



TAMING THE DRAGON? **DEFINING AFRICA'S INTERESTS** **AT THE FORUM ON CHINA-AFRICA** **CO-OPERATION (FOCAC)**



CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



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POLICY ADVISORY GROUP SEMINAR REPORT

13 AND 14 JULY 2009, PREMIER HOTEL, TSHWANE (PRETORIA), SOUTH AFRICA

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POLICY ADVISORY GROUP SEMINAR REPORT

CO-ORGANISED BY THE CENTRE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CCR), CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA,
AND THE INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL DIALOGUE (IGD), MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

PREMIER HOTEL, TSHWANE (PRETORIA), SOUTH AFRICA
13 AND 14 JULY 2009

RAPPORTEURS

GWINYAYI A. DZINESA AND LESLEY MASTERS

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About the Co-organisers

The Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa

The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) is based in Cape Town, South Africa. Established in 1968, the organisation has wide-ranging experience of conflict interventions in the Western Cape and southern Africa and is working increasingly on a pan-continental basis to strengthen the conflict management capacity of Africa's regional organisations, as well as on policy research on Post-conflict Peacebuilding; the African Union, the United Nations, and Civil Society; Africa and the European Union; Southern Africa's Peacebuilding Challenges; and HIV/AIDS and Post-conflict Societies.

The Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

The Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), Midrand, South Africa, is an independent non-governmental organisation broadly concerned with key issues in international affairs, and how these affect South Africa, southern Africa, and Africa as a whole. Founded in 1994, the organisation has built up valuable experience, and made an important and sustained contribution to research and analysis on international affairs. As South Africa has progressively engaged more intensively with southern Africa, the rest of Africa, and the global community, IGD has broadened its scope and increased its resources to focus on the critical challenges that confront Africa in a fast-changing global environment.

The Rapporteurs

Gwinyayi A Dzinesa is a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa; and Lesley Masters is a Researcher at the Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa.

Executive Summary

The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), Cape Town, South Africa, and the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), Midrand, South Africa, co-hosted a policy advisory group meeting in Tshwane (Pretoria) on 13 and 14 July 2009 on the theme, “Taming the Dragon? Defining Africa’s Interests at the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC)”. FOCAC has held three summits between 2000 and 2006. The fourth summit will be held in Egypt in November 2009.

The policy seminar examined systematically how Africa’s 53 states define and articulate their geo-strategic interests and policies for engaging China within FOCAC. Beijing has a structured long-term view of engaging Africa at FOCAC, but Africa is yet to develop a coherent multilateral response. The policy advisory group meeting sought to encourage African governments to adopt nationally, regionally and continentally appropriate policies, strategies, and responses to engaging China more effectively, in order to ensure “win-win” outcomes for the continent in this partnership. The advisory group focused on four key spheres of FOCAC: political relations; economic co-operation; international affairs; and social development, as well as on broader issues of Sino/African relations.

1. China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics

China is an increasingly influential actor in international relations, as its economy and geo-political interests continue to expand. African countries will continue to be important to Beijing, as China’s phenomenal economic growth is likely to increase its demand for Africa’s strategic resources, notwithstanding the global financial crisis of 2008/2009. Beijing is also increasingly adopting a more assertive and aggressive foreign policy befitting its rapid socio-economic development and rising power status as the world’s third largest economy after the United States and Japan. China’s rising international activism is accompanied by its preoccupation with domestic economic development and political stability. Beijing ranks its foreign policy priorities in the order of, first, major powers; second, “periphery countries”; and, third, developing countries, including Africa.

2. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation

China’s economic engagement with Africa is shaped by Beijing’s appetite for Africa’s resources, and disproportionately focuses on extractive industries compared to secondary and tertiary sectors. Beijing, has, in a short decade, become Africa’s third largest trading partner after Europe and the US. The lop-sided Sino-African trade relationship could, however, be made more mutually beneficial since China offers funds, technology, and infrastructure to facilitate Africa’s development. The growth trajectories of the Chinese and African economies are intertwined. Trade with China has also integrated Africa more closely into the global economy and China’s concessional capital deployment model – directed by the state rather than by private banks – could provide lessons for Africa. Beijing has also set up Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Mauritius, Nigeria, and Zambia which could promote economic integration and development in Africa.

3. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations

Since the inception of FOCAC in 2000, China has set out to improve political relations with Africa both institutionally through official forums; and bilaterally, through political exchange programmes and enlarged embassy infrastructure. This strategy is aimed at propagating Beijing's message of mutual benefit and equality; creating opportunities for Chinese firms in Africa; and gaining African support for the "one China" policy. Bilateral diplomacy remains dominant in Sino-African political relations. But China's political relationship with Africa is paradoxical in that, while premised on the principle of non-interference in domestic African politics, Beijing is increasingly involved in internal African issues in countries such as Sudan and Zambia as a result of its deepening engagement in Africa.

4. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: International Affairs

Sino-African co-operation is important in supporting calls for the reform of the international system. The global financial crisis has created the space for Africa and China to challenge the prevailing international economic order symbolised by the unequal relations in the three Western-dominated international financial institutions: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In terms of future UN reform, a reconstituted 15-member United Nations Security Council with permanent African representation would provide the continent with greater leverage to ensure that Africa's security interests are taken more seriously. Both Africa and China have an interest in improving the UN's effectiveness in the areas of peacekeeping, human rights, and socio-economic development. The West, however, remains politically and economically important to Beijing and, as China develops into a superpower, its interests could converge more with the West's at the UN and international financial institutions, and diverge more with Africa's and the developing world.

5. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social Development

On the surface, the indications are that China is on track to meet its Action Plan pledges in the area of social development. This, however, is based on limited reporting of implementation, with most of the statistics contained in a May 2008 report from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two obstacles could inhibit the implementation of these pledges: an underestimation of the challenges in Beijing and Africa; and a lack of adequate research and knowledge about these African projects within China. Concern has been raised that the global financial crisis will exacerbate the challenges of implementation and limit further pledges, though Beijing has pledged not to reduce aid to, and investment in, Africa. Despite calls by African civil society for greater transparency and the establishment of quantitative targets, access to detailed information on the progress of FOCAC commitments is not readily available. In addition, these projects have focused on the physical construction of infrastructure, while trying to match this emphasis with providing value added to the social services of African countries.

6. FOCAC, China, and the West in Africa

The relationship between Africa, China, and powerful actors in the West, such as the US and European powers, is complex. The West's initial panic and hysteria over Beijing's growing interests in Africa has, more recently, developed into a more rational assessment. Certainly, many of the West's investments and business partnerships have not been undermined by China's engagement with Africa. There has, however, been resistance in Africa and Beijing to the formalisation of areas of convergence between China and the West into a trilateral dialogue between Africa, China, and the European Union (EU), with the West excluded from having a significant presence in FOCAC. There has been a growing recognition in the West that Beijing may have a contribution to make towards meeting Africa's development challenges. China has, for example, provided infrastructure support to Africa that Western countries and Western-dominated financial institutions were reluctant to provide.

