



## China-Venezuela Relations: China Dilemmatic Options towards Venezuela Crisis and the Role of China Community of Common Destiny Principles in Maintaining Cooperation

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### Abstract

Oil prices directly impact Venezuela's circumstance due to 95% of their revenue come from oil export. Since 2013, oil prices have dropped significantly compared to the previous year. Thus, the crisis hits Venezuela severely. The impacts not only feel at the domestic level but also at the international level. China is Venezuela's bilateral partner that was impacted by the Venezuela crisis. Venezuela failed to fulfill their oil export to China to pay their loan in the oil-for-loan diplomacy scheme. Thus, their cooperation failed to fulfill the economic gain. However, China still shows the action that favorable Venezuela. They were backing up non-intervention toward Venezuela in the UN, providing a new loan, adjusting the previous loan's payment, and diversifying their investment in Venezuela. This paper argues that this action is not only for material gain. But also as a result of the newly ideational aspect in China's foreign policy, which is the China Community of Common Destiny. Thus, this research will analyze how this rhetoric idea involves China's action towards Venezuela. Also, this research will address their relations and China's diplomatic options toward their relations with Venezuela in crisis circumstances.

**Keywords:** Venezuela, Crisis, China, Cooperation, Community of Common Destiny

### 1. Introduction

In January 2019, Venezuela National Assembly Leader Juan Guaidó self-proclaimed himself as Venezuela's interim President. It creates instability in Venezuela's political circumstances exposed. His action taken referring to the Constitution of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Article 233, the President permanently unavailable to serve by the reason "...abandonment of his position duly declared by the National Assembly, and recall by popular vote. Venezuela's opposition highlights these two reasons to proclaim Nicolas Maduro's vacuum of power". They claim Venezuela needs to hold an election again. Nicolas Maduro's opposition already controls National Assembly since 2017. However, the Maduro government, backed up by the military and Supreme Tribunal Justice of Venezuela, still has the power to withstand National Assembly pressure. In 2018, Nicolas Maduro was elected to his second-term Presidential administration. However, Venezuela's opposition opposes this result, alleging that there was fraud in the election, creating Guaidó action.

This Venezuela's internal political turmoil was again put Venezuela in central of attention within the international community. The United States, some of the European Union states, China, Russia, and Turkey responded to Venezuela's condition. The US and some European Union state responded by recognizing Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's interim President (Recognition of Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's Interim President. 2019). Meanwhile, Russia, Turkey, and China assert that Venezuela needs to resolve its problems without foreign

interventions. As Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying was on January 24, 2019, convey, "China always upholds the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs and opposes foreign interference in Venezuela's affairs ("Xi Jinping Attends General Debate of 70th Session of the UN General Assembly and Delivers Important Speech, Underlying to Inherit and Advocate Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter, Establish New Type of International Relations with Win-Win Cooperation" 2015)."

The US and China put different approaches to Venezuela's conditions, even though both have an interest in Venezuela. Ensuring Venezuela's stability should benefit them by the continuity of crude oil and other petroleum products imports from Venezuela. It makes sense for the US to indicate interference with Venezuela's condition. However, what is interesting here is that China prefers not to interfere with Venezuela's condition, even though China might be suffering the most because of Venezuela's conditions since China is the biggest creditor for Venezuela. China has provided more than US\$ 60 billion to Venezuela since 2007-2016, from the China Development Bank (CDB) and the International Commerce Bank of China (ICBC) (Vasquez, Patricia I. 2018). This loan is expected to be paid by Venezuela oil export to China as much as 430,000 barrels per day (Sanderson, Henry, and Michael Forsythe. 2012). However, Venezuela missed the debt payment in 2015. Many scholars see China as having an unfavorable stake in Venezuela's relations (Wang et al. 2016) (Chun, Zhang. 2017) (Tiezzi, Shannon. 2019). However, still, China provides some arrangements to ease Venezuela's burden. China provided \$5 billion loans to Venezuela to help China from the crisis in 2015. In 2020, Venezuela also got a grace period on the oil-for-loan debt until the end of 2020 (Armas et al. 2020).

