

Sino-African Strategic Partnership and Stratagem of Foreign Aid: Implications for the West

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Abstract

China's ascending role and its comprehensive involvement in the African region is of great concern for many Western commentators. Among the Third World states, China stands out to be victorious after surpassing obstacles. It has emerged as a developing state with enormous economic stability. China's relation with Africa is of a strategic nature which works to reduce intolerable issues, extend economic benefits, and deal with Africa as an equal trading partner. Both China and Africa shared the common historical legacy of imperialism and believed that foreign aid is a new technique designed for exploitation. As a result, Africa is leaning more towards China than it was ever before. China's growing economic influence in different regions like Africa is emerging as an interesting area of foreign policy debate among the western political scholars mostly viewing China's strategic relations as a major concern for the western interests in semi-peripheral and peripheral regions. This paper is an attempt at understanding the dynamics of Sino-African emerging strategic partnership. This research also tries to view the Chinese perception of foreign aid as an instrument of trade and investment in the African region as a part of its strategic stratagem to enlarge Chinese influence, which is significantly different from the western stand view of aid and assistance to the developing and underdeveloped states. This article establishes a framework to understand the phenomenon of Chinese foreign aid to the African region as one of the substantial policy measures to enhance interdependence and economic ties rather than just increasing economic dependence for the recipient Africa.

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Key Words: Foreign Policy, China, Africa, Strategic Partnership, Dependency Theory, Marxism, Economic Interdependence, Foreign aid.

Introduction

The twentieth century brought discernible changes in world politics by dividing it into economically deviating blocs. This demarcation has been established as a visible term of International Political Economy since 1960s, precisely distinguishing the rich core states from semi-peripheral and peripheral states. A clear delineation between the developed states of the global North and underdeveloped or developing states of the global South contributed significantly to the nature and structure of the international financial regime and also manifested the economic relations between the two poles in favor of the global North in the Post-Cold war era.¹ Despite the fact that the global South is enriched with natural resources and manpower, several domestic factors like underdevelopment, civil war, backwardness, lack of proper administrative infrastructures, corrupt practices, bribes and most notably political instability made these states vulnerable to external dominance.

These inherent limitations led these states to consider foreign aid as a significant remedy to resolve their economic and developmental problems. However, most of the states from the global South remained largely dependent on the developmental path devised by foreign aid conditions aid down by the developed countries as donors, which were not according to the ground realities of these LDC (Less Developed Countries). The issue of China is based on a different economic paradigm. Unlike capitalist view, its scheme to concentrate on regions rather than individual states for economic development provides an other mode of foreign aid which seems more disposed to maintain cordial economic relations as economic partners with developing regions like Africa.

¹Global North is comprised of 20 percent of world population but have access and control over 80 percent of world resources whereas global South is consisted of 80 percent of population but only 20 percent of resources are available to them. See for further detail Charles W. Kegley and Shannon Lindsey Blanton, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 136-187.

Theoretical Understanding of Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy Strategy

The concept of foreign aid is not new. One can find ample instances in the history of international politics, where states often relieved each other against any uncomplimentary circumstances or impulsive natural disaster. But these initiatives were weak and short termed and often known as humanitarian assistance. Active participation of states in the shape of military assistance, technology, the exchange of information and monetary issues can be traced back to the World War II. After the War, the US, under the Marshall Plan financially rescued the war-torn states of Western Europe and Japan to reconstruct them from the debris of war. Foreign Aid as military support took shape after the establishment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), when the US vigorously pronounced its commitment to contain communism and military assistance as a form of foreign aid was offered to various states of the Middle East, Africa and Asia to act as potential fronts against Soviet ideological and territorial expansion. As a response to the capitalist western bloc, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) developed Warsaw pact to provide military assistance to its allies in the Cold War period. This bipolar skirmish left less room for other states, especially from the South to maintain their foreign relations apart from this bipolar conflict.

The era of 1950's is of great importance in international relations with regard to geo-strategic competition and power contest among the states. This era brought many nascent states on the surface of the world map. China is among those states that emerged as an independent entity after its struggle against colonization in 1949. Its gradual and consistent economic and sustainable political development made it a role model for other states of the global South. China's history of oppression and humiliation as a result of imperial and colonial control by European powers and Japan provided a major theme in its foreign policy orientation that centered on the idea of non-interference in the matters of other states. This led China to espouse the policies and strategies upholding interdependence with other countries at the regional and global level.

According to Morgenthau, foreign aid is an “innovation” in modern foreign policy. This innovation helps many states to reconstruct them. Now, mostly Third World states depend on foreign aid and assistance program mainly from the western donors. Carol Lancaster described foreign aid as a policy or a part of long term policy in order to achieve the long term national goals.² R. C Riddell expounded foreign aid as the transfer of all goods, resources, skills and practical information, financial grants whether as gift or concessional loans.³ Development Assistance Committee of Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) comprehends foreign aid as financial flows, procedural support and supplies that are designed to promote economic prosperity, safety and welfare, in the form of grant or subsidized loan and technology.

To comprehend the phenomena of foreign aid, it is important to understand the hypothetical base for foreign aid. Many spectators deliberate and frequently interface it with the two noteworthy schools of thought in international relations; Realism and Liberalism. Under the Realism paradigm, the primary contention is based on the assumption that the world is anarchic and there is no supreme power to regulate the relations. The overwhelming element of realism is the survival of the fittest, so in order to ensure security and maintain existing status quo, states fervently embraced those strategies which are viable for their survival. One of such power execution instruments is the foreign aid through which, a powerful state exercises its authority and extends its sphere of influence.

Liberalism paradigm, on the other hand, advocates human rights, free will and free trade among the states. Liberal stand considers individuals as instrumental in international relations. Liberalism believes that people start such procedures which expand association and thus augment the survival risks and minimize the perils. In this globalized paradox, interdependence and interaction is necessary and no state can avoid it. In this manner, foreign aid is a powerful and helping tool to increase harmony between the donor and recipient states.

²Carol Lancaster, “*Foreign aid: Diplomacy, development and domestic politics* (London: Chicago Press, 2007), 19-26.

³Roger C. Riddell. *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* (London: Oxford, 2007) ,17.

With the advent of globalization, specifically with the economic expansion of markets across the globe and emergence of non-state actors as significant players, there is a need for an exclusive theoretical framework to understand the phenomena of foreign aid. In this contesting milieu, proponents of Constructionism provide Modernization theory as a significant systematic approach to correlate developmental strategies and foreign aid. Modernization theorists attempt to locate a pathway to accomplish development, while claiming that the Third World states are dependent and underdeveloped due to the inherent exploitative structures of the international economic order. Many of the dependency theorists also expounded that it's a trap to capture African rich resources and to introduce them to the capitalist world.⁴ According to Modernization theory, social change is multi-dimensional. Most of the developed states passed through the same procedure. It is an evolutionary process from backwardness to illumination to achieving political development; hence it is evolutionary not revolutionary.⁵ States from North Pole are not ready to facilitate the South countries to pass through that process of evolution, and are intentionally restricting them by imposing sanctions and discouraging protectionist policies which is coined by Ha Joon Chang as "Kicking Away the Ladder".⁶

Dependency Theory

The aforementioned speculations encompass the relationship between foreign policy, foreign aid, power, development and modernization. One way or the other these theories work to maintain the status quo of major powers. After WWII, major states were economically wrecked and politically fragmented. Before that, weak states' exploitation was at its

⁴Alvin Y. Sosocial change and development modernization dependency and world-system , (Sage Publications, 1990),2.