Policy Recommendations

The policy advisory group proposed ten actionable policy recommendations for enhancing Sino-African relations through FOCAC that should guide discussions in Egypt in November 2009.

1. Economic co-operation

- First, African countries should ensure that China observes proper labour and safety standards. African, and not Chinese, labour and professionals should be used where possible, and China must be sensitive to concerns regarding the undermining of Africa's industrial base, particularly in the textile sector;
- Second, Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the East African Community (EAC); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) must determine constructive forms of regional economic engagements with China through FOCAC that promote economic integration and development. The Special Economic Zones being set up by China must also be used more effectively to promote economic integration and development in Africa;

2. Political Affairs

- Third, the African Union (AU) should consider establishing a formal and institutionalised political mechanism for enhanced dialogue and interaction with China through FOCAC. This may include the need to set up a dedicated African secretariat to engage China's FOCAC secretariat in Beijing. The AU and Africa's RECs could play a significant role in co-ordinating Africa's response to China. Beijing should also send a representative to the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, as the US and the EU have done;
- Fourth, Africa must, through its diplomatic community in Beijing, forge a common position in the continent's engagement with China's FOCAC Secretariat. Africa also needs to use its rotating position as co-implementing Chair of FOCAC – held by Egypt in 2009 – to co-ordinate African governments more effectively in Beijing as well as in African capitals;

3. International Affairs

- Fifth, African governments must improve the quality of their representation at the UN, as well as pressuring China, as one of the five veto-wielding permanent members of the powerful 15-member UN Security Council, to ensure that UN Security Council expansion includes two additional African permanent members and more effective international peacekeeping;
- Sixth, China should work with its African allies to strengthen the representation of the global South in economic institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO, to ensure the annulment of Africa's \$290 billion external debt and to ensure fairer trade for Africa;

4. Social Development

- Seventh, in the area of social development, African governments should second representatives from its RECs and the AU to serve on China's Implementation and Follow-up Committees for FOCAC, while a mechanism to assess implementation on a sectoral basis (environment, labour, education, and media) should also be developed;
- Eighth, FOCAC should promote people-to-people relations, with African and Chinese civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that should be incorporated into FOCAC processes, and a business forum should also be developed as part of FOCAC;

5. FOCAC, China and the West in Africa

- Ninth, any China-US or EU-China summit that includes discussion on Africa should have an African input through the African Union; and
- Finally, African governments and their allies, while noting the double standards of the US and some of its allies on human rights issues, must not allow Beijing to mobilise African support in the UN Human Rights Council to condone egregious human rights abuses around the globe. China should also not be allowed to condone autocratic misrule or sell arms to tyrants while trading profitably in Africa.

1. Introduction

The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), Cape Town, South Africa, and the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), Midrand, South Africa, co-hosted a policy advisory group meeting in Tshwane (Pretoria) on 13 and 14 July 2009 on the theme, “Taming the Dragon? Defining Africa’s Interests at the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC)”. FOCAC has held three summits between 2000 and 2006. The fourth summit will be held in Egypt in November 2009.

The meeting was attended by about 50 participants drawn from among African policymakers, including officials from African embassies in Beijing and African capitals dealing with China-Africa issues, as well as Chinese officials, and African and Western scholars. The policy seminar examined systematically how Africa’s 53 states define and articulate their geo-strategic interests and policies for engaging China within the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation. Organised four months before the FOCAC IV meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, the policy seminar focused on the opportunities and capacities for African policymakers to formulate an effective multilateral African response to China that can be transmitted through FOCAC, for mutual benefit.

A key concern of the policy advisory group was the need for African governments to adopt nationally, regionally, and continentally appropriate policies, strategies and programming responses to engage China more effectively, and to ensure “win-win” outcomes for the continent in this partnership. The third FOCAC summit in Beijing in 2006 had resulted in the adoption of an Action Plan 2007-2009 to deepen and broaden mutual beneficial co-operation in the four key areas of political relations, economic co-operation, international affairs, and social development.¹ The July 2009 seminar focused on these four areas, as well as three additional key issues: the role of the African Union (AU) and Africa’s Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the East African Community (EAC), and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), in making FOCAC more effective; the impact of the rivalry between China and the West on FOCAC; and the implications of the global financial crisis of 2008/2009 on China’s commitments to higher volumes of, and more efficient, development assistance to Africa.

In particular, the seminar sought to answer nine key questions:

- First, how does Africa define and express its interests and strategic goals for co-operation with China under the FOCAC framework?
- Second, is Africa a pawn or equal player in FOCAC with a clear, common strategy to manage the Sino-African interaction in a way that benefits the continent?
- Third, does the FOCAC IV meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh in November 2009 present an opportunity for Africa skillfully and confidently to renegotiate the Africa-China partnership in a manner that reflects Africa’s strategic interests?
- Fourth, can Africa develop a shared comprehensive, co-ordinated, and coherent plan for engaging China at FOCAC IV?

¹ See Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009) (available at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zft/eng/zyzl/hywj/t280369.htm> ; accessed 20 April 2009).

- Fifth, can the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Africa's RECs develop sound policy instruments that clearly outline strategies for Africa-China relations which can be communicated through FOCAC?
- Sixth, what methodologies are currently being applied by African governments to undertake national, regional and continental assessments of previous FOCAC commitments and engagements?
- Seventh, what are the strengths and weaknesses of Africa's engagement with China through FOCAC, and what are the gaps within the current African reaction to Beijing?
- Eighth, what are the implications, if any, of the global financial crisis of 2008/2009 on the FOCAC commitments, with particular regard to development assistance? and;
- Finally, based on an evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan 2007-2009, what African responses to China are to be recommended that can systematically incorporate Africa's own needs, demands, and expectations into this process?

The following seven specific themes and issues were addressed during the policy seminar:

1. China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics;
2. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations;
3. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation;
4. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: International Affairs;
5. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social and Cultural Interaction;
6. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: The African Union and Africa's Regional Economic Communities; and
7. FOCAC, China, and the West in Africa.

This policy seminar report is based on the seminar concept paper and papers presented at, and submitted to, the advisory group, as well as on discussions by participants at the meeting.

The establishment of FOCAC in October 2000, following a proposal by China, was significant. This sealed the institutionalisation of contemporary Afro-China relations that date back to the 1950s. FOCAC started as a triennial ministerial conference that aimed to provide a mechanism for collective consultation, dialogue and pragmatic co-operation between China and African countries. "Equality" and "mutual benefit" were to be the hallmarks of the envisaged Africa-China co-operation. FOCAC's popularity among African countries is clear, judging from the large attendance at its ministerial conferences. Forty-four African countries were represented at FOCAC I, held in Beijing in October 2000. FOCAC II took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 2003, while FOCAC III was held in Beijing in November 2006. The third meeting was significant for the elevation of the gathering to the Heads of State Summit level. Forty-three African leaders attended the 2006 summit, at which a declaration and Action Plan (2007-2009) on China-Africa co-operation were adopted. FOCAC IV will be convened in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2009. The Tshwane policy advisory group meeting in July 2009 explored possibilities for co-ordinating and harmonising African common positions and interests that – unlike China's – have often not been clearly defined.