Even without a doubt, scholars express their skepticism towards China's relations with Venezuela in the future (Ferchen, Matt. 2020) (B. Kaplan, et al. 2019). Matt Ferchen states that China-Venezuela relations failed to achieve economic potential. It leads to dysfunctional relations between both sides. Noriega points out that trade and investment (especially in the oil sector) become the main motor of China-Venezuela relations, making them the second strategic partner after Brazil in South America (Noriega, By Roger F. 2010). Thus, without stability in that sector, China should no longer benefit from its relations with Venezuela. However, still, China remains to maintain good relations with Venezuela. It could be seen through its stance to no interference with Venezuela's condition and provide some adjustment on Venezuela's loan.

Given those conditions, this research aims to answer research questions: *Why does China still maintain good relations with Venezuela even though Venezuela's circumstance no longer materially benefits China?* With Venezuela's political instability worsening and the future resolution seems unclear, China's option to Venezuela is becoming more dilemmatic. In the Hugo Chavez era, China-Venezuela relations sustained due to the oil boom that profited Venezuela could satisfy China's oil needs. China is the largest oil importer, while Venezuela has the biggest crude oil reserve. So, win-win cooperation based on complementary needs could be achieved. However, in different cases in the Nicolas Maduro era, oil price drop and Venezuela oil production could not achieve the same.

This research will follow the constructivism approach that focuses on how ideas, values, and norms influence states' behavior towards other states to answer that research question. This research argues that China's idea of Community of Common Destiny determines China's choices to maintain good relations with Venezuela, despite the absence of mutual benefit. Scholars on China-Venezuela relations mainly focus on its relation development (Ríos, Xulio. 2013) (Briceño-Ruiz et al. 2020), in which trade and investment underlying their relations. There is a gap that scholars put little attention to, that is, China-Venezuela relation not only based on economic calculations but also ideological. This research contributes to the literature by filling this gap.

In 2012, Xi Jinping introduced China's new foreign policy vision, a *community of common destiny*. For Tobin, a community of common destiny is China's foreign policy vision to transform global governance (Tobin, Liza. 2018). In other writings, Smith argues that this ideational approach aims to pursue legitimacy at the international level by promoting its definition of governance, development, and ordering principles. In his research, Smith explains that the Community of Common Destiny is how China pictures international society (Smith, Stephen N. 2018). Thus, it argued here that to come closer to that vision, and China needs to conduct good relations with other countries, especially those that share the same vision on seeing international society, Venezuela.

## **2. Method**

This research will use qualitative methods. Christopher Lamont explains that the qualitative method refers to data collection and analysis strategies toward non-numeric data (Christopher Lamont. 2015). To be specific, this research uses the literature studies method. In which writers collect the significant literature to find the data that will support the argument in this research. Thus, the data was collected from academic journals, books, online articles, news, and government statements. This research will best define by its descriptive and interpretative type of research.

## **3. Result**

China-Venezuela relations during the Venezuela crisis remain stable, even though Venezuela faces the hardship of meeting its oil production and export to China. These two countries' cooperation does not picture a mutual benefit relationship since Venezuela failed to pay its debt in recent times. If the cooperation is based only on material mutual benefit, this paper believes that China possibly stops granting new loans to Venezuela until Venezuela's conditions become conducive or at least gives a warning to Venezuela. However, in fact, China is still generous and granting Venezuela a new loan in 2018 of as much as US\$ 5 billion. Also, China tried to diversify its investment in Venezuela to decrease Venezuela's dependency on the oil sector, and China left Venezuela without intervention towards its domestic crisis circumstance. This paper sees these kinds of actions as the manifestation of China community of common destiny principles. This principle is about reaching an ideal international society through China's perspective. China's community of common destiny principle pictures that partnership between countries needs to treat each other as equals with mutual consultations and understanding. For that, China needs to ensure the participation of as many countries as possible to support its vision. Thus, ensuring Venezuela is treated as close to that principle is in need. Even though, the other factor, such as maintaining oil supply, has more precise explanation on China's motives to maintain relations with Venezuela, idea, value even norm could be alternative to understand their relations.

## **4. Discussion**

### *4.1. China-Venezuela Relations*

China Venezuela relations began with the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1974. As a result, in 1997, China National Petroleum Company operated in Venezuela. However, their relations started to intensify while Hugo Chavez became Venezuela's President in 1999. As it result commerce between China-Venezuela increased drastically from US\$500 million in 1999 to US\$7.5 billion a decade later (Yellinek, Roie. 2017). China's increase their fuel consumption to balancing its economic growth, while Venezuela, as the country with the largest proven oil reserves provide China's needs.

