

# China's Rise and the Transformation of the Global Governance System: A Study from the Perspective of Southeast Asian Countries

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## Abstract

With China's continuous rise, the global governance system is undergoing profound changes. As the world's second-largest economy and an emerging international responsibility power, China plays a significant role in shaping new international rules and promoting the trend of multipolarization. Southeast Asia, as an important region connecting China with the world, plays a key role in this transformation. This paper takes the major countries in Southeast Asia as the research object, explores the impact of China's rise on regional countries and their response strategies, and analyzes the new pattern of regional cooperation and competition. The research suggests that under the background of China's expanding influence, Southeast Asian countries adopt diverse strategies to seek their own interests, and regional cooperation is gradually entering a new stage of multilateral governance. Finally, it is proposed that regional countries should enhance their autonomy, promote regional integration, and achieve greater say in the global governance system.

## Keywords

China's rise, Global governance system, Southeast Asia, Regional and country-specific studies.

## Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous enhancement of China's economic strength and the expansion of its international influence, the global governance system is undergoing a historic transformation. The traditional unipolar order dominated by the West is gradually being replaced by a multipolar and diversified global governance model. China's rise not only makes it an important pole in the global economy and politics, but also has a profound impact on the rules, institutions and strategic layout of global governance. Southeast Asia is located at the intersection of the "Maritime Silk Road" and the "Pacific Rim", and is a key area for global trade and energy transportation. It is also a strategic battleground in the Asia-Pacific region. With the rapid development of China's economy, Southeast Asia has gradually become an important strategic area for the expansion of China's influence. In this process, the responses of Southeast Asian countries are not uniform, but show diverse strategic choices. On the one hand, many Southeast Asian countries have deepened economic cooperation with China, promoting cooperation in infrastructure construction, trade and investment, and regional integration, thereby enhancing their own economic development levels. On the other hand, some countries, out of geopolitical and security considerations, have maintained traditional cooperative relations with Western countries in the face of China's rise. Especially on issues such as the South China Sea disputes, the diplomatic strategies of Southeast Asian countries have shown a certain degree of complexity and diversity. While China is promoting the reform of the global

governance system, it is also continuously deepening cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, promoting the process of regional economic integration. However, how Southeast Asian countries can seek their national interests, maintain independence, and effectively participate in global governance in the context of China's growing influence has become a key issue of concern for scholars both within and outside the region. This article will reveal how Southeast Asian countries find their own strategic positioning in the process of China's rise, and how they adapt, adjust and promote regional cooperation in the context of the transformation of the global governance system. At the same time, this article will provide new perspectives and practical references for China's international strategic layout through the study of China's relations with Southeast Asian countries. Overall, this article not only provides an important regional perspective on China's rise and the transformation of the global governance system, but also offers policy recommendations for the cooperation model and future development path between China and Southeast Asian countries.

## **1. The Evolution of the Global Governance System and the Intrinsic Link with China's Rise**

### **1.1 The Historical Evolution of the Global Governance System**

After World War II, the global international order underwent fundamental changes. In 1944, the Bretton Woods Conference adopted a series of agreements, marking the formation of the Bretton Woods system. This system aimed to establish a stable monetary and financial system to ensure the recovery and development of the global economy after the war. The core of the Bretton Woods system included a fixed exchange rate system with the US dollar pegged to gold, the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to promote free trade. The establishment of the Bretton Woods system played an important role in the stability of the global economy, promoting global economic recovery and growth. It made the United States the dominant force in the global economy, and the US dollar became the main currency for international transactions. However, the system also had inherent flaws, especially the restrictions of the US dollar pegged to gold, which led to the international financial crisis in the late 1960s and the end of the gold standard by the United States in 1971. Despite this, its structure and ideas had a profound impact on the subsequent global governance system. The Cold War period (1947-1991) was an era of bipolarization in the global political and economic system. The United States and the Soviet Union led the capitalist and socialist camps respectively, and the framework of the global governance system was dominated by the confrontation between these two superpowers. International relations were organized within the framework of the Cold War through military alliances, economic aid, and ideological struggles, resulting in a highly divided global political and economic order. During the Cold War, the global governance mechanism was centered around the United Nations, with the mutual opposition of military organizations such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact, as well as economic governance institutions represented by the IMF and the World Bank. However, the global governance system during the Cold War placed more emphasis on the dominance of major powers, especially the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, which led to the voices and interests of many small and developing countries not being fully reflected. Economic cooperation gradually developed around multilateral institutions in the later stage of the Cold War, but the global governance system of this period was still restricted by the Cold War confrontation structure. After the Cold War, the global governance system entered a new historical stage. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States became the sole superpower, and the global order showed a brief trend of unipolarity. However, with the in-depth development of globalization, especially the rise of the Asia-Pacific region, Europe,

