

INSIGHTS

AI Global Summit: China's Presence Broadly Hailed

Voice of the World

Edited by TANG Zhexiao

How to deal with the risks from rapidly-developing artificial intelligence (AI) has become a priority worldwide since ChatGPT, an AI-powered language model that can create human-like texts was released to the public last year.

AI Safety Summit 2023, the global meeting convened by the UK in Bletchley on November 1-2, brought together politicians, AI company representatives and experts to discuss the global future of AI and work toward a shared understanding of its risks.

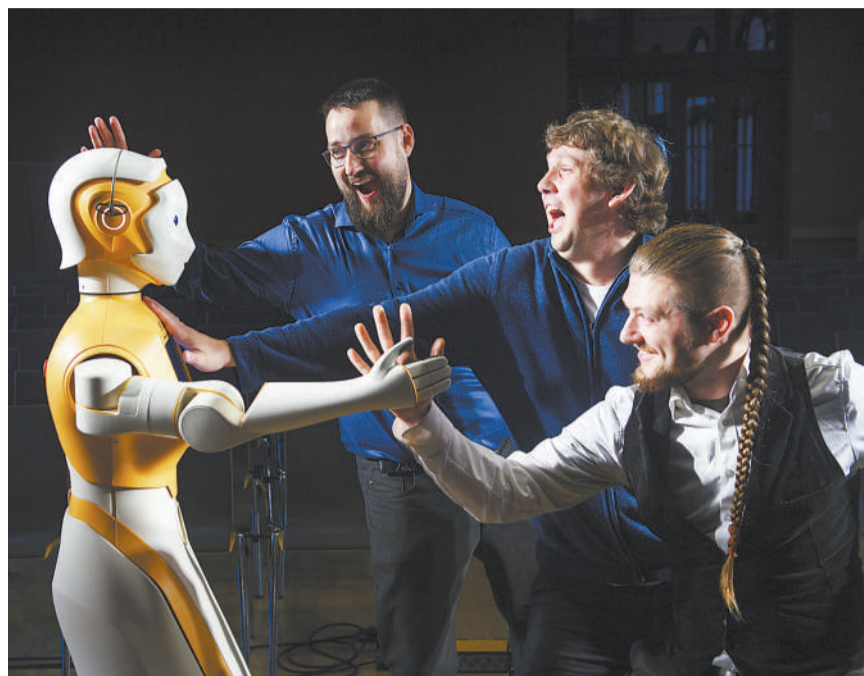
Sifted, a media site on European start-ups, said the summit was "broadly hailed as a diplomatic success because it managed to bring together senior Chinese and U.S. officials around the same table, and was bolstered by the participation of the European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and even tech entrepreneur Elon Musk."

Global AI statement inked

At the summit, 28 participating countries and the European Union signed the Bletchley Declaration, acknowledging that AI "should be designed, developed, deployed and used in a manner that is safe, in such a way as to be human-centric, trustworthy and responsible" and agreeing to work together to ensure that.

According to the UK government, the declaration aims to identify AI safety risks of shared concern, and build risk-based policies across concerned countries to ensure safety in light of such risks respectively.

The declaration noted that particular safety risks arise at the "frontier" of AI — the highly capable general-purpose AI models, including foundation models, that could perform a wide variety



Matthias Busch (L), Ingo Siegert (C) and Dominykas Strazdas from the Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Department of Mobile Dialog Systems at Germany's Otto von Guericke University, shake hands with the humanoid robot "Ari" on October 26, 2023. (PHOTO: VCG)

of tasks - as well as relevant specific narrow AI that could exhibit capabilities that cause harm, matching or exceeding the capabilities of today's most advanced models.

UK science minister Michelle Donelan said the declaration is "a landmark achievement" and laid the foundations for discussions of the summit.

However, experts think the declaration is not comprehensive enough. Paul Teather, CEO of AI-enabled research firm AMPLYFI, told Euronews Next that bringing major powers together to endorse ethical principles can be viewed as a success, but the undertaking to produce concrete policies and accountability mechanisms must follow swiftly.

Countries moving at their own pace

Participants in Bletchley reported their progress in AI governance and su-

pervision.

UK officials have made it clear that they do not think regulation is needed, or even possible at this stage given how fast the industry is moving, *The Guardian* reported.

French economy and finance minister Bruno Le Maire emphasized that Europe must innovate before regulating.

The French government fought hard for open source, software which allows users to develop, modify and distribute the model. "We shouldn't discard open source upfront," said Jean Noël Barrot, France's junior minister in charge of digital issues, Sifted reported. "What we've seen in previous generations of technologies is that open source has been very useful both for transparency and democratic governance of these technologies."

