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**From Margin to Centre:
The Emerging China, Sino-African Relations and Prospects
for Sustainable Development in Africa**

Author:	James Emmanuel Wanki ¹
Institution:	Anna Lindh Scholar, Dept of Politics and Public Administration
Address:	FG 205, Foundation Building, University of Limerick, 00353 Limerick, Ireland (Republic of)
E-mail:	james.wanki@ul.ie
Telephone:	+353876249315

¹ Anna Lindh Scholar (Doctoral Research) Centre for Peace and Development Studies, University of Limerick, Ireland.

If capitalism is restored in a big socialist country, it will inevitably become a superpower...
 China will never change her colour but will always stand by the oppressed peoples and oppressed nations. If one day China should change her colour and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world, and everywhere subject others to her bullying, aggression and exploitation, the people of the world should identify her as social-imperialism, expose it, oppose it and work together with the Chinese people to overthrow it

Deng Xiaoping (Chinese Statesman)
 Speech at UN General Assembly Special Session, 1974

Abstract

China's unprecedented economic growth over the last few decades has stroke the chord to world attention—stunning foes and friends alike. Saddled on a spirited economic expansion of 10 per cent per annum in real terms, China continues to consolidate her position as one of the world's fastest growing economies—a track record she has relished for close to three decades now. As a matter of fact, China's GDP for 2005 stood twelve times the level of 1978, when Deng Xiaoping launched the country on the path of economic reform (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2006a:24)². China is now the world's fourth largest economy and third largest trader, with very promising prospects that she may as well move up a notch in each category in the not too distant future³. Enscenced in an enterprising industrial base, a dynamic mercantilist culture, and a rapidly expanding military arsenal, the “Chinese red dragon” has arisen from slumber, poised to claim the 21st century.

In fact, while pundits are still gasping from this phenomenal economic ‘leap forward’ or the ‘Chinese Miracle’ as it is now being viewed by many, China is relentlessly broadening the circle of its external relations, ‘pinnacled’ by an aggressive economic offensive for the search of raw materials to feed the demands of Chinese industries. Once regarded as a laggard in the profiteering acrobatics of international political economy, China has already begun punching above her weight in significantly contributing towards defining the contours of the global economic landscape. Preponderating demand for energy around the globe has brought major players like the United States (US), European Union (EU), and Japan into fierce competition with China in clamouring for, and securing long term energy supplies. With its 2006 GDP growth hitting 10.7 percent, China's hunger for raw materials and energy resources especially oil to sustain her soaring economy, has only grown more insatiable. A Middle East mired in unending political and security tensions has only made the scenario more hectic.

The African continent—viewed as the traditional economic hunting ground for the United States, and the European Union—has over the last twenty years witnessed unmatched display of Chinese economic interest, with the volume of China's trade with Africa increasing exponentially. During the 1990s for instance, Sino-African trade grew by 700 percent, while trade with South Africa reached 3 billion US dollars in 2000 (accounting for 30% of all trade with the African continent). In 2005, Chinese trade with Africa

² Also see Lardy, R. Nicholas, *China: Towards a Consumption-Driven Growth Path*, Institute for International Economics Policy, Brief 06-6(October 2006)

³ For instance, Official statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2006a: 169, Xie Fuzhan) showed net exports of goods alone tripling from \$36 billion(1.7% of GDP) in 2004, to more than \$100 billion(4.6 % of GDP) in 2005—and expanded almost geometrically a further 75% to reach \$177.5 billion (6.7% of GDP) in 2006.

reached US\$ 39.7 billion, almost four times the volume in 2000⁴. In 2006, only one year later, it had hit a ceiling height of US\$ 55 billion⁵. China is now Africa's third largest partner in trade, already ahead of the United Kingdom, and closely behind the United States and France⁶. If the present projections continue unhindered⁷, China's trade with Africa may as well double those of the US and the EU in the not too far future. Recent economic projections portraying a Chinese economy overtaking that of the United States in size as early as 2041, have not ceased numbing many spines.

On the political front, the Chinese colossus has equally flexed its diplomatic muscles quite successfully towards building partnerships for mutual benefits with African countries. Many high-level exchanges occurred from 1995 onwards, culminating with the establishment of the Forum for China Africa Cooperation in 2000, with the subsequent release of the Chinese Africa Policy Paper in 2006. Indisputably, China's hand of friendship has been accepted by many third world countries especially those of the African continent who see the Chinese as the torchbearers of the developing world and as a credible balance to the excessive hegemonism of the United States and the EU. Besides, China's principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other States, and non-conditionality in trade dealings seem an enticing clause for most African countries who have viewed conditionalities from the West as a serious bulwark to their progress.

This paper critically questions the impact of China's great march into Africa. It begins by situating the context of Sino-African relations, revealing various phases and trends of China's economic, political and military relations with Africa. The opportunities and the challenges which China's relations present for the African continent are then examined within the dimensions of sustainable development. Emphasis is also placed on the impact which a strengthening China-Africa relation will have on EU-Africa relations in the medium and long-terms, especially as many within the African continent see the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) as a potential disincentive as far as the EU's economic relations with Africa is concerned. The paper then concludes by giving voice to a set of recommendation aimed at ensuring that the African continent benefits sustainably from China's expansion, and not fall prey to re-colonization from an evidently over-ambitious China, quite enthusiastic in relishing its ascending international clout.

⁴ *China Daily*, 2006-11-06

⁵ *Xinhua Online*, 16th May 2007 and *People's Daily*[Beijing], January 30th 2007, p.3

⁶ For further analysis, see Ian Taylor, 'Sino-African Relations and the Problems of Human Rights', In *African Affairs*, Oxford University Press(107/426, 2008) pp. 63-87

⁷ *China Daily* [Beijing], January 2006, p.2. A Senior Economist at the Chinese Ministry of Commerce predicts that the volume of China's trade with Africa will top the \$100 billion mark in the next five years.(Ian Taylor, 2008, op. cit.)

Evolution of Sino-African Relations

China's honeymoon with Africa is increasingly getting topical by the day⁸, attracting unprecedented attention and cascading interest from diverse angles of the East-West academic and political divides. While this is partly owing to China's resurging visibility on the world stage, it is also a consequence of the geometric growth of Chinese presence across the various flanks of the African continent. In 2006, China commemorated her *Year of Africa*—marking fifty years of serious engagements with the continent that began with the establishment of diplomatic relationships with Egypt in mid 1950s. The *Year for Africa* took relations between the two to new heights with the launch of the third Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). As Mancall (1984)⁹ and more recently, Large (2008) have argued, “current appreciation of China's historical involvement in the world, including Africa, contrasts with former notions about its supposedly isolated position at the epicentre of some hierarchical tributary system”. To further concur with Mancall, recognizing that Chinese external relations over the years have been characterized by a metamorphosis of various approaches which have both been warm and cold—as opposed to a single static dominant and enduring tradition, is indeed a sensible point from which to begin understanding Sino-African ties.

Indeed, China has over the years, changed its foreign policy from confrontation to cooperation, from revolution to economic development; and from Isolationism to International developmentalism¹⁰. Gaining a tactical diplomatic advantage in her unique position in the community of nations—having one foot in the developing world and another in the developed with a seat on the United Nations Security Council, China can conveniently flirt across the North-South divide, straddling both axes with relative ease in fostering her foreign policy objectives. Many have argued that China's present relation with Africa is an extension of her ambitious quest for global hegemonism. Following George Yu's dictum (1968), “studying China in Africa is much like pursuing a dragon in the bush. The dragon is imposing but the bush is dense”. Africa is seen as a virgin forest in which China is fiercely hunting for its strategic interest, namely: energy, trade and geopolitical interests.

The genesis of China-Africa relations backdates to the 15th century when an imperial fleet under the command of Admiral Zheng visited Eastern Africa as part of a circumnavigatory expedition¹¹. In fact, archaeological finds of ceramics excavated around

⁸ See Large, Daniel (2008) 'Beyond 'Dragon in the Bush': The Study of China- Africa Relations'. In *African Affairs*, 107/426, 45-61, Oxford University Press. For more incisive analysis of China's spectacular debut in Africa, also see Ian Taylor, '*China and Africa: Engagement and Compromise*' (Routledge, London, 2006). Equally see Ian Taylor, 'China's Foreign Policy Towards Africa in the 1990s', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36, 3(1998), pp. 443-60.

⁹ In incisive analysis of the patterns of Chinese foreign policy is brought forth in Mark Mancall *China at the Centre: Three Hundred Years of Foreign Policy* (The Free Press, New York, 1984). Also see Morris Rossabi (ed.), *China Among Equals*(University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1983), Joseph Fletcher, 'China and Central Asia' in John Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order*(Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1968), and Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: the Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*(Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts., 2005)

¹⁰ Muekalia, J., Domingos, 'Africa and China's Strategic Partnership', In *African Security Review* (2004) 13(1). Also see John Cooley, *East Wind over Africa: Red China's African Offensive* (Walker and Company, New York, 1965).

