

Belt and Road: Strategies for Promoting and Lobbying the Initiative in Partner Countries (On the Example of the Republic of Belarus)

Zhang Haoxuan

Postgraduate student in Political Science, Department of Political Science, Law Faculty, Belarusian State University, Minsk, Republic of Belarus, 220030;

Abstract: The Belt and Road Initiative offers extensive scope for China-Belarus cooperation. This paper establishes a foundation for localised adaptation based on Belarus' socio-economic needs, cultural traditions, and the interests of diverse groups. It designs a tiered and categorised promotion strategy across four levels—government, enterprises, academia, and the public—focusing on strategic alignment, tangible benefits, academic resonance, and livelihood improvements. It establishes a coordinated lobbying framework involving Chinese institutions, local advocates, and third-party organisations, enhancing specialized, guiding, neutral, and cross-culturally adapted lobbying. This achieves deep integration of the initiative's principles with Belarusian local contexts, providing practical support for promoting the initiative among similar partner nations.

keyword: Belt and Road Initiative, Belarus, Promotion Strategy, Lobbying Strategy, Cross-Cultural Communication

DOI: 10.69979/3041-0843.26.02.009

The joint statement on the establishment of an all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Belarus and the 2026-2030 social and economic development plan of the Republic of Belarus are the fundamental guidelines for China and Belarus to jointly build the "Belt and Road" to carry out precise publicity work. Belarus is a key hub of the Belt and Road Initiative in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS region. Relevant publicity work must be based on the positioning of the all-weather partnership between China and Belarus, closely linked to the core demands of Belarus' social and economic development such as digitization, high-tech, and diversification of foreign trade, and abandon the one-size-fits-all publicity model^[1]. We should implement precise and hierarchical propaganda ideas that are in line with local socio-economic characteristics and core interests according to local conditions, break down barriers to cross-cultural communication, enhance the recognition and participation of all sectors of society, deepen practical cooperation between China and Belarus, and also provide practical reference for the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative in similar cooperative countries.

1 The Foundations for Localised Adaptation of Belt and Road Promotion and Advocacy in Belarus

The Belt and Road Initiative takes facility connectivity, industrial cooperation, scientific and technological innovation cooperation and improvement of people's livelihood as its core essence. These development goals are highly consistent with Belarus' development demands of promoting industrial modernization, improving infrastructure system and cultivating new productivity. As an important hub of the Eurasian Continental Bridge, Belarus urgently needs to carry out infrastructure upgrading and construction. The concept of connectivity upheld by the "Belt and Road" initiative helps to open up regional logistics channels and consolidate its geographical transportation location advantages. Belarus attaches great importance to scientific and technological innovation and talent construction^[2]. The international scientific research cooperation and achievement sharing model advocated by the initiative can help the country improve its scientific research strength and promote industrial transformation and upgrading. At the same time, the initiative adheres to the concept of mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation, which is in line with the aspirations of Belarus to seek independent development and expand the pattern of international cooperation, and has laid a solid foundation for relevant external publicity and communication guidance.

2 Analysis of the Interests and Concerns of Belarus's Diverse Groups

At the government level, the Belarusian government pays attention to relying on international cooperation to maintain the overall stability of its own development and enhance its voice in the regional cooperation mechanism. At the same time, it recognizes the role of the Belt and Road Initiative in supporting the implementation of its own strategy and its long-term cooperation value. The slowdown in global economic growth and increased uncertainty in the financial situation: the overall growth momentum of the global economy is expected to decline, and the economic growth dividend is mainly concentrated in developing regions. The main influencing factors include: the growth rate continues to decline, the average annual GDP growth rate is expected to fall back to 10.3% -10.35%, and the core driving force of economic growth is gradually shifting to China, India, Southeast Asia and Africa; financial market volatility, tightening monetary and credit policies, high inflation and rising financing costs have further increased the pressure on finance and business operations in various countries. For the Belarusian economy, this requires it to focus on improving labor productivity, optimizing the domestic investment business environment, broadening diversified financing channels and cultivating innovative industries^[3]. The business community pays more attention to the actual economic benefits brought by pragmatic cooperation, emphasizing the sustainable operation and profit space of joint venture projects. Enterprises expect to introduce advanced technology, absorb financial support and develop market resources through the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" initiative, so as to promote the upgrading of local industries. The academic community focuses on the

conceptual value and research potential of the initiative, explores its compatibility with global development trends, and its academic research significance in the fields of cross-cultural exchanges and cooperation and global governance. The ordinary people pay more attention to the actual changes brought by the initiative to daily life, focusing on the improvement of people's livelihood, employment expansion and other related fields. The people's cognition and attitude directly constitute the social basis for the promotion of the Belt and Road Initiative in the local area.

