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國際學碩士學位論文

**From Reactive to Proactive:  
China's Negotiating Behavior in UNFCCC**

수동적 행위자에서 능동적 행위자로  
유엔기후변화협약에서의 중국의 협상 행태

2013年 2月

서울대학교 國際大學院  
國際學科 國際地域學專攻

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# **From Reactive to Proactive: China's Negotiating Behavior in UNFCCC**

A thesis presented

By

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To

Graduate Program

In International Studies (International Area Studies)

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Master

In the subject of International Studies (Social Science)

Graduate School of International Studies

Seoul National University

Seoul, Republic of Korea

February, 2013

# From Reactive to Proactive: China's Negotiating Behavior in UNFCCC

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이 論文을 國際學碩士 學位論文으로 提出함

2013年 2月

서울大學校 國際大學院

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李奈炫의 國際學碩士 學位論文을 認准함

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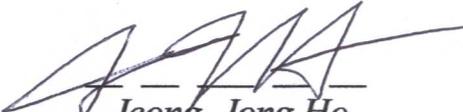
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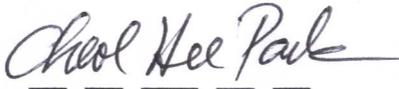
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## **Abstract**

# **From Reactive to Proactive: China's Negotiating Behavior in UNFCCC**

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Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental challenges confronting the international community in the era of globalization, thus international cooperation among countries is urgently needed to solve the challenges. In particular, climate change politics causes complex problems that involve the global, regional, national perspectives and the issues of developed and developing countries. Climate change is multi-dimensional development challenge for both developed and developing countries.

As China's international status has enhanced after 2008 Global Financial Crisis, China has been pressured to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system. This study explores how china's negotiating attitude changed towards in the international climate change conventions within the circumstance. China, one of the key culprits to global climate change, needs to take an action to address climate change.

Although China's climate change principles established at the primary stage of international climate change conventions have not been officially altered, China's negotiating position has been dramatically transformed.

First of all, China has moved from passive and skeptical participants to active and cooperative player in the negotiations. At the early stage of the international climate change conventions led by developed countries, China lacked understanding of the existing order and did not have capability to deal with climate change challenges in technical and financial wise. These factors constrained China to be remained skeptical and dissatisfied. China's negative posture was expressed in integration of developing countries for the struggle for institutionalizing support for economic development at the global level, calling for developed nation's unilateral action to combat climate change. Since 2008 global financial crisis occurred, China's negotiating attitude is changing. China used to push commitments of climate change to developed countries on the grounds the principle "common but differentiated responsibilities", yet China has been positive towards climate change, implying that they can create resolution which has binding obligation on reduction at the Cancun conference.

Second, China's negotiating posture within the North-South divide on climate change conventions has been changed. Bilateralization of negotiations between North and South on climate change issues has overshadowed in the conventions and this sees China being pulled into the North-South ideological battle. However, as China has been pressured

from international community to pay more attention to climate change as a largest emitter, its climate alliance structure is altered. The alliance structure has been modified in two ways. First, economic heterogeneity within the G77 led emerging economies-in particular China and India, but also South Africa and Brazil-to strengthen their cooperation on climate change, being against developed countries with a concerted voice. It also shows that emerging economies, so-called BASIC are moving from a stage of passively accommodating the existing international institutions to participating actively in the regime-building process. As for the second way, China has actively participated in exchanges and cooperation on climate change and energy issues both bilateral and multilateral level. To attain the goal, the G77 is still useful for countries like China as an instrument for avoiding future commitments in the Post-Kyoto negotiations. Thus, maintaining one foot in the G77 and moving into bilateral and multilateral agreements as done by China seems to be a rational strategy that increases benefits and decrease costs. China has boosted to promote pragmatic exchanges and cooperation to the rest of the G77 countries. In particular, China has become a practical leader as a largest donor of foreign aid for developing countries.

Key words: Climate Change, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Global Financial Crisis, Power Transition, Alliance Transitions, Negotiating Behavior

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# I. Introduction

## 1. Research Background and Research Question

As climate change moves to the center stage of world politics, it challenges to traditional global environmental governance by demonstrating itself to be a fascinating issue on a number of fronts. The range of environmental problems that we face today is vast and interconnected such as global warming, climate change and depletion of ozone layer. With the emergence of global environmental problems from the 1980s, scientists and policy makers have attention to combating global climate change which will affect future world. As global environmental problems pose serious agenda to international community, it has been demonstrated by the close attention paid to the meeting on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). China is a key player in climate change: China's large population, rapid economic growth and largest CO<sub>2</sub> emitter and thereby disproportionate influences on climate change. Since it joined in UNFCCC in 1992, China has actively participated in environmental conventions to cooperate with building G77 and China group, led by China and India, comprised about 90 percent of the developing country parties to the FCCC. China became the leader of developing countries in climate change in order to gain support for its position and has influenced in the venue. China and other developing countries argue for equity on historical grounds and responsibilities, placing the blame primarily on the North.

Global Financial crisis in 2008 resulted in China's rise in international system, thereby the dominant power United States and China which emerged as a challenging power have conflicted over global issues. In particular, a rapid rise in power has influenced the power dynamics in United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change. The dissonant alliance United States-China expressed into the Copenhagen Conference in 2009 one year after the global financial crisis occurred. China, as a world's biggest emitter of carbon dioxide, needs to take responsible action to address climate change.

In order to understand the power dynamics in UNFCCC, this study raises two questions. First, how China's negotiating position and strategy has been changed before and after 2008 global financial crisis? Second, how could China manage the interactions of developing countries relations on the development of a future climate regime, in particular United States?

To answer these questions, the first chapter analyses China's stance and attitude on UNFCCC and what factors have shaped into the Chinese perspectives before 2008 global financial crisis occurred and how China's climate change strategy has been conducted during the period. Second chapter aims to analyze how china's climate change attitude has been altered after 2008 global financial crisis and explores its change of climate change alliance and cooperation. For conclusion, the last chapter analyses China's negotiating attitude on UNFCCC before and after 2008 global financial crisis and evaluate Chinese

rapid rise in power with the analytical framework; power transition and alliance transitions theories.

Throughout the comparison, this study argues two major changes in China's negotiating attitude in UNFCCC. First, China's rapid growth in power after 2008 global financial crisis has caused China to move from passive and skeptical to active and cooperative participant. Second, although North-South divide still exists, China has altered its alliance structure from G77 to BASIC coalition and the new alliance has raised a concerted voice. Together, China has actively participated in multilateral cooperation as an actual player.

## **2. Literature Review and Significance of the Study**

Not a lot of recent works exist on China and UNFCCC. Zhang Haibin, a professor of Peking University, looks at China's position change by historical comparison in the field of international climate change convention.<sup>1</sup> He analyses China's change to negotiating attitude at conventions for the past sixteen years, divided into four timeline, year of 1991, 1999, 2001 and 2005 respectively. Zhang argues that China has insisted its stance since the framework of climate change convention constructed. First, China has considered itself as a developing country in international venue and push developed countries to

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<sup>1</sup> 张海滨, “中国与国际气候变化谈判”, 国际政治研究, 2007年第1期

fulfill their reduction commitments, sticking to the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities. Second, China has pursued a leadership position among the developing countries and stressed the need of transferring financial and technical resources by developed countries. However, China’s stance has transformed in conventions at the same time. First of all, in regards of three Climate Change Mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol, in particular, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) which China had a suspicion at the early stage, China has been toward positive and supporting attitude. Second, China and other developing countries pressured developed countries to provide financial support and technological transfer to the developing countries, however, in recent years; China has toward positive and cooperative stance working with developed countries to combat the climate challenges. Third, China has participated actively both climate change conventions and Kyoto Protocol constructed by United Nations framework and other international conventions in the field of climate change.

Lichao He (2010) <sup>2</sup> argues that China’s climate change polices have undergone major changes. The cause of this policy change is the adjustments in China’s Grand National strategy at home and its international aspirations supported by rapid economic growth. He believes that China sees the climate change issue as a matter of global strategic importance and presents an opportunity for China to facilitate its power in

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<sup>2</sup> Lichao He, China’s Climate Change Policy from Kyoto to Copenhagen, ASIAN PERSPECTIVE, Vol.34, No.3, 2010, PP.5-33

creating rules and institutions on major global issues. In addition, continuity and transformation can be seen in China's climate change policies in its behavior at the climate change negotiations. Major consideration that remains unchanged in its climate change policy: (1) Keeping in step with the developing countries as is illustrated by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities of the Kyoto Protocol. (2) Building an image of a responsible power and elevating its international status.

New developments have occurred regarding climate change policies; (1) Climate change issue has evolved from being an issue of low politics to being an important component of the nation's global strategy. (2) Aspiration to become a key player in making international rules and institutions. In keeping with the coalition with developing countries, China believes that developed countries should historically take responsibility for environmental protection and allow the developing countries the opportunity to develop as much as the developed countries were able to.<sup>3</sup>

Won (2012) argues that there are several major changes in Post Kyoto negotiations.

<sup>4</sup> First of all, the range of negotiation mechanisms has extended both bilateral and multilateral level, expanding over global governance debate such as G20 and APEC, in particular, G2 implying a special relationship between China and United States. Second,

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<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Economy, 'The Impact of International Regimes on Chinese Foreign Policy-Making: Broadening Perspectives and Politics . . . but Only to a Point', in David M. Lampton (ed.), *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 230–253.

<sup>4</sup> 원동욱, 포스트교토체제 하 중국의 기후변화정책과 미-중관계, EAI중국연구패널 보고서 No.5, 2012

the leadership of European Union which was one of the predominant powers at climate change convention has diminished. Its leadership has constrained by European Debt Crisis, thereby a willingness and capability relatively have undermined. Third, there are different interests in climate change talks, parties to the UNFCCC group under three contending forces<sup>5</sup>, namely the Umbrella Group, the European Union (EU), and the G77 and China.

However, limitations can be found in these works. Most of works regarding China's climate change diplomacy mainly focus on China's strategy to response climate change issues and focus on national strategic development. Of course, there are existing reviews regarding China's negotiating behavior in UNFCCC and changed negotiating attitude on Post-Kyoto negotiations. On the other hand, analysis on China's climate change diplomacy in UNFCCC failed to see a large picture of the changes in China's international behavior before and after 2008 Financial Crisis.

This study aims to analyze China's change of negotiating attitude on climate change conventions before and after 2008 global financial crisis and how the climate change strategy has been altered to deal with climate change issues in UNFCCC.

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<sup>5</sup> So called three groups in UNFCCC refers to Umbrella Group (United States, Japan, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Russia), EU (European Union) and G77 (developing countries) and China.

### 3. Analytical Framework

A considerable amount of the literature in international politics has analyzed and debated the causes of distribution of power among nations on the incidence of international conflict. Balance of power theorists claim that the presence of an equality of power among nations tends to discourage war. Several assumptions rest on the balance of power theory. The first is that a state is a unilateral actor and seeks to augment the national power. In order to attain the goal, states pursue internal development through industrialization and build up armaments at national level. External means of augmenting national power is alliance formation. The crucial assumption of the theory is that international system defined anarchy; thereby the states must ensure their survival through increasing their power in a self-help world.<sup>6</sup> Alliance formation, consequently, is used strategy for expansion national territory and to provide things that the states can increase their national power. However, balance of power theory fails to explain distribution of powers among nations and possibility of great power conflict.