China-Venezuela relations mark by the establishment of a strategic partnership through the construction of a High-Level Joint Commission. Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited Venezuela in April 2001 and signed a memorandum of understanding forming a High Level-Joint Commission. Venezuela is the second country to become a strategic partner for China after Brazil in Latin America. It shows the importance of Venezuela for China. Yanran Xu explains that since the MoU was established, President of Venezuela Hugo Chavez has made six trips to Venezuela, established 450 bilateral agreements, and implemented more than 80 major projects through loans and investment ( Xu, Yanran. 2017). Oil becomes the primary sector for China's investment in Venezuela. However, the other aspect of Venezuela's socialist program has concerned China, but its action is less militant than in the oil and mining sector.

China declared interest and steps in Venezuela's economic sectors, such as petroleum, mining, agriculture, telecommunication, housing, manufacture. However, the oil and mining sectors have become the most progressive due to the agreement established to develop these sectors. In the petroleum sector, in 2004, China granted a concession over the Zummano oilfield. After Chavez restructured the petroleum sector in 2007, the big player in the Venezuela oil sector like Exxon-Mobil and Conoco-Philips withdrew from Orinoco belt Venezuela. China sees this opportunity, and in 2010, China got a joint venture between China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Petróleos de Venezuela, SA (PDVSA). CNPC buys 40 percent rights to Orinoco block Junin-4. In 2013, Sinopec-PDVSA obtained the Junin-1 block in the Orinoco belt. In 2016, CNPC created Petrolera Sinovensa, a private subsidiary, to expand production. For Patricia I. Vazquez, this oil cooperation is China's primary investment in Venezuela from 2010-2016.

China also pays attention to Venezuela's mining sector. China provides technical assistance and infrastructure support to help Venezuela increase production through four agreements signed in 2011 with the Venezuela Ministry of Basic Industries and Mining. In 2012, China International Trust Investment Corporation (CITIC) agreed to develop the Las Cristinas mine. Then, CVG Ferromina Orinoco CA and China Railway Group provide a railway for transport mining product (Ellis, Evan R. 2017). A similar agreement on Railway Sector has also already done in 2009 for US\$ 7.5 billion projects from the north coast of Venezuela to the mining sector on the eastern side. This project reported was working start from 201.

Even though cooperation in the agriculture sector is less progressive than oil and mining, China and Venezuela have several cooperations. In 2001 China supplied tractors through a US\$30 million agreement. In 2002, China National Construction and Agricultural Machinery Import/Export Corporation signed US\$100 million to construct water supply for Falcon State (Cheng et al. 2008). In Chavez's visit to China in 2004, China agreed to provide agricultural machinery worth with a US\$40 credit line. However, with the collapse of Venezuela's agricultural sector and Venezuela's dependency on the oil sector, China's cooperation in this sector does not benefit from the China side. China also invests in the telecommunication sector in Venezuela. Huawei and ZTE have set up manufacturing facilities. ZTE established a factory to assemble cell phones in Punto Fijo, while Huawei constructed the manufacture in Oronoco. If seen from the joint venture established in various Venezuela sectors, China maintains good relations with Venezuela in the economic sector. However, does this cooperation provide a mutual benefit, win-win, or even complementary cooperation for both sides? , It is still debatable.

Venezuela also closes ties with China in the political and security sector. Joseph Y. S. Cheng and Huangao Shi explained that China becomes the prominent voice than backing up Hugo Chavez's effort to make Venezuela a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council 2006. China also provides JYL-1 mobile air defense radar systems, including a command and control center, technical support, and access to a satellite communication network to improve Venezuela's security along its border with Colombia. These close ties relations between Venezuela-China in the political and security sectors come from Venezuela's disappointment with Washington Consensus provided by the United States. Venezuela believes that the neo-liberal development formula does not provide Venezuela development and the Latin America region. Because of Latin America Financial Crisis that hit Venezuela and Latin America in 1998. This condition was used by Hugo Chavez to win Venezuela's presidential election in 1988 and develop a socialist and populist way in governs Venezuela.

Hugo Chavez's strong and charismatic figure and the oil boom turned Venezuela's ties relations from the United States to China. Venezuela also shows its rhetoric of anti-United States on several occasions of international meetings. The winning of Venezuela's left-wing government was followed by other countries in Latin America, such as Bolivia with Evo Morales, Brazil with Lula da Silva, Fidel Castro in Cuba, and others in Latin America Caribbean region. This phenomenon in which Latin America and Caribbean countries turn to the left-wing political and economic view is *Pink Tide*. For Venezuela, the socialist model of the political economy changes the position of the previous neo-liberal model. China has developed its relations with Venezuela, and the region is in the same period with the rise of the pink tide.

