



The Global Foundation
Together, we strive for the global common good



清华大学战略与安全研究中心
CENTER FOR
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND STRATEGY
TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY

第四届战略与安全国际论坛
The 4th International Forum on Security and Strategy
亚太大势：合还是分？
The Changing Asia-Pacific: United or Divided?



Remarks by Steve Howard, Secretary General of the Global Foundation to the CISS 4th International Forum on Security and Strategy, held online and in Beijing, China on 19 & 20 March, 2022.

Thank you, to Fu Ying and your colleagues at the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

I acknowledge the importance of this meeting, particularly at this fragile time in world affairs.

You have again gathered an impressive group of participants, those who would rather unify than divide.

I admire greatly the spirit of cooperation and the search for understanding that underpins these discussions.

That this International Security and Strategy Forum is led by an eminent Chinese institution makes it all the more significant and relevant for the times that we are living in.

I look forward to when we can meet again, face to face.

As you may recall, The Global Foundation is in the business of helping to secure the global commons, what we and others refer to as the 'global common good'.

The global commons is where we all share the air that we breathe, where people can live or aspire to live with dignity, with hope, with a shared sense of belonging and commitment to humanity, over and above their family, their village or tribe or nation.

To this end, our global family will meet again in Italy in late May for our first face to face meeting in 2 years, in the global city of peace and ecology, Assisi and then also in Rome.

Leading citizens from across the globe, including from China and the United States, will meet, not just to talk to each other, but also to make personal and institutional commitments towards serving the global common good.

At the heart of our work is the continuing notion of '**cooperative globalisation**', for a world which is transformed, around the principles of 'fairness' and 'inclusiveness', as well as 'prosperity'.

These principles should be as true of nations as they are of peoples.



All prosperity, including prosperity in our Asia Pacific region, the right to commerce, to trade and exchange freely, depends entirely on securing a global commons.

A viable global commons relies, of course, upon a backdrop of peace and the absence of war.

Yet, here we are today, in 2022, with our global commons under threat.

And while we are rightly shocked and horrified that men are fighting over territory and expending lives and materiel in Ukraine, hovering above us all is an even darker and more enduring cloud.

The more fundamental threat to humanity as a whole is in that same air that we all breathe, that right now challenges our very existence, our viability as a human race.

I'm speaking of course about our changing climate. The impacts this is already having on our daily lives are modest by comparison to what will follow.

Choices about these matters are determined in long cycles that take years or even decades to manifest. We are seeing today, in Ukraine, as in Asia and globally, the consequences of decisions and actions taken or not taken 20 or more years ago.

Therefore, I hope that this significant meeting convened by CISS, now in its fourth iteration, will focus its attention

on what we can agree and share as a vision for the global commons, the global common good, in 10 and 20 years from now.

I hope that we will work together assiduously to make this better world more possible than if we had not met together today.

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Let me turn my attention to the topic at hand, *'opportunities for prosperity in the Asia Pacific region'* and a few practical suggestions to encourage further, positive co-operation.

I will make some observations as an Australian, but I am looking at Asia Pacific from a global perspective, in keeping with the role of my organisation.

Let's put Asia back on the map!

As a child in Australia, I grew up with a complex world view.

I knew that Australia was a big and lucky continent, a resource-rich Western-style nation, a long way from its 'mother country'.

Like many, I came to believe that Australia was adjacent to the most interesting, if at times challenging, region of the world, which was and is still known as 'Asia'.

Over the past 40 or 50 years, Asia's rise from poverty has been remarkable, a true story of transformation. Asia has



emerged to become an economic powerhouse of the world.

Yet, in more recent times, in the language of geo-political speak, at least, the term 'Asia' appears to have been wiped from the map.

We hear much lately, in my home country at least, about 'Indo-Pacific', 'the Quad', of 'AUKUS', but not much at all about Asia itself.

Yet, in the ten countries of *South East Asia* alone, there are 500 million people, many of their leaders who were educated in and by Australia. The transformation undertaken by South East Asia, to lift its populations from poverty, is a remarkable story, often overshadowed by the miracle of China's own economic transformation.

Indonesia, the largest nation by far in ASEAN, is a remarkable success story since independence. Few would know that Indonesia leads the G20 grouping of economies this year, a powerful and pivotal role at a time when the world is fracturing into blocs.

China, as with Australia, has a deep interconnection with other parts of Asia. Yes, all of this is complicated, with the rise of China as a great world power, but to deny Asia's significance as a whole in world affairs is a mistake.

And speaking of China and Australia, how can it be that the two nations that have probably the greatest economic interdependence in the world, are at such a stand-off?

Consider, by comparison, Japan and Australia, after World War 2. Japan had attacked Australia, treated its prisoners of war badly yet, just a few year later, the leaders of both nations reconciled, realising there was so much more to gain through peace and economic interdependence than otherwise.

China and Australia have important choices to make, about each other, about the Asia region, about whether to work together for a better global commons.

This has been possible in recent memory and it is my fervent hope that it will again become possible in the foreseeable future. How many know, for example, that Australia was instrumental in helping China when it was forming its early policies on climate change? That work started in Beijing and continued in Washington, in 2008 where our Foundation hosted track one and half talks between China and members of the incoming Obama administration, at a time of great sensitivity on the matter of international cooperation on climate change.

How heartening then, 13 years later, to see China and the United States now working together on global climate change action. Our old friend Xie Zhenhua and John Kerry have co-chaired the G20 working group on the subject, thanks to Italy's lead and they have had a forceful impact at the Glasgow COP talks. China and the US, in spite of their differences, are working



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together to secure the global commons.

The Global Foundation will continue its work on climate change mobilisation by world investors, alongside the necessary transformation of international systems for cooperation on this and related subjects which are so inadequate at present.

Both China and Australia are navigating important domestic political processes over the course of this year.

Nevertheless, it is my sincere hope that the respective leaders of both China and Australia will agree to set a new, less adversarial tone in the relationship going forward, such that each respects differences in the other, while understanding the greater good that will come from cooperation and complementarity, not only between both countries, but also in acting together in Asia and more widely in the world.

This is not only a matter of future prosperity, it goes to the heart of overall human security, of working positively for a sustainable life on our planet, for the long-term global common good.

Thank you.

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