On the other hand, the role of alliance is viewed differently by Power Transition Theory which was introduced by A.F.K. Organski. He claims that alliance formation is not crucial and cannot be effective to increase national power. Before industrialization which characterized as an approximately equal distribution of power, conflict among

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<sup>6</sup> 김태현, 세력균형이론, 2002년 한국 국제정치학회 발표논문

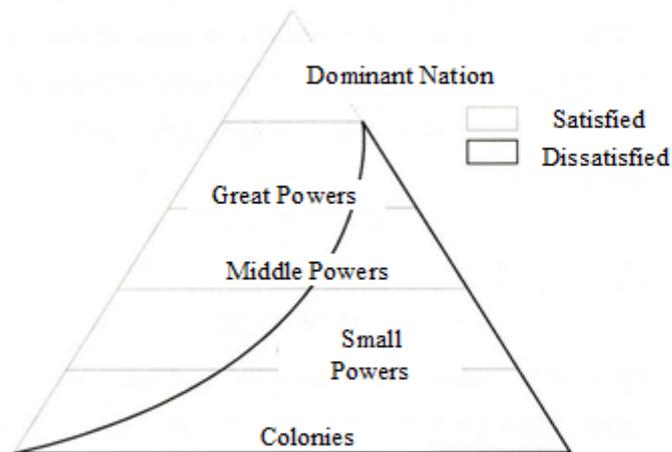
nations is unlikely. During such period of time, augmentation of power was likely to be made by alliance formation to increase national power in a short time. After industrialization, however, balance of power theory fails to explain power distribution because balance of power theory considers internal development through industrialization as the principle source of augmenting national power.<sup>7</sup>

Organski argues that transition of power among nations in the international system describes three phases and most of all nations in current international structure entered into the second phase. The first phase indicates international system prior to the industrialization revolution. The states pose latent power, thus any changes of power occurred. During the second period of time, distribution of power is very likely to happen. The growth speed of nations' power triggers the power distribution among nations. The last phase points the future period of time when all nations experienced the industrialization revolution and entered into the final phase. From his point of view, current international system has entered into the second phase of the power transition which causes wars among great powers.

Power transition perspective envisions global politics as a hierarchical system and the international order is visualized if one thinks of a pyramid with one nation at the top and many nations at the bottom.

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<sup>7</sup> A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, New York: Alfred A.Knopf, 1958



[Figure 1. Organski's Hierarchical System]

Source: A.F.K.Organski, *World Politics*, 1958

Organski classifies all the nations of the world in terms of degree of power and satisfaction, achieving two categories into the satisfied and dissatisfied which turn out to be of major importance in international politics. The dominant nation and the great powers allied with it make up first group of nations. In general, it can be said that these nations are satisfied with the present international order and its working rules, for they feel that the present order offers them the best chance of obtaining the goals they have in mind. The dominant nation is necessarily more satisfied with the existing international order than with any other since it is to a large extent her international order. However, peace is threatened when the power of dissatisfied challenger is powerful enough to

attempt to change things in the face of opposition from those who control the existing international order. The war is likely to occur when the challenger is dissatisfied with the status quo during the transition and the faster the challenger overtakes the leader, the more likely war is.<sup>8</sup>

Woosang Kim develops a theory of Alliance Transitions Model, which he describes as revised power transition theory.<sup>9</sup> The role of alliances is viewed differently by power transition and alliance transitions theory. Kim hypothesized that alliance parity, a balance of capabilities between opposing alliance coalitions, is associated with an increased probability of major war. Alliance parity is associated with an appreciably higher probability of war, while traditional power transition hypotheses regarding dyadic parity, dyadic transitions, and speed of transition are not empirically supported by the evidence.

In general, power transition theory by Organski is more applicable to explain prior to the industrialization revolution, and alliance transition model could be effective to show demonstrate power shift among great powers and probability of war before and after industrialization revolution occurred in international politics.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 김우상, *신한국책략3*, 세창출판사, 2012

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan M. DiCicco, and Jack Levy, "Power Shifts and Problem Shifts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.35, no.6(December 1999), pp. 675-704

<sup>10</sup> Woosang Kim, "Power Transitions and Great Power War", *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 35, no 4 (November 1991), pp. 833-850; Woosang Kim, "Power Transitions and Great Power War from Westphalia to Waterloo", *World Politics*, vol. 45, no 1 (October 1992), pp.153-172

#### **4. Research Methodology and Sources**

The purpose of this study is to analyze China's negotiating position in UNFCCC before and after 2008 global financial crisis to occur. China's negotiating attitude in climate change conventions, in particular, after financial crisis occurred will be examined within the analytic framework power transition and alliance transitions theories. Based on its changed negotiating attitude, analysis on China's strategy in response to climate change conventions also will be made. According to power transition theory, the causes of power conflict among nations are mainly associated with the rapid economic growth of a challenger and power conflicts among alliances. Together, peace also is threatened when a challenging power's level of dissatisfaction is higher.

In this study, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will be considered as a hierarchical system, according to power transition theory. China's international status is rapidly elevated after 2008 global financial crisis. Thus, this study explores how China's rapid growth shaped into China's negotiating stance in UNFCCC. Together, the role of alliance is viewed as a crucial factor in the field of climate change negotiations for China and find out how China's climate change strategy and its response have been changed.

In order to analyze China's change in the field of climate change diplomacy, in particular, negotiating stance and attitude in UNFCCC before and after 2008 global

financial crisis, statements of China's delegations for climate change are referred, including the policy speeches, policy reports and papers concerning climate change before and after the conventions of climate change. Government documents, media reports, and official documents released from related agencies and institutions are actively used for reference.

## **II. China's Negotiating Stance in UNFCCC before 2008**

### **Global Financial Crisis**

Climate change is becoming increasingly important in world politics, as international cooperation in response to the challenges has launched in 1990s. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was founded in 1998 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and its findings are a basis for the international negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. UNFCCC was adopted at United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992 and took effect in March 1994. As climate change developed into an important international issue attracting attention from scientist and policy makers around the world, China responded by initiating the coordination of its own climate policy. A national Climate Change Coordination Group was established to facilitate the work of formulating China's positions for the future international climate negotiations. Not only at national level, but China was actively participating in the international climate negotiations to

successfully create a convention.<sup>11</sup> All adhering countries participate in developing a long term goal for the prevention of global warming and set up basic principles and obligations under the UNFCCC. Kyoto Protocol was adopted for effective greenhouse gas reduction at COP-3 held in Tokyo, Japan in 1997. The protocol has the greenhouse gas reduction obligation of UNFCCC; thereby 38 countries were mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a level 5.2% below their average for 1990, introduced three market-based mechanisms, so- called Kyoto Mechanisms.<sup>12</sup> Despite active participation from the beginning of the convention, China has shown suspicious and conservative stance in climate change negotiations.

This chapter maps China's stance in the climate change negotiations between the period of its entry to UNFCCC and before 2008 Global Financial Crisis. It firstly focuses on China's stance and behavior from the preliminary stage as a major participant, and what factors have shaped into its negotiating attitude. Together, it elucidates China's negotiating strategy to respond climate change challenges.

## **1. China's Stance and Position on UNFCCC**

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<sup>11</sup> China signed the Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) in June 1992 and ratified it in 1994 as the fifth country in the world.

<sup>12</sup> As an additional means of meeting targets of UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol introduced three market-based mechanisms; Emission Trading, Joint Implementation, Clean Development, creating what is now know as the Kyoto Mechanism.

## 1) UNFCCC and China's Environmental Stance

Given its size, population, rapid economic growth and heavy domestic reliance on coal, it is evident that China's development path will affect the world's environment more than that of any other nation. China has demonstrated to the world that it is making a tremendous effort at fighting against global warming, but at the same time the implementation of the climate change policy was still limited by many factors, both domestically and internationally. China's climate change policy was greatly constrained by its need to eradicate poverty and achieve the goal of rapid economic development.<sup>13</sup> It is impossible to advance beyond the reality of China's economic development, although Chinese government is aware of the importance of the issues, such as environmental protection, health care, and educational development.<sup>14</sup> China's problems with environmental protection have a geographical, demographical, ideological and historical origin that affects its level of cooperation. This resulted in Chinese definition of sustainable development which became an impediment in the negotiations for environmental cooperation and environmental protection with Chinese characteristics implied sustaining the environment for development. Former Chairman of National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) and a leader of the environmental movement

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<sup>13</sup> Zhang, Zhihong (2003): 'The Forces behind China's Climate Change Policy: Interests, Sovereignty, Prestige' in Harris, P. G. (ed.) *Global Warming and East Asia: the Domestic and International Politics of Climate Change*. London and New York: Routledge, pp.66-85.

<sup>14</sup> Morten Boas, "The Asian Development Bank and Environmental Diplomacy: Limits to the Technocratic Consensus," in Paul G. Harris, ed., *International Environmental Cooperation*(Boulder, Colo.: University Press of Colorado, 2002), p. 109

in China, Song Jian stated at the 1992 UN conference on Environmental and Development (UNCED) that “To talk about environment in isolation from ecological development and technological progress means an environmental protection devoid of environmental policies”.<sup>15</sup>

China has approached to climate change not as a scientific but predominantly development issue. Starting in the 1980s, China gave the State Meteorological Administration the responsibility of advising the government on policy options in international negotiations surrounding the UNFCCC. As political awareness and sensitivity surrounding climate change increased in the late 1990s, this role shifted to the more powerful State Development and Planning Commission, which has since evolved into the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). The NDRC also serves as the primary energy policy decision making authority in China. It is now home to the National Coordination Committee on Climate Change, which oversees climate activities within the NDRC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Science and Technology, and the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA). This move resulted in adjusting negotiators from State Science and Technology Commission (SSTC) and National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) to climate change conventions, thus at COP-1 in 1995, there was only one official negotiator from NEPA.<sup>16</sup> Today, the

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<sup>15</sup> Jian. S, "China's position on Environment and Development", Beijing Review, 5 June, pp 8-12, 1992

<sup>16</sup> Economy, Elizabeth, "Negotiating the Terrain of Global Climate Change Policy in the Soviet Union and China: Linking International and Domestic Decision-making Pathways". PhD Thesis. Michigan: University of Michigan. 1994

NDRC and MFA are responsible for formulating China's international negotiation positions.<sup>17</sup>

## **2) Standpoint of Climate Change Mechanism**

China faced with increasing international pressure from the 1990s, due to its emergence as the largest global emitter followed by rapid economic growth. International attention to climate change in particular elevated by United States and other western countries with raising 'China Threat', 'Climate Threat'.<sup>18</sup> China's heavy reliance on fossil fuels implies large increases in CO<sub>2</sub> emission. China's and other developing countries' GHG emissions were amount to fifty five percent which takes more than half amount of the world GHG emissions, thereby developed countries and the U.S. in particular continued to push for commitments for developing countries. In 1999 at COP-5 in Bonn Germany, the head of Chinese delegation Liu Jiang stated that "It is impossible for the Chinese government to undertake any obligation of greenhouse gas emission reduction before China attains the level of a medium-developed country. However, China will continue striving to abate the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in line with her own sustainable development strategy, and will continue actively promoting and