and emerging markets, global governance gradually exhibited multipolar characteristics. Emerging forces such as China, India, and the European Union began to gradually enter the international stage, and the global governance system underwent fundamental changes in form and content. In addition, the complexity of global economic and security issues gave rise to the rise of multilateral institutions and regional cooperation organizations. The role of international institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Health Organization (WHO) was further enhanced, while regional economic and security organizations such as ASEAN, APEC, and the EU also played an increasingly important role in global governance. At this time, global governance was no longer limited to the traditional Western-dominated model but gradually showed the characteristics of diversity and interaction.

## 1.2 Background and Path of China's Rise

China's rise is not accidental; it is the result of the reform and opening-up policy. In 1978, China launched reform and opening up, implementing a series of economic system reforms and gradually transforming from a relatively closed country to a part of the global economy. In the late 1980s, with the gradual determination of its position as the "world factory," China became an important part of the global industrial chain. The advancement of opening up not only promoted China's economic modernization but also enabled China to occupy an increasingly important position in the global economy. During the process of reform and opening up, China actively participated in the construction and rule-making of the global economic governance system by joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) and signing free trade agreements (FTAs) with many countries and regions. China rapidly rose in the wave of globalization and became the world's second-largest economy, and its foreign trade and investment also became an important part of the global economy. Economically, China's rise is manifested in the rapid growth of GDP, the sharp increase in foreign exchange reserves, and the continuous development of manufacturing and technological innovation. From the "world factory" to the core of the global market, especially under the promotion of the "Belt and Road Initiative," China has gradually transformed from a global production base to an important investment and trade hub. The rapid development of China's economy has provided a strong economic foundation for its participation in global governance. Politically, China's rise is accompanied by a profound transformation in its foreign policy. China has gradually transformed from a low-profile regional power to an important force on the global political stage. Through multilateral diplomacy, regional cooperation, and active participation in global major issues, China has enhanced its influence in global governance. China's global strategic layout is reflected in the launch of major international cooperation projects such as the "Belt and Road Initiative" and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The "Belt and Road Initiative" proposed in 2013 aims to promote economic development and connectivity in the Eurasian continent and beyond through infrastructure construction and regional cooperation. This initiative not only showcases China's economic strength but also marks China's proposal of the "joint consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits" concept in the global governance system.

## 1.3 Challenges and Opportunities of China's Rise for the Global Governance System

With the rise of China's economy, especially its rapid expansion in global trade, finance and investment, China's global economic discourse power has significantly increased. As the world's largest exporter and manufacturing center, China's core position in the global supply chain has given it greater say in global economic governance. The "Belt and Road Initiative" advocated by China not only provides financial support for global infrastructure construction but also promotes the process of global trade liberalization. China's rise poses a profound challenge to the Western-dominated international order. The Western-dominated international

system is centered on the United States and promotes global governance through a globalized free market economic model. However, China's rise has presented an alternative voice led by "developing countries", particularly in areas such as global economic governance, climate change, and international security, proposing new concepts such as "common development" and "a community with a shared future for mankind".

However, China has not entirely rejected the Western-dominated international order but seeks integration and reform within traditional mechanisms. The concepts of "multipolarization" and "fair and reasonable" international order proposed by China not only challenge the inequality of the existing system but also inject more possibilities and driving forces for change into the future of global governance [8].