3 Adaptation Analysis of the Cross-Cultural Communication Environment in Belarus

Belarus has a unique cultural tradition of East Slavia, and its people advocate the spirit of pragmatism, integrity and mutual assistance. Cross-cultural communication needs to respect the country's cultural customs and values to prevent conceptual differences and conflicts. The media pattern in Belarus presents a strong concentration feature. The official media dominates public opinion. At the same time, the influence of social media continues to rise, providing multiple channels for the promotion of related cooperation initiatives. Language adaptation is an important prerequisite for cross-cultural communication. Belarusian and Russian are both official languages. When promoting relevant cooperation initiatives, language localization should be given priority. The core idea is transformed into an easy-to-understand expression of the local people, so as to eliminate the language barriers in cross-cultural communication. In addition, Belarus belongs to the group of countries in the global South, and naturally agrees with the cooperation guidelines with equality and mutual benefit, consultation and dialogue as the core, which is highly consistent with the core development direction of the joint construction initiative, and also creates an important entry point for cross-cultural communication and communication.

4 Foundations for Resource Integration in Promotion and Advocacy

China and Belarus have set up diversified cooperation platforms such as joint laboratories, overseas colleges and universities, and cooperative industrial parks. These platforms have become an important support for the promotion of relevant cooperation initiatives, and have realized the deep integration of concept dissemination and pragmatic cooperation. Chinese institutions have professional advantages in initiative interpretation and resource docking, while Belarusian local organizations are familiar with their national conditions and the demands of various groups. Third-party institutions can build a communication bridge with a neutral identity to resolve potential cognitive biases^[4] The academic, cultural and business exchanges between the two countries have become increasingly close, creating a good atmosphere of cooperation, accumulating rich network resources and consolidating the work foundation for publicity and promotion. In addition, institutions such as the National Academy of Sciences and the National Technical University of Belarus have strong influence in the field of scientific research and education, which can be used as the core carrier for cultivating local propaganda forces to further enhance the credibility and recognition of the initiative in Belarus.

5 A Tiered and Categorized Promotion Strategy for the Belt and Road Initiative in Belarus

The propaganda work at the government level takes high-level visits and official coordination as the starting point, constantly consolidates the strategic consensus between the two governments, and integrates relevant cooperation initiatives into the medium- and long-term cooperation planning system of the two sides. With the help of official meetings and bilateral consultation channels, the core connotation and cooperation direction of the initiative are accurately explained, the national development strategy of Belarus is benchmarked, the key areas and specific implementation paths of bilateral cooperation are clarified, and the recognition and support of the initiative at the government level are strengthened. Relying on the bilateral cooperation mechanism, the initiative concept is deeply integrated into Belarus' key national development areas such as infrastructure construction, scientific and technological innovation, and energy security, highlighting the strategic value of the initiative for Belarus' development. At the same time, with the opportunity of Belarus' participation in multilateral platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS cooperation mechanism, the initiative concept is promoted in various multilateral occasions, and the initiative of the Belarusian government to promote relevant cooperation under the framework of regional cooperation is further enhanced. In the whole process of propaganda and promotion, we always adhere to the principle of equal dialogue, fully respect Belarus' development vision and reasonable interest demands, do not instill ideas in one way, and truly realize strategic mutual trust and win-win cooperation.

6 Promoting Pragmatic Cooperation at the Enterprise Level

The publicity and promotion at the enterprise level should be based on pragmatic cooperation projects, highlighting the practical benefits brought by the joint construction initiative to the development of enterprises, so as to enhance the enthusiasm of enterprises to actively participate. In combination with the industrial development needs of Belarusian enterprises, we will accurately promote cooperation projects under the framework of initiative cooperation, focus on key areas of concern of enterprises such as industrial synergy, technology introduction and market expansion, and clearly clarify the economic benefits and development opportunities that cooperation can bring. Build a docking platform for Chinese and Belarusian enterprises to facilitate technical exchanges, capacity cooperation and joint project development between the two countries. Through practical cooperation, enterprises can effectively perceive the actual value brought by the initiative, and then actively participate in the promotion work. Improve the standardization and long-term mechanism of enterprise cooperation, ensure that cooperation projects meet the environmental protection, safety and labor-related standards of both parties, and enhance the recognition and satisfaction of enterprises with the proposed cooperation model. At the same time, relying on inter-enterprise exchanges, it conveys the concept of initiative and cooperation to management and grass-roots employees, forming a virtuous circle of taking the enterprise as the main body and actively spreading the consensus of cooperation.