China and Venezuela's friendship is tied by ideological adjacency, which is socialism. China promotes itself as a socialist with Chinese characteristics. Meanwhile, Venezuela promotes the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These ideologies were similar in practice. They follow the logic of public ownership over the economic asset for public benefit. For example, Chavez nationalizes many oil companies, Venezuela, since they realize the value of their natural resources should benefit the people. Meanwhile, China provides the Socialist Market Economy (SME) system in which predominantly public ownership enterprises drive the economic process understates. China and Venezuela are also similar in foreign policy behavior. They tend to put importance on becoming a regional and global player (Agustín, Óscar García. 2016). For example, Venezuela initiates the Association of Latin the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA). Also, China actively involves in many regional and international organizations, such as ASEAN and CELAC. These similarities are one of the ideational bases that approximately conduct their relations in the beginning. Even though scholars might argue that economy is the main derives.

Venezuela-China relations remain close in Hugo Chavez's period due to Chavez's vital leadership and stable oil

revenue. However, it is different from the Nicolas Maduro era a crisis hit Venezuela due international oil prices drop and government mismanagement. The next section of the paper will show an overview of the Venezuela crisis and explain how this condition impacted China's option towards Venezuela.

#### *4.2. Venezuela crisis and China Dilemmatic Option towards It*

Venezuela crisis is a direct impact of international oil price drops. Since 95% of its export relies on the oil sector. Based on the data of the *Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries* (OPEC), from December 2013 to 2017, crude oil prices dropped drastically, from US\$ 107.94 per barrel to US\$ 50.74 per barrel ("OPEC : OPEC Basket Price" n.d.). This condition was aggravated by the drop in Venezuela's oil production. In 2016, Venezuela crude oil produced only 2.3 million barrels per day (BPD). Usually, between 1999 and 2014, Venezuela's average production touched 3 million (Palacios, By Luisa. 2016). It is far from PDVSA oil production's target of 5.8 million BPD in 2012 (Hernandez, Igor, and Francisco Monaldi. 2016). Venezuela only exports 1.8 million BPD from that oil production but only got a profit from 1.4-1.5 million BPD. The remaining oil exported is used for oil subsidies to Latin American and Caribbean countries and pays debts to China. The lack of revenue from the oil sector makes PDVSA's contribution to government income decreases. In 2012, PDVSA could contribute to Venezuela's government income as much as US\$ 22.5 billion. However, in 2015, PDVSA only contributed US\$ 7.5 billion to Venezuela's Government income (Center for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies 2016). This condition produces a Crisis in Venezuela from the economic sector. The inflation rate reached 274% in 2016 and estimated that in 2017 the inflation rate would reach 1.134%, based on the IMF's data. From 2014 to 2016, Venezuela's GDP Growth rate was only -3.9; -6.2; and -18 (IMF. 2017). This means Venezuela does not experience economic growth.

The economic crisis also impacted Venezuelan social life. Human Rights Watch states that 87% of 1.488 Venezuelan respondents in 21 cities in Venezuela face hardship in getting food (Human Right Watch 2016). The escalation of the poverty rate also becomes a problem. Encuesta Nacional de Condiciones de Vida (ENCOVI), a survey institution, explains that in 2014, the poverty rate increased drastically. In 2014, 23.6% of Venezuelan families were extremely poor but rose to 51.51% in 2016 (ENCOVI 2016). This data indicates that Venezuela's condition is dangerous, due to only in two years the extreme poverty family percentage doubled. Venezuela's government has already stopped providing statistics from its country since 2014.

Crisis conditions also make instability politics in Nicolas Maduro's government. At the beginning of the paper, the writer explained that Juan Guaido, the National Assembly leader, declares himself as interim President of Venezuela because they argue that Nicolas Maduro has no legitimacy in Venezuela. Gallup News assesses the approval rating of Nicolas Maduro. From their assessment, Nicolas Maduro in 2015 only had a 20% approval rating, and 67% disapprove of his government (Godoy, Johanna, and Justin Mccarthy. 2018). Furthermore, in 2016, Americas Barometer Insight explains that the approval rating of Nicolas Maduro fluctuated by 15-20% (Rodríguez, Mariana. 2016). Opposition wins on the National Assembly election in December 2015, worsening Nicolas Maduro's political stability. The National Assembly got upset with the national election that won Nicolas Maduro in 2019, even though his approval rating was far from enough to be a president.