## **2. Interaction between Southeast Asian Countries and Global Governance**

### **2.1 Strategic Position of Southeast Asia**

Southeast Asia is located at the crossroads of the Asian and European continents, with a highly important geographical location. It connects the important shipping routes between China, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, and is a key channel for global trade. In recent years, with China's rise and its deepening cooperation with Southeast Asia, the region's economy has gradually become an important part of the global supply chain. In addition, as a regional economy, Southeast Asia holds a significant position in the global economic system and is one of the hubs for the flow of global capital, technology and labor. Southeast Asia has a complex historical background, especially under the influence of colonialism and the Cold War, which has formed a unique political landscape. Most countries in Southeast Asia gained independence after World War II, but they were once colonized by Western powers, particularly Britain, France and the Netherlands. The legacy of the colonial era has led to border disputes, ethnic conflicts and social instability among the countries in the region. During the Cold War, Southeast Asia became the frontline of the global superpower confrontation. The United States supported anti-communist regimes in Southeast Asia, especially through military intervention (such as the Vietnam War) to contain the expansion of communism. At the same time, the Soviet Union also sought to expand its influence in this region by supporting communist regimes (such as Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). This political situation during the Cold War not only shaped the internal and external political landscape of Southeast Asia but also profoundly affected the interaction between the countries in the region and the global governance system. The end of the Cold War did not completely eliminate conflicts in this region, and many historical disputes and geopolitical issues still have an impact on global governance today. The importance of Southeast Asian countries in global governance is not only reflected in their economic and trade cooperation with the world, but also in their role in maintaining regional stability and promoting global peace and development. The region's unique geographical location and historical background make it a key player in global governance, and its active participation in global governance is crucial for the stability and development of the world. Reflecting China's gradual transition from competition to cooperation and from challenge to construction in global governance. As an important part of the transformation of the global governance system, Southeast Asian countries play a "bridge" role. Against the backdrop of intensified China-U.S. competition, Southeast Asian countries have found a balance between the two superpowers through flexible diplomatic strategies, promoting regional and global cooperation. By strengthening regional integration and cooperation, Southeast Asian countries are driving the diversification of global governance, particularly playing a significant role in advancing issues such as global trade, climate change, and terrorism. Their neutral diplomatic stance makes them indispensable coordinators in the global governance system. In today's accelerating globalization, Southeast Asian countries must not only actively participate in the



transformation of global governance but also maintain regional stability and peace while promoting regional security and economic cooperation. The role of Southeast Asian countries in global multilateral mechanisms cannot be overlooked. Through regional organizations such as ASEAN, they have fostered the development of multilateralism in global governance, particularly in advancing free trade, climate change cooperation, and global health. Their active promotion of multilateralism reflects their deep understanding and participation in the transformation of the global governance system.

## **2.2 Southeast Asian countries' participation in global governance**

Southeast Asian nations are strengthening their influence in global governance through regional cooperation, with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) serving as a vital platform for this collaboration. Established to promote economic, political, and cultural cooperation in the region, ASEAN also resolves regional conflicts and disputes through its consultative mechanisms. As the most significant regional organization in Southeast Asia, ASEAN plays a pivotal role not only in regional economic cooperation but also in shaping global governance frameworks. Through partnerships with international organizations, engagement with major non-regional powers, and focus on global issues like climate change, trade liberalization, and regional security, ASEAN actively contributes to building global governance. Particularly in advancing multilateralism, free trade, and climate change initiatives, ASEAN has adopted proactive diplomatic strategies. Southeast Asian countries not only enhance cooperation through regional organizations but also amplify their voice in global governance by participating in multilateral platforms. The United Nations stands as a key arena for ASEAN's engagement in global governance, where the region expresses its stance on international issues and actively participates in peacekeeping operations, climate change negotiations, and human rights protection. Economically, Southeast Asian nations contribute to the global trade system through platforms like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). They have played a positive role in promoting free trade, combating trade protectionism, and strengthening regional economic integration. A critical challenge for Southeast Asian countries in global governance lies in balancing the interests of major powers, particularly the influence between China and the United States. The rise of China has forced Southeast Asian countries to confront China's growing economic and political influence in the region. Meanwhile, the United States' military presence and economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific have also compelled Southeast Asian countries to maintain good relations with the U.S. As a result, the role of Southeast Asian countries in global governance is typically characterized as "strategic selectivity" —that is, when dealing with the influence of both China and the U.S., these countries attempt to coordinate the interests of all parties through diplomatic means and multilateral mechanisms to avoid falling into conflicts between the two. In this process, Southeast Asia seeks to maximize its own interests through regional diplomacy, cultural cooperation, and diversified economic policies.

## **3. The specific impact of China's rise on Southeast Asian countries**

### **3.1 Analysis of major Southeast Asian countries: Vietnam and the Philippines**

1. Vietnam: The rise of China has had a profound impact on Vietnam's economic development, particularly in trade, investment, and infrastructure construction. As the world's second-largest economy, China has become one of Vietnam's most important trading partners and has provided new opportunities for economic cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative. Bilateral trade between China and Vietnam continues to grow, especially in the export of goods from China to Vietnam, including machinery, electronics, and consumer products, which have played a positive role in Vietnam's industrialization and the expansion of its consumer market. Meanwhile, Vietnam's exports to China of agricultural products (such as rice, coffee, and