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<sup>17</sup> Ho-Ching Lee, "China and the Climate Change Agreements: Science, Development and Diplomacy", *Confronting Environmental Change in East & Southeast Asia*(edited by Paul G. Harris), pp.148, 2005

<sup>18</sup> 国家发展和改革委员会主任马凯：驳“中国能源威胁论”，<http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/49169/49170/4991612.html> (accessed: 2012. 8. 18)

participating in international cooperation”.<sup>19</sup>

In general, China was skeptical both to the climate change negotiations and to the implementation of Kyoto Mechanism. China remained suspicious its stance on climate change conventions within the framework of UN and other measures in response to climate change. Consequently, at COP3 China and other developing countries objected to Emission Trading, arguing that it would not reduce emissions, and they proposed to delete it from the Protocol.<sup>20</sup> In 1992 at the seventh INC session, China was skeptical when the idea of JI (Joint Implementation) was introduced. At INC-8 there were discussions about broadening JI to include developing countries on a voluntary basis; however, Chinese negotiators viewed JI as an instrument created primarily to benefit developed countries helping them to avoid domestic actions and it could be a means of introducing commitments for developing countries, shifting responsibility from Annex I to non-Annex I Parties.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Chinese opposed a new protocol on the grounds of scientific uncertainty, saying that more research would be needed before further steps could be discussed. The Chinese delegation stated that “The Conventions is like a big pie, if you try to swallow the whole pie in one gulp, you will choke,” and warned against “more haste, less speed,” calling for “first step first”. JI was up for discussion through

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<sup>19</sup> Zhang, Zhihong (2003)

<sup>20</sup> Tangen, Heggelund and Buen (2001): ‘China’s Climate Change Positions: At a Turning Point?’ Energy & Environment, Vol. 12, Nos. 2&3, 2001, pp 237-251.

<sup>21</sup> Earth Negotiations Bulletin (1997a): ‘Summary of the Third Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change’, Vol. 12, No. 76.

COP-1 and COP-2. China and the G77 expressed their skepticism fearing that the introduction of JI projects involving developing countries could be on the expense of financing and technology transfers stipulated in the UNFCCC.<sup>22</sup>

## **2. China's Principled Stance**

Negotiating stance and attitude to international climate change conventions could be connected with how the leaders perceive environmental issues. In the view of realist, nations' stance and position are likely to be formulated by government officials and could have close relations with national interests to maximize of the time. Although China's leaders are increasingly concerned about climate change, both in terms of its impact on the country and its international political ramifications, the issue has not surpassed economic development as a policy priority. Many in china still believe that China needs to focus on the primary task of modernization before making any commitments to climate change mitigation. To understand China's stance and attitude to climate change, the chapter explores China's climate change principles and what factors are driven to formulate the principled stance.

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<sup>22</sup> China Ministry of Science & Technology (ed.), *The Background Materials for Climate Change*, unpublished paper on file with authors, pp. 3–10, 1998, ENB (1996): 'Summary of the Second Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change', Vol. 12, No. 38.

## 1) Top Agenda: Economic Development

In 1990s, China and other developing countries did not consider climate change as a scientific issue rather than dominated political issues to cooperate with, because they view sustainable development as sustained development and put economic development and alleviation of poverty before the environment.<sup>23</sup> In 1991, China convened Beijing Ministerial Conference of Developing Countries on the Environment and Development where 41 developing countries gathered to create a united bargaining front for Kyoto Protocol and UNFCCC. Through the meeting, China and developing countries set forth a principled negotiating stand asserting the need for international cooperation, the right to development, opposition to interference in the internal affairs of states, and demands for financial assistance and technology transfer. The developing countries declared a principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ and have requested developed countries to support environmental funding and technical assistance on the basis of the principle. These principles also constituted China’s position on climate change, established during the 1990s and Chinese stance in environmental negotiations has not been altered since 1972.

The compromised stance on international climate change conventions among

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<sup>23</sup> Joanna I. Lewis & Kelly Sims Gallagher, Energy and Environment in China: Achievements and Enduring Challenges, in *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy* 259 (Regina S. Axelrod et al. eds., CQ Press 2011)

developing nations has guided to china's basic principles<sup>24</sup> in response to climate change conventions. First principle is to address climate change within the broader framework of the country's national sustainable development strategy, thus international society has reached to a consensus. Second one is to follow the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. In keeping with the principle, china and other developing countries called on developed nation to fulfill their responsibilities according to the principle. Under the principle, developed countries also have to provide financial and technical assistance to the developing countries. Third, following the notion of 'common but differentiated responsibility', China believes very strongly that it should not be forced to take on burdens associated with climate change while it remains relatively poor and until the developed states take concrete action of their own. Chinese officials believe that the industrialized, wealthy states of the world must take the responsibility for global warming because of their historic emissions of greenhouse gases. The primary goal of developing countries like China is to develop their economy and eradicate poverty, thus developing countries can not implement climate change measures not as much effective as developed countries will do. Third one is to address both climate change mitigation and adaptation on the same basis. Chinese government acknowledges that mitigation and adaptation are key factors to tackle the challenges, yet mitigation issues could be addressed in the long term, whereas adaptation is urgently needed. Forth principle is to integrate climate change-related policies with programs for national and social economic

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<sup>24</sup> National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) released official documents regarding China's climate change strategy; "中国应对气候变化国家方案", 2007.6

development. The fifth principle is to rely on technological advancement for effectively mitigating and adapting to climate change. Based on the technical advancement, Chinese government will develop new energy, renewable energy, and new technology. Last but not least, China will be actively and extensively participate in international cooperation on climate change meaning working with international society to deal climate change challenges.<sup>25</sup>

In sum up, China's policies on climate change, both domestically and internationally, are officially guided the six principles; control of GHG gas emission, strengthen capability of adaptation to climate change, technological advancement to climate change, awareness raising of climate change, building climate change related agencies and measures. Overall, what comes from China's environmental stance indicates that environmental issues do not take over China's national objectives and they all are engaged into economic, social, and international goals. China's level of engagement to climate change depends on how China balances these objectives in the long run.<sup>26</sup> Generally speaking, what comes from these principles is a clear indication that climate change is taken seriously, but also that it does not take priority over China's other

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<sup>25</sup> 2009.5.20 落实巴厘路线图:中国政府关于哥本哈根气候变化会议的立场,

[http://www.sdpc.gov.cn/zcfb/zcfbqt/2009qt/t20090521\\_280387.htm](http://www.sdpc.gov.cn/zcfb/zcfbqt/2009qt/t20090521_280387.htm) (accessed: 2012. 4. 20)

<sup>26</sup> Ho-Ching Lee, "China and the Climate Change Agreements: Science, Development and Diplomacy", *Confronting Environmental Change in East & Southeast Asia*(edited by Paul G. Harris), pp.148, 2005

national objectives.<sup>27</sup>

## 2) Lack of Capacity

Since China joined IPCC in December 1990, it has still remained conservative and uncooperative stance, although China actively participated into climate change convention at the first stage. Due to the lack of government support and finance, China was not capable enough to develop technical skill to engage climate change conventions, thereby China had to depend on climate change data and reports conducted by developed countries. In January 1991, Song Jian stressed that China has no choice but to pose passive stance when it participates climate change negotiations due to the lack of capability to deal climate change.<sup>28</sup> China was not ready to have its own mitigation inventories and climate change data or study to actively engage international conferences. At the initial stage of climate change conventions, sacrificing economic growth for environmental protection was far beyond China's capability.<sup>29</sup> Chinese official from Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "Flexible Mechanism is very complicated to understand and we are not completely aware of that,"<sup>30</sup> adding that "thus, China will be

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<sup>27</sup> Lewis & Gallagher (2011), p269

<sup>28</sup> 国务院环境保护委员会秘书处，国务院环境保护委员会文件汇编（二），北京：中国环境科学出版社，1995，pp.249

<sup>29</sup> Zhang, W, Vertinsky, I, Ursacki, T and Nemetz, P, "Can China be a clean tiger? Growth strategies and environmental realities", Pacific Affairs, vol 72, no 1, pp23, 1999

<sup>30</sup> Interviews with Zhao Jun and Zhang Maoming, China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3–6 March 2003; Li Rui, China Ministry of Finance, 23 March 2003.

remained ‘No Voice’ regarding the issues”.<sup>31</sup> China remained uncertain about climate change impact and it caused Chinese climate change negotiations without scientific acquaintance. China concerned about climate change since it could impede China’s economic growth, yet the leaders still considered climate change conventions as one of the international environmental conventions.<sup>32</sup>

China’s initial position in the negotiations are founded on China being a developing country which should not be required to reduce its emissions in a way that harms further development. As a developing country China has limited capacity to reduce emissions and lacks the necessary technological solutions to do so. Environment stance of Chinese leaders does not surpass economic development, and due to the reason, China has approached to climate change conventions in order to attain international interests as a political priority, not for the scientific reason. In terms of combating the climate change challenges, China believes that developed countries should take the responsibilities under the historical reason, thereby, its stance of the conventions was not positive. Together, the causes of remaining conservative and relatively passive stance of Chinese leaders were derived from lack of understanding about climate change mechanisms.

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<sup>31</sup> Interviews with Huang Jing and Zhou Hailin, China Ministry of Science and Technology, 15–22 April, 2003.

<sup>32</sup> 庄贵阳, “后京都时代国际气候治理与中国的战略选择”, 世界经济与政治, 2008年 第8期, P.9

### **3. A North-South Divide**

In UNFCCC, due to the China's climate change stance and its dissatisfaction derived from convention framework and rules led by western nations, developed and developing countries including China have conflicted at climate change negotiations under Kyoto Protocol. China, the second largest CO<sub>2</sub> emitter, posed still uncooperative attitude in the negotiations, resulted from a huge gap with developed countries and dissatisfaction about existing framework of climate change conventions. China led the developing countries in climate change negotiations, voicing their interests against developed countries. This sees China being pulled into the North versus South ideological battle, sometimes being more recalcitrant in multilateral negotiations than it would actually like to be.<sup>33</sup>

#### **1) Developed versus Developing Countries**

From preliminary stage of climate change conventions, China has strongly opposed intervention of China's sovereignty with regard to global issues by other nations and international institutions, namely climate issues. In 1992, Chinese Premier Li Peng stated that "International cooperation should be strengthened on the basis of respecting national sovereignty" and introduced the Chinese notion of 'Environmental Sovereignty' which argues that developing countries including China should enjoy full use of their own

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<sup>33</sup> Hass, P., Keohane, R. and Levy, M. (1993) *Institutions for the Earth: Sources of Effective International Environmental Protection*, Cambridge, Mass and London: MIT Press

natural resources and utilize Economic Rights and Responsibilities according to own priorities and the 1972 declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.<sup>34</sup>

China's negotiating attitude caused conflicts with developed nations and in particular, opposing opinions between major emitters, China and United States.

## **A. United States**

A leader of developed countries United States and China being a leader of developing countries are key players in climate change negotiations, and their amount of GHG emissions account for more than forty percent of global emissions. China stresses that developed countries have mainly caused environmental problems including climate change challenges though industrialization thereby developed and developing countries should not take the same responsibility according to principle of equity. However, U.S. appealed for urgent action on climate change requiring developing countries including China to actively cooperate on climate change, adding that climate change challenges can not be solved without their participation because developing countries are the major emitters.