The series of FOCAC conferences has had a significant impact on Sino-African relations. Following FOCAC I, China annulled a debt of \$1.2 billion owed by 31 African countries. The aftermath of FOCAC II in 2003 saw a phenomenal expansion in Afro-Chinese trade and investment. Following this summit, Africa's exports to China reached \$1 billion within a year. Sino-African trade grew from \$2 billion in 1999 to \$55.5 billion in 2006. By 2006, China had become the third largest foreign investor on the African continent (at an estimated \$6.6 billion) after the United States and Europe.² At the FOCAC III summit in 2006 in Beijing, China unveiled an ambitious politico-diplomatic programme,³ including: provision of \$5 billion in loans and credits; doubling of development assistance by 2009; establishing a \$5 billion China-Africa Development Fund (CADF) to promote Chinese investment in Africa; and setting the goal of increasing two-way trade to over \$100 billion by 2010. China has already implemented some of its key FOCAC III summit commitments. It had cancelled \$1.42 billion of African debt by 2007 and, at an annual African Development Bank (AfDB) conference in Shanghai the same year, also pledged \$20 billion over three years for infrastructural development in Africa.⁴ A deeper understanding of Africa's strategic calculus in its dealings with China, which the Tshwane seminar of July 2009 aimed to foster, will help to promote a better appreciation of the potential of FOCAC for Sino-African relations.

China, the world's third largest economy, has a structured long-term view of engaging Africa. Its geo-strategic national interests and goals in the Sino-African relationship are clearly defined in Beijing's Africa Policy document published in January 2006. The inaugural White Paper on China's strategy towards Africa stresses the fact that the Sino-African strategic partnership is based on "equal treatment, respect for sovereignty and common development".⁵ Beijing has effectively used the FOCAC forum as a vehicle to articulate its White Paper policy road map for co-operation with Africa.⁶ This approach has effectively allowed China to set the rules of engagement at FOCAC in spite of the forum's stated "view to seeking mutual reinforcement and common development".⁷ It is this discrepancy that the Tshwane seminar aimed to address.

Many analysts are concerned that Africa lacks a coherent collective bargaining policy to engage China.⁸ The responses by African governments to China's activities on the continent have often been reactive, uncoordinated and *ad hoc*.⁹ This has made African countries susceptible to undermining their own interests.¹⁰ At the 2006 FOCAC meeting, Africa failed to craft a collective bargaining strategy to shape the Sino-African relationship in a way that would have been beneficial to the continent's development.¹¹ FOCAC is often depicted by Beijing's Africa mandarins as a regionalised initiative seeking to forge China-Africa strategic co-operation. Notwithstanding these concerns, and the rhetoric of multilateral engagement with African

2 Adekeye Adebajo, "An Axis of Evil? China, the United States and France in Africa", in Kweku Ampiah and Sanusha Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon? Africa and China* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), pp.227-258.

3 Daniel Bach, "The European Union and China in Africa", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*, pp.278-293.

4 See Chin-Hao Huang, "China's Renewed Partnership with Africa: Implications for the United States", in Robert I. Rotberg (ed), *China into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 2008), p.143.

5 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, *China's Africa Policy*, January 2006.

6 See Martyn J. Davies, "Special Economic Zones: China's Developmental Model Comes to Africa", in Rotberg (ed), *China into Africa*, pp.137-154.

7 *Characteristics of FOCAC* (available at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zft/eng/gylt/tjij/t157576.htm>; accessed 20 April 2009).

8 See Sharath Srinivasan, "A 'rising Great Power' embraces Africa", in Adekeye Adebajo and Abdul Raufu Mustapha (eds.), *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), pp.334-366; Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, "Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon", *South African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 13, Issue 1, Summer/Autumn 2006, pp.97-114; Chris Alden, *China in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2007); Mwesiga Baregu, "The Three Faces of the Dragon: Tanzania-China Relations in Historical Perspective", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*, pp.152-166.

9 Alden, *China in Africa*.

10 See Srinivasan, "A 'rising Great Power' embraces Africa".

11 See Srinivasan, "A 'rising Great Power' embraces Africa"; and Daniel Bach, "The European Union and China in Africa".

institutions such as the African Union, NEPAD and Africa's Regional Economic Communities, China's Africa policy has been mostly conducted on a bilateral basis, which some observers in Africa have seen as a "divide and rule" tactic.¹² The essentially bilateral configuration of Afro-Chinese relations has thus often resulted in uncoordinated regional and multilateral African responses to China.¹³ The failure to develop a continental strategy towards Beijing has the potential of turning FOCAC meetings into forums for Africa's elites to swear "an oath of allegiance to the African continent's 'new tutor'"¹⁴ in an asymmetrical China-Africa relationship.



From left: Mr Aziz Pahad, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa; Dr Adekeye Adebajo, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa; Dr Garth le Pere, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

12 See Rotberg (ed), *China into Africa*.

13 See Alden, *China in Africa*.

14 See Adama Caye, "China in Africa: After the Gun and the Bible: A West African Perspective", in Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (eds.), *China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace* (London: Hurst & Co, 2008), pp.129-141.

2. China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics

The Tshwane policy advisory group acknowledged that China is well placed to become an increasingly influential actor in the post-Cold War era as its “Dragon” economy continues to expand. Beijing recorded a 7.9 per cent economic growth in the second quarter of 2009,¹⁵ as it appeared to weather the global financial downturn of 2008/2009 better than most Western economies.

African countries will continue to be important to China as the latter’s phenomenal economic growth is likely to continue to require Africa’s strategic resources. China’s economic model may also hold lessons for Africa’s quest for development and poverty reduction.

Traditionally, emerging world powers have faced the need to reorient their foreign policies, and China has been no exception. Beijing is currently grappling with replacing its old *taoguang yanghui* policy (literally, “hiding one’s capacity while biding one’s time”) and its approach of *budangtou* (“not seeking to lead”)¹⁶ with a more aggressive policy befitting its rapid socio-economic development and increasing global power status. This trend has seen China recently flexing its military muscle; asserting its interests in its maritime exclusive economic zone; cancelling a scheduled China-European Union (EU) Summit in 2008 in protest at French President (then EU president) Nicolas Sarkozy’s meeting in December 2008 with the Dalai Lama¹⁷; proposing to replace the US dollar with an international reserve currency; demanding a bigger decision-making role in international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); and providing significant assistance to developing countries, including many African governments.¹⁸ China has thus mobilised its “hard power” resources (record economic growth and increasing military strength) and “soft power” resources (culture, value system, and pragmatic diplomacy) to increase its international presence on the world stage.