¹¹ Obiorah, Ndubisi (2007) 'Who's Afraid of China in Africa? Towards a Civil Society Perspective on China-Africa Relations'. In *Africa Perspective on China in Africa*.(Op. cit) pp: 35-54

Timbuktu in West Africa and the great Zimbabwe ruins were traced back to China, suggesting that some form of indirect trade and communication had existed between both regions over 3000 years ago. However, it seems fair enough to trace China's contemporary linkages with most of the developing world especially Africa, to the Bandung Conference of 1955, where China shared developing nations' sense of humiliation, the fierce urgency to restore lost dignity, and a pious but powerful determination to reclaim its own destiny. The prolific Richard Wright (1956) in his *Colour Curtain* vividly captured the prevalent temperament at Bandung in these famous lines:

The despised, the insulted, the hurt, and the dispossessed—in short, the underdogs of the human race were meeting...And what had these nations in common? Nothing, it seems...but what their past relationship to the Western world has made them feel. This meeting of the rejected was in itself a kind of judgement on the Western world.

The Peoples Republic of China (PRC) was founded at a time when most of the developing world, especially the African region, was still under the yoke of colonialism and Western imperialism. Beginning with a world view similar to that of the Soviet Union (the world as being divided into two camps: the forces of socialism, and those of imperialism), China soon recanted from the latter's perception in what became a Sino-Soviet struggle for spheres of influence in Africa. For instance, this rivalry played out in Zimbabwe, where China backed the liberation movement of Robert Mugabe (ZANU), while Russia backed that of Joshua Nkomo,(ZAPU). Arguably, Mugabe's ultimate election victory and his total vanquishing of ZAPU, laid the foundation for the close relationship that exists between China and Zimbabwe today. Beijing's new political doctrine for Southern countries on the eve of their decolonization was one of respect and mutual partnership. Consequently, China extended a hand of friendship to India in 1954, and both nations agreed on five key principles of coexistence¹² to define South-South cooperation, which were later adopted by 29 African and Asian countries at the Bandung conference of 1955. The overarching objectives of the Bandung concert were the enhancement of socio-economic cooperation within the South, fostering of self-determination and human rights, and the rights of peoples to self-governance.¹³

Following the posits of Bandung, China began cultivating ties with, and offered economic, technical and military assistance to African countries engaged in liberation movements against colonial rule, as part of what Beijing conceived as a united revolutionary front against superpower dominance. The Maoist 1960s equally saw a tremendous flux of Chinese traders going to settle in Africa. Chairman Mao extended support to liberation movements and organisations from Cairo to Cape Town. In same light, Chinese Premier Chou Enlai, on a ten State tour of the African continent, reported that "revolutionary prospects [were indeed] excellent throughout the African continent". Mao was later to articulate a theory of "Three Worlds" presented by Deng Xiaoping at the UN in 1974, in which he clustered China and other developing countries especially those

¹² The conferees at Bandung were mindful of the multi-polar realities of the world, and the tenets of mutual respect and cooperation underlined their deliberations.(1) Respect for Sovereignty, to be a guiding policy for a new dimension to international relations,(2) Mutual non-aggression, the need to abstain from the use of armed force or threat thereof, in the relations among States,(3)Non-Interference in the national affairs of member States, (4)Equality and Mutual benefit, indicative of political equality, economic equality and mutual support in supplementing member countries' needs, and finally;(5)Peaceful co-existence, invites all countries to pursue common interests, reserve differences, maintain friendly cooperation, respect each other and live in harmony despite variance in respective ideologies and cultures.

¹³ See Richard Wright (1956) *The Colour Curtain*, University of Mississippi Press, United States.

of Africa at the third echelon, below Europe and Japan in the second echelon, and the then two superpowers, Soviet Union and United States at the top. This was interpreted by the South as a formidable move of Chinese solidarity. With Mao's death and the rise of Xiaoping, China began charting a new path for its foreign policy especially with regards to Africa. Besides, most of the continent's countries had won their independence and China's revolutionary rhetoric had lost its enticing popular appeal. Chinese emphasis was now turning towards economic development and trade as well as broader internationalism. China joined the World Bank and IMF in 1980, already on a lively gear to its economic recovery objectives. This was in tandem with a paradigm shift at Beijing, from confrontation to cooperation, and from revolution to economic prosperity.

With the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a unipolar world dispensation, China found a 'place under the sun', assuming a dual role as Torchbearer for the Third World and as power-balancer of US hegemonism. With a re-invigorated military, a buoyant economy and growing international authority, China has redefined its geostrategic vision, calling for multi-polarity and a new politico-economic world dispensation that is more inclusive¹⁴. Dedicating the decade following 1990 to enlarge, consolidate and strengthen ties with respective African countries in the economic, military, political and cultural dimensions, China has re-engaged Africa on a scale that bewilders the sensibilities of even the keenest analysts. Oil is without doubt, a key goal in China's African offensive, and she has taken further moves to deepen economic cooperation and trade with oil producing countries like Nigeria, and Angola where a record US\$3billion dollar deal was reached in 2002.

On the political spheres, China-African relations have witnessed a great leap forward over the last ten years. Following a letter from the Chinese leader, Jian Zeming to the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU, now AU-African Union) soliciting the establishment of a comprehensive China-Africa forum, China displayed its knack in wanting to go beyond the tangents of bilateral relations, to engaging Africa on a more integrated continental platform. African leaders responded enthusiastically, and Zeming hosted the first ever China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing from the 11-12 October 2000. Since then, Chinese interests in Africa have climaxed, with large Chinese firms for instance, extending their exploration into investment opportunities in Africa. At the 2006 Beijing Summit, China once more re-affirmed its desire and respect for win-win perspectives regarding economic exchanges with Africa¹⁵. Consequently, Beijing put forward an Africa Action Plan for 2007-2009¹⁶ at the end of the summit in which China made concrete pledges to assist Africa in key strategic areas¹⁷. It made public its intentions of doubling the volume of its assistance to African States, as well as providing preferential loans and export buyer's credits to African countries amounting to US\$ 5 billion over the next three years. By May 2007, China equally announced that it was in process of providing US\$ 20 billion in infrastructure and trade financing to Africa over the following three

¹⁴ Muekalia, *ibid.* pp 6-7

¹⁵ Maswana, Jean-Claude (2007) *China-Africa's Emerging Economic Links: A Review under Core-Periphery perspective*, MPRA Paper No. 5520, posted 07. November 2007. <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/5520/>

¹⁶ President Hu Jintao, Beijing-China, 4th Nov. 2006. Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009). In May 2007, China's State Council approved a fund of US\$ 5 billion in support of African countries' manufacturing, agricultural, transport, mining, resource exploration, and development and Telecommunication sectors. This was directed towards developing a platform for more successful Chinese entrepreneurial activities in Africa.

¹⁷ Declaration of the *Beijing Summit of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation*(Draft)2006

year period¹⁸. These are glaring signs that Sino-African relations are now taking quantum leaps into greater heights, being consolidated and concretized on daily basis.

However, Sino-African relations continue to be assailed by a swirl of poignant criticisms flowing from especially the West, and interestingly from some quarters in Africa as well, for what has been described as “China’s perceived amorality *vis-a-vis* human rights in its diplomacy towards Africa”¹⁹

Sino-African Relations and Prospects for Africa’s Revival

China’s Africa policy²⁰ especially those related to trade and investment, as well as its dual role as creditor and donor, will certainly have far reaching impacts for the future of developing economies in Africa, and of course, contribute significantly in defining the extent to which global development challenges for the region are overcome²¹. By abandoning the issues of human rights, democracy and governance, the very sincerity of China’s good intentions are brought into question. We cannot talk of sustainable development by remaining indifferent to offenses against the very foundations of sustainability enshrined in human rights, social justice, democracy and good governance.

For one reason, China’s march into Africa is sponsored by similar motivations that triggered European scramble for the continent in the 19th century—the demand for raw materials to fuel industrialization.²² Wading-off suspicion that China’s agenda in Africa will be counter-productive to the continent in the long run, President Hu Jintao, in an address to the Nigerian National Assembly, re-affirmed that “China’s development will not bring a threat to anyone but, instead will only bring more opportunities and space for development to the world”²³. His premier, Wen Jiabao had earlier on addressed a similar concern during his 2006 tour in Egypt, when he declared “our attempts and efforts to develop relations are not directed at entering any alliance and will not compromise the interest of other countries”²⁴. Whatever extent critiques may go, China’s relations with African countries have yielded some benefits for the continent that continue to speak volumes in terms of the considerably rising interest accorded China there. The ensuing themes therefore attempt at exploring Africa’s prospects for revival as a consequence of its relations with China.

¹⁸ For more analysis, see Penny Davies (2007) *China and the End of Poverty in Africa: Towards Mutual Benefits?*, Diakona, Sundryberg, Sweden

¹⁹ See statement from Ms. Bartholomew, Commissioner, US-China Economic and Security Review Commission in the Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human rights and International Operation of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, One Hundred and Ninth Congress, First Session, July 28, 2005, Serial No. 109-74(Government Printer, Washington DC, 2005), p.17(cited in Ian Taylor, op. cit).

²⁰ See China’s African Policy (2006). In January 2006, Beijing released an official African Policy framework which specifically emphasized that China “encourages and supports enterprises’ investment and business in Africa, and will continue to provide preferential loans and buyers’ credits to this end”.

²¹ Davies, Ibid

²² See Manji, Firozi & Marks, Stephen. eds. (2007) *African Perspectives on China in Africa*, Fahamu - Network for Social Justice, Cape Town. pg 4

²³ Cited in Howard French (2006) ‘Commentary: China and Africa’. In *African Affairs*, Oxford University Press. pp:127-132

²⁴ French, Ibid. pg: 128.