⁵ibid, 2.

⁶Mr. Ha Joon Chang criticized the great pressure put forward by developed states on developing states to follow certain "good policies and strategies" , he concluded that developed states "kick away the ladder" with which they have moved up to the top. In this way keeping nations from embracing strategies and institutions that they themselves have utilized for economic development .For further reading see Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective* (London: Anthem, 2002)

peak. After the war, social scientists tried to develop a framework for political and economic development in peripheral states. Marxists rejected the cooperation by adopting the policies of trade and avoidance of conflict through power politics. Marxists focused on the economy, which superseded other aspects of political development.

Neo-Marxist theorists debate over the unjustified division of wealth among states: why the Third World states depend on the core states. Dependency theory is strongly affiliated with Marxism, which maintains that major powers penetrate for natural resources in developing states. Dependency theory strongly contributes towards foreign aid; the concept emanated from the Latin American situation and propounded by Latin American intellectual Raul Prebisch. Dependency theory was a result of failure of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the structural inequality between North and South. Dependency theory refuted the orthodox Marxist claim of bourgeois revolution to nurture development as the successful revolution of China has fundamentally dismissed the idea. Similarly, following a modernization path to achieve development was also rejected by the dependency theorists.⁷

A renowned proponent of dependency theory, Gunder Frank, explicated the dependency cycle in his Metropolis Satellite Exploitation Model. In his analysis, Frank asserted the developmental process of the developing states by criticizing the concept of modernization theorists who claimed that the underdevelopment is due to ignorance and backwardness. Frank gave the examples of China and India who were once developed but because of colonization, confronted backwardness. Under Metropolis Satellite Exploitation Model, Frank explains that an underdeveloped state works as a satellite state of a hegemon by transferring economic surplus.⁸ Another reason of exploitation is the

⁷So, *social change and development modernization dependency and world-system*, 91-95.

⁸Ibid, 95-99

foreign direct investment, loans and grants, which later become an impediment in the developmental phase of the local market. Due to the structural limitation of industrial development, e.g. export control of foreign capital, subsidized product, budget deficit problem, trade, tariff and the lower earnings from the primary products, developmental sector is monopolized.

By examining the main contention of both the realist and the liberalist, one can differentiate that a power struggle and interdependency are the catalysts of change. Liberals were regularly condemned by the critics for advancing private enterprise and encouraging another way of exploitation. Realists used individual's penalty and power politics to extend their status quo. Dependency theory is more allied to the concept of foreign aid and their interrelation with the development and contested interest of the major powers. Although many scholars have discussed the concept of foreign aid, the dependency theory has provided a more comprehensive and conceptual development to understand this phenomena and its relation with the core and periphery states. Unlike realism, liberalism and modernization theorists who lack a basic element: "domestic politics of developing state" in their assumption for development, the dependency theorists incorporate these elements while explaining in relation with development.

Foreign aid, as a policy measure, has its varying consequences according to its objectives, type, nature of restrictions and conditions attached. Some of these are as follows:

- The main advantage of foreign aid in any underneath state is that it will bridge the gap between budget deficit and capital formation.
- Developing a proper infrastructure for agriculture, the industrial segment is challenging for developing states due to their inability to properly employ natural resources and human capital in investment sector. Through foreign aid, new specialized learning and data can, without much of a stretch, be passed on. Coordinated effort with any developed state in specialized terms will expand the adequacy and efficiency of a developing state.

- Foreign aid in the shape of food, sanctuary and medicine will help to meet the emergencies.
- Foreign aid, if utilized properly will create income and build the expectation for everyday comforts of the beneficiary states. On the other hand, foreign aid can be used as a neo-imperialist strategy by donor countries to put the recipient states in a subservient position. This can lead to empowering donor countries to pull the political and diplomatic strings through economic-hegemonic control.
- The main disadvantage of foreign aid is the increase in foreign debt. With increasing interest rate, it is difficult for a receiving state to pay the debt and meet their needs.
- Recipient countries do not exert for the proper use of foreign aid. Sometimes it is used to enrich politicians, bureaucrats and other top orders of the state.
- Foreign aid is a tool of exploitation and is employed by major powers in order to extend their political influence or to accomplish their foreign policy goals.

Progression of Sino-African Ideological, Economic and Strategic Ties

Throughout the years, economic stability and political development remained the main theme of Chinese foreign policy towards major regions of the world which considerably enlarged its area of influence across the globe.⁹ Africa is one of the significant regions, which is of great importance to China's investment and trade for its sustainability of economic development and military power. The economic and political relations between China and Africa dated 500 years back. However, a profound change was observed in the last three decades after the

⁹For an exceptional history on Sino-African ties, see David H. Shinn and Joshua Eisenman, *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*, Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania, 2012. For a brief review of Maoist ties with Africa, see Domingos Jardo Muekalia, "Africa and China's Strategic Partnership," *African Security Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2004.

changing dynamics of international politics.¹⁰ Sino-African foreign relations were initiated in 1951 by establishing China's diplomatic ties with Egypt.¹¹ Political commentators and scholars describe the transformation of Sino-African relationship from formal diplomatic ties to a strategic partnership. They divide the nature of foreign aid into three main phases. These phases were highly influenced by the realities of the international world order and domestic socio-political circumstances. Beijing's engagement with the African region is not at all a new development; however, its nature of associations remained varying in all three phases. Strategic partnership between the two sides evolved and developed steadily.

The first phase was characterized by China's urge of getting political and diplomatic recognition majorly from the global South as China was not on good terms with both the Capitalist West and the expansionist and revisionist USSR.¹² Thompson explains that the evolution of Sino-African relations were largely characterized by aid agreements which assisted the various African states with aid projects in the form of technical and financial resource.¹³ Looy considers China's

¹⁰China is having a significant effect on Africa on its socio-political, monetary and social aspects. Migration to Africa from China has existed for no less than 500 years, however, it has quickened in the previous 5 years as new business opportunities become apparent. For further detail please see Giles Mohan and Diner Kale, *The invisible hand of South-South globalization: Chinese migrants in Africa*, (A Report for the Rockefeller Foundation prepared by The Development Policy and Practice Department, The Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK., 2007).

¹¹Zhang Chun, *The Sino-Africa Relationship: towards a strategic partnership*, in *Emerging Powers in Africa*, (Special Report, LSE Ideas., 2013), <http://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/publications/reports/pdf/sr016/sr-016-chun.pdf>.