seafood) and manufactured goods (such as textiles and footwear) have also seen significant growth, driving the modernization of Vietnam's agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Additionally, as part of China's supply chain, Vietnam has deeply integrated into the global industrial chain, further diversifying its economic structure. Under the framework of China's Belt and Road Initiative, Vietnam has received substantial investment, particularly in infrastructure, transportation, and energy. Investments by Chinese companies in Vietnam have not only boosted the country's economic growth but also enhanced its position in the global economy. For example, many infrastructure projects in northern Vietnam, such as railways, highways, and ports, have received support from Chinese capital. Moreover, Vietnam's economic and trade relations with China have also promoted the upgrading of manufacturing, with many Chinese companies relocating their production bases to Vietnam to leverage the country's cost advantages in labor. Vietnam's economic cooperation with China is not limited to traditional sectors like agriculture and manufacturing but is now expanding into high-tech and green economy fields. China's technological and financial support has helped Vietnam enhance its capabilities in electronic information technology, clean energy, and green infrastructure. For example, in the field of new energy, China's solar technology has provided key technical support to Vietnam, helping it promote green and sustainable development. China's experience and technology in environmental protection have also facilitated Vietnam's reforms in pollution control and efficient resource utilization .

2. Philippines: The impact of China's rise on the Philippine economy is reflected in multiple aspects such as trade, investment, and infrastructure construction. China's economic cooperation with the Philippines has deepened in recent years, especially under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, where the Philippines has become an important partner of China. China has become one of the Philippines' largest trading partners, with Philippine exports mainly including electronic products, mineral resources, and agricultural products, while Chinese exports to the Philippines include machinery, electronic products, and consumer goods. The Chinese market has a huge demand for the Philippines' electronics manufacturing and agricultural products, which not only promotes the growth of Philippine exports but also drives the modernization of its manufacturing and agriculture sectors. Chinese investment in the Philippines, particularly in infrastructure construction, has played a significant role. Through cooperation with China, the Philippines has received substantial infrastructure investments, especially in areas such as transportation, energy, and information technology. Chinese companies have invested in and constructed several major infrastructure projects in the Philippines, including highways, bridges, and urban public transportation.

### **3.2 The impact of China's rise on ASEAN**

With the rise of China, its influence in global governance continues to grow, particularly in Southeast Asia. As the most important regional organization in Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is playing an increasingly significant role in the global governance system. Against the backdrop of China's rise, ASEAN is not only an important part of the global economy but is also becoming a more prominent voice in global governance reforms. Through initiatives such as the Belt and Road and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), China actively promotes cooperation with ASEAN, providing it with greater voice and participation space in the global governance system. The rise of China has accelerated ASEAN's economic integration process. Through free trade agreements with China (such as the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area), trade and investment between ASEAN countries and China have continued to increase, further deepening economic integration. China's investment, especially in infrastructure construction, has promoted regional connectivity among ASEAN countries, which not only enhances their economic development levels but also boosts ASEAN's overall influence in global economic governance. China's rise has driven the restructuring of global supply chains, with ASEAN, as China's production base, becoming a crucial link in these

chains. China's direct investment, manufacturing relocation, and technical support to ASEAN countries have facilitated their economic transformation and upgrading, particularly in industries such as electronics, automobiles, and machinery manufacturing, where ASEAN's role is becoming increasingly significant. ASEAN countries have not only strengthened their economic ties with China by participating in global supply chains and collaborating with multinational corporations, but also enhanced their voice in global economic governance. Meanwhile, the rise of China has accelerated the process of global trade liberalization, with ASEAN becoming a significant beneficiary in this process. China actively supports global trade liberalization and promotes reforms and negotiations through multilateral trade systems such as the World Trade Organization (WTO)[14]. Through cooperation in formulating global trade rules, ASEAN countries have expanded free trade, particularly in areas such as regional market access and tariff reductions, significantly safeguarding ASEAN's economic interests. With the proposal of the global sustainable development agenda, ASEAN countries are increasingly focusing on environmental protection, resource management, and climate change. As the world's second-largest economy, China is actively advancing the sustainable development agenda, especially in green economy, low-carbon technologies, and climate change. Through cooperation with China, ASEAN can better participate in these issues within global governance.