Trade and Enhancement of Opportunities for Economic Buoyancy in Africa

The volume of China's trade with Africa continues to soar, growing from US\$ 39.7 billion in 2005 to US\$55 billion in 2006, moving to hit the US\$ 100 billion mark by 2010²⁵. It has been argued rather convincingly that Africa's raw materials will account for a very significant component of this phenomenal growth. Over the last decades, Africa has begun experiencing renewed accelerated growth, since the 1970 downturns, owing significantly to China-driven commodity prices²⁶. The continent registered a peak 5.2 per cent economic growth in 2005 partly as a result of Chinese investment. Africa's export shares to China have equally upped from 1.3 per cent in 1995 to 9.3 per cent in 2004. Similarly, the nature of Sino-African trade has evolved especially with respect to the types of commodities exchanged. For instance, the 1980s and 1990s saw China's key exports constituted mostly of light manufactured goods, footwear, and clothing, however, the twenty first century is revealing a shift to higher technology-related exports including assorted electronic devices, as well as heavy and light machinery, which presently constitute about 50 per cent of China's export bundle²⁷. On the other hand, key African exports to China are basically constituted of natural resources such as crude oil, copper, iron ore, diamond, timber, and cotton to name a few, though non-commodity exports—processed food, textile, small manufactured goods—equally account for less than 10 per cent of Africa's export package to China. These items usually tend to be technologically simple, are intermediate inputs or finished consumers goods²⁸. Manufacturing-related commodities have witnessed skyrocketing demand, not just from China, but from her Asian neighbours as well. For instance, copper prices have hiked six fold since 2001 slumps, hitting apex heights of US \$ 8000 per ton in recent trading, and platinum prices too are following a similar pattern, tripling over the same period.

Fig.1 Share of Africa in China's total Imports, by Major Commodity Groups, 1994-2003(expressed in %)

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	Change in absolute value (1994-2003) (Per cent)	
							Total imports	Imports from Africa
Total primary commodities	2.6	3.4	3.1	8.8	7.6	8.1	362	1348
Agricultural raw materials	3.2	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	5.4	214	437
Fuels	1.7	4.0	3.7	17.3	15.1	16.4	622	6976
Ores and metals	5.4	4.8	3.7	3.7	4.1	3.6	495	299

Source: COMTRADE, in *African Perspectives on China in Africa* (2007)p.2

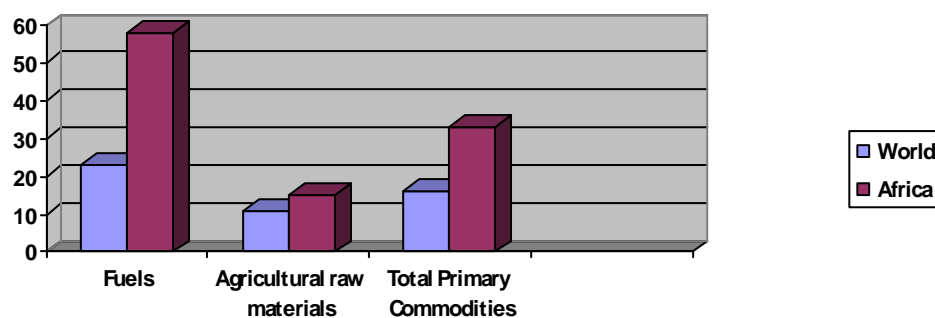
²⁵ *China Daily*, 2006-11-06

²⁶ Maswana (2007) op. cit. pg 6

²⁷ World Bank (2007) *The Growing Relationship between China and Sub-Saharan Africa: Macroeconomic, Trade, Investment, and Aid Links*, World Bank Researcher Observer, (22, 1).

²⁸ Maswana (2007) op. cit. pg 5

Fig.2 Distribution of China's primary imports from world and from Africa, by Major Commodity groups, average annual rate of growth, 1994-2003(Expressed in percentages)



Source: Comtrade and UNCTAD estimates, in *African Perspectives on China in Africa* (2007)p. 23, readapted diagrammatically by author to highlight relevant categories

African nations are equally enthusiastic that Chinese demand has escalated oil prices. Once the largest oil exporter in Asia, China became a net importer of oil in 1993. China's voracious appetite for energy to feed its booming economy has triggered a search for oil supplies from African countries such as Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, Chad, Algeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and the Republic of Congo. According to statistics from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, China accounted for 40 percent of total growth in global demand for oil between 2000 to 2004, overtaking Japan as the world's second-largest oil consumer in 2003, after the United States. The resulting commodity prices have been a boon for most African countries, since soaring prices combined with higher production have helped stimulate local economies. As earlier mentioned, Sub-Saharan Africa's real GDP grew by an average of 5.5 per cent in 2005, with upward trends predicted for the future, a climb that began with 4.4 per cent in 2001-2004 brackets, comparing with a rather sluggish performance of 2.6 per cent over the previous three years.

Africa contains just 10 percent of the world's proven oil reserves, but in a global oil market that is characterized by mounting uncertainty, oil companies cannot resist the oil lure from especially West Africa's Gulf of Guinea for reasons far beyond sheer output guarantee. West Africa's oil is both light and sweet, making it less costly and easier to refine than crude from say the Middle East. Furthermore, the natural off-shore setting of most of West Africa's reserves means relatively less expensive transport-related costs, and less vulnerability to oil line sabotages that come with political upheavals. As Ghazvinian (2008) has argued, "given the hundreds of thousands of barrels of Nigerian crude that are lost every year as a result of fighting, community protests, and organized crime, this is something the industry gets rather excited about"²⁹. Sino-Nigerian bilateral trade agreements saw the signing of a US\$800 million crude oil sale agreement setting in motion an annual purchase by China of 30,000 barrels a day for five years. In suit, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) procured a 45 per cent working interest in an offshore oil exploration license, OML 130, for the sum of US\$ 2.268 billion to explore four of Nigeria's oil blocs, regarded as part of an incentive package for the construction of a hydro-electricity power station; while China National Petroleum

²⁹ Ghazvinian, John (2008) *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil*. Harcourt Publishers, US.

Corporation (CNPC) moved to invest in the Port Harcourt Refinery³⁰. A major investment deal has equally been planned by ONGC Mittal Energy Limited, which will see close to US\$ 6 billion invested in what Rocha(2007) describes as the construction of “railways, oil refining and power in exchange for oil drilling rights”. In a feat that has vividly dramatized China’s insatiable hunger for oil, Chinese business interests expressed willingness to take over a recently privatized Nigerian oil refinery in Kaduna rated as a highly financially risky—a venture which many Western companies had previously described as “a visible mine field of financial losses”.

Fig. 3 Africa’s Proved Natural Gas Reserves

Country	Natural gas (trillion cubic feet) Bp Statistical Review Year end 2004	Natural gas (trillion cubic feet) CEDIGAZ 1-Jan-05	Natural gas (trillion cubic feet) Oil & Gas Journal 1-Jan-06	Natural gas (trillion cubic feet) World oil Year end 2004
Algeria	160.439	161.743	160.505	171.5
Angola		13.067	1.62	4
Benin		0	0.04	
Cameroon		3.496	3.9	
Congo(Brazzaville)		4.061	3.2	4.15
Congo(Kinshasa)		0	0.035	
Cote d’Ivoire(Ivory Coast)		0.918	1	
Djibouti	0	0	0	0
Egypt	65.452	66.004	58.5	66
Equatorial Guinea		2.472	1.3	3.4
Ethiopia		0.883	0.88	
Gabon		1.059	1.2	3.425
Ghana		0.848	0.84	
Libya	52.632	51.313	52.65	51.5
Morocco			0.06	
Mozambique		2.19	4.5	0
Namibia		2.472	2.2	0
Nigeria	176.394	178.517	184.66	180
Rwanda		2.013	2	
Somalia		0.212	0.2	
South Africa		0.353	0.001	
Sudan		3.037	3	4
Tanzania		0.989	0.8	
Tunisia		2.649	2.75	3.885
Other-country Not specified	41.513	0.177	Not applicable	8.899
Africa total	496.43	498.86	485.841	500.759

Source: United States Energy Information Administration

³⁰ See Brooks, Peter & Ji, Hye Shin (2006) *China’s Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States*, Heritage Foundation, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/bg1916.cfm>

Interestingly, Chinese officials have reported that in the first ten months of 2005, Chinese companies invested a total of US\$175 million in African countries, primarily on oil exploration projects and infrastructure, to bolster China's exploratory propensity. By 2045, China is projected to depend on imported oil for 45 percent of its energy needs³¹. Present upheavals and economic uncertainties embroiling Middle East has forced her to take strategic moves towards safeguarding relatively assured energy sources from Africa in a bid to diversifying her supply lines.