China impacted by this situation that happens in Venezuela. These two country relations base on complementary needs relationships, which means their relations rely on the needs that could be provided between them. Venezuela is providing oil for China's energy consumption, while China is providing a loan for Venezuela to make sure that Venezuela can maintain its oil sector sustainably. However, the crisis that hit Venezuela during Nicolas Maduro's presidency makes Venezuela could not provide enough oil to fulfill the obligation to pay the loan to China. China has provided more than US\$ 60 billion to Venezuela since 2007-2016, from the China Development Bank (CDB) and the International Commerce Bank of China (ICBC). This loan is expected to be paid by Venezuela oil export to China as much as 430.000 barrel oil per day. At an average of 419.000 beds, Venezuela should send 37.7 million barrels to China from January 1 to March 31, 2011. However, China's custom shows that only 21.1 million barrels that Venezuela sent. It is not surprised, due to Venezuela oil production amount drop.

As an impact of it, China's government has been less generous to Venezuela's Government. China's side alleged that Venezuela was spending from the loan that they gave irresponsibly. Furthermore, the corruption problem makes China worried that the loan is not fully received by the sector that is aimed. In 2016, China's side

announced that they would stop granting Venezuela new loans. However, it does not accomplished, China decide only to cut the loan to Venezuela. In 2015, China's total loans to Venezuela up to US\$5 billion. However, later in 2016, China only granted US\$ 2.5 billion and lesser in the next year. This decision is a double-edged sword. The lesser loan that China gives will make situations of Venezuela riskier for China. Venezuela needs a China loan to sustain its oil production. If Venezuela continuously fails to meet the oil quota payment China also will disadvantage. Like granting more loans to Venezuela, China's prospect to provide payment is already risky to give this country another loan. Another solution could be taken as Moises Naim, a former Venezuelan trade minister, explains, China needs to make some adjustments to overcome this problem, renegotiate loan and granted more favorable terms for Venezuela; or second, categorize the debt that has been given before as 'odious debt. Michael Kramer and Seema Jayachandran explain that odious debt means sovereign debt incurred without the people's consent and does not benefit the people could be categorized as odious. Odious debt is usually incurred by the despotic, tyrannical, dictatorial, or unjust and oppressive regime. By doing so, creditors forgive the before debt and do not transfer the debt to a government (Kremer et al. 2002). Loosen debt terms have already been done several times.

On the other hand, Yanran Xu suggests that China needs to push market reform to secure repayment and oil supply. However, categorizing Venezuela as odious debt or push market reform is riskier for China because they will both lose payment for before debt and betray their own beliefs of mutual trust and non-interference in international politics. This condition makes China in a dilemmatic position towards Venezuela. Despite those problems, China-Venezuela relations never be in really critical conditions that lead to shattering. Especially for China, their often conduct adjustment to prolong their relations during this hard period. China's supportive behavior towards Venezuela did not make sense if following the rational choice approach, but it could be acceptable if looked at from an ideational perspective. Thus, this research turn to an ideational approach, that argues China's idea of the community of common destiny derives such a behavior.

#### *4.3. Roles of ideas on China foreign policy and the relevance of The community of Common Destiny*

China's foreign policy is often based on the values and principles they shape and promote. Start from Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence; Peaceful Development and Harmonious World; and China Dream until The community of Common Destiny. These principles come from China's government administration's different eras, but every idea act as a foundation for China's contemporary foreign policy principles. This research will elaborate how these principles determine China behavior.

*Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence* was famous in 1954 due to the Panchsheel Treaty between China and India. The Principles consist of; (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) Mutual non-aggression; (3) Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit; and (5) Peaceful Coexistence. Through his speech, at a meeting marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary Of the Initiation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, June 28, 2014, '*President Xi Jinping addresses that these principles enshrined in China Constitution and become the cornerstone of China's foreign policy*'. He added that '*in the new era today, the spirit of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, instead of being outdated, remains as relevant as ever; its significance, rather than diminishing, remains as important as ever; and its role, rather than being weakened, has continued to grow*'. His speech shows his confidence in this principle to the future.