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<sup>34</sup> Administration Center for Chinese Agenda 21, The Documents of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, pp.1-10

In March 1995 at COP-1 in Berlin, Germany, China and U.S. conflicted over obligations and responsibility of climate change. COP-1 adopted the Berlin Mandate to begin a process for negotiations a follow-up protocol to the convention, containing more specific obligations and established the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM) to begin this work.

Some developed countries and the U.S. continued to push for commitments for developing countries, even though developing countries have no concrete abatement commitments according the Mandate. U.S. president Bill Clinton called for ‘meaningful participation’ from developing countries, yet China contradicted U.S. to attempts to include developing countries into reduction commitments.<sup>35</sup>

In December 1997, prior to COP3, President Clinton made a speech in Washington, stating that global warming “must have a global solution that cannot come without China’s participation.” and again called for “meaningful participation” by China and the rest of the G-77.<sup>36</sup> Vice President Al Gore flew in to Kyoto and met Chinese President Jiang Zemin in an unsuccessful attempt to get China to agree to eventually reduce its emissions in exchange for “generous US funding”.<sup>37</sup> At COP3(1997), there was much

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<sup>35</sup> ENB(1998): The fourth meeting of the conference of the parties to the UN framework convention on climate change, vol.12, No.87

<sup>36</sup> ENB(1997): “COP3 Report,” Earth Negotiations Bulletin, 12(76), <http://www.iisd.ca/vol1999/200> (accessed: 2012. 5. 12)

<sup>37</sup> Cooper, D.(1999) “Kyoto Protocol and China: Global Warming’s sleeping Giant,” Georgetown International Environmental Law Review 11 Winter: 401-437.

heated debate between developed and developing nations over new commitments of Kyoto Protocol including developing countries' binding commitments to curb GHG emission. China refused to be bound by new commitments, reiterating the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility". Li Peng explained that "All countries should take action appropriate to their own conditions".<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) spokesman, Tang Guoqiang, made clear that China would "shoot down any treaty that would hamper developing countries' hopes and prosperity " and said that "The Kyoto Protocol should be limited to developed countries." Gore said that the United States would "walk away" from a deal that did not include "meaningful participation by key developing countries"<sup>39</sup> However, Zhong Shukong, special advisor to MOFA and senior negotiator at Kyoto, criticized industrialized nations for failing to cut energy consumption while asking China to make sacrifices: " Ours are survival emissions. Theirs are luxury emissions. In the developed world, only two people ride in a car, and you want us to give up riding a bus."<sup>40</sup> At COP-4 in Buenos Aires, removed article on voluntary commitments for developing countries was brought up again by the U.S. China and India recalled that the debate at COP-3 had rejected the article voluntary commitments because it was an idea not implied in the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

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<sup>38</sup> Bolands, H.A.(1997) "China to Champion Developing World at Kyoto Talks", Agence France Press(November 27, 1997)

<sup>39</sup> Tacey, E. (1997) "Greenhouse Treaty in Balance as China-US Row Comes to a Head," Kobayashi, Yuka (2003) 'Navigating Between "Luxury" and "Survival" Emissions : tensions in China's multilateral and bilateral climate change diplomacy.' In: Harris, Paul, (ed.), *Global Warming and East Asia: The Domestic and International Politics of Climate Change*. London; New York: Routledge, pp. 86-108.

<sup>40</sup> Boulton, L.(1997), "China Attacks Proposed Gas Curbs at Conference", Duffy, A.(1997) "Emissions Treaty in Peril as Rich Nations Demand Concession from Poor", Harris , Paul, (ed.), (2003)

As far as CO2 emissions concerned, U.S is a number one emitter. However, the passive posture of U.S. was consistent in climate change conventions. Earth Summit in 1992, United States refused to sign on the specific target for reduction and called on additional study, namely scientific uncertainty. In Kyoto negotiation, United States tried to postpone its obligation of reduction arguing that environmental challenges can not be effectively implemented without developing countries' participation. Consequently, the passive posture of the United States led to decide on Kyoto withdrawal and remained passive and negative stance until the end of Bush administration. <sup>41</sup>

China and U.S. have been criticized as “an alliance of denial” or “a suicide pact” for postponing their participation, on the pretext of the other party's non-participation or the non-implementation of reduction commitments.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Before the U.S. delegation departed to the conference on the climate change in Kyoto in 1997, the Senate unanimously passed the Byrd-Hagel resolution, which states the United States must not sign any agreement on greenhouse gas emissions unless it stipulates specific commensurate reductions for developing nations. This resolution has influenced the debates and negotiations over the 1997 treaty.

[http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\\_call\\_lists/roll\\_call\\_vote\\_cfm.cfm?congress=105&session=1&vote=00205](http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=105&session=1&vote=00205)

<sup>42</sup> 신범식, 기후변화의 국제정치와 미-중관계, 國際政治論叢 제51집 1호, 2011

## **B. Bilateral ties**

China and United States, respectively the world's largest developed and developing countries, have become far more active partners in tackling environmental issues. The cooperation between two countries started with Sino-U.S. Forum on Environment and Development in 1997. The two largest producers of greenhouse gases became active in developing reducing GHG emissions, and thus mitigating the potentially catastrophic effects of climate change. The collaboration of two giants has reached out to deploying low carbon coal technologies, improving energy efficiency and conservation, developing an advanced electric grid and promoting renewable energy. However, there are obstacles have constrained on climate change cooperation between United States and China; the complexity of global climate change politics, U.S constraints of national politics and China's strong opposition to address obligations.<sup>43</sup>

China and Europe have highlighted clean energy cooperation as a key pillar of their partnership. The EU in particular considers the combat against climate change to be an important element in the development of a source of soft power which strengthens its own know-how and technology, the contribution it makes to managing projects with developing countries like china in a coordinated way.<sup>44</sup> In 1994, the EU and China began to explore clean energy as a new area for collaboration. The first joint Energy Conference,

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<sup>43</sup> 신범식 (2011)

<sup>44</sup> Duncan Freeman and Jonathan Holslag, Climate for Cooperation The EU, China and Climate Change, Brussels Institute of Contemporary Chinese Studies, September 2009

organized in 1996, identified various technologies that the EU sought to promote in cooperation with national and local Chinese governments. In 1999, a delegation of the European Parliament, the European Commission and high-ranking representatives from the industry, called on China to make an assessment of the co-operation between the EU and China in energy-related areas. In 2003, a vice-minister-level Environment Dialogue was started which coincided with the approval of the Energy and Environment Program (EEP).<sup>45</sup>

The EU and China launched their Partnership on Climate Change at their bilateral Summit in September 2005. The partnership particularly aims at strengthening the dialogue on climate change policies and exploring practical co-operation.<sup>46</sup> Apart from the efforts at the level of the European Commission, various member states have their own initiatives. Table 1 provides an overview of clean energy projects financed by Member States official development projects in China.

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<sup>45</sup> See the special webpage of the European Commission: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/china.htm>, more information about the Energy Environment Program(EEP), see: [www.eep.org.cn/index.php](http://www.eep.org.cn/index.php)

<sup>46</sup> Joint declaration on The EU-China Partnership on Climate Change, Brussels, 2 December 2005, China-EU Partnership on Climate Change Rolling Work Plan, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 October 2006 and European Commission and China step up co-operation on clean coal technologies and other energy issues, European Commission, 20 February 2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Germany	3.0	5.6	9.3	7.8	13.0	4.0	54.7	1.1	98.5
Spain	1.3	0.0	0.1	0.4	14.8	1.9	2.2	32.4	53.2
Denmark	4.1	2.7	1.2	9.3	3.4	5.4	3.2	0.9	30.1
Finland	0.0	0.1	2.9	4.0	5.5	5.0	2.3	0.1	19.8
Netherlands	1.0	8.9	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	11.4
Italy	0.0	5.3	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	10.5
UK	5.7	2.1	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	9.2
France	0.9	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4
Sweden	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8
Belgium	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Total	16.0	24.7	14.7	28.4	38.5	16.4	62.4	37.2	238.2

[Table 1] ODA in the Chinese Energy Sector per Donor (Million Euro)

Sources: OECE-DAC Database and member states governments  
Brussels Institute of Contemporary Chinese Studies

Bilateral relations between Japan and China initiated in 1993. Based on UNDP database, Japan is the number one donor to China totaling \$102 million in environmental assistance from 1993 to 1995.<sup>47</sup> Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto pledged to increase ODA between \$9 billion and \$10 billion in the span of five years, and Japan's MITI initiated the Green Aid Plan (GAP) which today has thirty-nine energy related projects in China.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> China Environment and Sustainable Development Resource Book II: A Compendium of Donor Activities, Beijing: UNDP 1996

<sup>48</sup> "Japan Fund for Global Environment" in ODA section of JMOFA webpage, <http://www.mofa.go.jp>, Hirono, Ryokichi, Japan's Environmental Cooperation with China during the Last Two Decades, Asia-Pacific Review, Volume 14, Number 2, November 2007, pp.1-16(16)

## **2) G77 and China Coalition: G77+1**

In June 1992, forty-one developing countries were invited to China for the “Beijing Ministerial Conference of Developing Countries on Environment and Development” to develop a united bargaining position for the UNCED. During the conference, the group of 77 and China established the largest bloc emerged in November 1991. This was an outgrowth of two milestone events and their resulting documents, ‘Beijing Declaration’ which established a more coherent and orchestrated developing country stance for the future environmental negotiations.

The following year, Chinese delegation reiterated developing countries stance on climate change as china stated in Agenda 21, and recalled its economic growth and environmental protection stand as well. Developing countries including China declared that they are seeking their own development while promoting international cooperation to deal with climate change, asserting that developed countries should take the historical responsibility of the North, more aid and technological transfer, and respect for sovereignty. Throughout the declaration of G77 and China, China takes its role as a leader and representative of the developing world, including in the context of the climate change negotiations.

## **A. Opposition of Carbon Reduction Commitment**

The G77 and China have been quite successful in their effort to keep the question of commitments for developing countries off the official agenda. At COP-3, developing countries including China strongly called for developed countries to accept Chinese view. As a result, China succeeded in deleting an article on voluntary commitments for developing countries.<sup>49</sup> The relations between developed and developing countries have been characterized by distrust and hostility over the emissions reduction commitment. Consequently, developed countries had no choice but to accept developing countries opinion. After China signed the Kyoto Protocol, Gore said that “We understand your first priority is to lift your citizens from poverty. This is your right... it will not be denied”.<sup>50</sup> The removed article which China and India suggested on voluntary commitments for developing countries was brought up again by the US at COP-4(1998) in Buenos Aires. China and G77 said that the idea of voluntary reductions for non-Annex countries is not implied in the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’. Chinese delegation expressed voluntary commitments would not promote the FCCC and are just a way to avoid existing commitments by some Parties.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, China concerned that voluntary commitments would create a new category of Parties under the FCCC and

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<sup>49</sup> ENB (1997a): Summary of the Third Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Vol. 12, No.76

<sup>50</sup> South China Morning Post (1997a) “Poorer Nations See Solution to Gas Curbs More”, Harris , Paul, (ed.) (2003)

<sup>51</sup> ‘Heads of Chinese Delegation Expounds Stance on Global Climate Change at COP3’, People’s Daily (9 December 1997), <http://www.ccchina.gov.cn/index1.html>

destroy the unity of “G77 and China”<sup>52</sup> The Chinese negotiators remarked that developed country emissions were projected to be 5% above 1990 levels by 2000, and 13% above 1990 levels by 2010. As a result, developing countries’ survival emissions should be distinguished from developed countries’ luxury emissions rather than forcing developing countries to ‘remove food from people’s tables’, developed countries should change patterns of production and consumption.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, China’s attitude in climate change conventions led China to gain a reputation as ‘hard-liner’.<sup>54</sup>

## **B. Opposition on FCCC Mechanisms**

As a spokesman of developing countries, China played a very essential role. China has not only protected national interest related to environmental problems, but also obtained excellent diplomatic results pushing on the demand of developing countries in international environmental regimes. China has adhered to negative stance concerning implementation of FCCC Mechanisms<sup>55</sup>, and it refused the mechanisms on the grounds that it would export emissions across boundaries and violate human rights and international equity. Chinese officials were especially vocal in expressing these concerns

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<sup>52</sup> ENB (1998): ‘Summary of the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change’, Vol. 12, No. 97.