Despite China’s rising international activism, Beijing is also preoccupied with its own domestic economic development and political stability. This was exemplified by China’s President Hu Jintao’s sudden departure from the Group of Eight Industrialised Countries (G-8) Summit in Italy in July 2009 to handle unrest at home. Beijing appears to be unprepared to assume global leadership, as its foreign policy formulation is mainly premised on national interests rather than on broader regional or global economic and security concerns.

China ranks its foreign policy priorities in the order of, first, major powers; second, “periphery” countries; and third, developing countries, including Africa.¹⁹ Beijing views major powers as the key; “periphery” countries as the priority; and developing countries as the foundation. China’s commitment to multi-polarity is evidenced by its maintenance of strategic partnerships with the world’s major powers, including the United States and Russia,

15 See Newstin, “Demand At Home Fires Up Dragon Economy” (available at www.newstin.com/tag/us/133477409 ; accessed 15 July 2009).

16 See Yongnian Zheng, ‘*Harmonious Society’ And ‘Harmonious World’: China’s Policy Discourse Under Hu Jintao* (available at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared_cpi/documents/policy_papers/Briefing_26_Harmonious_Society_and_Harmonious_World.pdf ; accessed 22 July 2009).

17 Charlemagne, “Dragon Nightmares”, *The Economist*, 18-24 April 2009, p.33.

18 Suisheng Zhao, “China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics”, paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon? Defining Africa’s Interests at the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC)*, Tshwane (Pretoria), 13 and 14 July 2009.

19 Suisheng Zhao, “China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics”.

and to a lesser extent, France and Britain. Beijing also maintains ties with “periphery” countries within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as with the European Union, and developing countries such as Brazil, India, and African states. China has attempted to balance traditional friendships with its developing world allies, while simultaneously accommodating American diplomatic concerns. Despite insisting on the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, Beijing was supportive of Washington on the United Nations Security Council – on which China serves as one of five veto-wielding permanent members, along with the US, Russia, Britain and France – regarding the imposition of sanctions on Iran; denouncing North Korea’s nuclear tests; and deploying a joint UN-African Union peacekeeping operation in Sudan’s Darfur region.²⁰ In order to protect its investments in resource-rich African countries, it is in China’s interests that political stability and “good governance” are maintained in these countries.



From left: Professor Garth Shelton, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; Professor Rok Ajulu, University of South Africa, Tshwane, South Africa; Professor Suisheng Zhao, Centre for China-US Co-operation, University of Denver, United States

20 Ibid.

The policy advisory group cautioned against romanticising China's relationship with Africa. Beijing's engagement with Africa through FOCAC could come to resemble the traditional paternalistic relationship between the continent and former colonial powers such as France, Britain and Portugal. China could also become a *status quo* power seeking Western approval far more than supporting Africa. Beijing has a carefully constructed institutional and policy framework for engaging Africa as well as a clear and focused agenda at FOCAC that is shaped by its rapid economic growth and demand for Africa's resources.²¹ FOCAC is largely driven by China through its dedicated secretariat in Beijing. China appears to prefer engaging African countries bilaterally rather than through multilateral frameworks.²² Critically, the achievement of Africa's broad developmental goals will involve a series of challenging collective action problems. Africa is a diverse and not a homogenous continent, making it notoriously difficult to craft a single blueprint that can assist all 53 African countries to deal with the challenges of "taming the Chinese dragon".²³ Doubts remain about Africa's potential to develop a co-ordinated strategy for engaging China at FOCAC: How, for example, can Africa shape its agenda and mobilise a concrete multilateral response? Who is going to prepare an African response to China at FOCAC? Is the AU the best institution to design the response, considering political issues such as the non-membership of Morocco? Are African governments ready to cede this authority to the AU? Do African policy makers know where the centre of power lies in China? How can 53 African countries co-ordinate a common response to China, a single united power?

Despite different country-specific, geo-political, and strategic interests, as well as capacities, it is important for Africa to rethink and plan its engagement with China at FOCAC more effectively. Incoherent African positions regarding FOCAC procedures and processes must be reversed. Some African governments appear to be satisfied with the FOCAC *status quo*, while others would prefer changes to FOCAC, such as increased African input and leadership. For some countries, there should be direct African engagement with FOCAC, while others would want to see Africa's response to the FOCAC agenda aligned more closely with that of the New Partnership for Africa's Development of 2001. A number of African governments have argued in favour of the need for positions and responses to be focused on Africa's sub-regions. Others have argued for using FOCAC to build competition between China and the West to Africa's advantage. These diverse African views and assessments of FOCAC give rise to the challenges and dilemmas of establishing and co-ordinating Africa's multilateral FOCAC agenda.²⁴

The African Union also lacks the capacity to craft and mobilise a concrete African response. Aside from Morocco not being a member of the AU, Sino-African relations are further complicated by the fact that four African countries – Burkina Faso, Swaziland, Gambia and São Tomé and Príncipe – having recognised Taiwan, do not have diplomatic ties with China, and thus attend FOCAC meetings only as observers. In addition, inter-state conflicts among AU member states such as Sudan and Chad further complicate efforts at multilateral co-ordination. To address the challenges of co-ordination and harmonisation, Africa could focus on key areas that cut across different country-specific interests, such as Chinese support for strengthening the AU's peacekeeping capacity; fighting diseases such as malaria; and constructing railway infrastructure.²⁵ Africa's RECs can also provide a platform for fundamentally co-ordinating strategic regional approaches towards China through FOCAC. The AU should invest resources to build its capacity for co-ordinating the appropriate responses to China.

21 See Alden, *China in Africa*, pp.27-28.

22 See Alden, *China in Africa*, p.27.

23 See Sidiropoulos, "Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon".

24 Garth Shelton, "Overview of FOCAC and Action Plan 2007-2009", paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

25 See Sidiropoulos, "Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon", p.103.

3. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation

Growing economic ties between Africa and China are significant determinants of broader, evolving Sino-African relations. Beijing is clear about its strategic economic goals: resource security provided by Africa's deposits of oil and mineral resources for the rapidly expanding Chinese economy; a formidable market of 800 million consumers; and an investment destination in the context of China's "Go-out" or "Go-global" strategy initiated in 2001.²⁶

FOCAC processes and the White Paper on China's African Policy of 2006 have "explicitly become platforms in promoting and concretising China's economic interests on the continent."²⁷ Beijing has also voiced its support for NEPAD through FOCAC. Africa could try to advance the socio-economic programme as the over-arching framework through which Sino-African economic relations are developed.²⁸ The bilateral deals between Beijing and individual African countries could either complement or compete with the priority areas identified under NEPAD.