Fig.4 Oil Production in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2010(in thousands of Barres per day)

<i>Country</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2010</i>
Nigeria	2,040	2,555	3,500
Angola	750	1,100	2,050
Chad	0	35	390
São Tomé & Príncipe	0	25	350
Equatorial Guinea	118	350	350
Congo (Brazzaville)	283	222	197
Gabon	271	204	134
Cameroon	116	72	68
Côte d'Ivoire	7	55	85
DRC	25	35	28
Mauritania	0	0	125
Guinea Bissau	0	0	250
Total	3,610	4,866	7,527

Source: The Africa Report, March 2006

China's overt display of interest in the oil sector is not exclusive to Nigeria. In Gabon, Sinopec and Unipet have reached a joint deal with Total, while Pan-Ocean continues with its exploration of Tsiengui on-shore belt, and together with Shell, extends its exploratory tentacles to the Awokou reserves. Through these networks of deals, China now receives one-fifth of Gabonese annual oil output. In Angola, Beijing pushed forward a US\$ 2 billion Sino-Angolan cooperation agreement, with an actual value now reported at close to US\$9 billion, in which Sonangol (Angolan State Oil Company) committed to supplying directly to China's Sinopec, supplemented by future joint drilling rights for both companies at Angola's offshore block three. Angola currently exports 25 percent of its oil production to China, in exchange for supplementary incentive-driven aid packages that include funds for Chinese companies to build railways, schools, roads, hospitals, bridges, and offices; laying of a fiber-optic network; as well as training Angolan

³¹ United States Energy Administration, 2007.

telecommunications workers for enhanced technical performance. Today, Angola is one of the world's fastest-growing economies, owing in a considerable extent, to China's investment.

Fig.5 Key Oil Sources in Sub-Saharan Africa

Nigeria.	Nigeria, a member of OPEC ³² , is the largest oil producer in Africa and the eleventh-largest producer in the world. The country is a major oil supplier to both Western Europe and the United States, producing roughly 2.5 million barrels per day. Her proven oil reserves are estimated at 35.2 billion barrels, with plans by the Nigerian government to expand to 40 billion barrels by 2010. Nigeria's economy is heavily dependent on oil revenues, which account for nearly 80 percent of government revenues.
Angola.	The second-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria, Angola's oil production is expected to reach 2 million barrels per day by 2008. She also has major offshore sources of gas. The oil and gas industries, both considered highly promising, have attracted over \$20 billion in foreign direct investment since 2003. The Angolan economy is highly dependent on its oil sector, which accounts for over 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and almost 90 percent of the government's revenues. World Bank sources report that Angola accounted for half of China's oil imports from Africa in 2005.
Sudan.	The centre of international controversy, Sudan's production and export of sweet oil ³³ —have risen rapidly in the last few years, with her Energy Ministry reporting production of some 500,000 barrels per day in 2005 despite internal upheaval and the Darfur question. Sudan has proven reserves of some 563 million barrels of oil, with the potential for far more output. China takes 64 percent of Sudan's oil exports.
Equatorial Guinea.	Total proven oil reserves are estimated at 1.28 billion barrels. Oil production averaged 371,700 barrels per day in 2004, with oil accounting for nearly 90 percent of the country's total exports in 2003. In October 2004, Equatorial Guinea told oil companies operating in the country to cap production at 350,000 barrels per day, for fear that ever-increasing oil revenues could destabilize the economy.
Gabon.	Gabon has proven oil reserves of roughly 2.5 billion barrels and produces about 230,000 barrels per day. This represents a decline of 37 percent since its peak production levels in 1997. Exports of crude oil account for approximately 60 percent of the government's budget and more than 40 percent of GDP.
Republic of Congo.	Being the fifth largest oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Republic of Congo has 1.5 billion barrels in proven reserves and averaged 235,000 barrels of crude oil production per day in 2004. In 2005, the oil industry accounted for about 80 percent of the country's revenues, and nearly 90 percent of its total export earnings.

While China's oil deals continue to inundate the media, creating news headlines, Beijing has been driving through its economic agenda rather quietly in other sectors, such as copper, zinc, Nickel and Iron ore. In Zambia, China has invested close to US \$170 million in the mining sector, primarily but not solely on copper. China is now the world's largest user of copper, with the United States following closely behind. Beijing is finalizing plans to set up a US\$ 200 million copper smelting plant at the Chambeshi mine, with a yearly production capacity of 150,000 tons.

³² Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries

³³ OPEC description for oil that is light crude—the most easily refined, relatively under-sulphurized, and therefore most desirable.

Fig.6 Africa's Mineral Reserves Versus World Reserves

Commodity	Africa (reserves)	World (reserves)	Africa relative to World (%)
Platinum group metals (t)	63,000	71,000	89
Diamonds (million carats)	350	580	60
Cobalt (t)	3,690,000	7,000,000	53
Zirconium (t)	14	38	37
Gold (t)	10,059	35,941	28
Vanadium (t)	3,000,000	13,000,000	23
Uranium (t)	656	4,416	15
Manganese (kt)	52,000	380,000	14
Chromium (1000t)	100,000	810,000	12
Titanium (kt)	63,000	660,000	10
Nickel (kt)	4,205	62,000	7
Coal (mt)	55,367	984,483	6

Source: Sam Jonah (2005)³⁴

China's resilience knows no bounds. In war-ravaged Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), China has begun investment in cobalt and copper mines, working on roads to facilitate mineral exports, and examining power projects as well for future investment in the electricity sector which is one of the countries greatest challenges at the moment.

Feza Mining—a combined venture between the Chinese enterprise Wambao Resources, and some Congolese businessmen, is about completing a pyrometallurgic infrastructure, which per Congo's Ministry in charge of Mines, is expected to produce close to 1000 tons of pure cobalt annually. In post-war Sierra Leone, Chinese businesses are seriously investing in the hotel sector, constructing luxury hotels and supplying infrastructural facilities in other related sectors. In Uganda, a Chinese pharmaceutical firm has already begun introducing a new anti-malaria drug, and is in the forefront, in a bid to supply anti-mosquito treated bed nets to the country. In Cameroon, Chinese engineering firms have won road construction contracts in the North western parts of the country, and are presently engaged in the building of a multipurpose sports complex in the country's capital, Yaoundé. Cameroon equally accounts for a significant amount of the 13 per cent of Africa's log exports that go to China.

The scale of China's economic needs are beginning to trigger a more than proportionate demand for especially Africa's raw materials, pushing prices to soaring heights; a trend which is hoped to improve Africa's terms of trade. Without doubt, China's trade dealings have given renewed stamina to the economic prospects of the continent, and continue to open wide, the doors of economic opportunities and development for the wider region.

³⁴ Presentation by Mr. Sam Jonah, Former President of AngloGold Ashanti, University of South Africa, 2005

Development Financing, Assistance and Debt Cancellation

The profundity of China's march into Africa is perhaps more vividly crystallized in the volume of Chinese development assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa. While it is really difficult to lay a finger on the actual sum of China's development assistance to the African continent, Premier Wen Jiabao estimated that between 1949 to 2006, China had dispensed close to US\$ 5.6 billion in the form of development assistance to the African region, although many sceptics continue to downplay the authenticity of the figures as an acute undervaluation of the actual flow of China's aid to the continent. What ever the real figures are, it is already too difficult to conceal the now open truism that Beijing's plan to double its aid flows to the African continent in the course of the next few years represents a trump card in its strategic economic and diplomatic offensive against the bastion of traditional Western influence on the continent. For as Davies(2007) rightly professed, because Chinese aid constitutes an integral part of the package deals signed with African countries, there is ample basis to predict that China's aid regimes for the region will follow similar expanding curves as investment and trade components.

Broadly speaking, Chinese development assistance to Africa, and the manner in which they are delivered, are truly varied and diverse. However, three broad categories emerge, viz: grants, interest free loans, and concessional loans. Key Chinese organs and institutions involved in this delivery range from Chinese diplomatic missions in respective African countries, to more complex financial organs in Beijing, such as the *Export-Import Bank of China (China Exim Bank)*, the Chinese Development Bank(CDB), the Chinese Ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture, as well as those of Science and Technology. It has been argued that China does not link its assistance and aid to the apron-strings of severe conditionality as most aid agencies do, rather, it emphasizes the language of South-South cooperation which underlines the Bandung spirit. This South-South discourse is further empowered by China's insistence on the equality of development partnerships, and on its now too typical rhetoric of win-win relations between itself and its African partners.

China has indeed financed an unending catalogue of development projects on the African continent. The roads, bridges, rails, buildings and dams built by Chinese firms and funds span the entire breadth of the continent and stand as a lasting legacy of the virility of Sino-African cooperation. According to official Beijing sources, China had devoted close to US\$11.7 billion in the development of infrastructure in Africa by the end of 2006; moving further to announce a new package of US\$ 20 billion for trade and investment financing in the African region in 2007, which should span the next three years. The China Exim Bank equally announced in 2007(February) that it had extended a regime of concessional loans to Africa, with an aggregate outstanding balance estimated at US\$ 8-9 billion. Chinese development assistance have been mostly bilateral in nature, though Beijing sometimes prefers channelling aid flows through multilateral organizations such as the African Development Bank, and other UN agencies. All 53 African countries have been targeted in this light, though greater priority has been given to Tanzania, Sudan, Angola, Zambia and Ethiopia for strategic economic and political reasons. China's Ministry of Commerce, in its synopsis of China's development assistance to Africa over the last fifty years, cites a plethora of varied development projects executed across the continent, including 38 hospitals, 133 infrastructure projects, and the dispatch of approximately 16000 Chinese medical personnel to support health systems and medical facilities in African countries.