Kanaz, T.M. "Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa ; An African View", in, *Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa*, ed. W. Weinstien, (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1975)

¹²Kanaz, T.M. "Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa ; An African View", in, *Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa*, ed. W. Weinstien, (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1975)

¹³Thompson Drew, "China's soft power in Africa: From the" Beijing Consensus" to health diplomacy," *China Brief*, no. 21 (2005)

strategy as simply an attempt to increase as many allies as it could possibly maintain.¹⁴

In this phase, China's collaboration with many Asian and African nations was structured on the basis of shared history under colonialism and ideological discernment against Western domination.¹⁵ The first phase of China's aid to Africa was a purely ideological one. The relations among states were based on ideological orientation. African states were also looking for diplomatic and financial support from the political allies to advance their nationalist movements for independence. China assisted many African states in the form of economic, technical, political and military support as a counter to the policy of western imperialism.¹⁶

The Sino-African relations were reconnected in the Bandung Conference of 1955, where Zhou Enlai supported the struggle of developing states against colonialism. Before that, five principles of peaceful coexistence also laid the basis for non-interference and friendly relations with neighboring states. Under the Maoist perceptions, relationship with Africa was maintained on the Chinese geopolitical and ideological considerations. Since 1950, China initiated various aid programs, which at that time were rather limited in scope.

Under the Cold War setting, foreign aid was considered a vital political mean that Beijing used to expand its diplomatic recognition and to compete with the Soviet Union and the US, and to obtain recognition, support from the African region. The formal aid program evolved gradually. Zhou Enlai visited ten African countries in 1963-1964

¹⁴Judith van de Looy, "Africa and China: A Strategic Partnership?" ASC Working Paper 67/2006, Leiden, the Netherlands: African Studies Center, 2006, p. 06.

¹⁵The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference of 1955 emerged as effective forum for promoting economic and cultural relations between China and 29 African and Asian states where colonialism, imperialism and hegemonic position of West was viewed as major common threats.

¹⁶Peking Review of 26 January, 1973, advocated armed opposition by stating "the armed struggle is the only way through which colonialism, apartheid, and racial discrimination in Southern Africa and Guiney can be eliminated." Quoted in Larkin, B.D. (1975) " *Chinese Aid in political Context 1971-1975; Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa* , ed. W. Weinstien ,(New York: Praeger Publisher, 1975)

and developed “Eight Principles of Economic and Technical Aid to Africa”. Key agenda of this diplomatic expansion was to facilitate African countries by offering “condition free loans, interest free loans, technical assistance and local market development.” At the same time, these aid principles were also intended to contend with the “imperialists” (the US) and the “revisionists” (the Soviet Union) and ultimately gaining Africa's approval and support.”¹⁷

From the year 1966 onward, despite China's determination to support Third World states against neo-imperialism, its domestic uncertainties caused by the Cultural Revolution diverted its focus from nourishing its partnership with the African states. However diplomatic relations were still extended to many African countries.¹⁸ China remained actively involved in developing the infrastructure of African states through its aid projects. “Tanzania-Zambia railway”¹⁹ was one of the significant aid projects by China in African region in 1970s. Many other African states were also offered construction of federal buildings, factories and the development of infrastructures. China also made use of

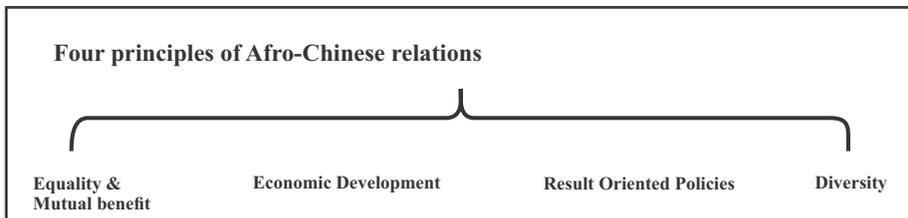
¹⁷The principles include: China always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other nations; China never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges; China helps lighten the burden of recipient countries as much as possible; China aims at helping recipient countries to gradually achieve self-reliance and independent development; China strives to develop aid projects that require less investment but yield quicker results; China provides the best-quality equipment and materials of its own manufacture; in providing technical assistance, China shall see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques; the Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities. “Zhou Enlai Announced Eight Principles of Foreign Aid,” China Daily, August 13, 2010.

¹⁸In 1967, China has 13 diplomatic missions in Africa and by 1974 this was increased upto 30. By 1979, a total number of 49 African states established diplomatic relations with China. see for further detail: Yizhou Wang, “*Transformation of foreign Affairs and International relations in China 1978-2008*”, Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2011.

¹⁹It was the largest project assisted by China in Africa under which 1800 km railway track was constructed with cost over US\$ 450 million.

its health diplomacy and student exchange programs to advance its multidimensional ties with the African region.²⁰

The second phase of Sino-African relations began in the Post-Maoist period. China at that time inevitably needed new investments in economic markets across the globe. The aim was to modernize its economy and enlarge its power under the commercial strategic theme of “Go Global”. However, in this era, Beijing heavily depended on the West for expanding its commercial links and for technical advancement. This led China to confine its role to being only a facilitator in the “North-South Dialogue” instead of acting as a champion of anti-imperialist causes as it attempted in the first phase of relations with Africa. During this phase, largely due to Cold War compulsions, Moscow and Washington with varying intensity remained involved in containment strategies which provided enough space for Beijing to focus on other states instead.²¹ However, to expand the Chinese trade prospects, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang visited eleven African countries in December 1982 and pronounced following four principles of Chinese collaboration with and assistance to Africa states.²²



In second phase of post-Maoist China, Beijing's economic interests increasingly ascended as the prime drivers of its foreign relations with Africa. Looy expounded in a working paper by the African Studies Centre

²⁰Since 1964 around 15000 doctors and health workers have been sent to more than 47 African states. Approximately 180 million patients have been treated by Chinese doctors over the years. For further reading see Philip Snow, *The Star Raft: China's Encounter with Africa* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989).

²¹Judith van de Looy, “Africa and China: A Strategic Partnership?” ASC Working Paper 67/2006, Leiden, The Netherlands: African Studies Center, 2006, 5.

²²Taylor, I “China's Relations with Sub-Saharan Africa in the post Maoist Era, 1978-1999”, in F.Columbus (ed.) *Politics and Economics of Africa*, Volume I, New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc. 2001

that, despite all the developments on diplomatic front, Africa remained less relevant for China during the decade of the 1980s as Beijing was more occupied with the issue of international recognition, especially from the United States and the Soviet Union. This led China to expand its contacts towards Western countries to advance its economic development. Moreover, the lack of financial resources was also one of the reasons behind China's incapacity to assist or support African countries against dictators.²³

The third phase of foreign aid was based on economic pragmatism. In this third phase of its relationship with African region, the orientation of its policy emerged as non-ideological and more inspired by its “Go Global Strategy”.²⁴ In this phase China seemed less concerned with the type of regime and their ideological positions. It was primarily the economic interests that shaped the Chinese behavior in its foreign relations. The third phase of relations which truly translated the Sino-African ties into a strategic partnership began in the Post-Tiananmen Square events which strained Chinese relations with the West. As a result of these developments, China once again turned towards “South-South cooperation” to pronounce its traditional stance of non-interference in order to counter the Western allegations of Chinese human rights violations in Tiananmen Square.