## **4.The Transformation and Future of the Global Governance System from the Perspective of Southeast Asia**

### **4.1 Expectations and Reactions of Southeast Asian Countries to the Reform of Global Governance**

The transformation of global governance, particularly with China's rise and the emergence of other major powers, has led Southeast Asian nations to gradually shift their expectations from the traditional Western-dominated model to a more diversified and equitable global governance framework. For a long time, Southeast Asian countries have had relatively weak influence in international affairs, especially regarding global finance, trade, and climate change, where their interests are often overlooked or inadequately protected. With evolving global political and economic landscapes, Southeast Asian nations increasingly seek to secure a place in global governance, striving to ensure that more international decisions fairly reflect their interests and needs . The rise of multipolarization has opened up more cooperation opportunities for Southeast Asian countries, particularly in areas like global economic governance, climate change, and international trade. They aim to enhance their voice to promote balanced regional cooperation and global governance development. The aspirations of Southeast Asian nations in global governance are primarily reflected in the following aspects:

#### **4.1.1 Strengthening Voice in Global Governance**

Southeast Asian nations are striving to enhance their influence in international institutions such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization, and International Monetary Fund. Particularly in critical areas including financial system reforms, global trade rule-making, climate change mitigation, and environmental protection, they seek greater participation in decision-making processes to safeguard their development interests and security concerns from being overlooked.

#### **4.1.2 Strengthening Regional Cooperation**

Southeast Asian nations aim to drive global governance reforms through enhanced regional cooperation mechanisms such as ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). This collaboration not only boosts their global influence but also ensures economic and political stability within the region.

#### **4.1.3 Promoting a fair international order**

Southeast Asian countries have generally called for the global governance system to pay more attention to the needs of developing countries, especially on issues such as global development, climate change and trade fairness. They hope to promote a more just and equal international order by reforming the existing global governance structure.

#### **4.2 Cooperation and competition: Finding a balance between great power competition and promoting regional and global cooperation**

In the transformation of the global governance system, Southeast Asian countries face the challenge of finding a balance in the competition among major powers. As the world's leading economic and political powers, China and the United States exhibit particularly evident competition in the Southeast Asian region. Southeast Asian countries seek to leverage the cooperation opportunities brought by the rivalry between major powers while also confronting the challenge of avoiding potential conflicts and pressures to safeguard their own interests. The role of Southeast Asian countries in global governance can be seen as that of "balancers." They strive to maximize their own interests in the great power game through multilateral diplomacy and cooperation platforms. In terms of economic cooperation, Southeast Asian countries generally rely on China's growing economic influence while maintaining collaboration with the United States, the European Union, and other major countries. By participating in regional cooperation mechanisms such as the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), they actively promote free trade and regional integration to enhance their voice in global economic governance. Additionally, Southeast Asian countries promote economic cooperation with major powers by joining and advancing multilateral economic platforms like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). This not only helps reduce their dependence on China as a single economic entity but also drives regional economic growth and stability through diversified partnerships. In terms of security cooperation, Southeast Asian countries seek to ensure regional security and stability through security partnerships with major powers, such as military alliances with the United States and cooperation with China in counter-terrorism and maritime security. Southeast Asian nations primarily rely on their flexible "balance diplomacy" strategy, which involves seeking optimal cooperation opportunities among global powers to maintain regional stability. Recognizing the interconnected nature of regional security and economic stability, these countries have come to understand that regional cooperation within the global governance framework serves not only as a catalyst for economic growth but also as a vital safeguard for ensuring regional security and stability.

#### **4.3 Implications of China's interaction with Southeast Asia for global governance**

China's role in the global governance system is undergoing profound changes. From its early role as a "challenger" (especially in the international economic and political structures before and after the reform and opening-up) to its current position as a "builder" of the global governance system, China's attitude and policies on the international stage have undergone fundamental transformations. As the world's second-largest economy, China not only plays an increasingly important role in global trade, investment, energy security, and climate change, but also demonstrates greater responsibility and constructiveness in promoting global governance reforms and participating in the formulation of international rules. China's Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative mark its gradual shift from a "rule recipient" to a "rule maker," particularly in infrastructure construction, global economic governance, and regional cooperation, bringing new opportunities and challenges. China's participation in global governance, especially in its interactions with Southeast Asian countries, showcases its diplomatic philosophy of "win-win cooperation." Through cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, China has accelerated the multipolarization of global governance, reflecting its



gradual transition from competition to cooperation and from challenge to construction in global governance. Southeast Asian countries, as a crucial link in the transformation of the global governance system, serve as a "bridge." Against the backdrop of intensifying competition between China and the United States, Southeast Asian countries have found a balance between the two superpowers through flexible diplomatic strategies, promoting regional and global cooperation. By advancing regional integration and cooperation, Southeast Asian nations are playing a pivotal role in diversifying global governance, particularly in addressing critical issues like global trade, climate change, and terrorism. Their neutral diplomatic stance positions them as indispensable mediators within the global governance framework. In today's rapidly evolving world, these countries must not only actively participate in global governance reforms but also maintain regional stability and peace while promoting security and economic collaboration. Southeast Asia's contributions to multilateral mechanisms are undeniable. Through regional organizations like ASEAN, they have fostered multilateralism in global governance, especially in advancing free trade, climate cooperation, and global health initiatives. Their proactive engagement with multilateralism demonstrates their profound understanding and active participation in transforming the global governance system.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Main Research Findings