There has been much debate about China's economic engagement with Africa and whether this is disruptive due to the "Dragon" economy's focus on extractive industries and seemingly insatiable appetite for Africa's resources. A convergence of interests is evident, as Beijing offers funds, technology, and infrastructure to facilitate Africa's development. The growth trajectories of China's and African economies are seen as being intertwined. On the one hand, African economic growth for the last decade has been dependent on China's demand for resources, while on the other, Chinese growth has relied on Africa's capacity to supply Beijing with these resources.

China's economic activities in Africa, have, however, produced both positive and negative impacts for Africa's economic development. This economic co-operation has had developmental effects, including infrastructure building; increased trade; deployment of a concessional capital model; and foreign direct investment. Trade with China could integrate Africa more closely into the world economy, while the Chinese government's concessional capital deployment model could also hold advantages over the use of private banks.²⁹ Furthermore, Beijing has set up of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Mauritius, Nigeria and Zambia which could promote regional integration and development in Africa.³⁰ In 2007, China launched a special China-Africa Development Fund (CADF), with first-phase funding of \$1 billion provided by the China Development Bank.³¹ The CADF will ultimately reach \$5 billion and aims to promote Chinese investment in Africa, thereby enhancing Sino-African economic co-operation.³² Some of the broad CADF-focus areas like infrastructure construction, manufacturing, agriculture and banking cut across the specificity of African countries.

26 See Garth le Pere (ed), *China in Africa: Mercantilist predator, or partner in development?* (Midrand: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2006).

27 Denis M. Tull, "The Political Consequences of China's Return to Africa", in Alden, Large and Soares de Oliveira (eds.), *China Returns to Africa*, pp.111-128.

28 Srinivasan, "A 'rising Great Power' embraces Africa".

29 Martyn J. Davies, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation", paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

30 See Kweku Ampiah and Sanusha Naidu, "The Sino-African Relationship: Towards an Evolving Partnership?", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?* p.332.

31 Liliang Teng, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation", paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

32 See China-Africa Development Fund, "The Company Overview" (available at <http://www.cadfund.com/en/Column.asp?ColumnId=55> ; accessed 24 July 2009).

The activities of Chinese companies in Africa have also been criticised in various African quarters for their environmental degradation; exploitative labour practices; use of Chinese, rather than African, labour;³³ undermining local industry (particularly the textile sector);³⁴ and importing sub-standard products into African markets. Significantly, the FOCAC Action Plan commits China to conducting business in a manner consistent with environmental protection and sustainable development. Similarly, China's White Paper of 2006 encourages China-Africa co-operation in areas including climate change, water resources conservation, anti-desertification, and bio-diversity.³⁵ Beijing is also a signatory to the 2004 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness that seeks to ensure that aid is aligned to the development policies of aid recipients. On the eve of FOCAC III of 2006, China's State Council issued "Nine Principles to Encourage and Standardise Enterprises' Overseas Investment". This is an instrument that African governments can potentially use to ensure that their interaction with Beijing promotes the continent's long-term and sustainable development agenda. African governments should also craft and implement strong regulatory frameworks and policies for Chinese business, and other investment, including environmental protection and sound labour relations.³⁶



From left: Mr Liliang Teng, China-Africa Development Fund, Johannesburg, South Africa; Ms Bharti Daya, Department of Trade and Industry, Tshwane, South Africa; Dr Martyn Davies, Centre for Chinese Studies, Stellenbosch, South Africa

- 33 See Devon Curtis, "Partner or Predator in the Heart of Africa? Chinese Engagement with the DRC", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*, pp.86-107; Muna Ndulo, "Chinese Investments in Africa: A Case Study of Zambia", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*, pp.138-151; Adebajo, "An Axis of Evil? China, the United States and France in Africa", p.231; and Sidiropoulos, "Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon", p.104.
- 34 See Lloyd Sachikonye, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Agenda? Zimbabwe-China Relations", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?* p.133.
- 35 Garth le Pere, "The Geo-Strategic Dimensions of the Sino-African Relationship", in Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*, pp. 20-38.
- 36 Ibid.



ABOVE: Dr Michele Ruiters, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Midrand, South Africa, *left*; Dr Garth le Pere, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

RIGHT: *From left:* Mr Simplice Gnanguessy, Embassy of Benin, Beijing; Mr Daniel Large, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, England; Dr Sheila Bunwaree, University of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius

There is an urgent need for country-level studies that can carefully assess China's economic engagements in order to strategise on appropriate responses to enhance mutual benefits from trade.³⁷ African governments should be able to exercise significant leverage in dealing with China, primarily because of their abundance of resources that Beijing needs for its continued growth and industrialisation.³⁸ Africans need to be more confident and sophisticated in ensuring the mutual reciprocity of FOCAC.

African governments, however, have diverse economies and cultures, and this may undermine the crafting of a continental African consensus and a single, harmonised position. Africa's RECs must, therefore, play a significant role in directing sub-regional economic interaction with China through FOCAC in a way that facilitates regional development. Africa must also take the opportunity to ensure that the Special Economic Zones established by China are used more effectively to promote economic integration and development in Africa. Regional hegemony like South Africa and Nigeria may have an important role to play in such strategies. The global financial crisis of 2008/2009 has placed China in a particularly advantageous position, especially in light of its financial reserves on which the rest of the world, including the industrialised economies of the West, appears to have pinned prospects for global economic recovery. Although economic indicators suggest that the global financial crisis may not have any immediate and direct effect on the volume of Chinese development assistance to Africa, there are growing fears that the declining economic fortunes of Western countries could remove an important check on Beijing's growing influence and leverage on the continent.

Against the backdrop of the global financial meltdown, the "Beijing Consensus", characterised by non-interference in state sovereignty; freedom from Western hegemony; and the absence of political conditionalities on donor assistance, is seen by many African governments as an attractive alternative to the "Washington Consensus" of marketisation and democratisation.

37 Ibid.

38 See Sidiropoulos, "Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon".

4. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations

Well-documented historical and political dynamics provide the foundations for Sino-African political engagement.³⁹ These interactions are based on traditional mutual political trust. Beijing's political relations with Africa are underpinned by five considerations.