The other principle that is also important for China's foreign policy is Peaceful Development and a Harmonious World. Yanran Xu explains in his writing that Peaceful Development means that China is looking for sustains peaceful international circumstances to its social and economic development and, in return, provide peace through its development. Then, why Peaceful Development needs to be together with a Harmonious World, for Liu Jianfei world already peaceful due to the absence of world war, but harmony is still unachievable. He quoted President Hu Jintao's speech at the high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary title Building a Harmonious World of Lasting Peace and Common Prosperity. He straight argues that peace and common prosperity are needed to achieve a harmonious world. This principle shows bases for China's action, yet shown that China needs to ensure its action at the international level. China's development needs a sustained and peaceful, and harmonious world.

Under Xi Jinping Era, *China Dream* became the principle adopted by the Chinese government. It impacted

China's domestic and international politics, as Angela Poh and Mingjian Ji (Poh, Angela, and Mingjian Li. 2017). China Dream is the concept that Xi Jinping has promoted since he became the Secretary-General of the China Communist Party and then became China President. In his first speech of Presidency March 2013, Xi explains that The China Dream means creating 'a moderately prosperous society, a prosperous, democratic, civilized and harmonious modern socialist country.' To achieve that ambition, need to be created national prosperity and revitalization of the happiness of the people that rely on the Chinese way, which is socialism with Chinese characteristics (Barmé, et al. 2016).

The aim of the China Dream seems too domestic-minded if look barely by the rhetoric that explained. China's behaviors under Xi Jinping Presidency do not show inward-looking foreign policy. Otherwise, China demonstrates the effort to gain more involvement in international-level politics. Poh and Mingtian Ji explain that China through Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), Asian Infrastructure Bank, and its relations with the regional organization (such as ASEAN and CELAC) also their involvement in UN Peacekeeping Mission shows the effort to develop their roles in international politics. Thus, the so called outward-looking principles introduced by the Chinese government it is *Community of Common Destiny* Principles. President Xi Jinping promotes this principle in the 18<sup>th</sup> Communist Party of China National Congress 2012. Community of Common Destiny introduces to describe China's relations with other countries, especially its neighbors.

Xi Jinping official announces to an international level this concept in his speech at the General Debate of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly. In his speech, he proposes establishing a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation as core and building a community of shared mankind destiny. He stresses five suggestions to achieve that, 1) establish a partnership in which countries treat each other as equals with mutual consultations and mutual understanding; 2) build a security pattern featuring fairness and justice contributed and shared jointly by nations; 3) strive for open, innovative and inclusive development prospects that benefit all; 4) advance inter-civilization exchanges featuring harmony in diversity and inclusiveness; 5) We should build an ecosystem that puts Mother Nature and green development first ("Xi Jinping Attends General Debate of 70th Session of the UN General Assembly and Delivers Important Speech, Underlying to Inherit and Advocate Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter, Establish New Type of International Relations with Win-Win Cooperation" 2015) He also promotes this concept through other forums such as Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and the World Economic Forum in 2017. However, it is still unclear the meaning of community of shared destiny or Community of Common Destiny.

Denghua Zhang explains the Community of Common destiny by borrowing Hedley Bull's term of 'a society of the states' that states conceive themselves bound by a sense of common interests, rules, values, and institutions while interacting with each other. The community of Common destiny aims is the same as that term. Furthermore, Community of Common destiny is an expression that underlines shared interests and destiny between China and other countries and the need to address common challenges in partnership so that all can develop in tandem (Zhang, Denghua. 2018). He added that this is how states, especially China, see the world as a joint unit. However, its explanations are still unclear about Xi Jinping's means Common Destiny definition and the criteria for this concept. Which one could be categorized as common destiny is still in a question mark.

On the other hand, Stephen N. Smith provides other explanations on Community of Common Destiny's motive. He argues that the Community of Common Destiny is China's new assertiveness in the Xi Jinping era. It is China's way to pursue legitimacy at the international level by promoting its definition of governance, development, and ordering principles. In his research, Smith explains that the Community of Common Destiny is an international society. He applies the logic that international society is changeable according to the legitimate principle accepted by the international level. China's promotion of Community of Common Destiny shows its perspective on how international relations should be. In Xi's speech at UN General Assembly, he uses the sentence to establish a new type of international relations.