<sup>53</sup> Heggelund, Gørild (2005): ‘What are the Domestic and International Developments in China's Climate Change Policymaking?’ Paper presented at the 46th ISA Conference, Hawaii, 2-5 March 2005-02-25.

<sup>54</sup> 唐更克,何秀珍,本约朗,刘文俊, 中国参与全球气候变化国际协议的立场与挑战,世界经济与政治, 2002年第08期

<sup>55</sup> Tangen, Heggelund and Buen (2001): ‘China’s Climate Change Positions: At a Turning Point?’, Energy & Environment, Vol. 12, No. 2&3, 2001, pp 237-251

claiming that “concepts such as emissions banking, emissions permits and AIJ are attempts to stray from commitments”, and would “shift the responsibility for action from rich to poor nations and encourage developed countries to continue polluting the atmosphere while hindering development of the Southern hemisphere”.<sup>56</sup> China and other developing countries objected to emission trading, arguing that it would not reduce emissions, and suggested to delete it from the Protocol. By doing this China and other developing countries eventually succeeded in delaying the pace at which trading will come into effect.<sup>57</sup>

### **C. Multilateral Cooperative Frameworks within UNFCCC**

China takes ‘the G77 and China’ approach mainly in multilateral negotiations, and bilaterally it pays more attention to its domestic needs. At bilateral level, some developed countries such as Japan and EU have provided aid regarding the environment and technology for China. However, at multilateral level, China has associated itself with the G77 despite not having the problem of limited weight in acting alone. Rather than acting alone, it can use the G77 block as protection against being singled out.

From the early stage of climate change conventions, China posed a defensive posture pertaining to implementing Kyoto Mechanism. China was notably weak in technological

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<sup>56</sup> 中国代表团团长刘江部长于1999年在气候变化公约第五届缔约方会议上的发言, <http://www.ccchina.gov.cn/cn/NewsInfo.asp?NewsId=3876> (accessed: 2012. 8. 16)

<sup>57</sup> ENB (1997a)

capability to measure and collect data; thereby negotiations dealing with mechanisms delivered little outcomes. In 1999 at the fifth Conference of the Parties, one of the important developments was the changing attitude towards the flexible mechanisms. China was initially critical to proposals of flexible mechanism involving developing countries, including the Clean Development Mechanisms when it was proposed as a part of the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>58</sup> At COP-6 China spoke in favorable terms of the Mechanisms, and called the CDM a ‘win-win’ mechanism benefiting both developed and developing countries. This positive stance for CDM was strengthened at the COP-7 in Marrakech when China explicitly supported the Kyoto Mechanisms and even called for accelerating the launching of the CDM.<sup>59</sup> From initial skepticism to a more pragmatic focus on maximizing benefits, China’s position regarding the CDM had developed, and legal binding on emission reduction as well. At COP-8, China said that “Once developed countries have taken the lead in mitigating emissions, developing countries would be able to make a contribution”.<sup>60</sup> This comment was noted by observers as a possible sign that some developing countries are moving toward involvement in discussion for the future steps. The issue of future commitment by developing countries was brought up at COP-10 in Buenos Aires in December 2004 and this led to a split in the G77 and China coalition which to this point had maintained a more or less unified front in their refusal to discuss

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<sup>58</sup> Zhang , Zhongxiang, “Reconstructing climate policy: how best to engage China and other developing countries?”, East-West Center, September 2003

<sup>59</sup> Zhang, Zhongxiang (2003)

<sup>60</sup> Pew Center (2003): ‘COP-9 Summary’

[www.pewclimate.org/what\\_s\\_being\\_done/in\\_the\\_world/cop9/summary.cfm](http://www.pewclimate.org/what_s_being_done/in_the_world/cop9/summary.cfm)

anything that could lead to new commitments.<sup>61</sup> Despite the differentiated interests, China stayed into G77 solidarity.<sup>62</sup>

### **III. China's Altered Negotiating Attitude in UNFCCC after 2008 Global Financial Crisis**

Global climate politics causes multi-faceted and complex problems that involve the global, regional, national perspectives and the issues of developed and developing countries and the class. For that matter, the politics of global climate change consist of a multi-dimensional process.<sup>63</sup> At international level, one nations' posture and negotiating attitude are associated with expansion of national power on time-series and how the leaders perceive national interests. The rise of China, after 2008 global financial crisis has caused china's change of international behavior, in particular negotiating attitude on climate change conventions, from being 'defensive', 'conservative' and 'skeptical' to flexible, cooperative and positive.

This chapter aims at exploring how china's negotiating attitude and strategic view on climate change negotiations have been altered after global financial crisis occurred in

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<sup>61</sup> Pew Center (2004): 'COP-10 Summary',

[www.pewclimate.org/what\\_s\\_being\\_done\\_in\\_the\\_world/cop10/summary.cfm](http://www.pewclimate.org/what_s_being_done_in_the_world/cop10/summary.cfm)

<sup>62</sup> Joanna I. Lewis, "China's Strategic Priorities in International Climate Change Negotiations", *The Washington Quarterly*, winter 2007-08

<sup>63</sup> 원동욱, 포스트교토체제 하 중국의 기후정책과 미중관계, EAI 중국연구패널 보고서 no.5, 2012

2008.

## **1. An Altered Position on UNFCCC**

As China's international status elevated sharply, China has changed itself from backward participant to active participant in all course of building up international environmental regimes. Its change shows that with the power shift in the international climate change conventions such as Copenhagen Conference (COP15), 2010 Tianjin Climate Change Conference in China, Cancun Conference (COP16) and Durban Conference (COP17).

### **1) UNFCCC COP-15 in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009**

As world leaders poured into the Copenhagen Conference (COP15) in Denmark 2009, there was a sense of expectation to result in a binding agreement among governments to substantially reduce pollution-causing climate change. As Barack Obama who has strong willingness to fight with climate change and strengthen leadership in climate conventions was appointed as a president of the United States in 2008, there was a palpable sense of expectation to FCCC.

United States and China, the major players in the conventions, gained attentions from all around the world even before the conference started. Likewise in China,

Copenhagen Conference was in the headlined for days and had all the media attention.<sup>64</sup> At the conference in 2009, there were sheer conflicts between developed and developing countries. Surely, between U.S. and China, there existed obstacles for the cooperation. United States President Barack Obama came on strong and pushed China to change its position on transparency of emissions cuts. On the issues of accountability and transparency, he commented that “I don’t know how you have an international agreement where we are not sharing information to be sure we are meeting commitments. It doesn’t make sense. That would be a hollow victory”.<sup>65</sup> Other developed countries also pushed China to actively participate to combat the issues. Sarkozy, President of France, also called on China to fight climate change and said “The final result of Copenhagen conference depends on China”.<sup>66</sup> During the conference, China fought hard against strong US pressure to submit to a regime of international monitoring. The Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, walked out of the conference at one point, and sent a lowly protocol officer to negotiate with Barack Obama. Head of China’s delegation Xie Zhenhua stressed that “For Chinese, this was our sovereignty and our national interest”.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> China paid attention to Copenhagen conference, covered media, see; <http://www.huanqiu.com/zhuanti/world/climate2009/>, <http://discovery.163.com/cop15>, <http://news.sohu.com/s2009/copenhagenclimate/> etc

<sup>65</sup> Obama's Speech in Copenhagen: Right at China, <http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2009/12/obamas-speech-i.html> , “Breaking: India, China walk out of Copenhagen”, <http://hotair.com/archives/2009/12/18/breaking-india-china-walk-out-of-copenhagen/>

<sup>66</sup> Grading Obama's Copenhagen Speech, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/blogs/the-gaggle/2009/12/18/grading-obama-s-copenhagen-speech.html> (accessed: 2012. 9. 3)

<sup>67</sup> “China blamed as anger mounts over climate deal”, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/dec/20/china-blamed-copenhagen-climate-failure> (accessed: 2012.10.20)

The conflicts between two countries mainly derive from strategic differences which are difficult to be solved. First, United States called developing countries for active participation on setting CO2 emissions reduction targets, while developing countries argue that obligation and responsibility should be followed by equality and historical record. Second, concerning the voluntary emissions reduction and verification, China keeps with the principle of respective capabilities and has no concrete abatement commitments, whereas U.S. contradicts that it is meaningless to implement national emissions reduction without transparency and verification. Third, in terms of technical transfer and financial assistance by developed countries, developing countries express their frustration over the developed countries' limited transfer of technologies and insufficient financial support.

The Copenhagen summit, eventually, appeared to be falling victim to a standoff between United States and China.<sup>68</sup> China's ambassador for climate change, Yu Qingtai had interview with Western media stressing that the climate change summit was "a step in the right direction". He blamed that "During and before conference there was a concerted effort by a small group of developed countries who believed that by joining hands, they could force us to go beyond what we are responsible for or capable of. However,

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<sup>68</sup> "Copenhagen climate summit: confusion as 'historic deal' descends into chaos", <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/copenhagen-climate-change-confe/6842789/Copenhagen-climate-summit-confusion-as-historic-deal-descends-into-chaos.html>, "U.S., China deadlock in Copenhagen", <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/dec/17/us-china-deadlock-copenhagen/?page=all> (accessed: 2012. 10. 30)

Copenhagen Summit proved that those attempts will not be successful. In fact developed countries should have known better. So what they need to learn from this whole process is to make up their minds whether they want to pursue confrontation or co-operation with China.” He repeatedly blamed a breakdown of trust at the conference on rich nations ganging up on China.