First, China's core national interests and its own imperatives for growth and development will increasingly bind it to Africa; second, China's historical experience and development model are instructive and useful for Africa; third, Beijing supports principles of sovereignty and non-interference; fourth, China has an opportunity to make a positive and constructive contribution to Africa's development; and, finally, bilateral political relations with African governments must respect the "one China" policy in order to prevent diplomatic recognition of Taiwan.⁴⁰ Against the backdrop of Western global hegemony, China has strategically positioned itself as a putative leader of the developing world, and urged concrete South-South solidarity and co-operation in efforts to ensure an equitable political and economic world order. In this arena, China portrays its political relationship with the continent as a partnership between "the biggest developing country and Africa, the continent with the largest number of developing countries".⁴¹

Since the inception of FOCAC in 2000, China has set out to improve political relations with Africa both institutionally, through official forums, and bilaterally, through political exchange programmes and enlarged embassy infrastructure.⁴² This approach has sought to propagate Beijing's message of mutual benefit and equality; creating opportunities for Chinese business; and ensuring African support for the "one China" policy.⁴³ Over the last ten years, Beijing has successfully established formal diplomatic relations with African countries that have cut ties with Taiwan. These include: South Africa, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Guinea-Bissau in 1998; Liberia in 2003; Senegal in 2005; Chad in 2006; and, most recently, Malawi in 2008. As a result, there are now only four countries on the continent that retain formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan: Burkina Faso, Swaziland, Gambia, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Bilateral diplomacy is dominant in China-Africa political relations. Notably absent from Beijing's institutional endeavours is a formal Chinese delegation to the African Union, unlike the EU and the US whose ambassadors to Ethiopia are also accredited to the AU.⁴⁴ This is despite the fact that Beijing is constructing a modern conference centre at the AU's headquarters, scheduled for completion in mid-2010 at an estimated cost of \$150 million.⁴⁵

China's political relationship with Africa is paradoxical in that, while premised on the principle of non-interference in domestic African politics, Beijing is increasingly involved in internal African issues because of its deepening engagement in Africa. Beijing's non-interference policy is controversial and widely seen by some as condoning

39 See Ampiah and Naidu (eds.), *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?*

40 These points are taken from Garth le Pere, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations", paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

41 Tull, "The Political Consequences of China's Return to Africa".

42 Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009).

43 Garth le Pere, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations".

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

repressive regimes, the most commonly cited examples being Zimbabwe and Sudan.⁴⁶ China's military engagement with Africa includes bilateral military exchanges, support for peacekeeping operations, and arms sales. The FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009 commits Beijing to increasing its *attaché* presence in Africa.⁴⁷ The Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) has representation in a third of Africa's 53 countries, with 75 per cent of these countries having *attachés* in China.⁴⁸ Beijing also sponsors high-ranking military exchanges and functional military co-operation in areas such as training, logistics, defence policy and force structure between the PLA and African militaries.⁴⁹ In 2007, 1,300 Chinese soldiers – nearly 75 per cent of Beijing's global peacekeeping forces – were deployed to seven United Nations missions in Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Western Sahara. China has provided support to the AU, including \$11 million for humanitarian relief in Darfur; \$1.8 million to the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) by the end of 2006; 315 peacekeepers and a 315-member multi-functional engineering unit to the UN/AU mission in Darfur; and \$300,000 to assist with the AU mission in Somalia.⁵⁰

Arms sales have been an important feature of Beijing's military relationship with Africa. Between 1996 and 2003, China became the world's largest exporter of weapons to Africa, accounting for over ten per cent of total imports.⁵¹ China's arms sales policy states that its arms should support the legitimate self-defence of the receiving country;



From left: Mr Daniel Large, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, England; Ambassador Rob de Vos, Netherlands Embassy, Tshwane, South Africa; Dr Garth le Pere, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

46 Garth Shelton and Farhana Paruk, *The Forum on China-Africa Co-operation: A Strategic Opportunity*, Institute for Security Studies Monograph 156 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2008), p.64.

47 Garth le Pere, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations".

48 Jennifer L. Parenti, *China-Africa Relations in the 21st Century* (available at http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq_pages/editions/152/23.pdf ; accessed 17 July 2009).

49 Garth le Pere, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations".

50 Ibid.

51 See Bates Gill, Chin-Hao Huang and J. Stephen Morrison, "China's expanding role in Africa: Implications for the United States" (Washington, D.C.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2007).

should not interfere with a country's internal affairs; and should not compromise regional or international security.⁵² African civil society has raised concerns around China's arms sales to, and provision of, political and military cover to African countries involved in conflicts such as Ethiopia and Eritrea or internal repression such as Zimbabwe and Sudan. There have also been criticisms of China's relationship with Africa as being similarly paternalistic to those with the US and European countries such as France, Britain and Portugal. The AU is, however, not unique in having problems co-ordinating a multilateral response in its engagement with China. Other regional organisations such as the EU and ASEAN have also encountered difficulties in responding to China within their own strategic partnerships. While African actors are not homogenous, they should use FOCAC to shape China's political role in Africa in order to ensure political equality and mutual trust. The onus is on African governments to define proactively future Afro-Chinese political relations, within a pan-African framework, in a manner that promotes the continent's political interests. Africa also needs to devise a strategy for Beijing to support economic integration more effectively through more formalised relations with Africa's RECs.



ABOVE: *From left:* Mr Felix Ngoma, Embassy of the Republic of Congo, Beijing, China; Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Port Louis, Mauritius; Mr Rabah Bouchoucha, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algiers, Algeria
RIGHT: Dr Siphamandla Zondi, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

52 Garth le Pere, "FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations".

5. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: International Affairs

In the area of international affairs, the FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009 agreed on eight key issues:

First, to increase the “authority and efficiency” of the United Nations through reform based on “democratic negotiation”, and ensuring that developing countries and, particularly, African countries have more representation on the powerful 15-member UN Security Council; second, that China and its African partners meet yearly on the sidelines of the 192-member UN General Assembly to exchange views on issues of mutual interest; third, that the 47-member UN Human Rights Council respects the “historical, cultural and religious background of all countries” and gives as much priority to the economic, social and cultural rights of the global South as it does to the civil and political concerns of the rich North; fourth, to expand co-operation within the UN, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other international fora, including reviving the stalled Doha development round; fifth, to establish an effective mechanism to monitor the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals which aim to halve poverty by 2015; sixth, to strengthen co-operation with the African Union and Africa’s sub-regional organisations; seventh, to support UN counter-terrorism efforts; and finally, to increase co-operation in nuclear non-proliferation efforts, as well as combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.⁵³

Maintaining close co-ordination and solidarity in international affairs is a major aspect of FOCAC. China needs Africa in numerous ways to further its international ambitions. The 2007-2009 Beijing Action Plan notes that there are “complex and profound changes” taking place in the international environment.⁵⁴ The global financial crisis has created the space for Africa and China to challenge the prevailing economic order symbolised by the “Washington Consensus”. However, as Beijing and African governments have substantial divergences in



From left: Mr Peter Draper, South African Institute of International Affairs, Tshwane, South Africa; Ambassador James Jonah, former UN Undersecretary-General, for Political Affairs; Dr Adekeye Adebajo, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa

53 This paragraph is based on Adekeye Adebajo, “Ending Global Apartheid: Africa’s International Engagement with China”, paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

54 Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009).

economic potential and objectives, questions have been raised regarding the possibility of shared objectives in pursuit of the reform of the World Trade Organisation and the Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank and the IMF. Despite China's dramatic economic and industrial growth, it remains a developing country with many pressing needs and hundreds of millions of people still living in poverty. As such, Beijing can relate to Africa's development challenges in a way that perhaps the West cannot. In this regard, there is the shared political objective of re-ordering global economic governance arrangements.