²³Looy, *Africa and China: A Strategic Partnership?*, 5.

²⁴The “Go Global” policy was outlined in the CCP's tenth Five-Year Plan in 2001 (China Internet Information Center, “China Mapping Out the 11th Five-Year Development Guidelines,” website, China.org, undated), and reaffirmed in the 12th Five-Year Plan in 2011 (People's Republic of China, Twelfth Five-Year Plan, trans. Delegation of the European Union in China, March 2011). The policy calls for Chinese firms and institutions to expand China's outgoing foreign direct investment (FDI) globally and to place an equal importance on outgoing and incoming FDI. Doing so facilitates several goals, among them the ownership of assets abroad, a larger global role for Chinese finance, the development of “national champion” firms, and expanding overseas markets for Chinese exports. See Linda Yueh, “China's 'Going Out, Bringing In' Policy: the Geo-economics of China's Rise,” International Institute of Strategic Studies Geo-Economics and Strategy Seminar, A New Era of Geo-Economics: Assessing the Interplay of Economic and Political Risk, March 25, 2012

Foreign aid is one of the significant aspects of Sino-African relations since the inception of their ties, however, China has its own meaning, definition and strategy of foreign aid in accordance with its developmental path evidently diverse from the Western perspective.²⁵ Notwithstanding Beijing's claim that the aid and assistance to Africa is thoroughly related to economic development, political commentators have noted that the political and diplomatic intents have been driving the aid program.

China amassed a substantial role in the international aid system; especially its long term engagement with African states is increasing the apprehension among major states. China was the first developing country to establish an aid program.²⁶ Tom Crouch (Director of Aid Program for Philippines at the Asian Development Bank) views China as a power player, who has established trading relations with Sudan, Nigeria and Angola, and changed the landscape of international assistance.²⁷ China provided foreign aid for three reasons; strategic interest, commercial and economic benefit and ideological objectives.²⁸

²⁵Officially, China provides eight types of foreign aid: complete projects, goods and materials, technical cooperation, human resource development cooperation, medical assistance, emergency humanitarian aid, volunteer programs, and debt relief. China's aid to Africa covers a wide array of fields, such as agriculture, education, transportation, energy, communications, and health. According to Chinese scholars, since 1956, China has provided almost 900 aid projects to African countries, including assistance supporting textile factories, hydropower stations, stadiums, hospitals, and schools. See for further detail : un Sun, "China's Aid to Africa: Monster or Messiah? Institution," Brookings, last modified February 7, 2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/chinas-aid-to-africa-monster-or-messiah/>.

²⁶Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: the real story of China in Africa* (UK: Oxford University Press,2009),33.

²⁷Perlez, Jane. "China Compete with West in Aid to Its Neighbors." *Asia Pacific*, New York Times . September 18, 2006. Accessed November 17, 2015.http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/18/world/asia/18iht-web.0918aid.2845121.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed on November 17, 2015)

²⁸Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: the real story of China in Africa*, (UK: Oxford University Press,2009),15

Furthermore Beijing and Chinese commercial companies have three key economic interests in the African region:²⁹

- Quest for natural resource import.
- Utilization of a rising and comparatively unexplored economic market for Chinese exports and investment.
- A thriving prospect for Chinese companies to increase employment opportunities and accomplishment of “Go Global” commercial strategy.³⁰

In the year 2000, Sino-African strategic partnership was further strengthened by the establishment of 'Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).'³¹

²⁹Renowned American Think tank, RAND has identified mainly four strategic dynamics driving the China's aid policy. First, it wants access to natural resources, particularly oil and gas. It is estimated that, by 2020, China will import more oil worldwide than the United States. To guarantee future supply, China is heavily investing in the oil sectors in countries such as Sudan, Angola, and Nigeria. Second, investments in Africa, a huge market for Chinese exported goods, might facilitate China's efforts to restructure its own economy away from labor-intensive industries, especially as labor costs in China increase. Third, China wants political legitimacy. The Chinese government believes that strengthening Sino-African relations helps raise China's own international influence. Most African governments express support for Beijing's "One China" policy, a prerequisite for attracting Chinese aid and investment. Finally, China has sought a more constructive role as contributor to stability in the region, partly to mitigate security-related threats to China's economic interests. see for further detail see: Hanauer, Larry and Lyle J. Morris. *China in Africa: Implications of a Deepening Relationship*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9760.html.

³⁰Lloyd Thrall, "China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security". Rand Corporation, 2015, 12.

³¹FOCAC was established with an aim of pronouncing an international political and economic order which was participated by over 40 African states with 80 foreign minister and ministers with addition of 17 international and regional organizations to enhance South-South Cooperation. This conference developed two major documents, The Beijing Declaration And Programme for China-Africa Cooperation In Economics and Social Development.

Main theme of this conference from Chinese perspective was:

- Appraising prospects of South-South Cooperation
- Construction of international economic and political order in accordance with South's reservations and concerns.³²

The issue of debt relief was raised at the first meeting of FOCAC by African states which was resisted by Beijing. However, a very cordial and positive gesture was made during second meeting of FOCAC, held in Addis Ababa in 2003 where Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao pronounced that the investment and foreign assistance 'comes with the deepest sincerity and without any political condition'. This led China to announce the debt relief of total 'US \$ 1.27 billion' and offering of aid packages to several African countries.³³ Sino-African cooperative measures were further expanded on November 4, 2006 when 43 African countries participated in FOCAC's Beijing Summit. China's role was largely strengthened, not merely as a donor, but as a partner of the African region, which elevated the relations up to strategic heights. This was much appreciated by African states. The Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, stated during the summit that 'China's policy of non-interference and respect for sovereignty contributed to the establishment of Sino-African partnership based on mutual trust'.³⁴ China has profoundly influenced African economies, as is particularly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the most recent decade, the Chinese have built a network of trade and exchange along with the investment with nearly fifty nations.³⁵ Rand Corporation noted in a report on Sino-African partnership that "China's officially reported annual aid to Africa has grown steadily from US \$550 million in 2000 to US \$2.5 billion in 2011, representing about half of China's total aid budget."³⁶