## **2) Tianjin Climate Change Conference in China**

Tianjin Climate Conference took place from 4 to 9 October 2010 in Tianjin, China, as preparatory meetings for Cancun Conference. During the conference, all delegations from 175 governments discussed to make progress in defining what can be achieved at the UNFCCC in Cancun. During the conference, China and other developing countries have accused developed countries of failing to honor their commitments to curb greenhouse gases. The preparatory session delivered little but sheer conflicts between developed and developing countries. At the opening session, China’s State Councilor Dai Bingguo said China will continue playing an active and constructive part in the climate talks. He stressed that the climate change negotiations should stick to the basic framework of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol and the mandate of the Bali Road map and follow the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” and requested developed countries to set the targets to take the lead in reducing the greenhouse gases emissions and the arrangements should be made to provide adequate financial and

technological support to developing countries.<sup>69</sup> Xie Zhenhua, Deputy Director of the National Development and Reform Commission stressed on the duty of developed countries, saying “The more financial support developed countries provide to fight climate change, the earlier the implementation of carbon emissions reduction China begins, and afterwards it would lead to emission reduction.” China postured the offensive stance toward the developed countries, adding “Some developed countries which their GDP per capita exceeds 40,000 dollars did not reach the emission peak. How come China is being targeted when its GDP is merely 3,000 dollars”.<sup>70</sup> After the conference, China’s special representative for climate change conference, Huang Huikang told reports that “Our intervention is not to block discussions. We just want to keep the group’s discussion the right way. The key issue is the lack of substantive progress on the developed countries side”.<sup>71</sup>

### **3) From Hard-Liner to Flexible Cooperator; COP16, COP17**

Majority of the world leaders did not attend the Cancun Conference (COP-16)

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<sup>69</sup> “UN climate change talks open in Tianjin”, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-10/04/content\\_11377094.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-10/04/content_11377094.htm), Tianjin by numbers, <http://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/3864-Tianjin-by-numbers>(accessed: 2012. 10. 18)

<sup>70</sup> “中 텐진 유엔기후변화협약회의 진통'” , <http://news.mk.co.kr/newsRead.php?sc=30000022&cm=%EC%82%AC%ED%9A%8C%20%EC%A3%BC%EC%9A%94%EA%B8%B0%EC%82%AC&year=2010&no=541818&selFlag=&relatedcode=&wonNo=&slD=504> (accessed: 2012. 10. 23)

<sup>71</sup> “China Spurns Pledges in Climate-Change Accord, U.S.'s Stern Says”, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-10-08/china-spurns-pledges-in-cancun-climate-change-accord-u-s-s-stern-says.html> (accessed: 2012. 10. 25)

held in Cancun, Mexico in September 2010. China showed flexibility during the conference which is contrasted with China's negotiating attitude a year ago. China's top climate negotiator told that "China will continue to play a constructive role and adopt an open attitude in talking with other countries. We are confident progress can be made." Mr. Xie added that "Domestically, we are studying what our mitigation efforts should look like after 2020. Negotiations for the post-2020 targets should be based on the results of a review to be published in 2015."<sup>72</sup> China has previously rejected making its domestic emission goals binding, however, Chinese Foreign Ministry's envoy for climate change talks, Huang Huikang stated that "We can create a resolution and that resolution can be binding on China. Under the convention, China can even have a legally-binding decision. And make our efforts a part of international efforts".<sup>73</sup> The following year, China's negotiating attitude has been more proactive and positive at COP17 held in Durban, South Africa, saying that China could accept binding emissions reductions after 2020 as long as the U.S and other developed world emitters do most of the work in the meantime. Xie Zhenhua, one of the Chin's top climate negotiators told reporters that "We accept a legally binding arrangement from 2020 onward, and he added that "it's time to for us to see who is acting in a responsible way".<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> "China takes flexible attitude on climate talks", <http://ph.news.yahoo.com/china-takes-flexible-attitude-climate-talks-040003936.html> (accessed: 2012. 10. 18)

<sup>73</sup> More information of China's voluntary reductions, see: China flexible on UN climate target, <http://www.aljazeera.com/NEWS/AMERICAS/2010/12/201012754721865691.htm>; [http://www.greenstart.kr/USR\\_main.jsp??=MAIN/index](http://www.greenstart.kr/USR_main.jsp??=MAIN/index)

<sup>74</sup> "China Shakes Durban Climate Talks", <http://blogs.wsj.com/source/2011/12/05/china-shakes-durban-climate-talks> (accessed: 2012.10.25); "Durban Climate Talks and Bridging the Trust Gap", <http://www.chinausfocus.com/slider/durban-climate-talks-and-bridging-the-trust-gap/>

China's stance at climate change negotiations after global financial crisis in 2008 has been dramatically changed. Elevated China's international status caused by financial crisis has attracted attentions from U.S. and developed countries, thus it is inevitable to cooperate with China to tackle international affairs in particular in the field of climate change conventions. China and U.S have shown dissimilar standpoints at the global level and strategic differences at Copenhagen and Tianjin conferences. However, China has moved from passive hardliner to active cooperater at Cancun and Durban conference, showing an image of a responsible power.

## **2. An Altered Alliance Structure**

On the pretext of the other party's non-participation or the non-implementation of reduction commitments, China and U.S have debated over climate change. The two major CO<sub>2</sub> emitters are not able to shun climate change challenges that have repercussions for the future would result in little benefit of conflict between two countries. Despite the obstacles they have, there is an emerging chance of cooperation between two countries in the politics of climate change that would transform the alliance, the group of two so-called G2.

China has faced with increasing international pressure after 2008 global financial crisis to devote more attention to climate change, both due to its emergence as the largest global emitter, and its international status, thereby the pressure also influenced China's

strategic approach to climate change negotiations. G77 and China solidarity changed when China joined forces with a number of large and relatively well-off developing countries, so-called BASIC countries.

This chapter aims to map changes of China's alliance with developing countries and explore possibility of China-U.S. climate change cooperation under the G2.

## 1) G2

G2<sup>75</sup> is a proposed informal special relationship between the United States and China after global financial crisis and is initiated by Fred Bergsten director of the Peterson Institute for International Economics as primarily an economic relationship. One official from the U.S. had an interview with Japanese media, saying "China and U.S should move toward G2 in order to strengthen bilateral cooperation between two countries".<sup>76</sup> The notion of G2 has gained attentions in international society before and after Copenhagen conference, since China and U.S. are the major players at the convention, implying the impact of the interaction of China-U.S. relations on the

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<sup>75</sup> Last year Fred Bergsten, director of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, reiterated his views on G2 in the Foreign Affairs; Fred Bergsten, "A Partnership of Equals: How Washington Should Respond to China's Economic Challenge", Foreign Affairs, July/August 2008, <http://foreignaffairs.com/articles/64448/c-freed-bergsten/a-partnership-of-equals>

<sup>76</sup> 田一楓, "中美共治: 如何作出正确解讀", 2009  
<http://bbs.ifeng.com/viewthread.php?tid=3643961> (accessed: 2012.10.06)

development of a future climate regime.

As China represents rapid power in growth 2008 global financial crisis, U.S. dominant power has declined and dependency on China has been intensified. In fact, China is a number one foreign reserves holder and records a biggest trade surplus in the world. According to U.S. Department of Treasury, China holds U.S. government debt and a treasury bond of government agencies and corporation amount to \$14,640 billion in 2009 and U.S. trade deficit with China has increased from 19.2% to 43% for ten years.<sup>77</sup> U.S. economic dependency on China has been increased, for instance, U.S. called on China to additional purchase after global financial crisis,<sup>78</sup> and this shows that it is inevitable for U.S. to have strategic cooperation with China, a challenging state, to overcome global financial crisis and solve international affairs.

Conversely, China poses a passive stance on G2. Premier Wen Jiabao at the China-EU summit on May 20, 2009, declared that China's stance on G2. He stressed that "It is impossible for a couple of countries or a group of big powers to resolve all global issues. Multipolarization and multilateralism represent the larger trend and the will of people". He added that "Some say that world affairs will be managed solely by China and the United States. I think that view is baseless and wrong".<sup>79</sup> He Yapei, vice foreign minister,

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<sup>77</sup> See U.S Department of the Treasury: <http://www.treasury.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>78</sup> Morrison, Wayne M. 2009. "China and the Global Financial Crisis: Implications for the United States." Congressional Research Service Report June 3.

<sup>79</sup> 温家宝会见欧盟领袖 称中美共治世界无根据 <http://news.sohu.com/20090521/n264093389>.

also refused the notion of G2 and added that “Tackle climate change needs multilateral cooperation. United States and China has different obligation and responsibility on climate change. Therefore, it is inconsistent with the facts and law”.<sup>80</sup>

In general, China and U.S. have dissimilar viewpoints on G2. U.S. has faced with international pressure and criticism after its withdrawal of the Kyoto Protocol, and also the U.S. global leadership after 2008 global financial crisis has been declined. Likewise, China has been pressured to give more attention to fight climate change as the largest global emitter and the challenging power as well. However, Chinese denial to accept the notion of G2 implies corporate responsibility, stressing ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’.

## **2) From G77 to BASIC Coalition**

Since China and developing countries stated ‘Beijing Declaration’ in 1992, developing-country solidarity has used as a strategy to influence climate change negotiations. China stood alongside developing and very poor countries in international negotiations related to climate change. After global financial crisis occurred, China has been pressured to take on much more responsibility for future climate change regime, and

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[shtml](#) (accessed: 2012.10.5)

<sup>80</sup> 何亚非驳斥气候领域“中美共治”提法, <http://news.sina.com.cn/o/2009-12-13/030016762944s.shtml> (accessed: 2012.10.10)

the pressure has been shown to be effective in the climate change negotiations. Together, developing countries have emerged as economic powers, Chinese strategy to climate alliance has been altered from the leader of G77 to BASIC coalition.

China's position changed quite dramatically at the Copenhagen conference when China joined forces with a number of large and relatively well-off developing countries- BASIC states, comprising Brazil, China, India and South Africa to refuse binding limitations on these countries' GHG emissions although small island states which are extremely vulnerable poor countries requested.<sup>81</sup> Copenhagen conference shows that with the power shift in the climate change conventions, strategic alliance structure in climate change politics has moved from North-South confrontation to U.S. versus BASIC countries.

In November, vice-chairman of the China National Development and Reform Commission, Xie Zhenhua visited India and signed an agreement on cooperation not only on addressing climate change which would strengthen the cooperative activities between two countries but also on cooperation in Copenhagen Summit.<sup>82</sup> Shyam Saran, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's special envoy on climate change, stated that "We must be sure that UN framework convention on climate change is not in any manner diluted, its principles and provisions must be reaffirmed. We are not negotiating on new treaty. We

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<sup>81</sup> Paul G. Harris, *China and Climate Change: From Copenhagen to Cancun*, Environmental Law Institute, 2010.9

<sup>82</sup> "India and China signs Agreement on Cooperation on Addressing Climate Change", <http://www.pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=53317> (accessed: 2012. 10. 11)

must remain in the parameters of UN framework convention on the climate change. This is something which all four countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) are entirely agreed".<sup>83</sup> During the conference, China and India joined hands. Premier Wen had talked over the phone with Prime Minister Singh to coordinate the stands of the two countries. They maintained close contact throughout the Copenhagen conference. China and India, with Brazil and South Africa, worked for the unity of developing countries, urged developed countries to fulfill their obligations and commitments.<sup>84</sup>

Hillary Clinton, United States Secretary of State announced that the United States is ready to join other rich countries in raising \$100 billion in yearly climate financing for poor countries by 2020. She added that "\$100 billion is a lot. It can have tangible effects". Developed countries pushed developing countries, particularly major economies to take meaningful actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions and a system to ensure all parties' actions are transparent. This discussion brought up national sovereignty issue which China and India jealously guard. The developing countries bristle at the notion that donor nations would want to actually verify that their billions of dollars are being spent on actual GHG mitigation and adaptation projects.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> BRIC favors Kyoto Protocol to remain effective post Copenhagen: India, <http://www.aniin.com/>

<sup>84</sup> Bonding At Copenhagen Cemented India-China Relations, <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?263645> (accessed: 2012. 10. 06)

<sup>85</sup> Live at Copenhagen: Reaction to President Obama's Speech, <http://blog.heritage.org/2009/12/18/live-from-copenhagen-reaction-to-president-obamas-speech/>

Small-island states and African countries agreed on U.S. proposal, however, China refused the proposal, arguing that supporting climate finance has to be conducted by international verification. Despite the different interests, China compromised Brazil, India, and South Africa. What was conceived as a climate talk turned into a negotiation with U.S. versus BASIC.<sup>86</sup> Eventually, the conference adopted ‘Copenhagen Accord’ drawn by U.S. and BASIC countries.