The U.S. will launch an AI safety in-

stitute to evaluate known and emerging risks of the so-called frontier of AI models, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said on November 1.

China ready to enhance AI safety with all sides

The Chinese delegation at the summit emphasized the need for international cooperation on AI safety and governance issues, urging increased representation of developing countries in global AI governance.

According to Wu Zhaohui, China's vice minister of science and technology, China was willing to "enhance dialogue and communication in AI safety with all sides."

American media CNBC reported Donelan as saying that it is a "massive" gesture that Chinese government officials chose to attend the U.K. AI summit.

Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, hailed UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's "essential" decision to invite China, said Politico Europe. "Having them here is essential," Musk reportedly said, "If they're not participants, it's pointless."

"There's no safety without China," according to Sifted. "China was a key participant at the summit, given its role in developing AI. Its involvement in the summit was described as constructive."

European Commission vice president for values and transparency Vera Jourová, who visited Beijing in September to hold talks on AI and international data flows, said: "I think it was important that they were here, also that they heard our determination to work together, and honestly, for the really big global catastrophic risks, we need to have China on board."

China launched the Global Artificial Intelligence Governance Initiative on October 18, presenting a constructive approach to addressing universal concerns over AI development and governance.

Comment

BRI's Shot in the Arm for Multilateralism

By LONG Chen

After ten fruitful years of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled eight major steps China will take to support the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. This demonstrates BRI cooperation begins to develop in quality and depth.

At a time when anti-globalization, unilateralism, protectionism, and the encouragement of "decoupling" among countries are on the rise, China has become a central pillar of multilateralism by supporting geo-economic strategies instead of geopolitical strategies, while sharing opportunities and fruits of development with the international community.

Adherence to multilateral cooperation has become the "ballast stone" for stable and long-term implementation of BRI

In spite of the threat posed by the pandemic, the BRI cooperation has shown strong resilience and vitality. The BRI participants have jointly focused on global public health cooperation and made great efforts to build a Health Silk Road, further enriching the connotation of high-quality BRI cooperation.

According to data from *The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future*, by the end of August 2023, more than 80 countries and international organizations have participated in the Initiative on Promoting Unimpeded Trade Cooperation. China has signed 21 free trade agreements with 28 countries and regions, and bilateral investment treaties with 135 countries and regions. The BRI cooperation continues to fly in the face of negative pushback and those who advocate the "China threat" theory.

BRI has drawn a new blueprint for the development of globalization

Under the "Core-periphery" division of labor system of neoliberal economic globalization, the political worries caused by economic problems have provided a breeding ground for anti-globalization trends such as trade protectionism. The imbalance of interest distribution and the intensification of domestic contradictions have pulled the once-globalization advocates gradually back to an anti-globalization stance.

However, different from the resource allocation model in neoliberal economic globalization, the resource allocation under the BRI is implemented in a win-win way by promoting the rapid development of exporting countries.



Students from BRI partner countries experience traditional Chinese medicine at a hospital in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

In addition, globalization under the outdated world order has caused developing countries to be invisible. However, with China's BRI, countries that had been "forced to be invisible" have re-emerged on the international stage through close coordination and cooperation with each other, making globalization real.

Eight major steps will guard the development of globalization

Among the eight major steps President Xi announced, the first is to continue to support building a multidimensional BRI connectivity network. The main artery of economic globalization will be further opened up by establishing pilot zones for Silk Road e-commerce cooperation to conform to the development trend of the new era, and taking the lead in completely removing all restrictions on foreign investment access in the manufacturing sector to break trade barriers.

On the issue of coordinated development, China promotes both signature projects and "small yet smart" livelihood programs. It implements the principle of "teaching people to fish on their own" rather than "draining the pond to fish." China's proposal to carry out 1,000 small livelihood assistance projects is an important manifestation of its commitment to pursuing common progress and development with the world's people.

In the face of global governance challenges, China attaches importance to the strength of all humankind and all countries. At the recent Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, China proposed to continue to deepen cooperation in areas such as green infrastructure, green energy and green transportation.

Such a move intends to build and improve the cross-border green industrial chain, step up support for BRI International Green Development Coalition, better implement the principle of green investment, and drive BRI green value chain upgrades.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the BRI, China's proposal to further deepen BRI cooperation reflects not only its confidence in the common progress and development of humankind, but also delivers a strong blow against so-called unilateralism and protectionism.