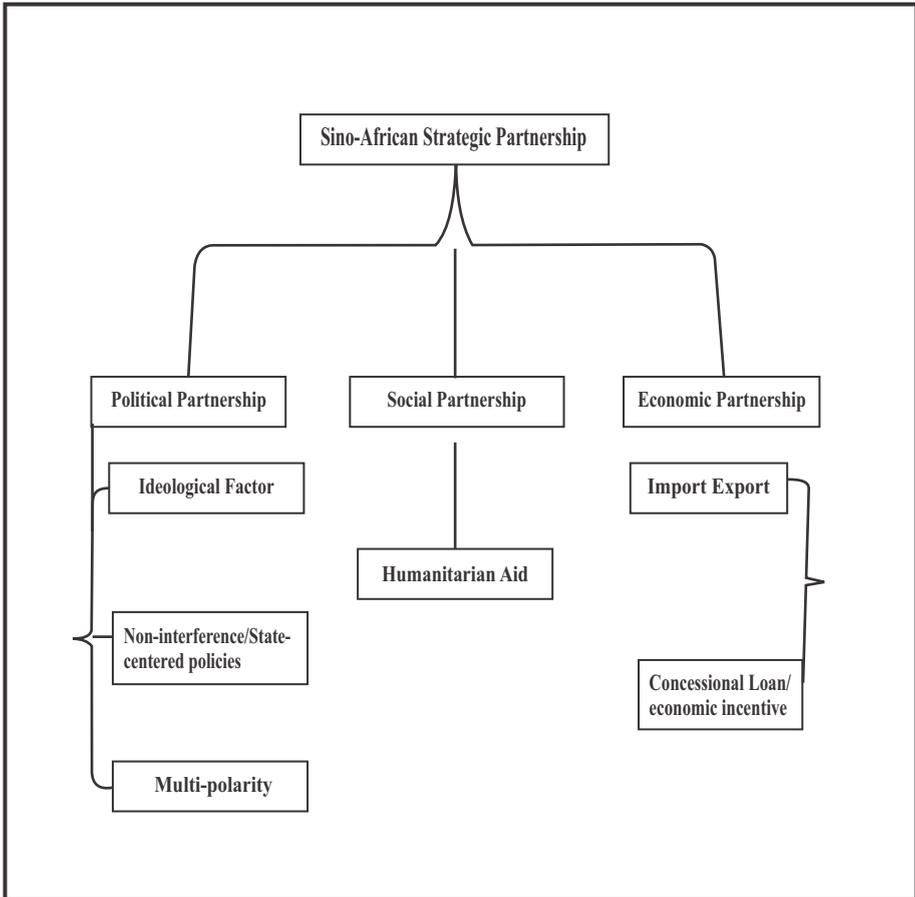
³²See for further detail: www.china.org/english/features/china-Africa/82047.htm(10 september2016)

³³Looy , working paper , 12.

³⁴YizhouWang , "Transformation of foreign Affairs and International relations in China 1978-2008", Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2011. p. 73

³⁵Zafar, Ali. "The growing relationship between China and Sub-Saharan Africa: Macroeconomic, trade, investment, and aid links." *The World Bank Research Observer* 22, no. 1 (2007): 103-130.

³⁶Thrall, "China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security", p.39



Ideological Partnership

Since the Cold War period, in order to enhance the 'third-world solidarity', China advanced its image as an alternate model of political and economic development against neo-imperialist and North dominated-power politics. Though Beijing never overtly pronounced this policy, however, to validate its economic and political centralization within the Chinese state apparatus, “Beijing Consensus of state-based capitalism and tighter political control” are largely propagated.³⁷

³⁷While the “Beijing Consensus” is a Western term, Chinese sources do portray parts of China's state-led economic model as an alternative to that of the more private-led model of Western states. For example, Xinhua, “China's Development Model Good Example for African Nations: CCM Vice-Chairman of Tanzania,” June 21, 2012.

Africa was pivotal for China in its early struggle for recognition in the world arena. Africa at the same time passed through a transitional phase in which nascent states emerged as the result of decolonization. China remains an important factor for Africa for its struggle against colonial rule and sustainability against external and internal vulnerability. Sino-African partnership serves as a role model for the developing states. Secondly, China's policy of non-interference and non-aggression is of great concern for Africa. Without having any expansionist intention, China's involvement in the world and particularly in the Third World states, serves a good example.

China's state centered policies are also commendable for Africa as it encouraged domestic market due to which the inflow of imports and exports has increased. On the other hand, Africa has its sustainable visibility in international organizations such as the United Nations and its vote is crucial for China. With the help of Africa and other developing states, China is playing its role in the maintenance of a multipolar world to avoid hegemonistic intentions of any other state. With China as a reference, Africa is more aware of its strategic importance. Beijing summit broadened the continental frame of reference for China's foreign policy and strengthened Africa's self-perception.³⁸ Today China is more interested in developing a common identity for all the developing states, most of which are African states.³⁹

Economic Partnership

David Brown, a scholar in the US National Defense University is of the view that Chinese political and commercial actors are more inclined to view Africa through an "optimist" lens, while the Western actors mostly resort to a "pessimistic" approach largely owing to the prevalent problems of famine and conflict.⁴⁰ China and Africa on economic fronts

³⁸Thomas Fues & Sevn Grimm, Denise Laufer "China's Africa policy: opportunity and challenge for European development cooperation", German Development institute" briefing paper,4/2006

³⁹I Taylor "China's foreign policy towards Africa in the 1990's," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36,3: 450.

⁴⁰Thrall, "China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security" ,13.

are cooperating to sustain their developmental goals. China's economic ties with the African region are built on strong structural footings as Africa's generous store of crude oil and raw materials are very crucial for China's enormous economy. Liberia's Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh acknowledged the learning capacity and policy initiatives of China, and declared it as a role model to reduce poverty for African states.⁴¹ The Chinese model of interest essentially brings money related advancement targets in Africa largely based on 'no string attached' financial and specialized help.⁴² Current engagement of China and its concessional loans to Africa appeal to majority of the states in Africa. These countries look forward to the Chinese aid as both the states have confronted colonialism in the past and were defrauded at the hands of the Western states.⁴³

More importantly, the Chinese involvement in Africa is based on shared advantages with minimal political objectives. Their relationship is more about partnership than that of a borrower and lender. In November 2006, 43 states of Africa were present in the international summit in Beijing. This conference led to a new strategic partnership between Africa and China with a massive aid package, augmented technical assistance and a win-win situation for both.⁴⁴ It is a fact that the

⁴¹Transcript of IMF press conference of African finance ministers, International Monetary Fund, Washington DC, April 14, 2007, (<https://www.imf.org/external/np/tr/2007/tr070414a.htm>) online accessed on 13 September, 2015

⁴²Zafar, Ali. "The growing relationship between China and Sub-Saharan Africa: Macroeconomic, trade, investment, and aid links." *The World Bank Research Observer* 22, no. 1 (2007): 103-130.

⁴³In support of Beijing's wider "Go Global" commercial strategy, the CCP's eleventh Five-Year Plan in 2006 called for a global expansion of Chinese special economic zones (SEZs).⁸⁹ China has initiated six SEZs within Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Zambia, and two in Nigeria (Ogun and Lekki).⁹⁰ The purpose of SEZs is to attract Chinese and other foreign investment and to reduce the costs, risks, and delays of doing business in Africa. SEZs function by incentivizing firms— through subsidies, tax breaks (both Chinese and host nation), and cheap loans—to move or establish businesses within the zone

M. Chidaushe, "China's grand re-entrance into Africa – mirage or oasis?," in *African Perspective on China in Africa*, ed. F. Manji, and S. Marks (Cape town, Nairobi: Oxford, 2007), p.107 - 118.

