Debate Topic 1

Will the Global Development Gap Widen or Narrow Over Time?

Thank you, Chair. Greetings to all judges and fellow debaters.

Today, we affirm that the global development gap is *gradually narrowing*. We begin by identifying three major types of global economic imbalance:

1. Uneven development among advanced capitalist countries;
2. Disparities between developed and developing nations;
3. Gaps within the developing world itself.

We acknowledge that such imbalances have existed since the beginning of global economic interaction. Rather than aiming to eliminate them entirely, we argue that the barriers to achieving balance are progressively being removed. This forms our core criterion: **if the obstacles to global equity are diminishing, then the imbalance is narrowing**.

We will support our stance with two main arguments.

First, the economic divide is shrinking. Classical economist David Ricardo's theory of *comparative advantage* laid the foundation for many late-developing nations to rapidly industrialize. China is a prime example. Since the policy of reform and opening-up, China has leveraged its labor-rich advantage to grow export-driven, labor-intensive industries, fueling decades of rapid economic expansion.

In 1960, China's GDP was only 10.99% of the United States'. By 2021, it had reached 76.95%. This transformation demonstrates that, with the right strategy, developing countries can close the gap with industrialized economies. Global economic development is not static—it advances and evolves. As developing countries rise and developed countries experience economic cycles, the overall global trend points toward convergence, not divergence.

Second, technological progress and globalization have reduced geographic and informational distances between nations, giving underdeveloped regions more access to growth opportunities. The concept of a "global village" is no longer theoretical—it's a lived reality. Infrastructure investments, such as those led by China in Africa, have visibly reduced regional disparities. Satellite data shows increasing brightness—indicative of energy access and economic activity—in previously underdeveloped areas. This demonstrates that these regions are becoming more integrated into global development, enjoying more balanced growth and opportunity.

In conclusion, we believe that the barriers to global development equity are being overcome. The forces of economic cooperation, technological advancement, and strategic development have all contributed to narrowing the global development gap.