The Talks in Tianjin was the last formal session in the UN climate talks before the conference of the parties to the UNFCCC delivered disappointing outcome.<sup>87</sup> U.S. climate envoy Todd Stern argued that “China could not insist rich nations take on fixed targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions while China and other big emerging nations adopt only voluntary domestic goals”. Su Wei, a senior Chinese climate change negotiator, countered that “Stern’s claims were a diversion from the United States’ failure to make big cuts in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases causing global warming. China is the world’s top greenhouse gas polluter after the United States”. Su also added that “In fact, it amounts to doing nothing themselves and then shrinking responsibility. United States wants to place the blame on China and other developing countries”.<sup>88</sup>

The most important countries in terms of shaping the Cancun talks have been the

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<sup>86</sup> The BRICs The trillion-dollar club, *The Economist*, 2010,4,15, <http://www.economist.com>, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-10/04/content\\_11377094.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2010-10/04/content_11377094.htm)

<sup>87</sup> Climate Meeting Delivers Little, Overshadowed by US-China Spat, <http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/86988/> (accessed: 2012. 10. 11)

<sup>88</sup> China calls U.S. a pig in the mirror on climate change, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE6980NX20101009>

BASIC countries, as well as the host nation Mexico. When the annual UN climate change summit opened, the overall goals were very different from the Copenhagen conference, and this was driven by China. The Cancun climate change summit proved that leadership over the global agenda is shifting away from the developed countries and toward the developing countries.<sup>89</sup> BASIC countries remained united firmly over major issues in relation to climate change. Xie Zhenhua, Chinese delegation to climate conference told a joint briefing with his South African, Indian and Brazilian counterparts stressing that the second commitment of the Kyoto Protocol is a must. He stated that “The BASIC countries are united firmly....We are countries of action. We are ready to do our due contributions on climate change to advance the Durban conference a success. We will speak with the same voice”. He refuted rumors that the BASIC countries had spitted due to their differences over the major issues by adding that “Facts cannot be distorted and rumors will not be turned into facts”.<sup>90</sup>

Emerging economic powers including China have shown strong solidarity in climate change negotiations, voicing their opinions against developed countries. China, India and other BASIC countries compromised to have preparatory meetings for the climate change

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<sup>89</sup> At this year’s talk, delegates have been working on more limited deals rather than a comprehensive treaty. BASIC bloc has been driving the negotiations on a host of issues. Although there were different interests, the bloc has been influential. Cancún 2010: BRICs Lead the Way : <http://www.gartenrothkopf.com/gr-energy-climate-briefs/cancun-2010-brics-lead-the-way.html> (accessed: 2012. 04. 28)

<sup>90</sup> “BASIC countries united over climate”, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011climate/2011-12/07/content\\_14227894.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011climate/2011-12/07/content_14227894.htm) (accessed: 2012. 5. 22)

convention to reconcile their opinions. BASIC countries are no longer passively accommodating the existing regimes within the UN framework, they are moving to active participants in regime building process with concerted power.

### **3. Expansion of Climate Change Cooperation**

Before 2008 global financial crisis, China received financial and technical support concerning climate change from developed countries as a means of foreign aid, whereas China had multilateral cooperation within the UN framework to insist carbon reduction commitments on developed nations and opposition of implementing mechanisms, being against developed countries. Interestingly, China has proven to be far more cooperative at the bilateral level than it has been at the multilateral level in relation to transferring financial and technological resources.<sup>91</sup> After 2008 global financial crisis which caused Chinese international status to be elevated, the range of climate change diplomacy and wielding climate change cooperation have been not only expanded, but diversified. As China shifted from being a leader of developing countries to cooperation with BASIC countries, China has been actively participating in both bilateral and multilateral meetings.

In order to understand the expansion of climate change cooperation, this chapter is to explore bilateral exchanges to response climate change challenges and how China diversified multilateral cooperation from multilateral meetings within the UN framework

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<sup>91</sup> Kobayashi, Yuka (2003)

to pronounced multilateral ties.

## **1) Bilateral Exchanges**

### **A. China-Developed Nations**

In October 2008, China's State Council issued a white paper entitled "China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change" including plans for international cooperation to deal with climate change. China stressed that it has actively participated in and supported the activities of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. Based on the climate change policies, China promotes international cooperation playing a positive role at bilateral exchanges and cooperation, according to the paper.<sup>92</sup>

Under the Kyoto Protocol, developed countries provide foreign aid assistance to combat climate change, namely Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the bilateral exchanges, comprising financial support and clean energy cooperation by industrialized nations. After global financial crisis, however, the areas of cooperation are further expanding and the exchanges on both sides have set a strong and cooperative network based on the high-level dialogues, strategic issues, trade and economy and people to people contacts to be developed between China and developed countries.

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<sup>92</sup> 中国应对气候变化的政策与行动 ( 白皮书 ) ( 2008 ) ,[www.npc.gov.cn](http://www.npc.gov.cn)

The EU in particular considered the combat against climate change to be an important element in the development of its external relations and even a source of soft power. However, as China has emerged as the EU's second-largest trading partner and is currently on its way to be the world's largest economy, the relations between EU and China are focused on furthering relations and setting up more comprehensive strategic partnership. European Council President Herman Van Rompuy says that the areas of cooperation are further expanding. The initial bilateral cooperation, focused on trade matters, has evolved over a decade into a truly strategic partnership, which goes much beyond bilateral trade and cooperation to embrace climate change, peace and security, human rights, energy security and the global financial architecture.<sup>93</sup>

The United States has been both historically and culturally disadvantaged in establishing cooperative frameworks with China, yet both U.S. and China are not able to avoid cooperation on climate change issues. In 2009, the United States and China agreed to advance new initiatives at the next Joint Working Group Meeting of the Ten Year Framework of Cooperation on Energy and Environment (TYF) in Beijing at the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Washington D.C. The two countries welcomed new public-private partnerships and collaboration on climate change, reiterating their commitment to work together to address climate change both bilaterally and through the UNFCCC, the Major Economies Forum, the Clean Energy Ministerial,

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<sup>93</sup> "Looking ahead with confidence", China Daily, [http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-09/21/content\\_15772209.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-09/21/content_15772209.htm) (accessed: 2012. 06. 21)

and the U.S-China Climate Policy Dialogue.<sup>94</sup>

Substantial Cooperation on climate change between Australia and China has been weak since they agreed on Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2003.

However, in 2011 at Australia-China Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Change, Australian Minister of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency announced a joined program to battle climate change challenges with China's National Development Reform Commission.

## **B. China-Developing Nations**

In order to achieve a positive outcome to Post-Kyoto Protocol, China has prepared a bilateral network. Toward this end, China welcomed new partnerships and collaboration through the UNFCCC and public-private partnerships. The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on cooperation in dealing with climate change signed by China and India is conducive to the positive results of the upcoming Copenhagen meeting. The agreement was signed by Xie Zhenhua, vice minister of the National Development and Reform Commission of China, and Jairam Ramesh, Minister of Environment and Forestry of India, at the national action plan joint meeting on climate change.<sup>95</sup> Chinese Foreign

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<sup>94</sup> 원동욱 (2012)

<sup>95</sup> Both China and India agreed that they would build partnership on climate change and

Ministry Spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said that the signing of this agreement indicated that China-India cooperation on climate change had ushered into a new stage.

China and other developing countries have cooperated on climate change mainly throughout multilateral channel in UNCCC. However, China has strengthened bilateral relations with developing countries under partnerships as well as other fora. Especially, China has strengthened support to small-island states which are vulnerable to climate change, so-called Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS). Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited Maldives meeting with President Mohammed Waheed Hassan and pledged to boost cooperation on climate change between the two countries adding that China will provide assistance for the Maldives to counter climate change and enhance the pragmatic cooperation to deal with global challenges including climate change, and advance the bilateral relationship into a new phase.<sup>96</sup>

China and Fiji agreed to work together to facilitate Chinese assistance in cooperation between vulnerable small island developing states like Fiji in climate change negotiations.

<sup>97</sup> Between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ratu Inoke

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strengthen cooperation in alleviation, adaptation and empowerment projects on climate change. Based on the agreement, the two countries would hold annual meetings to exchange views on major issues on global climate talks, domestic policies and measures, and implementing related cooperative projects. “China-India MoA on climate change co-op conducive to positive results of Copenhagen meeting”, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/22/content\\_12301166.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/22/content_12301166.htm)

<sup>96</sup> “China, Maldives pledge closer cooperation on climate change”, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7933164.html> (accessed: 2012. 11. 01)

<sup>97</sup> “Fiji and China to Increase Cooperation in Climate Change”,

Kubuabola and the visiting Chinese Minister of State Development and Reform Commission, Xie Zhenhua, the two countries have agreed to increase their cooperation in the area of climate change.

In terms of bilateral exchange, China stated to boost exchanges and cooperation in response to climate change in particular African Countries offering training program to 1,000 officials and technicians which will enhance their capabilities for sustainable development. China has also started a three-year program that offers low-carbon and energy-saving products to small island nations, African countries and the world's least-developed countries.<sup>98</sup>

## **2) Multilateral Exchanges**

China has promoted global cooperation based on the principles of “mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, being practical and effective”, said the white paper titled China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change. China has established a dialogue and cooperation mechanism on climate change with not only United States,

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<http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj/media-resources/media-release/42-fiji-and-china-to-increase-cooperation-in-climate-change>

<sup>98</sup> “5th ministerial meeting of FOCAC to be held in Beijing”, <http://english.cntv.cn/special/5thfocac/homepage/index.shtml>, “China offers climate change programs to developing countries,” <http://english.sina.com/china/2012/0621/479255.html> (accessed: 2012. 10. 29)

European Union, Japan and other developed countries and regions, but also developing countries like South Africa and India, Brazil on climate change signing relevant joint communiqués, memorandums of understanding and cooperation agreements according to the white paper. China actively participates international cooperation on climate change with BASIC and other developing countries at multilateral level including the outreach a session of the G8 Summit, G20 Summit, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting, East Asia Summit(EAS) and Boao Forum for Asia. Since Copenhagen conference, China has extended its multilateral cooperation channels and exchanges to promote pragmatic climate change cooperation.