By investing in areas that western aid agencies and private investors have since abandoned: physical infrastructure, agricultural sector and industrial facility, China continues to display its foresight and determination in seeing a revived Africa. According to the World Bank (2007)³⁵, China disbursed an estimated US\$12.5 billion (as of mid 2006) as both concessional and non-concessional loans to Sub-Saharan Africa, for the purpose of infrastructural development alone. Only recently have many western organizations started giving greater priority to these parameters, realizing that they are indeed very essential for Africa's long-term growth. In the domain of education and manpower development, many African students have equally been trained by Chinese technical centres and institutions as a means of developing the human resource base to support Africa's progress in achieving sustainable development.

In terms of lending, China signed out a US\$ 1.8 billion cheque to Nigeria, Mozambique and Angola alone in 2006³⁶, a remarkable display of camaraderie; given that in the same time bracket, the World Bank ceded a relatively less generous US\$ 2.3 billion to all the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Regarding debt forgiveness, Beijing seems to have moved more assertively than say Washington, Paris, or London, in the cancellation of Africa's large debt burden which increasingly epitomizes the very wedge that stalls Africa's momentum for forward motion; in the pursuit of sustainable development. Over the last eight years, China has announced three large debt cancellation packages, beginning in 2000, then in 2005 and 2006. By April 2007, Beijing made public the delivery of the first quota of US\$ 1.38 billion worth of debts cancellation to the African continent, covering some 31 countries.

Developmental Knowledge Exchange and Sharing

A new thesis has begun emerging within international financial and development circles, which in fact, has credited China's development model and pathway as a suitable alternative for African countries grappling with the ordeal of moving their countries forward, especially in the face of obvious complications and in some cases, development reversals that have come with succumbing to World Bank/IMF prescriptions such as structural adjustment programmes. Chronicling this standpoint in his commentaries on a previous knowledge exchange encounter between Chinese and African leaders, Jeffrey Sachs, Development Economist, Director of the Millennium Review Project, and Adviser to UN Secretary General reiterated that "the advice that the African leaders received from their Chinese counterparts was sound, and much more practical than what they typically get from the World Bank"³⁷ China's development paradigm truly presents an all too glaring case for the necessity to fine-tune exercises in development policy formulation to the specific contexts of respective regions and countries, as opposed to compelling countries to constrict their diverse development scenarios to single one-size-fits-all western propelled models.

China might have failed to squarely address issues of human rights, good governance and transparency, but Beijing has continued to blaze the trail in lifting millions of people out of the despondent jaws of poverty than many western-driven attempts combined have achieved. The World Bank's Beijing bureau reported in 2007 that China singularly accounted for more than 75 per cent of poverty reduction successes in the developing

³⁵ For further analysis, see World Bank(2007) *Africa's Silk Road*, IBRD, Washington D.C

³⁶ French, (2006) op cit.

³⁷ Sachs, May 24, 2007.

world over the last twenty years, and the UNDP 2006 report further acclaimed China's spirited development gains when it declared that since 1981, the share of Chinese population living on less than US\$1 per day had been drastically dragged down from an estimated 64 per cent, to 16 per cent, freeing over 400 million people from the shackles of absolute poverty.³⁸

Apart from economic cooperation, there are indeed, a multitudinous array of dimensions through which knowledge exchange could be fostered between China and Africa, especially in tackling such challenges as poverty reduction and rural development, labour migration, imbalances in regional development trends, rapid population growth and urbanisation, as well as the development and expansion of domestic markets and their successful integration into the global market system. Such previewed exchanges have already begun being concretized. In 2004, at the Shanghai Global Conference on Scaling up Poverty Reduction, an International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) was established to support mutual exchanges and knowledge sharing between Southern countries; and under its jurisdiction, training sessions and workshops have been organized in China to acquaint key African government officials and personnel of China's successful experiences in poverty reduction.

Empowerment of African Leveraging Capacity

As Davies (2007) has once more emphasized "China is seen as a healthy competitor which could give Africa leverage towards traditional donors and address the structural imbalances of the international system within which many African countries are facing marginalization". China's entry as a key masquerade on Africa's international relations arena is beginning to broaden the leveraging horizon for African countries to negotiate their destinies in the face of western partners and global financial institutions with renewed verve and vigour. Before China's ascent as an alternative partner for Africa, the continent typically found itself negotiating with an international system that was largely patronized by western interests. This provided (an indeed, still provides) a dispensation in which Africa was (is) routinely forced to its knees, at best, chided; at worst, scoffed and treated with contemptuous mirth through outrageous prescriptions and onerous conditionalities that stifle(d) its very prospects for sustainable development in many respects.

In fact, one great reason why China continues to receive the olive branch in its ride across Africa is because many in the continent see the Chinese as a breath of fresh air from a long sorry history of poignant marginalization under a world order marked by western hegemonism. By providing a truly dynamic alternative to development and trade cooperation, Africa has found in China's friendship and conviviality, a vital corridor through which to retreat without necessarily surrendering, in the face of unacceptable western pressures and prescriptions. The political implication of this new breathing space symbolizes a new-found assertiveness on Africa's part, in responsibly and proactively confronting the international order, with enough weight to articulate and define its destiny.

³⁸ See World Bank Office, Beijing(2007) and "UNDP China wins 2006 Poverty Eradication Awards"

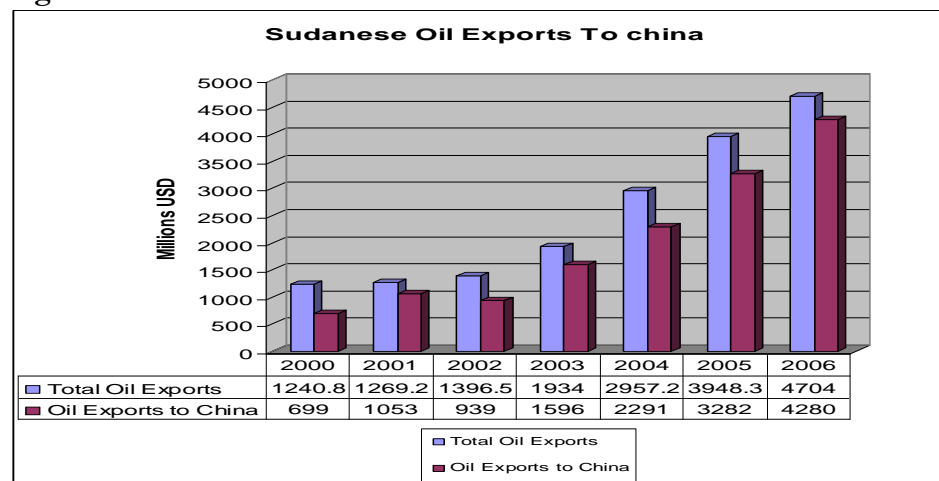
Sino-African Relations and Challenges to Sustainable Development in Africa

That China has been a positive vector for Africa's renewed development prospects, need not be overemphasized. However, Beijing's anomalous comportment especially with regards to human rights, its principle of non-intervention and non-conditionality, as well as the wanton disregard and scorning imprudence with which some Chinese enterprises conduct business in Africa, have indeed attracted a souring barrage of criticism emanating largely from the West, and increasingly, from an enlarging circle of scholars, leaders and civil society organizations within Africa. Some of these concerns are truly legitimate and present an enduring challenge for the long-term sustainability of the African continent, and in many respects, for Africa's very ability to claim the development goals which it so desperately strives to realize in its very partnership and cooperation with China. The ensuing paragraphs raise key issues in this light and measure their negative impacts with respect to the question of sustainable development in the Africa continent.

Non-Intervention, Arms Sales and Indifference to Human Rights, Democracy & Good Governance

Chinese foreign policy is saddled on the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States. This political prescription immunizes Beijing from the moral obligation to intervene in addressing internal unrests that unfold in potential zones of Chinese cooperation and economic interest, and as many high-profiled Chinese sources continue to purport, separates business from politics, because "business is always business". China's intensifying romance with African governments, especially those fraught with poor human rights records and bad governance like Sudan and Zimbabwe—has particularly stirred international outcry. Beijing cannot afford to preach a gospel of sustainability in its dealings with Africa, and then turn a blind eye to the unfolding carnage that is being perpetuated in Darfur by a Khartoum superstructure that flourishes largely on Chinese largesse and protection. Gradually, Chinese companies have moved in to fill the vacuum created by Canadian and other western companies forced out of Sudan by international pressure, and in so doing, have effectively cushioned any real pressure for change that the international community might have targeted for the country. The economic golden fleece is glaringly obvious: oil, and Sudanese oil exports to China have been growing in leaps and bounds over the years.

Fig.7



Source: *Investing in Tragedy: China's Money, Arms and Politics in Sudan* (2008)p.4

Beijing has remained unabashed if not inept, to wanton and systematic miscarriages of the fundamental principles of good governance and human rights in Africa. Ironically, China—deadening any impulse towards moral probity—has often swung brashly into action, using its veto in the United Nations Security Council to block proactive attempts by the international community to hold accountable human rights abusers on many occasions, especially those in Sudan. It is partly due to the gravitas that comes with China’s blank cheque to Khartoum that Bashir’s government has continued to eschew international condemnation in its marauding parade of death across villages and refugee camps in Darfur. Southwards, China’s diplomatic weight has helped to increasingly zero-out the pressure of international sanctions on Zimbabwe, contributing towards steering-off the envisaged impact in terms of meaningful political, economic and social reform intended by the international community.