Chinese concessional loans are more attractive to African states than the preconditioned loans from the West, and they believe that China's involvement in Africa keeps African states away from the international marginalization.

China's presence in Africa is multi-lateral which further extended visibly during 1990's. China has increased its inclusion, investment, transfer of technology and resources in Africa. Major focus was on infrastructure building. Chinese investment in Africa started from 410 Million USD in 1990, transformed into a tremendous 3 Billion USD in 2004 and surged up to 5 Billion USD in 2008. From 2009 to 2012, huge concessional credits were given to Africa worth 10 Billion USD, in contrast to World Bank lending of 4.5 Billion USD since 2006.⁴⁵ China is one of the largest partners in African mining and imports more minerals and material than the US and EU. As per the reports, 66 percent of oil from Africa is exported to China, followed by copper, Iron, cotton, zinc, lead and diamond.⁴⁶ Africa is one of the largest FDI destinations for China. Starting from 1 percent in 2000 to at least 3 percent in 2010 and, since 2009, it generally expanded 20 percent.⁴⁷

Table No 1: Foreign direct investment, 2009-14 (USD million)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Inflow	54,379	44,072	47,405	56,435	53,969	53,912
Outflow	6,225	9,264	6,500	12,386	15,961	13,073

Source: "Statistics," African Economic Outlook, accessed September 20, 2016, <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/statistics>.

Chinese inclusion in Africa is far more than just a demoralizing issue, though its involvement is greatly observed by the Western states, but there are few examples with positivity by the west in Sino-African relations. China is one of the largest trade partners in Africa, owning

⁴⁵Nida, Jafrani. *China's Growing Role in Africa: Myths and Facts*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace February 9, 2012: <http://carnegieendowment.org/ieeb/2012/02/09/china-s-growing-role-in-africa-mythsand-facts/9j5q> (accessed on 05/09/2016).

⁴⁶Thrall, "*China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security*", pg 30

⁴⁷Ibid 39-40.

almost 900 factories pan-Africa, playing its significant role in improving the conditions of Africa. Zambia-China economic corridor (2007) brought a huge investment of 800 Million USD, creating thousands of local jobs.

In 2005 China lifted import tariff from 190 goods from 29 African states. Increasing interdependence of Sino-African partnership has been identified by Rand Corporation in a report in 2015 by calling it a “peaceful development of Chinese power” in the African region where China has emerged as the largest trade partner on the whole.⁴⁸ China also has become the largest exporter of small armaments and light weapons to African countries. Sino-African economic ties are largely more significant to African countries than to China as Sino-African trade stands for 15 percent of total African trade but just accounts for 5 percent of total trade of China.⁴⁹

Table 2: China's Trading Partners in Africa in 2012

Sr. No.	State	2012 Total Chinese Trade in Million	2012 Total Sino-African Trade in (%)	Chinese Imports in Millions	2012 Chinese imports from Africa (%)	2012 Chinese exports in Million	Chinese exports to Africa (%)
1	South Africa	59,494.8	33	44615.5	42	15,334.4	21
2	Angola	37,502.2	21	33,458.3	32	4,044.2	5
3	Nigeria	10,573.8	6	1,266.2	1	9,307.6	12
4	Egypt	9,546.4	5	1,321.4	1	8,225.0	11

⁴⁸Though China stands second as a trading partner to Africa as compare to an aggregated European Union.

⁴⁹Thrall, “China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security”, pg 12-13.

5	Libya	8,760.3	5	6,368.2	6	2,392.1	3
6	Algeria	7,737.4	4	2,319.8	2	5,417.6	7
7	Ghana	5,432.3	3	624.8	1	4,789.5	6
8	Congo (Republic of Congo)	5,075.7	3	4,555.0	4	520.7	1
9	Democratic of Congo	4,347.1	2	3,508.5	3	838.4	1
10	Sudan	4,220.4	2	2,040.3	2	2,180.1	3
11	Morocco	3,692.2	2	562.2	1	3,130.0	4
12	Togo	3,468.5	2	84.8	0	3,383.8	5
13	Zambia	3,348.7	2	2,688.6	3	696.2	1

Source: Lloyd Thrall, "China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security". Rand Corporation, 2015, pg 26.

Table 3: China's Most Important Trading Partners from Africa In 2004

Angola	3422.63 Million USD
South Africa	2567.96 Million USD
Sudan	1678.60 Million USD
Republic of Congo	1224.74 Million USD
Guinea	787.96 Million USD
Gabon	415.39 Million USD
Nigeria	372.91 Million USD
Algeria	216.11 Million USD
Morocco	208.69 Million USD
Chad	148.73 Million USD

Source: IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics (May, 2005)

According to the second White Paper on China's foreign aid, in three years (2010-2012) since the last report, China provided US \$ 14.41 billion in official development assistance (ODA), or an average of US \$ 4.8 billion per year:

- 7.26 billion Yuan (\$1.17 billion) of interest-free loans
- 32.32 billion Yuan (\$5.21 billion) of grants
- 49.76 billion Yuan (\$8.03 billion) in concessional loans

According to the paper, 51.8 percent of Chinese aid goes to Africa. This means an average of US \$ 2.5 billion per year between 2009 and 2012.⁵⁰

China's economic partnership is helping many African states to maintain their sustainability. Many states got ample opportunities to balance their trade ratio with the export of crude materials. However, few states suffer from an influx of low-cost consumer products from China which topples the balance of their import/export relations. China's selling of weapons to African states also creates aggravation among nations. China's strategic and military aid to Africa made China a strong ally of Africa. In response to that, Africa ideologically supports China's stance in the United Nations. China has been one of the world's advanced and growing economies since the start of the present decade. Its hankering for crude materials has driven up product's costs and therefore supported development in Africa.⁵¹ On the other hand, China's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is essential for Africa for reaching its Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Social Partnership

One distinguished feature of China's aid to Africa is non-conditional loans which are more convenient than the Western Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). The West is more concerned about democratic reforms in Africa, whereas, China focuses more on political and economic development. China is the major contributor in infrastructure building. With the coordinated efforts of local African market and strategic monetary policies, China has introduced a positive investment environment in Africa. This initiative is more conducive and slanted towards development as it is more compatible with the ground realities of Africa.