## **A. South-South Cooperation**

At a United Nations Convention on Climate Change in Doha, Qatar in December 2012, a newly agreed to extension of the 1997 Kyoto-Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions was finalized. China, belongs to BASIC, called on extension of the second commitments which they have no binding obligation, whereas developed countries stress that the extension will have little impact on global greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>99</sup> Climate-Change ministers from Brazil, South Africa, India and China have reached a consensus on a range of issues including the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol and ensuring adequate financial support for developing countries a month in advance of a

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<sup>99</sup> “Symbolic Extension Of Kyoto Protocol Clears The Way For Talks On New Climate Treaty”, <http://cen.acs.org/articles/90/i51/Symbolic-Extension-Kyoto-Protocol-Clears.html> (accessed: 2012.12.23)

conference in Durban, South Africa.<sup>100</sup>

China has actively participated in cooperation both BASIC countries and other developing countries at multilateral level. Toward this end, china has promoted South-South Cooperation for climate change challenges. As a part of its ‘Green Diplomacy Strategy’, China for the first time highlighted its own development aid in the context of South-South capacity building and financial assistance with least-developed countries (LDCs) and small-island states (SIDs).<sup>101</sup> China has been playing a leading role at the multilateral cooperation, convening energy-related meetings such as China Low Carbon Forum, Methane-to-Market Partnership, and International Forum on Climate Change. This move shows that China’s diplomatic behavior towards climate change at multilateral level has been active.

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<sup>100</sup> BASIC countries reach Kyoto consensus, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2011-11/02/content\\_14019150.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2011-11/02/content_14019150.htm) (accessed: 2012. 10. 29)

<sup>101</sup> In the renewable energy and carbon emission reduction sectors, there is a large state-owned enterprise that has 10 percent of its business invested in other developing countries which is named **China Energy Conservation and Environment Protection Group. South-South Gate**, established in Shanghai in 2008 by UNDP is functioning as a major gateway for small and middle-sized Chinese enterprise to invest in developing countries. **AOSIS-China Climate Change Adaptation Pilot Program** which the small island states will receive more than \$2 million USD in technology assistance from China over a five-year period. **Training programs** on climate change for 1,000 officials and technicians from developing countries from 2012 to 2014 and, **a three year program** offering low-carbon and energy-saving products to small island nations between 2011 and 2013. China promotes South-South Cooperation in Durban, <http://www.chinafaqs.org/blog-posts/china-promotes-south-south-cooperation-durban>, China to train developing countries on climate change mitigation, <http://www.cleanbiz.asia/news/china-train-developing-countries-climate-change-mitigation>

## **B. A Largest Emerging Donor**

China stated in the white paper pertaining to climate change in 2008 and 2011 respectively to actively participate in multilateral cooperation for the combat with climate change. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year period, China established 121 assistance programs for climate change implementation. These programs involved 93 training programs that provided capacity building to over 207,000 personnel. The 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan also includes provisions to further assist other developing countries to address climate change.

China has been the largest beneficiary of ODA from developed countries. Developed nations supported China to address environmental challenges as a mode of foreign aid. Conversely, China has become the largest donor in foreign aid to LCDs and SIDs through South-South Cooperation. Based on the figures in a working paper by the Center for Global Development, emerging powers contribute between \$11 billion and \$42 billion in aid each year. China, the largest emerging donor gives out more money today than the World Bank. While the sheer volume is astonishing, the reach of assistance is expanding.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> “China’s foreign aid to Africa, New donors may help results”, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/aug/14/chinas-foreign-aid-to-africa/> (accessed: 2012. 10. 26)

## **VI. Conclusion**

Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental challenges confronting the international community in the era of globalization, thus international cooperation among countries is urgently needed to solve the challenges. Cooperation will not mean the absence of differences, rather stakeholders will face disputes that they have to manage. In particular, climate change politics causes complex problems that involve the global, regional, national perspectives and the issues of developed and developing countries. Climate change is multi-dimensional development challenge for both developed and developing countries.

As China's international status has enhanced after 2008 Global Financial Crisis, China has been pressured to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system. This study explores how china's negotiating attitude changed towards in the international climate change conventions within the circumstance. China, one of the key culprits to global climate change, needs to take an action to address climate change. Accordingly, China's negotiating attitude has been changed in UNFCCC.

Although China's climate change principles established at the primary stage of international climate change conventions have not been officially altered, China's negotiating position has been dramatically transformed. First of all, China has moved from passive and skeptical participants to active and cooperative player in the

negotiations. At the early stage of the international climate change conventions led by developed countries, China lacked understanding of the existing order and did not have capability to deal with climate change challenges in technical and financial wise. These factors constrained China to be remained skeptical and dissatisfied. China's negative posture was expressed in integration of developing countries for the struggle for institutionalizing support for economic development at the global level, calling for developed nation's unilateral action to combat climate change. Since 2008 global financial crisis occurred, China's negotiating attitude is changing. China used to push commitments of climate change to developed countries on the grounds the principle "common but differentiated responsibilities", yet China has been positive towards climate change, implying that they can create resolution which has binding obligation on reduction at the Cancun conference.

Second, China's negotiating attitude within the North-South divide on climate change conventions has been altered. Bilateralization of negotiations between North and South on climate change issues has overshadowed in the conventions and this sees China being pulled into the North-South ideological battle. However, as China has been pressured from international community to pay more attention to climate change as a largest emitter, its climate alliance structure is altered accordingly. The alliance structure has been modified in two ways. First, economic heterogeneity within the G77 led emerging economies in particular China and India, but also South Africa and Brazil to strengthen their cooperation on climate change, being against developed countries with a

concerted voice. It also shows that emerging economies, BASIC is moving from a stage of passively accommodating the existing international institutions to participating actively in the regime-building process. For the second way, China has actively participated in exchanges and cooperation on climate change and energy issues both bilateral and multilateral level. To attain the goal, the G77 is still useful for countries like China as an instrument for avoiding future commitments in the Post-Kyoto negotiations. Thus, maintaining one foot in the G77 and moving into bilateral and multilateral agreements as done by China seems to be a rational strategy that increases benefits and decrease costs. China has boosted to promote pragmatic exchanges and cooperation to the rest of the G77 countries. In particular, China has become a practical leader as a largest donor of foreign aid for developing countries.

China's alteration of negotiating position in UNFCCC is demonstrating the power shift in the international climate change conventions. International climate change negotiations convened after 2008 global financial crisis show that how much and how quickly the power dynamic in the world is moving from European and American preeminence to a world where countries like China and other emerging economic powers will shape the future course of global negotiations. After China's entry into UNFCCC, it resisted passive and skeptical positions to climate change regimes led by developed countries. The results were expressed into North-South divide and pushed industrialized nations to take action to address climate change challenges.

However, as China's international status has sharply elevated after global financial crisis in 2008, the power shifted in both international system and climate change conventions. That resulted in a sheer power conflict between a dominant power United States, and a challenging power China at the Copenhagen conference convened one year after the global financial crisis. Together, great powers seek to augment their national power both internal development through industrialization and alliance formation. Alliance Transitions theory considers a coalition of challenging power and its supporters as an effective alliance structure and the role of alliances as an external means of augmenting national power is also crucial. China has diverted climate alliance from a leader of G77 to BASIC coalition. Climate change negotiations show that its new coalition has been plying a crucial role to shape the future climate change regime building.

Overall, a China's rapid rise in power produced in conflicts between the dominant nations which satisfied with the existing international order and the challenging powers, dissatisfied and powerful enough to possess the means of doing something about their dissatisfaction at the venue of UNFCCC.

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## 국문 초록

### 수동적 행위자에서 능동적 행위자로 유엔기후변화협약에서의 중국의 협상 행태

이나현

기후변화문제는 세계의 공공재이면서 서로 협력하지 않았을 때 공멸을 가능케 할 수도 있는 속성을 띠고 있다. 또한 단순히 환경문제가 아닌 경제적 분야와도 밀접하게 연관되어 있으며 다층적이고 복잡한 구조로 형성되어 있다. 중국은 2008년 세계금융위기를 기점으로 국제사회에서의 대외적 지위 상승에 따른 국제적 역할이 확장되었으며, 세계 최대의 오염배출국으로서의 책임이 더욱 커져가는 상황에 직면하게 되었다. 세계 금융위기로 야기된 중국의 급속한 부상은 국제정치의 축소판이라 할 수 있는 기후변화협약에도 영향을 주었고, 이에 따른 중국의 기후변화협상 태도와 전략의 변화는 유엔기후변화협약에서의 협상에 투영되었다.

기후변화협상에서의 중국의 협상태도와 전략의 변화는 다음과 같다. 첫째, 중국이 기존의 기후변화협약에서 보여왔던 소극적이고 회의적인 입장에서 적극적이고 협력적으로 변화하였다. 선진국에 의해 제안되고 만들어진 기후변화 협약체제에 대한 이해 부족과, 기후변화문제 해결을 위한 기술이나 자금 면에서 선진국에 크게 미치지 못하는 상황은 중국이 초기 기후변화협약 체제에 불만족과 회의감을 가지게 하는 원인으로 작용하였다. 또한 체제에 대한 불만족과 회의감은 중국이 개도국과 담합하여 선진국에 대응하는 형태로 전개되었으며 이들은 선진국에 대한 일방적인 책임과 의무를 강요하였다. 그러나 2008년 세계금융위기 이후 중국은 기존의 일방적으로 선진국에게 강요하던 떠넘기기 식 태도에서 국제사회의 감축의무에 대한 요구를

수용하겠다는 협력적인 태도로 전향하였다.

둘째, 중국이 기후변화협약에서 보여왔던 선진국과의 대립양상에도 변화가 확인되었다. 기존의 교토체제에서 중국은 기후변화문제에서의 남북갈등을 조장하는 선진국 대 개도국의 대립으로의 기후변화동맹을 유지하였다. 그러나 이와 같은 동맹형성의 양극화는 2008년 세계금융위기를 기점으로 변화하였다. 첫째, 기존의 개도국의 대변인 입장에서 벗어나 개도국 내의 신흥경제국들 협력하여 선진국을 더욱 압박하는 연합(BASIC)을 형성하였다. 둘째, 개도국들과의 양자적 다자적 협력채널을 활발히 이용하며 기후변화문제 해결을 위한 개도국들에 대한 실질적 협력과 지원을 더욱 확장해 나가고 있다.

중국이 기후변화협약에서의 보여준 협상 태도의 변화에서 세력전이 과정이 진행되고 있음을 확인하였다. 중국은 기후변화협약에 편입된 이래로 서방국가들에 의해 만들어진 체제와 이행제도들에 상당한 의구심과 불만을 나타내었고 중국의 불만은 선진국 대 개도국으로 대립되는 구도로 전개되었다. 중국은 개도국들과의 담합을 통하여 선진국에 기후변화에 대한 책임과 의무를 질 것을 일방적으로 요구하였다.

하지만 2008년 세계금융위기 이후 중국의 국제사회에서의 대외적 위치가 급속히 상승하였고 이러한 변화가 빠르게 진행됨에 따라 기존 패권국인 선진국 특히 미국과의 첨예한 대립구도는 정점에 달하였다. 또한 동맹전이 이론에서 주장하는 국력증대의 외적 수단인 동맹의 형성과 구도의 변화는 중국의 개도국과의 변화된 협력구도에서도 확인 할 수 있다. 중국은 기존의 G77+1 이라는 개도국의 블록에서 BASIC 국가들과의 새로운 연합을 형성하였고 이들과의 협력을 통한 선진국에 대한 압력이 더욱 강해졌으며 동맹국들과의

협력이 강화된 협상태도는 2008년 이후 개최된 기후변화회의에서 확인되었다.

주요어(keywords): 기후변화, 유엔기후변화협약, 세계금융위기, 동맹전이, 세력전이, 협상 행태

학번: 2010-23937