Since the 1960s, Africa and its Asian allies have played a significant role in moving the UN from its post-1945 focus on peace and security to socio-economic development, bringing ideological struggles to many of the UN's organs.⁵⁵ Yet, there has been a failure in achieving substantive progress on issues relating to trade, aid, and development. China is well placed to assist African countries in terms of aid, export relations, and investment flows to the continent, though this must take into account the impact of the financial crisis of 2008/2009 on China. In the short-term, China can assist with liquidity support through the IMF, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as through bilateral support. In the medium-term, Beijing can play a role in addressing regulatory reforms through the Group of Twenty (G-20) and the IMF; the reform of the Bretton Woods institutions with respect to governance, representation and conditionalities; as well as through reducing systemic risks, including macroeconomic imbalances and volatile currencies.⁵⁶ The G-20 meeting in London in April 2009 discussed ways of reforming the weighted voting of the World Bank and IMF – which disproportionately benefits the US and its powerful Western allies – to enhance the power of China and developing countries, and to reduce Western dominance of these institutions.

In terms of UN reform, a reconstituted Security Council would almost certainly give Africa an enhanced presence at the top table of global diplomacy to help ensure that, with consistently strong representation, the continent could help check the excesses of the Permanent Five – the United States, Russia, China, Britain, and France – and make sure that Africa's security concerns are taken more seriously. This is particularly important, given that about 60 per cent of the Council's deliberations focus on the continent, and that, in 2009, about 70 per cent of UN peacekeepers are deployed in Africa. China, as one of the five veto-wielding members of the UN Security Council, must play a constructive role in the expansion of the Council to include two additional African permanent members.⁵⁷

In the area of peacekeeping, the UN Security Council has not done enough to strengthen the capacity of African regional organisations, and to collaborate effectively with them in the field. The world body must learn lessons from the AU's difficult peacekeeping experience in Sudan's Darfur region between 2003 and 2007. These challenges effectively forced the AU to hand the mission over to the UN through the creation of a UN-AU hybrid mission in July 2007, with China playing a constructive role in convincing a reluctant Khartoum to accept the force. In another sign of Beijing's growing assertiveness in UN peacekeeping, China has pushed for UN Security Council action in Somalia since a Council mission to Addis Ababa in June 2006. African governments must pressure China to ensure that the UN Security Council strengthens peacekeeping in Africa.

55 Adekeye Adebajo (ed.), *From Global Apartheid to Global Village: Africa and the United Nations*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009); and Douglas Williams, "The Specialised Agencies: Britain in Retreat", in Erik Jensen and Thomas Fisher (eds.), *The United Kingdom - The United Nations* (London: MacMillan Press, 1990), pp. 227-228.

56 Peter Draper, "The World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund", paper presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

57 This paragraph and the following three are taken from Adekeye Adebajo, "Ending Global Apartheid: Africa's International Engagement with China".

In the sphere of improving human rights around the world, the UN Human Rights Council has disappointed in its first three years of operation, as politicisation of human rights issues continued. African governments and their allies must support efforts to strengthen the UN Human Rights Council and regional governance mechanisms such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which 29 countries have joined. While noting the double standards of the US and some of its allies on human rights issues, Beijing must not be allowed to mobilise African support in the Human Rights Council to condone egregious human rights abuses around the globe. China should also not be allowed to condone autocratic misrule or sell arms to tyrants while trading profitably in Africa.

While maintaining close co-operation with Africa, Beijing essentially views the West as far more politically and economically important than Africa. As the Chinese dragon grows richer, so also could its interests – like Japan’s – coincide increasingly with those of the West at the UN and in global financial institutions. Beijing seeks the West’s acceptance far more than it does Africa’s. China’s sensitivity to Western criticisms over human rights issues in Tibet before its hosting of the 2008 Olympics clearly demonstrated this. Beijing’s larger interests are likely to continue to coincide more with those of the West than with Africa’s, though Chinese economic rivalry is also likely to continue with the United States, France, and other Western countries in the quest for Africa’s resources. This will be a complex relationship of co-operation and competition.



Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Port Louis, Mauritius, left; Mr Rabah Bouchoucha, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algiers, Algeria

6. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social Development

The social development aspects of the 2007-2009 FOCAC Action Plan cover a wide range of sectors, including: development assistance and debt relief; human resources development; culture; education; medical care and public health; environmental protection; tourism; media; people-to-people contact; and women and youth exchange programmes.

On the surface, indications are that China is well on the way to meeting its Action Plan pledges on or before the deadline. For example, 150 of a pledged 168 interest-free loans to African governments had been forgiven; bilateral debt of 32 (of 33) highly indebted poor African countries had been cancelled; 19 of a pledged 30 hospitals in Africa were under construction by 2008; and ten of a pledged 30 anti-malarial centres in Africa were completed, with a further ten due to be constructed.⁵⁸ This is, however, based on limited reporting of implementation, with most of this data provided by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If implementation is approached as a series of “tick-boxes”, it gives the appearance that the eight measures of the Action Plan unveiled in 2006 are on track to be met. The problem is, however, that this approach masks the fact that some of the measures currently being undertaken have been implemented since 2003.⁵⁹

A number of obstacles inhibiting the implementation of these pledges were identified. In the first instance, there has been an underestimation of the implementation challenges both in Beijing and in the African countries concerned. In addition, there is a lack of research and knowledge within China about its projects in Africa. Although there are an increasing number of think tanks that focus on Africa, these programmes are small in comparison to other area study programmes. On the African side, there has also been little effort by national governments to assess the successes or failures of these pledges. As the global financial crisis gathered pace, concerns were expressed that this would exacerbate the challenges of implementing Chinese projects in Africa. Beijing has, however, pledged not to reduce aid and investment to Africa, with Chinese institutions continuing to lend to African governments. Yet FOCAC 2009 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, may not yield the generous pledges of the past. Despite calls for greater transparency and the establishment of quantitative targets, access to detailed information on the progress of FOCAC commitments is not readily available.

Opportunities presented by FOCAC could be lost as a result of a short-fall in follow-up monitoring and evaluation. In order to determine the successful implementation of Chinese projects in Africa, figures from reports indicating, for example, where schools and hospitals have been built on the continent, and where the funding is coming from, will need to be disaggregated. While China is providing the physical infrastructure, embedding these projects into a functional social fabric – including the maintenance and staffing of these facilities – is the responsibility of the African governments involved.

58 Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Botswana, *Implementation of Follow-up Actions of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation* (available at <http://bw.chineseembassy.org/eng/zt/zfhz/t461546.htm> ; accessed 29 July 2009).

