivity and higher incomes.

However, the right to development is still more textual rhetoric than practical actions, noting that in 1986, the USA voted against it and eight other rich countries

³³ Report World Bank Group. Structural Reforms Needed to Sustain Growth Momentum. 2024. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/06/14/-structural-reforms-needed-to-sustain-growth-momentum-world-bank-report>.

³⁴ (...) we expect global growth to be around 3 percent, which is weak by historical standards-during the pre-COVID decade the annual average was 3.8 percent. Low productivity growth and high debt levels are posing challenges to all, but especially to emerging and developing economies. (...) geopolitical tensions affect trade and capital flows, which have been essential engines of growth over the last decades. (Remarks by the Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, 2024). <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2024/03/24/sp032424-md-cdf-remarks#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20despite%20the%20higher%20global,it%20is%20coming%20down%20faster.>

³⁵ Report by World Bank Group. 2024. Structural Reforms Needed to Sustain Growth Momentum. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/06/14/-structural-reforms-needed-to-sustain-growth-momentum-world-bank-report>.

abstained, while 146 nations voted in favor of the declaration at UN meeting. In 2018, a commission was created to draft a legally binding convention based on international collaboration, but only three rich countries, all in the Middle East, supported the measure.

CONCLUSIONS

With the creation of the World Bank Group and the IMF in the 1940s, both sought to implement compulsory political reforms, led by privatization and government policies focused on supporting the private sector. Such measures could have some effect if put into practice together with other reforms but, in the view of developing countries, they had a paternalistic conception that restricted sovereignty and reproduced actions of neocolonialism³⁶. Only in 1990 would there be a voice for thought that approached development as a premise for human development. The theory was recent and needed a defining basis for the concept among so many international disciplines, but one that could encompass the understanding of freedom and the elimination of human deprivation.

Developed States questioned whether they were not already making enough with the investments made and whether the DRTD would not become a normative order with obligations to provide more financial transfers. It was not a financial reparation. However, the New International Order required the promotion of legal and economic structural changes sufficient to reverse the effects of the old model of colonial domination. The transfer of financial support from developed countries to developing countries was also under discussion, but it was more than that. The DRTD was based on the inalienable right to development through international cooperation without imposing economic models.

The NAM was established under a political agenda while the Group of 77 focused more on economic issues. They were both created for developing countries to express their demands in a world marked by the Cold War. For its part, the UN engaged its area of interest on the issues of the Global South, trying to establish a dialogue with the North in favor of actions that would converge towards a NIEO. Unfortunately, the expectations of the North-South dialogue produced few results. The leading countries at the time did not intend for the emergence of new actors. In parallel, 1978 marked significant changes in the previously dormant Asian giant.

³⁶ Kimber, Norman R., "The Human Right to Development: Historical and Contemporary Linkages to Colonialism" (MA thesis, University of Western Ontario, 2023).

China is the central and emblematic protagonist of the new international reality. At the same time the country is a new economic power, it is also an essential reference in international politics and the center of regional political attention³⁷. The history of its rise is an integral part of its success, as it breaks with the obstacles to growth traditionally attributed to peripheral nations in the same way that it contradicts the social democratic model of growth of the European tradition and differs from all transitions from communism to market economy.

Giovanni Arrighi hypothesizes that the new post-Cold War international order could effectively be characterized by a new style of regional/global development that emphasizes trade as an alternative form to militarism³⁸.

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³⁷ Jaguaribe, Anna. 2011. "China: estratégias de modernização alternativa." *Desenvolvimento em Debate*. Vol. 2, no.2, 39-49.

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³⁸ Ibid

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