This paper, against the backdrop of China's rise and the transformation of the global governance system, provides an in-depth analysis of China's impact on the global governance system, particularly its influence on Southeast Asia in the economic, political, and security domains. It also explores the role and response strategies of Southeast Asian countries in the transformation of global governance. The main research findings can be summarized as follows:

**The Profound Impact of China's Rise on the Global Governance System:** China's rise has profoundly altered the global governance system, particularly in the economic, political, and security domains. Economically, as the world's second-largest economy, China has gradually transitioned from a "rule-taker" to a "rule-maker," proposing new frameworks and initiatives in global economic governance, trade rules, and financial systems, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). These initiatives have actively promoted the multipolarization of the global governance system. Politically, China's advocacy of the "community with a shared future for mankind" emphasizes resolving global issues through win-win cooperation, demonstrating leadership in areas such as climate change and global public health. In the security domain, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, China's rise has brought new security challenges and opportunities. Issues such as the South China Sea disputes and the Taiwan question remain sensitive topics in global politics, but China's role in regional security architecture is gradually strengthening, and its participation in international security affairs is becoming more active.

**The Importance and Uniqueness of Southeast Asian Countries in the Global Governance System:** As a key engine of global economic growth, Southeast Asian countries occupy a unique position in the transformation of the global governance system due to their geographical and strategic significance. First, Southeast Asian countries are important partners in China's rise, particularly under the Belt and Road Initiative, where Southeast Asia has become a core region in China's economic strategic layout. Second, Southeast Asian countries play a significant role in addressing global issues such as trade, climate change, terrorism, and transnational crime. Through regional cooperation mechanisms like ASEAN, they not only promote regional economic integration but also actively participate in the reform of global governance, advocating for a more just and balanced international order. Their uniqueness lies in their strategies of "diversified diplomacy" and "flexible cooperation," which involve relying on

China's economic growth while enhancing their influence in global governance through cooperation with other major powers.

**Diverse Response Strategies of Southeast Asian Countries to China's Rise:** In responding to China's rise, Southeast Asian countries have not adopted a uniform strategy of either cooperation or confrontation but have instead employed diverse approaches. On one hand, Southeast Asian countries have generally deepened economic cooperation with China, particularly in infrastructure construction, trade investment, and technological collaboration. On the other hand, Southeast Asian countries have not neglected their security needs, especially on sensitive issues such as the South China Sea. Many Southeast Asian countries seek to cooperate with other major powers (such as the United States and India) through multilateral diplomatic platforms to address potential pressure from China. This flexible diplomatic strategy reflects both their reliance on economic cooperation and their strong desire to maintain regional security and stability.

## 5.2 Policy Recommendations

Based on this research, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

**Recommendations for China's Policies: How to Enhance Cooperation with Southeast Asian Countries to Promote Common Development**

**Deepen Economic Cooperation and Investment:** China should further increase investment in Southeast Asian countries, particularly in key areas such as infrastructure, energy, and technological innovation. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, China can collaborate with Southeast Asian countries to create a mutually beneficial cooperation framework, promote regional integration, and foster synergistic development in global economic governance.

**Enhance Political Trust and Cultural Exchange:** In addition to economic cooperation, China should strengthen political trust with Southeast Asian countries through cultural diplomacy and people-to-people exchanges. By enhancing cooperation in education, tourism, media, and other fields, China can promote mutual understanding and support among the people, alleviating potential negative sentiments and misunderstandings.

**Security Cooperation and Regional Stability:** While ensuring economic cooperation, China should also prioritize security cooperation with Southeast Asian countries. By strengthening collaboration in counter-terrorism, maritime security, disaster relief, and other areas, China can enhance Southeast Asian countries' trust in its security cooperation, avoid escalating security conflicts, and ensure regional stability.

**Recommendations for Southeast Asian Countries: How to Fully Leverage Their Geographical and Economic Advantages in the Transformation of Global**

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