To further amplify its untoward indifference to international controversy, China continues to sell arms to ‘capstonian’ autocratic governments in Africa with devastating human rights credentials for nothing more than economic concessions, especially oil exploration rights. China’s arms sales to African countries helps cement relationships with African leaders, enabling a swifter offset of the costs of procuring oil from them. For instance, between 1955 and 1977, China sold an estimated US \$142 million worth of military equipment to the African continent, with the pace of sales subsequently doubling over the years.

Fig.8 Synopsis of Major Chinese Arms Deals with African Countries

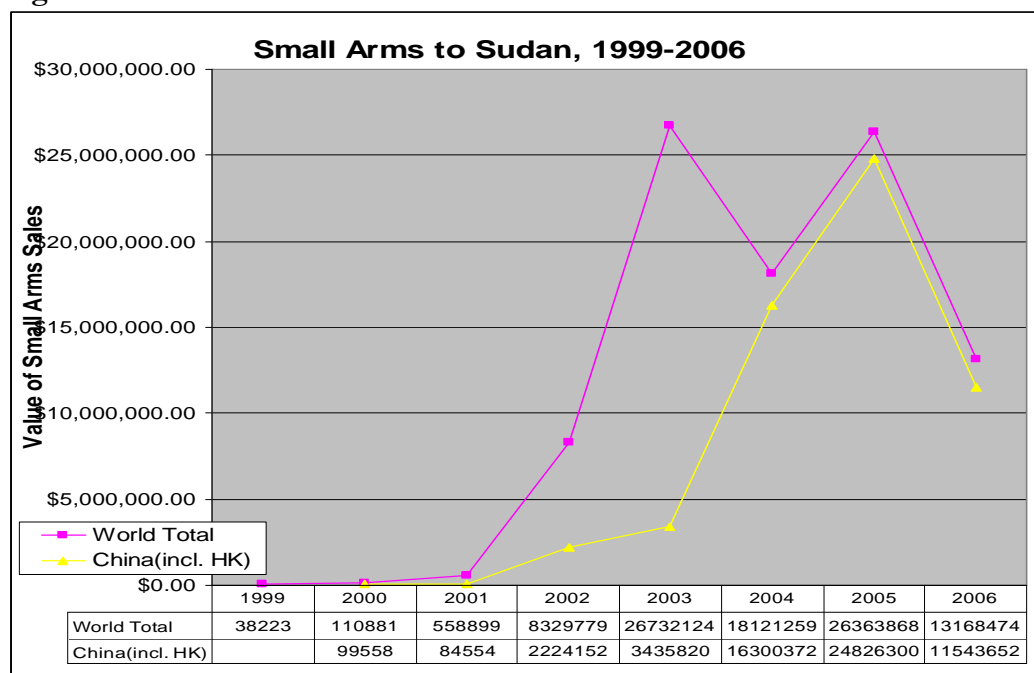
Sudan.	China has supplied the government in Khartoum with arms since 1985 totalling US\$50 million. Beijing sold Sudan SCUD missiles in 1996 in an arms deal that was underwritten by a US\$200 million Malaysian government loan award against future concessions in oil extraction in Sudan (Askouri, 2007). Back in 1990, The Government of Sudan signed a US\$ 400 million arms deal with China in exchange for Sudanese cotton. According to a report from the aerospace industry journal <i>Aviation Week and Space Technology</i> , China has sold Khartoum both weapons and US \$100 million worth of Shenyang fighter planes, including twelve supersonic F-7 jets. All wings of the Sudanese military are equipped and by China, including the military air presence exercised by the government. According to a recent <i>Human Rights First</i> Report(March 2008), Sudan spends about 70 – 80 per cent of State revenue from oil in defense, purchasing Chinese military hardware—including the helicopter gunships reportedly used to terrorize civilians in Darfur—comes from China. A defence analyst commenting on Sudan’s 52 nd Independence day military parades in 2007, remarked that “images from the parade have revealed to the world that the Sudanese army resembles a second Chinese Liberation Army” ³⁹
Equatorial Guinea	Beijing continues to provide military training to equator-Guinean forces, providing military hardware to the country’s dictator, Theodore Obiang Nguema. Of course, this has often been part of oil delivery packages which China brokers with petroleum endowed nation.
Ethiopia & Eritrea	Beijing has been fanning the hostilities up north east of Africa. China sold Ethiopia and its neighbour, Eritrea, an estimated US\$1 billion worth of weapons before and during their border war from 1998 and 2000.

³⁹ *Investing in Tragedy: China’s Money, Arms and Politics in Sudan* (2008) p.12

Burundi.	In 1995, a Chinese ship carrying 152 tons of ammunition and light weapons meant for the army of Burundi as part of a covert arms deal was refused permission to dock in Tanzania
Tanzania	The Overseas Development Institute reports that China has delivered at least thirteen covert shipments of weapons labelled as agricultural equipment to Dar-es-Salaam
Zimbabwe	Mugabe imported Twelve FC-1 fighter jets and 100 military vehicles from China in late 2004 in a deal worth \$200 million. In May 2000, China reportedly swapped a shipment of small arms for eight tons of elephant ivory from Zimbabwean. In addition, China provided a radio jamming device to Mugabe's forces that allows the regime to block broadcasts of independent news sources like Radio Africa from a military base outside Harare.

According to the US Congressional Research Service, China's arms sales to Africa constituted 10 percent of all conventional arms transfers to the continent between 1996 and 2003. With respect to political hotbeds like Sudan, China has exploited the frantic security scenario in the country to sell record breaking volumes of small arms to especially government forces and other pro-government militia, which they evidently use to further their campaigns in Darfur.

Fig.9



Source: UN Comtrade data, in *Investing in Tragedy: China's Money, Arms and Politics in Sudan* (2008) p.12

By an large, as earlier noted, Beijing's flagrant disregards for principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance, its addiction to profit at the expense of human rights, and particularly its arms deals with Africa, have continued to provoke a rash of fiery criticism from many segments within and without Africa. According to Amnesty International, "China is having an adverse effect on human rights in other countries because by dealing with repressive regimes, such as Sudan, and putting its economic and trading interest ahead of concerns for human rights, it is allowing these regimes to be provided with

resources they would not otherwise get so easily”⁴⁰. In the words of Human Rights Watch, “China’s policies [in Africa] have not only propped up some of the continent’s worst human rights abusers, but also weakened the leverage of others trying to promote greater respect for human rights”⁴¹. Within Africa, the tone has been increasingly acidic, for instance, in West Africa’s Accra-based *Public Agenda* (2006:3) asserts that “[China] is sacrificing human rights protection for natural resources. Unlike other Western countries which bar their companies from doing business with renegade regimes, Beijing insists on dealing with the continent’s most brutal and corrupt leaders”. Similarly, though on a near rambunctious rhythm, Southern Africa’s *The Namibian* (2007:2) slams China’s attitude in Africa, describing “Sino- African relations [as] essentially devoid of any political content....complicat[ing] efforts at deepening and strengthening democracy and human rights. This self interest in China’s Africa policy empties it of moral content”.

China’s disinterest in good governance and democratic values run in variance with the principles enshrining the “new African renaissance” which is epitomized in the concept of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD, signed in Nigeria in October 2001). Formed as a continent wide organisations with the aim of leading African countries individually and collectively towards democracy, human rights, tolerance, accountability and the rule of law as preconditions to the eventual sustainable development of African countries in the cultural, socio-economic and political dimensions(paragraphs 43,45, 49, 71 and 183), NEPAD stands as a flag bearer for a new struggle to democratise the African continent, instilling better practices that can indeed, foster the progress of the continent. But China’s present stance is seriously problematic to NEPAD’s smooth functioning, as highlighted by *the Star*, a South African tabloid:

Chinese aid is likely to subsidize profligate and/or dictatorial governments, as it is to advance the welfare of ordinary Africans...One of the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development(NEPAD)...is to promote corruption-free, good governance in Africa, for its own sake as well as a means of securing sustained developmental assistance....Aid that fails to advance democratic government, no matter whence it comes is counterproductive⁴²

Apparently, Beijing has only one precondition in its partnership contract with other States; the non-recognition of Taiwanese independence. Apart from that, it seems every other clause follows the common sense dictates of mutual profit. Many have argued that China is the wrong chronicler of human rights and good governance in Africa because Chinese political thought offers very little space for theorizing on human rights and democracy, and so the question emerges: how can Beijing be expected to give what it does not have, or to teach what it does not know? However differing views on this issue might be, China is hurting Africa at its very core, bruising down moral probity, stunting democratic progress, and in many ways, brushing away many of the development gains which the African continent might be accruing in its dealing with China. We cannot talk about real development and sustainability while being poignantly passive to human rights considerations, good governance and democracy. In bypassing the relevance of these considerations—upping arms sales to a highly volatile region, at a time when many of its countries are emerging from traumatic conflict experiences and tediously battling to

⁴⁰ Sariah Rees-Roberts(2007) Press Officer for Amnesty International, London, cited in *UN Integrated Regional Information Networks*(Dakar, June 27th, 2006)p.1

⁴¹ Human Right Watch, ‘China-Africa Summit: Focus on Human rights not just Trade: Chinese Leadership should Pressure Sudan, Zimbabwe on Human Rights’ (Human Rights Watch, New York, November 2nd 2006). Cited in Ian Taylor(2007), op.cit.