More importantly, traditional Western donors, who imposed political and economic sanctions with high investment standards, set by ISO, overlook the indigenous issues and formative crevices between North

⁵⁰Deborah Brautigam, "China in Africa: The Real Story: China's Second Foreign Aid White Paper Published -- Finally!," China in Africa: The Real Story, last modified July 10, 2014, <http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/2014/07/chinas-second-foreign-aid-white-paper.html>.accessed online on 16th Sept, 2015

⁵¹Goldstein Andrea et al., *The Rise of China and India What's in it for Africa?: What's in it for Africa?* (Paris: OECD Development Centre Studies, 2006),37-50

More importantly, traditional Western donors, who imposed political and economic sanctions with high investment standards, set by ISO, overlook the indigenous issues and formative crevices between North and South states. China then again, entirely takes over its non-intervention and non-interference rule and remains neutral in any political or domestic issue, until it becomes a threat to regional stability. China's impartial position and non-impedance expectations were plainly exhibited on account of Sudan. Despite the immense pressure from the West and criticism for non-cooperation, China focused on the political solution of this issue rather than putting sanctions and undue pressure on already conflict torn area.

Table 4: Chinese-aided Complete Plant Projects in Africa by 2009

Total	Agriculture Projects	Schools	Hospitals	Sports Ventures	Conference Centers	Industrial Projects	Others
884	142	71	54	53	62	145	357

Source: Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China

Regarding the socio-political dimension, China's involvement in Africa is more comprehensive and multilateral. China is more willing to guide the directions of African people to decide about their own future. China has added to the United Nations peacekeeping missions all through Africa. In April 2003, around 175 Chinese troops and a medical group of 42 members were conveyed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on a peacekeeping mission, and in December 2003 almost 600 Chinese peacekeepers were sent to Liberia. 1,400 Chinese were conveyed to Africa in 2004, in nine United Nations peacekeeping missions. China deputed almost 11,000 Chinese personnel (technicians, engineers and police, etc.) in 18 peacekeeping operations in Africa.⁵² China's role and level of engagement in Africa is far higher than the other permanent members of the United Nations, which is highly commendable.

On the higher education level, China and Africa share common goals and have taken mutual steps to increase the cooperation in this regard. In 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the pattern of education initiatives was limited and based on partial educational exchange programs. However the

⁵²Thrall, "*China's Expanding African Relations: Implications for US National Security*", pg 50-54

action plan of Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC, 2000) focused more on training and scholarships for African students. Further, to improve efficiency, the human development mechanism was set up to train the African professionals. Since the last decade, the volume of professional training and scholarships has been increased to double in size. Third (China, Africa Cooperation) FOCAC meeting decides to build 100 schools in different African countries.⁵³ Since 1964, around 15,000 Chinese medicinal laborers have set out to 47 African nations treating around 180 million patients.

China's Foreign Aid strategies in Africa and Implication for the West

China's rapid expansion and its multidimensional engagement in LDCs are augmenting criticisms and concerns among western donors. Critics largely manifest that China's aid programs are enormous but serve to support generally the undemocratic regimes. However, it is largely recognized that irrespective of the nature, objective and orientations of the Chinese aid program, it is strengthening its foreign relations vigorously. China's aid system has emerged as a significant and formidable alternative to the persisting western aid regime. China as a non OECD⁵⁵ (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) member is increasing its global development community which is enlarging China's political influence in several regions.⁵⁶

⁵³Milton O. Obamba, "The Dragon's Deal: Sino-African Cooperation in Education," international higher education, Number 72. Summer 2013 Pages 7-8, Boston College, https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cihe/pdf/IHEpdfs/ihe72_p7_8_Obamba.pdf, accessed October 2, 2015

⁵⁴J. Van de Looy, "Africa and China: a strategic partnership?," African Studies Centre Working Paper no. 67, Leiden, The Netherlands, 2006, 7.

⁵⁵Official development assistance is defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as concessional funding given to developing countries and to multilateral institutions primarily for the purpose of promoting welfare and economic development in the recipient country. China is not a member of OECD and does not follow its definition or practice on development aid. The bulk of Chinese financing in Africa falls under the category of development finance, but not aid. This fact is privately acknowledged by Chinese government analysts, although Chinese literature constantly blurs the distinction between the two categories.

⁵⁶Yun Sun, "China's Foreign Aid Reform and Implications for Africa Institution," Brookings, last modified July 1, 2015, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/07/01/chinas-foreign-aid-reform-and-implications-for-africa/>.

In the recent past, a significant debate has started about China's enlarging role in African development through its aid strategies which are largely a policy instrument of Beijing for its broader and global goals of economic development.⁵⁷

Renowned American Think Tank Rand Corporation identified the momentous Sino-African strategic partnership in its report in 2015 in following words:

“Across economic, political, and security domains, the growth of China's presence has been swift and staggering. For example, Sino-African trade increased almost twenty folds since 2000, supplanting the US as the continents' largest trading partner. Among the permanent United Nations (UN) Security Council members, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) is the largest contributor to the United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa, deploying 20 times the number of peacekeepers it sent to Africa in 2000. In addition, approximately 1 million Chinese live in Africa, up from only a few thousand, ten years ago.”⁵⁸

This report elaborated its stand view by maintaining that China's engagement with Africa has transformed dramatically over the previous ten years and will expect to continue with alteration and further advancement of these relations.

⁵⁷Chinese investment grew in Africa from USD 210 million in 2000 to USD3.17 million in 2011. Yun Sun, "China's Aid to Africa: Monster or Messiah? Institution," Brookings, last modified February 7, 2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/chinas-aid-to-africa-monster-or-messiah/>.

⁵⁸Thrall, Lloyd “China's Expanding African relations: Implications for U.S National security” 2015, Rand Corporation, www.rand.org, 11

The economic and political system offered by China is state-centric which has entirely altered the existing world order thus challenging the economic and political orthodoxy. One unmistakable element of China and the West is that regardless of having over 4000 years of age history, China never expected to mediate or assault some other state for expansionism. More importantly, harmony and non-interference is still a dynamic topic in China's worldwide arrangements. Thus China emerged as a potential threat to the West.

- Most significantly, China's emergent interests in Africa will probably compel Beijing to remain a keen observer of internal affairs of African countries as its energy security and energy interests are primarily driven by its broader interests of securing economic development and augmenting its political influence across the globe.⁵⁹
- China presently as the world's second-largest oil consumer and importer receives almost 21 percent of its oil imports from the African region, which enhances its stakes in African political stability and development for ensuring its energy security.⁶⁰ Beijing's emergent security interests in the African region are primarily driven by its broader global goals of preservation of economic development and enlarging its political influence. China as an emerging global power is in the process of expansion of its global goals where “security practices, missions, and presence” in significant regions are part of its policy while defining its security and energy interests.⁶¹ This engenders potential security interests for China, which can lead to political involvement of Beijing if its stakes of foreign aid and trade seem at risk, though the possibility of such a situation are quite less as is evident from the Chinese non-interference policy.

⁵⁹Ibid,14.

⁶⁰Energy security is generally enhanced by supply diversification. Concentration of resource supply in a small group of sources raises the risks and costs of an individual disruption. See Daniel Yergin, “Ensuring Energy Security,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, March/April 2006.

⁶¹China likely has more than 15,000 overseas enterprises (including more than 2,000 in Africa) with well more than 1 million overseas citizens.³² Chinese firms have active investments and contracts of more than \$1 billion in 12 of the top 20 global failed or failing states.