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China's Higher Education Is Rising

Opinion

By QI Liming

The development and success of education plays a big part in a country's comprehensive national strength. Additionally, education, especially higher education, serves as an important support mechanism for a leading country to achieve more self-reliance and strength in science and technology.

This year saw Chinese universities leapfrog their way up the international rankings. Even though the selection criteria and ranking data do not provide detailed information on the overall strength of universities listed, the rankings do at least provide some insights.

Global research and knowledge shifting from West to East

China is on the verge of a historic breakthrough into the world's top 10 universities, according to the latest Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings released in September, with its highest placed entry now at 12.

As THE World University Rankings reported, Tsinghua University moved up from 16th to 12th, closely followed by Peking University moving from 17th to 14th.

In the latest versions of the other lists, the QS World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities, these Chinese entries climbed to 17th and 22nd respectively.

Forbes magazine said this represents a remarkable rise for a country that six years ago had just two representatives in the top 100 and a highest rank of 27.

While the U.S. overall picture is of continuing long-term decline, it is the long-anticipated rise of China's universities that represents the big story of this year's rankings, well and truly marking their arrival on the world stage.

One of the reasons for the U.S. poor showing is falling levels of research funding relative to other countries, according to THE. In contrast, in China, South Korea, Canada and Australia, universities' average proportion of research income has increased since 2019.

"There's no doubt this new data

provides further, hard evidence that the balance of power in the global research and knowledge economy continues to shift from the West to the East, with potentially profound implications for the world," said Phil Baty, THE's chief global affairs officer.

Overall strength of Chinese universities being continuously improved

China had just four universities in the top 200 in THE's first rankings in 2004, but 20 years later it has 13, with six in the top 60 and two on the brink of breaking into the top 10.

And based on current progress, the Chinese mainland would be home to a world top 10 university in the near future said Baty. This would break the stranglehold of U.S. and U.K. universities on the rankings.

"[The] Chinese mainland is a remarkable case study of exceptional, consistent improvement. It now has world-class universities to rival any in the world," added Baty.

According to the University World News website, the Chinese mainland continues its overall rise in the rankings this year, with an average overall score that has improved from 35.9 three years

ago to 41.8, driven by improvements in research reputation and research publication citations.

"[The] Chinese mainland's rise and rise up the global rankings in recent years seems to have no limits," said Baty, adding that it has already overtaken the U.S. in terms of the sheer volume and quality of academic research it produces.

According to the *Nature* Index released in June 2023, in the first half of this year, some universities that are little known outside China are rapidly surpassing their more established counterparts in the West in high-quality scientific research. The index was based on scientific research output between February 1, 2022 and January 31, 2023, using "simple, transparent and current metrics that demonstrate high quality research and collaboration."

Seven of the top 10 university contributors were from China in the updated list, maintained by the academic journal *Nature*, that tracks contributions to research articles published in 82 of the world's most influential natural science journals, according to the index.

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From October 10 to November 11, nine expert teams are visiting 27 hospitals in 12 provinces or municipalities across China to engage in medical exchanges. Chinese and Canadian medical experts learn from each other, injecting new vitality into cooperation between the two countries in the medical field.

Most of the BMDAC members are well-known experts from universities such as University of Toronto and McGill University, and among them are

some Chinese doctors living in Canada.

Gao Song, an ultrasound specialist living in Canada, participated in the free medical consultations this year. She said she was honored to join the association and return to China to contribute to China's medical needs.

Gao said that during the communi-

cation process, there are valuable lessons to be learned from Canadian doctors' in-depth interpretation of data, comprehensive assessment of patient surgical risks, and more standardized treatment, while the innovative research and technical experience of Chinese doctors have also provided new ideas for Ca-

nadian doctors.

After conducting clinical activities together with Canadian experts, Zhang Youhong, an ultrasound expert in Meizhou People's Hospital, said that Canadian doctors left a deep impression on her in terms of retaining and reusing ultrasound image data, as well as profes-

sional division of labor in operations. Chinese doctors' proficiency in esophageal ultrasound operations was also appreciated by Canadian doctors.

Dr. Ying Tung Sia, director of cardiovascular research and chief of cardiology at Trois-Rivieres Center Hospital of University of Montreal, appreciated the

diligence, dedication and enthusiasm of Chinese doctors in their pursuit of learning new technologies. He said he is very willing to be part of the training.

Meanwhile, Errett, who has witnessed the improvement of China's medical technology over the past 24 years, said, "It's a dramatic change. It was incredible to see the development of first class medical centers doing very difficult surgeries. And the Chinese have accomplished those in 20 years, which took other countries 50 years. So it's quite remarkable."

Bond of Sino-Canada Medical Cooperation