7 Promotion of Conceptual Resonance within the Academic Community

The dissemination and promotion at the academic level takes theoretical research and academic exchanges as the core, and builds academic support for the implementation and dissemination of the co-construction initiative. Support universities and research institutions in China and Belarus to carry out joint academic research on issues related to the initiative, and jointly organize academic forums, seminars and other exchange activities. China and Belarus agreed to promote pragmatic cooperation between universities, relying on joint education projects to build academic departments, and simultaneously carry out distance education and teaching. Make full use of government scholarships and other channels to promote students to exchange and jointly train talents, and strive to create a good learning environment for students from other countries. The two countries continue to support their young people to learn each other's national languages, expand cooperation in the field of language education, further strengthen the Belarus Research Center established by China and the Confucius Institutes in Belarus, and are committed to building a China Research Center in Belarus. The two sides encourage scientific research institutions of the two countries to deepen exchanges through academic conferences, seminars, joint research and other forms^[5].

Various academic activities have carried out in-depth discussions on the cooperation model, development path and regional value of the initiative, and produced research results with academic value. Support the exchange of visits between scholars of the two countries, guide the Belarusian academic community to explore the core connotation of the initiative and the practical results of China-Belarus cooperation, explain the era value and practical significance of the initiative from an academic perspective, and enhance the conceptual consensus at the academic level. Incorporating the research content of the initiative into the curriculum system and scientific research direction of universities in the two countries, cultivating young students' awareness and recognition of the initiative, and reserving reserve talents for publicity and promotion. Relying on scientific research cooperation platforms such as the China-Belarus Joint Laboratory, we will promote the deep integration of academic research and pragmatic cooperation, so that academic research results can provide theoretical support for the steady advancement of the initiative.

8 Grassroots-Level Promotion of Livelihood Orientation

The promotion at the grassroots level adheres to the people-centered approach and focuses on the actual improvement of people's lives brought by the co-construction initiative, so as to arouse emotional resonance and enhance public support. Relying on localized communication channels, it interprets various cooperation measures in the field of people's livelihood, highlights its positive role in employment, medical care, education and infrastructure construction, and intuitively shows the real dividends of people's livelihood. It adopts a two-line communication method that parallels major projects and daily narratives. While focusing on promoting large-scale cooperation projects, it also shows various practical measures for ordinary people, narrowing the distance between the initiative and the public^[6]. Through cultural exhibitions, artistic cooperation, mutual visits and other multi-cultural exchange activities, the mutual understanding and friendship between the people of China and Belarus will be enhanced, and a good atmosphere of social public opinion will be created for the implementation of the initiative. With the help of social media and local media platforms, push popular content that is close to life and easy to empathize, and further enhance people's awareness and acceptance of co-construction initiatives.

9 Multi-stakeholder Lobbying Strategies for the Belt and Road Initiative in Belarus

Chinese institutions carry out professional publicity and lobbying work. The Chinese Embassy in Belarus has set up a special propaganda work team. The team members need to be fully familiar with the content of relevant cooperation initiatives, the national conditions of Belarus, the local language and cultural background, and have excellent cross-cultural communication skills. Develop exclusive publicity programs for the differentiated needs of different interest groups, and accurately convey the core concepts and cooperation opportunities of the initiative. At the government level, the publicity team focuses on strategic docking and long-term cooperation value, professionally interprets the initiative, designs cooperation and co-construction programs, and helps the two governments clarify the direction of cooperation and development. Facing the enterprise group, the team focuses on pragmatic economic benefit analysis, provides project docking and technical support services, and responds to the concerns of the enterprise. In the academic field, by sharing the relevant research results and practical experience of the initiative, we will promote academic exchanges and scientific research cooperation, and stimulate the enthusiasm of academic research. The whole publicity and lobbying process adheres to the principle of objective truth, truthfully conveys the concept and actual results of the initiative cooperation, eliminates exaggerated expressions, and maintains the good credibility of Chinese institutions^[7].

10 Guided lobbying by Belarusian local advocates.

Cultivate the local publicity backbone team of Belarus composed of government officials, business leaders, academic experts, cultural figures and other diverse groups, and rely on the credibility advantages of local people to enhance the actual effectiveness of external publicity and communication guidance. Government officials who play the role of publicity can explain the value and significance of cooperation initiatives in public by virtue of their own public office status, and convey the recognition and support of relevant cooperation at the official level. Business leaders can combine their own cooperation experience, share the actual benefits and practical insights gained from participating in the initiative cooperation, and drive more market players to participate. Academic experts can interpret the concept connotation and cooperation path of the initiative from a professional perspective, and further consolidate its academic recognition. Cultural professionals can use their social influence to promote the concept of cooperation through cultural communication channels and expand the participation enthusiasm of the public. Establish a local publicity talent cultivation mechanism, provide relevant training and resource guarantee for relevant key personnel, guide them to accurately convey the core values of the initiative, and form a joint force for localized

publicity and promotion.