- Largely China is under heavy criticism from the West for not following the traditional donor standards. This generated challenges for the European Union and its working in Africa. It is generally assumed that China's foreign aid programs are neither transparent nor confined to serve the economic interests, but largely comprised of its global and political interests about expanding its area of influence.
- It is generally understood that Africa prefers China over the West because the policies experienced under the western aid system have been incompatible with development realities and had largely failed to bring any relative and substantial change in African economic development. The conditional loans by western donors and schemes under the international financial regime further worsen the situation which led the African states to lean more towards China. So, one can relate to China's aid to Africa by the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{No Strings attached+non-interference= Modern} \\ &\text{Donors (China)} \\ &\text{Conditional loans+ good governance (Political} \\ &\text{Stability)= Traditional Donors} \end{aligned}$$

Looy explains that although the fast growing investments of Chinese companies and increasing relations between Africa and China are not overlooked, but the West has yet not been well informed regarding the prospective emergence of this relationship.⁶² Thompson expounded that Sino-African relationship must be observed in the broader context of strategic orientation rather viewing it as merely a quest for raw material and resources. He explicated it further by saying that "China's influence and sound relationship in Africa are the result of many years of investment in building relations through aid, trade, cultural and technical exchanges and not just the by-product of China's recently booming economy and soaring demand of African raw material"⁶³

⁶²Judith van de Looy, "Africa and China: A Strategic Partnership?" ASC Working Paper 67/2006, Leiden, The Netherlands: African Studies Center, 2006, 1.

⁶³Thompson Drew, "China's soft power in Africa: From the" Beijing Consensus" to health diplomacy," *China Brief*, no. 21 (2005) www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/artical.asp

The Western foreign aid system is based on Washington's consensus, under which many restrictions were being imposed on the recipient states to comply with the principles of fiscal policy, interest rates, the flow of trade and public resource disbursement, etc. The main purpose of these arrangements is to reduce poverty. However, these fiscal policies and aid provisions seem little relevant with existing economic realities of recipient countries which significantly contribute for ad hoc management and short lived governance strategies. Aid and assistance programs initiated and supported by international financial regime are characterized by financial and monetary conditions which restrict largely the recipient states to devise economic resolutions in accordance with their ground realities. Moreover, these fiscal conditions imposed by western donors do not structure their relationship with recipient countries as partners as this relationship describes the latter as subservient without getting the adequate fruits of development.

As a result of these reservations regarding foreign aid, developing states considerably felt inclined towards China for its unconditional support in the form of aid with trade policy. Many commentators speculate that China's involvement in the public sector increased its presence in the African states, especially its natural resources. China, however, criticized the Western economic setup as their structural adjustment programs and restrictions are dominating the developmental capacity of African states. State-centric and conditional free loans are more convenient to African states as they are more compatible to the African culture. However, conditional free loans and assistance would undermine the vested interest of the West.

Social Partnership

China extended its official relations with Africa in 1956 by initiating diplomatic ties with Egypt. Since then, they have become all weather friends. China currently has diplomatic relations with 51 states out of 54 in Africa and these relations are built on shared goals, common interests, mutual understanding and unanimity on regional and international issues. These relations steadily matured as strategic partnership due to emerging multidimensional areas of cooperation. In the initial period of their relation, colonial past and anti-imperialist stances brought the two sides closer. Sino-African relations can be classified broadly into three phases though all phases were characterized by Chinese compulsions including emergence of its domestic uncertainties and transformation of international order.

China's policy of foreign aid seems different from the western perspective since it is more associated with the developmental efforts on both sides rather than maintaining a merely donor-recipient relation. China generally renounced using the words "aid" or "donor" specifically as it believes in mutual benefit and development assistance. After its policy of opening up, China focused more on economic integration to accelerate its role in the global economy. China established itself as the largest developing state while Africa is the largest developing continent with numbers of under developing states. Both of them shared a common history of humiliation by the Western imperialism. So Sino-African solidarity is not astonishing.

Even though Africa is gifted with natural resources, e.g. Africa owns 40% of world's potential hydroelectric power supply, 30% of world's uranium, 50% of world's gold, 40% platinum, 7.5% of the world's coal, 8 % of discovering oil reserves, 12% of natural gas reserves, 60% of cocoa and 70 % of coffee reserves, yet it is the dark continent of all.⁶⁴ Its colonial past, political crisis and slavery further worsens the situation. In this regard, Africa needs strategic partnership of a country that not only helps Africa in improving its overall condition, but also treats Africa as a strategic partner rather than only a recipient of aid.

China Africa Relations: $\frac{\text{Strategic Partnership}}{\text{Win-Win Situation}}$

With fewer prospects of Western economic models to rescue LDCs for sustainable development, China pursues a more reliable, strategic economic partnership and adopted policies which are compatible with African ground realities. These policies are instrumental in the development of the region and compatible with the working conditions and ground realities of the African continent. African states, favor Chinese involvement in the region, which is more conducive and non-expansionist. Besides aid and assistance program, China provides soft loans and grants to Africa. In its second address of FOCAC (China, Africa

⁶⁴George B.N. Ayittey, *Africa in Chaos: A Comparative History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998),5-6

Cooperation) meeting in 2003, China announced to forgive 1.2 Billion USD to 31 African states. In the same meeting China exempted tariff on 190 products in Africa.⁶⁵ In China-Africa Policy paper (2006), China reiterated its needs of African raw material, but it also stressed on the political and economic stability, peace and more importantly focused on Africa's concerns.

Historical harmony between Africa and China is an important contributing factor in the strategic interest of both. China supported African states when they were politically isolated and economically deteriorating. Non-interference and non-aggression principles from China are crucial for politically unstable areas like Africa. China believed that the Chinese foreign aid model is more suitable to Africa. China supported state-centric policies as they are imperative for political growth in Africa. With the rapid initiatives by the major powers, working conditions in Africa are improving; however, there is still a question mark on the overall improvement of Africa. Collective efforts in this regard are highly recommended in order to reduce the misery of this gifted region of the world. With all these apprehensions and concerns among western donors regarding Beijing aid strategies as its policy instrument, it still is not widely perceived as major threat to the international financial regime and its goals. However, China also needs to work collectively with traditional donors to increase productivity and establish proper infrastructure for future endeavors and joint ventures in Africa. There is also a need to introduce reforms into China's aid and assistance policy in order to ensure transparency. Its growing role as one of the major global players also requires its support to economic development and sustainability which is already being manifested in its diplomatic orientations. In case of amplifications of western concerns and misunderstandings regarding Chinese ambitions due to non-transparent nature of Chinese foreign aid and assistance, disagreements over aid policies can lead to potential political conflicts.

⁶⁵"China-Africa Trade and Economic Relationship Annual Report 2010," Forum on African-China Cooperation, last modified May 22, 2011, <http://www.focac.org/eng/zxxx/t832788.htm>. Accessed on November 15, 2015.