Thus, based on that explanation, China's has a tendency to carry out foreign policy based on their self-made principles. It makes the idea of a community of common destiny relevant to observe China's behavior towards other countries. Despite its unclear definition, this China idea of Community of Common Destiny under the Xi Jinping era shows China's effort to gain more roles at the international level. Gradually leave the low profile international interaction that applied in President Hu Jintao's era. China Community of Common Destiny

seemingly aims at developing countries as a partner, Denghua said. Latin American regions also included in this aim, as Venezuela becomes the important partner.

#### *4.4. Community of Common Destiny principles on dealing with Venezuela*

In the Venezuela crisis, China still granted Venezuela the new loan and 28 bilateral agreements. During Nicolas Maduro's visit to China, September 17, 2018, China agrees to grant Venezuela US\$ 5 billion loans to boost the oil industry Venezuela. Maduro meets China President Xi Jinping in the annual meeting of Venezuela's China High-Level Committee. The visit also produces Venezuela's commitment to join China Belt and Road Initiatives. China also decides to back up Venezuela from international pressure towards Venezuela's crisis condition. US promoted a draft of a peaceful restoration of democracy to address Venezuela's problem in the UN Security Council, but China and Russia (Venezuela: Competing US, Russia Resolutions Fail to Pass in Security Council UN News." 2019). These China's policies that favor Venezuela could be seen lay on some principles of Community of Common Destiny.

As explained in the previous chapter, Xi suggests creating a community of common destiny needs to establish a partnership in which countries treat each other as equals with mutual consultations and mutual understanding. Venezuela and China have done producing this method to maintain cooperation. China and Venezuela every year held a High-Level Joint Commission to discuss the specific problem and future engagement on its relations. China also develops its relations with Venezuela from a strategic partnership to a comprehensive strategic partnership. Towards a crisis that happens to Venezuela, both governments maintain mutual consultations and understanding through the held meeting. When back from his China visit, Nicolas Maduro praised President Xi Jinping for his leader's vision of a common destiny for humanity (Venezuela's Maduro Pays Tribute to 'giant' Mao Daily Mail Online." 2018). From his statements, Nicolas Maduro has recognized President Xi Jinping's concept of common destiny. This statement implied that Venezuela, through its President, opens a shared community with a common destiny vision.

Xi's other suggestion of creating a Community of Common Destiny strives for open, innovative, and inclusive development prospects that benefit all. China tries to do this also with its investment in Venezuela to another sector aside from the oil sector. In order to help Venezuela diversified its country income as explained before and deal with the crisis. Also, grant and restructure the loan to lift Venezuela's burden. However, Venezuela's mismanagement towards other sectors to increase its country's income does not produce significant outcomes. If looked at China's decision to grant Venezuela still another loan, China probably still sees the prospect of future benefit. As Robert O. Keohane and Robert Axelrod explain, cooperation could sustain due to states still seeing the positive of 'shadow of future' (Axelrod, Robert, and Robert O. Keohane. 1985). It is still unclear what the shadow of the future that China wants to achieve through Venezuela is a community of common destiny, or only to secure its oil supply.

The community of common destiny is a China project towards international society. To achieve that, China needs many states to participate, even better to support it. China successfully maintains its relation with Venezuela does not mean that China has made the community of common destiny. However, it means that China has done secure the commitment of Venezuela to participate in its project. China's effort to build a Community of Common Destiny could be seen from promoting Belt and Road Initiatives. Venezuela's commitments to join this project also presume the positive prospect to help China maintain its aim. Because of less agreement over the meaning of Community of Common Destiny, it is hard to conclude that China maintains its relations with Venezuela due to its aim to make a community of common destiny. It has some possibilities, as explained before. However, less founded factual data to support that argument.

## **5. Conclusion**

Venezuela's conditions indeed give a hard time for China. But still, it is not enough to make their relations shattered. Through analyzing the China idea of a community of common destiny, it is found that China needs to ensure its relations with Venezuela since Venezuela find supportive of their vision. Also, treating Venezuela in a way that is treated as an equal partner with China and respected their way of dealing with the domestic problems, despites Venezuela in debt to China, portray one value of a community of common destiny. It is establishing a partnership in which countries treat each other as equals with mutual consultations and mutual understanding. Some might argue, that it is only a rhetoric that did not directly define China behavior, but



through China experience, this kind of approach could give an alternative on seeing China behavior.

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