⁴² *The Star*[Johannesburg] July 4th 2006, p.6, cited in Ian Taylor, op.cit.

consolidate fledgling democratic processes, Beijing is setting a negative precedence in Africa, setting-off a dangerous domino that may in the long haul; undo Africa's very chances of attaining sustainable development.

Undermining International Efforts in Africa

China's presence continues to alter and challenge the leveraging ability of international institutions to stimulate positive change and reform in Africa, largely because China provides an insulating gadget from which non-compliant countries can hide to wade of the impact of international economic, political or fiscal pressure. For instance, the IMF and some Western countries have been pressing Angola to improve its oil sector transparency for the greater good of its people, as a prelude to receiving aid packages from the donor community, partly under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative led by the United Kingdom with strong US support. When Angola refused the terms of the US\$ 2 billion national reconstruction deal, Beijing promptly stepped in and signed out the cheque to Angola. Decrying this feat as being antithetical to the "Equator principles" –(a set of voluntary rules for lending that urges lenders to ensure the environmental sustainability, social standards and human rights considerations of projects they envisage funding are up to standard), former World Bank president, Paul Wolfowitz called on leaders of governments and institutions to pressure China to act according to good practice, and in a manner that can support the sustainability of macroeconomic reform in other countries.

Undermining African Entrepreneurial Potentials

A truly diverse cross section of the African citizenry is concerned over China's business conduct in Africa, especially as Chinese companies are underbidding local firms and not hiring Africans. Chinese goods too are flooding African markets, carrying outrageously cheaper price tags that undermine the competitiveness of local industries. In Cameroon, as in Guinea, Nigeria, Gabon and many other countries across Africa, Chinese products continue to flood the local markets, killing the entrepreneurial ability of local African businesses which are still struggling to develop financial stamina. In the Douala, Bamenda, Yaoundé and Limbe markets in Cameroon for instance, it is trendy to find people scrambling for cheaper Chinese shoes, dresses, and electronics for prices five times less the actual prices of the same goods, even though they are usually less durable. In 2005, for instance, owing to intense competition from Chinese firms, ten clothing factories folded up in Lesotho, with the loss of some 55,000 jobs. Battling with an unemployment rate of 30% amidst other forms of economic hardships, these are not jobs such a country can afford to lose.

Still in the Southern African region, Chinese textile exports to the republic of South Africa grew exponentially from 40 percent of clothing imports to nearly 80 per cent by the close of 2004. Consequently, within the same time brackets (from 1996 onward), employment in the sector in South Africa decreased drastically, and by the end of 2002, close to 75,000 people had lost their jobs in the industry owing to market flooding from China. South Africa's clothing exports to the United States plummeted from US\$26 million in the first quarter of 2004 to US\$12 million in the first quarter of 2005. Prior to this situation, the US sponsored Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) which gives preference to certain categories of imports from Africa, including textiles, had triggered successive waves of growth and buoyancy in textile industries in Africa, especially those of Swaziland, Lesotho, Ghana and Kenya. Interestingly, Chinese firms

too rushed to Africa to take advantage of AGOA. At grassroots economic cycles in many countries in Africa, the 'China effect' is really sweeping away economic prospects and livelihood chances for a vast majority of the population engaged in petty trading and small businesses.

Unsustainable Exploitation of African Resources

China's insatiable crave for energy to keep its economic miracle humming and her drive for natural resources to keep home based industrial productivity soaring, is fuelling an explosion in the demand for African natural resources, since Africa occupies a central position in China's global energy market. Between 2000 and 2005, for example China's overall energy consumption rose more than 78 per cent⁴³, while car ownership continues to increase over 10 per cent annually. It is projected that by 2030, there will be an estimated 390 million cars on Chinese roads, more than 20 times the rate in 2002⁴⁴, further triggering oil imports. By 2006, China was already consuming approximately 7.6 million barrels of oil each day, of which close to 47 per cent of that amount was imported⁴⁵. Today, being the world's second largest consumer of oil, the Chinese economy would have to import approximately 60 per cent of its projected domestic oil consumption volume by the 2020⁴⁶.

It is largely due to China's addiction to massive oil importation as a central strategy for consolidating its robust economic growth that Africa stands particularly vulnerable to an imminent Chinese overrun. The high prices offered by Beijing for Africa's natural resources and the lofty packages of incentives and concessional loans that go with especially oil deals, has indeed, instigated African governments to engage in the wanton exploration of their natural resource endowments along patterns and paces which are unfortunately far from being sustainable. Oil refineries in Nigeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Cameroon, for instance, are now pumping larger volumes of petroleum to meet China's skyrocketing demand, with very little considerations in terms of sustainability, as well as the long term industrialisation prospects of their own very economies. So too are many mineral deposits in Congo, Zambia and other parts of the continent currently being squeezed out to feed China's economic hunger.

The situation is further compounded by the fact that most African countries have not yet awoken to the realization that they can use their resource endowments collectively as a negotiating power to leverage Beijing for better and more sustainable patterns in Sino-African cooperation agreements, especially with regards to ensuring that strategic development gains for the benefits of poor and less privileged segments of African societies are safeguarded. In many respects, Africa finds itself largely ignorant of its position in 'Beijing's grand design', still trounced by the exceeding scale with which an overambitious China marked its debut on the continent. As South Africa's Finance Minister sadly confirms, "China knows what it wants from Africa, but Africa is not clear on what it wants from China"⁴⁷

⁴³ Energy Information Administration, (2007) Official Energy Statistics of the United States Government, available at http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/vountry/country_time_series.cfm?fips=CH

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp.19, 28

⁴⁵ *Investing in Tragedy* (2008) p.1

⁴⁶ 'Rogue Trading' *Foreign Direct Investment Magazine*, June 5th 2006.

⁴⁷ Orr, in the *China Monitor*, June 2007, p.6

Impacts of Sino-African Cooperation on EU-Africa Relations

Africa is still significantly under the political and economic tutelage of the West, especially Europe. As a matter of fact, being Africa's most significant partner politically—in shared history and in terms of on-the-ground support, economically through trade, development and humanitarian assistance, the European Union represents with its members, 67% of all DAC members Official Development Assistance to the region⁴⁸, 45% of Africa's foreign trade (144 billion Euro in 2000)—five times bigger than inter-African trade (29 billion Euro per annum), and more than 50% of all global development assistance to the region (over 29 billion dollars in 2002). However, China's triumphant debut in Africa has indeed opened the floodgates for widespread assessment of many central issues spinning on the fulcrum of Sino-African cooperation. For instance, China has already overtaken Britain—once Europe's most powerful trader with Africa—as the third largest trader with the African continent, and if the present trends go unabated, the Chinese may dominate Africa's foreign trade all together by exceeding margins in the not too distant future. Amidst many other similar concerns, pundits and politicians alike in the West have already begun drafting out a 'potential casualty list' to enable them plot out a comprehensive set of side effects which a strengthening Sino-African relationship might have on the nature and strength of EU-Africa relations in the medium and long-terms.

For one great reason, in the midst of China's thirst for Africa's resources to embellish her economic ascendancy, Beijing's fiery determination to carve out a superpower niche for herself on the stage of international affairs is certainly now, an all too glaring ambition to conceal. Building stronger political ties with African countries is a central part of Beijing's political calculus. Strong relations with Africa guarantee's China a great deal of leveraging momentum in the United Nation, especially as Africa has the most developing countries (53) in a single continental bloc. As a matter of fact, China has exercised her ascending diplomatic clout against the West in many recent instances with considerable success. Beijing has counter-vetoed a US-EU backed UN Security Council veto demanding the prosecution of Sudanese officials for crimes against humanity in Darfur, as with other vetoes on the Zimbabwe question (Hanson, 2007)⁴⁹. She has equally signed out aid and development assistance to Angola, when IMF/World Bank conditionalities backed by the EU and US seemed pestiferous to Angola's interests. With one leg in the developing world, bound by the solidarity of Bandung, and another in the developed—seating permanently, on the UN Security Council, China continues to gain considerable favour in the eyes of most African countries which see her as a torchbearer for their course. This present euphoria in Africa over China, is unfortunately dissonant to an increasing fatigue with Europe in the continent, which albeit her assistance to the region, has left a legacy of pain beginning from slavery to colonialism, then to neo-colonialism, political and economic manipulations, support to dictatorships; onerous conditionality to development assistance, and excessive meddling in the domestic affairs of African States to serve various Western political, economic and strategic interests. With China's increasing fraternity and emergence, the certainty of Africa's closeness to Europe in the long run merits considerable rethinking.

⁴⁸ OECD Development Assistance Committee.

⁴⁹ Hanson, Stephanie (2007) *Vying for West Africa's Oil*.....