11 Neutral lobbying by third-party organisations

Give full play to the neutral bridge role of third-party institutions, eliminate the cognitive bias of different groups on relevant cooperation initiatives, and enhance the objectivity and credibility of publicity and promotion work. Third-party entities such as international think tanks, industry associations, and civil society organizations can use their own neutral identities to alleviate the resistance of various stakeholders and enhance the social acceptance of publicity content. International think tanks can conduct independent research around the initiative, publish objective and fair research reports, and provide professional reference for all parties to understand the initiative. Relying on the professional advantages of the industry, the industry association can promote cooperation opportunities to enterprises and promote the cooperation and co-construction under the framework of the whole industry participation initiative. Civil society organizations can go deep into the grassroots community through various forms of publicity activities, explain the positive role of the initiative in the field of public livelihood, and collect public opinions and feedback to relevant institutions to optimize publicity and communication strategies^[8]. Third-party institutions must adhere to a neutral position, objectively disseminate the concept and results of cooperation, uphold the principle of impartiality, and ensure the fairness and actual effectiveness of publicity work.

12 Adaptive Persuasion in Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural publicity adheres to the principle of localization, respects Belarus' cultural traditions and values, and avoids cultural barriers and conflicts. Optimize the expression of publicity discourse, transform the professional expressions related to cooperation initiatives into expressions that are easy to understand by local people, and pay attention to the appropriate norms of language and conform to the habits of local language expression. According to Belarusian cultural customs and public preferences, design publicity forms and abandon communication methods that are contrary to local traditions. Integrate the concept of the initiative with the national spirit and development vision of Belarus, deepen the emotional identity of the people, and enhance the appeal of communication. Relying on official media, social media, civil society organizations and other localized communication channels to carry out accurate publicity to ensure that the dissemination of content accurately reaches the target audience. At the same time, we should strengthen the cross-cultural literacy training of the publicity personnel, deepen their understanding and grasp of the local culture, and ensure the smooth and orderly progress of the publicity work.

The key to the promotion of the " Belt and Road " initiative in Belarus lies in the deep integration of the concept of the initiative with the country's local development demands, cultural traditions and practical interests. This propaganda model abandons empty preaching communication and one-way concept indoctrination, based on practical cooperation and multi-party coordination, and strives to build a propaganda and promotion system that adapts to the local, hierarchical classification, and multiple linkages. As the core partner of the Belt and Road Initiative in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Belarus' propaganda practice can not only inject new momentum into deepening the all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Belarus, but also provide valuable practical experience for the implementation of the initiative in similar partner countries. In the future, the relevant publicity and promotion work needs to continue to optimize the strategy, accurately adapt to the changing demands of various groups, and promote the initiative from being recognized to being recognized and then to active participation in Belarus, so as to ultimately achieve mutual benefit and common development between China and Belarus.

References

- [1]Zuo L, Ren Y. How renewable energy consumption and digitalization contribute to environmental sustainability: Evidence from One Belt One Road countries. *J Environ Manage.* 2025;380:124379. doi:10.1016/j.jenvman.2025.124379
- [2]Wu X. Internationalization Issues in Chinese Firms: One Belt, One Road-Based Perspective. *Front Psychol.* 2022;13:881155. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.881155
- [3] Program of Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2026-2030 has been approved. - URL: <https://sdgs.by/en/news/program-of-socio-economic-development-of-the-republic-of-belarus-for-2026-2030-has-been-approved/>
- [4]Bashir MF, Ma B, Qin Y, et al. Evaluation of One Belt One Road publications: a bibliometric and literature review analysis. *Environ Sci Pollut Res Int.* 2021;28 (28):37016-37030. doi:10.1007/s11356-021-14621-y
- [5] Joint Statement by the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Belarus on Further Developing the All-Weather Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Between the Two Countries in the New Era (Full Text) - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.cn/zyxw/202303/t20230302_11033872.shtml
- [6]Zhao M, Yang L, Cheng P, et al. Helmet use among cyclists and motorcyclists involved in media-reported road traffic crashes after implementation of the national 'One Helmet, One Belt' campaign in China. *J Epidemiol Community Health.* 2025;80 (1):35-40. doi:10.1136/jech-2025-224411
- [7]Chen J, Rojniruttikul N, Kun LY, et al. Management of Green Economic Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability in One Belt and Road Initiative Economies. *Environ Sci Pollut Res Int.* 2022;29 (24):36326-36336. doi:10.1007/s11356-021-18054-5
- [8]Akter SN, Bi S, Qiu X, et al. Technological prospects of Belt and Road Initiative in Bangladesh. *Heliyon.* 2023;9 (7):e17549. doi:10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e17549