Further more, on the economic front; it seems fair to say that while European partners are showing Africans the stick, China is handing out carrots instead, winning hearts and minds in the process. An example suffices here for illustrative purposes. The African continent recently rejected The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) put forward by the European Union as the proposed basis for reaching a new set of economic and trade related agreements with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries. Under the Lomé Conventions ACP countries enjoyed unilateral trade preferences into the EU market for almost three decades. Replaced by the Cotonou Agreement in 2000 which extended such unilateral trade preferences until the end of 2007, the EPAs which are World Trade Organisation (WTO) compatible reciprocal trade agreements were expected to replace the current “non-reciprocal” preferential trade regimes at the beginning of 2008. However, the EPAs are regarded in Africa as inherently iniquitous because they intend to open relatively fragile African economies to fierce competition from more powerful and competitive European firms and products, while slashing government budgets through the elimination of tariff revenues. In fact, many Aid agencies and development organisations such as Oxfam have criticized the EU for attempting to “‘strong-arm’ poor countries into free trade deals that may be very harmful for their economic development”⁵⁰. In the words of Senegalese President, Abdoulaye Wade, "It is clear that Africa rejects the EPA", adding that the EU was losing out to China in Africa because Chinese products are cheaper and Chinese companies "more pragmatic" and better at carrying out business in Africa. Measuring the consequence of the present state of affairs, he concluded that: "Europe is close to losing the battle of competition in Africa,".

On the other hand, China’s trading engagement with Africa is hinged on the win-win principle. Despite its many flaws, China provides concessional loans, trade incentives as well as support to African partners, with less stifling terms. This is indicative of a mutual partnership in which both partners are considered equal, at least in principle, working towards helping each other. This is contrasted to the European Union’s onerous preconditions and its insistence on tying aid and investment bundles to apron strings of democracy, human rights and good governance. In many respects, Africa’s bargaining position has been immensely strengthened through its close partnerships with China⁵¹.

As Rocha (2007) has argued, China’s rising influence in Africa and its non-interference and non-conditionality clauses, especially in areas of fostering good governance, human rights and democracy, are indeed fanning worries that China’s influence could derail international attempts in enhancing these virtues in the continent, especially by diluting the impact of western pressure directed towards the achievement of the aforementioned goals. Some have taken the argument further to suppose that a strengthening Sino-African relation serves to expand China’s spheres of influence in ways that can potentially alter contemporary Western hegemonism not only with regards to shaping the development discourse in Africa, but in proportions that could even redefine the international world order. Whatever the case, the Chinese development doctrine seems to be gathering a large following across the African continent, a trend which is

⁵⁰ *EU-Africa summit fails on trade*, Monday 10 December 2007, <http://www.euractiv.com/en/trade/eu-africa-summit-fails-trade/article-168988>

⁵¹ *Ibid*,

concomitant with a growing realization that “traditional relations and partnerships with the West have not helped Africa overcome the structural obstacles to eradicating poverty and reversing its economic marginalization”⁵²

In many ways, China’s rising ranks present a growing challenge to the ways in which the European Union and the United States have often sought to maintain and utilize their hegemonistic levers. For instances, China utilizes panoply of methods and instruments in advancing its economic interests in dimensions that Western nations can only envy. Beijing sometimes instructs Chinese companies to underbid trade deals in the interest of long term strategic and economic objectives. As an example, Beijing instructed China’s state owned construction company in Ethiopia to bid low on a wide range of tenders without recourse to profit motives because of China’s long haul aims in accessing investment opportunities in Ethiopia’s natural resource and construction sectors. Similarly in Kenya, China’s ZTE Communications offered 144 million Kenyan shillings worth of equipments to Telkom Kenya, as an incentive to its eventual entry in the industry. This approach is increasingly giving China a more proactive stance in courting African countries into its web of dominance and control. While this may not be particularly significant in the Short run, it does represent a little step forward in what might be China’s eventual dominance in the continent.

Recommendations

In many respects Africa is trapped at the crossroads, torn between the brunt and the blessings of China’s presence on continent. While Africa’s development conundrum has both stupefied and bewildered the generosity and purpose of many development interventions in the continent, China’s rising role in the continent shows plenty of promise for the region, and in many respects, has the potential of being the master key capable of unlocking Africa’s development potentials. However, while a plausible way forward cannot be charted by prescribing quick-fix palliatives, certain consideration can indeed be highlighted to serve as basis for safeguarding Africa’s very interest as well as its prospects for sustainable development, even as it marches forward side-by-side an overambitious Chinese giant, defiantly towering in advantage, yet quite enthusiastic in exercising its clouts, even at the expense of the African continent.

First and foremost, – rephrasing John F.Kennedy, African countries must never fear to negotiate with China, just as they must never negotiate out of fear. They must learn to resist Chinese capture, even as they engage her in a form of win-win cooperation. This brings forward a challenge for African countries to begin building a collective voice with which to leverage China and negotiate broader terms with profound implications on sustainability. In this regard, the African continent will have to reach a platform for cooperation with China that prescribes a roadmap stipulating dimensions for cooperation, stating obligations of respective parties, as well as ensuring that rules set out are respected. This should be done bearing in mind the need to conserve resources for Africa’s own futuristic economic needs.

⁵²See Davies (2007) op cit.

Second, it would be necessary and proactive for African States to create a supervisory organ located in a high political structure within the African Union, to be charged with monitoring and supervising various forms of Sino-African relations in the continent. This organ, should among others, follow-up the conduct of Chinese activities as well as their impacts on societies; beginning from grassroots to the macro-societal sectors in various countries on the continent; conduct research, identify and analyse trends, and then present annual reports to the African Union General Assembly of Heads of States and Governments for Action. Based on these reports, the African Union may then present its suggestion for action at subsequent Fora on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

Third, African governments should begin engaging China on a comprehensive code of conduct for the operation of Chinese companies and businesses in the continent. In such an agreement, African nations should push forward a binding contract that enjoins Chinese interests operating in the continent to put greater priority on the employment and working conditions of African employees operating under Chinese establishments. A furthers step should be taken to reach some form of quota arrangements in a bid to insulating vulnerable sectors of African economies such as cottage industries, textile sectors, etc, from Chinese dumping.

Fourth, Human rights and governance consideration must be highlighted as part of African efforts on the continent. The NEPAD manifesto is a well articulated blueprint in the right direction. What is left is for African leaders to continue pushing hard to create saner human rights conditions, better reform environments for the flourishing of democracies; and a steady but unyielding commitment to improve the governance conditions in respective African countries. The NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism could be reinforced to become legally binding to member states, holding them accountable to their respective levels of progress in good governance. Some sub-regional organisations like ECOWAS have adopted protocols on Democracy and Good Governance, as recognition that these are truly preconditions for sustainable development. In same light, African governments should collectively pressure China in its roles in Sudan and Zimbabwe, preferably through the behest of the African Union.

Finally, the African civil society, aid agencies, the media and other development-related organisations in Africa must continue broadening discussions on China's role in the continent, especially on the impact of Chinese policies and interests on prospects for social justice, poverty alleviation, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, democracy, and good governance. It is indeed by conducting research and broadening conversations on the effects of China's presence on the continent that international awareness can be created, and then appropriate steps taken to demand a redress of undesirable conditions. Proactive steps must be equally taken to recognize and appreciate areas where China's intervention has truly transformed peoples and communities positively. The consistent portrayal of the "so many things that are wrong about China's presence in Africa, without highlighting the many things right about Chinese endeavours on the continent" only seeks to alienate Beijing, and serves to politicize the subject.

Conclusion

Growing from the nadir of poverty and underdevelopment to the zenith of a thriving industrial economy, China has emerged a character too big to be constrained to the confines of Asia. Saddled on phenomenal economic growth rates, boisterous economic productivity and a truly profound political desire to find a great place under the sun, China has marched onto Africa, like other parts of the world, poised to break cultural barriers, build friendships and bring raw materials home. On the African continent, China's sphere of influence is truly expanding; Beijing has build partnerships with all 53 African countries, establishing win-win relations that hinge on two principles: non-recognition of Taiwan in exchange for non-intervention in domestic politics of African partners. This has seen China signing out billions of dollars as both concessional and non-concessional loans to African countries, undertaking hundreds of infrastructural projects, and training hundreds of Africans in various Chinese institutions; in exchange for oil, mineral resources and agricultural products among others. While China's non-interference policy has won her many friends, it has sparked-off a paroxysm of sour criticism related to Chinese amorality with respect to wanton human rights violations, bad governance, and the sales of arms.

By backing Sudan in its carnage in Darfur, and Mugabe's dangerous feat of megalomania, China has invited a fiery barrage of reproach from many quarters of the globe—first from the West, then from within Africa itself. Increasingly, China is either being seen as a political colossus bereft of any moral impulse, or too steeped into economic considerations to see the actual weight of her profound moral obligations to the international community. In many respects, this paper has attempted at shedding light on some of the truly pertinent themes surrounding China's relations with Africa. From the evolution of Sino-African partnerships; to an analysis of the pros and cons of China's engagements in Africa; and then to a measurement of the impact of a strengthening Sino-African cooperation on Euro-African partnerships, the work has indeed charted a very modest patch of a largely unfolding terrain that is both intriguing as it is interesting. In giving voice to a set of recommendations geared at strengthening Africa's bargaining power in the face of an overambitious Chinese interest, the paper contributes to a growing debate centred on surveying relevant approaches which African countries can adopt, to ensure that they benefit sustainably from cooperation with China—thus avoiding the risk of being overrun by a country that has, in many respects, started an unstoppable sail to 'superpowerdom'.

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