59 Sanusha Naidu, “FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social Development”, presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009. See also Lucy Corkin, “FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social Development”, presented at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

Negotiation of projects as well as monitoring their implementation can only be streamlined if there are clearly defined interlocutors, for example, the AU, RECs, NEPAD, or national governments in Africa. In addition, there needs to be clarity on the meaning of the concept of “social development” as this sometimes differs between China’s model of poverty reduction and Africa’s focus at the community level. African civil society actors must play a critical two-fold role in FOCAC:⁶⁰ first, to improve the interpersonal and inter-social environment of the Chinese presence in Africa; and, second, to socialise and sensitise Beijing to Africa’s governance and accountability imperatives. There has also been little done in terms of research on the gender impact of China’s investments in Africa and their effect on women’s rights.

As FOCAC develops, it will be imperative that implementation of projects is carefully monitored and evaluated, addressing shortfalls that inhibit effective implementation of Chinese projects on the continent. This is a particular concern in Africa, which faces problems of absorptive capacity, bureaucratic minefields, and bottlenecks. Africa also needs to take ownership of these projects in order to align them more closely with the host government’s poverty reduction strategies.



From left: Ms Lucy Corkin, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, England; Ms Aseghedech Chirmazion, Independent Consultant, Nairobi, Kenya; Ms Sanusha Naidu, FAHAMU, Cape Town, South Africa

60 Ndubisi Obiorah, “Who’s Afraid of China in Africa? Towards an African Civil Society Perspective on China Africa Relations”, in Firoze Manji and Stephen Marks (eds.), *African Perspectives on China in Africa* (Cape Town: Fahamu and Pambazuka, 2007), pp.35-55.

7. FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: The African Union and Africa's Regional Economic Communities

The FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009 noted the significance of the AU, RECs and African financial institutions such as the AfDB. The plan also emphasised the imperatives of strengthening co-operation between FOCAC and NEPAD and to “further explore specific ways and areas of cooperation”.⁶¹

The relationship between China and Africa must be placed in a historical context, dating back to the era of decolonisation in the 1950s.⁶² The stage for relations between China and the Afro-Asian world was set at the Bandung Conference of 1955 in Indonesia. Within seven months of the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Chinese Premier Zhou En Lai embarked on an African diplomatic safari, expressing Chinese support for Africa's anti-colonial struggles. Beijing also consistently stressed its opposition to encroachment and interference in sovereign African countries.

Africa's interests and responses at the FOCAC summit in Sharm el-Sheikh in November 2009 should be understood in terms of first, the objectives outlined in the AU Constitutive Act of 2000; second, how the AU intends to achieve these objectives; and third, the mechanisms it will use to do so.⁶³ The AU is aware of the need to forge a collective African strategy to allow for better organised engagement with China. Alpha Oumar Konaré, as Chair of the AU Commission between 2003 and 2008, stated that “the terms and conditions should be set by us”.⁶⁴



Dr Mzukisi Qobo, Department of Trade and Industry, Tshwane, South Africa, left; Dr Kweku Ampiah, University of Leeds, England

61 Forum on China-Africa Co-operation, Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009).

62 See Adebajo, “An Axis of Evil? China, the United States and France in Africa”.

63 Solomon Gomes, “FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: The African Union and Africa's Regional Economic Communities”, paper submitted to the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

64 Sidiropoulos, “Options for the Lion in the Age of the Dragon”, p.103.



TOP: Mr Akwasi Agyeman Agyare, Embassy of Ghana, Beijing, China, *left*; Ambassador Abdelmoniem Elbeiti, Sudanese Embassy, Beijing, China
ABOVE: Dr Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, University of Oxford, England
RIGHT: Ambassador Peter Tejler, Embassy of Sweden, Tshwane, South Africa, *left*; Ambassador Rob de Vos, Netherlands Embassy, Tshwane, South Africa

The AU also noted that “the Commission should play a coordinating role in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of all FOCAC Summits”.⁶⁵ Africa could set up FOCAC-specific high-level co-ordinating bodies at the level of the AU and RECs to guide and implement Africa’s continental and regional engagements with China.⁶⁶

Africa’s Regional Economic Communities should not be separated from the AU at FOCAC. Even though RECs are the building blocks of a future African Economic Community to be established by 2008, they have rarely been effective in promoting economic integration and development over the last 50 years. Furthermore, China has not engaged Africa’s RECs as separate entities, but has usually conducted its business on a bilateral basis.

⁶⁵ AU Assembly/AU/Dec.160 (VIII).

⁶⁶ Garth le Pere, “The Geo-Strategic Dimensions of the Sino-African Relationship”, pp.20-38.

8. FOCAC, China, and the West in Africa

The rivalry between China and the West in Africa has been termed “A New Scramble for Africa”.⁶⁷ The West has not only historically maintained a monopoly in shaping Africa’s direction, the approach of many powerful Western countries to Africa has often been paternalistic, based on perceptions that the continent is in need of “saving” and that only these countries could save it.

As such, China’s engagement with African countries has often been portrayed as a threat to Western interests. This presents a challenge to the global interests of the West in both geo-political and economic terms. The level of alarm regarding China’s growing relations with Africa reached new highs in 2005-2006. The general thrust of criticism has been two-fold: first, economic exploitation; and, second, condoning autocracy. In the first instance, there has been concern in some Western capitals that China is challenging American and European firms for strategic resources like copper and oil, and that Beijing is using corrupt means in engaging with Africa. There are also concerns that Chinese loans are undermining efforts to grant African countries debt relief (Africa’s external debt is about \$290 billion). Linked to the concerns about economic exploitation is the question of the political implications of China’s expanding relations with Africa. The argument is that Beijing’s insistence on separating economics from politics (based on a non-interventionist policy) emboldens autocratic regimes in Africa to engage in human rights abuses, while China’s preference for bilateral relations is often seen as undermining the West’s attempts to promote effective multilateral relations with the continent.⁶⁸

The initial panic and hysteria concerning China’s growing interest in Africa has recently developed into a more rational response. The result has been the development of a “parallel game”, with powerful actors in the West sometimes attempting to speak on behalf of Africa in order to protect the continent from “colonialist” exploitation, while simultaneously seeking to prevent Beijing from undermining their commercial interests. The actual level of Western commitment to Africa has recently been in general decline, making the “New Scramble” rhetoric inappropriate. It would, however, be erroneous to exaggerate the West’s disengagement from Africa based on the continuing interventionist French role in Chad, the Central African Republic, and Côte d’Ivoire.

Following the terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September 2001, the George W. Bush administration refocused American attention on security issues.⁶⁹ In 2002, a US Joint Task Force Horn of Africa Command was established in Djibouti, with 1,700 American soldiers, to prevent terrorist activities in the region. The move has been viewed by some as foreshadowing a return to Cold War tactics of supporting autocratic regimes in the name of US economic and security interests. During the Cold War, Washington supported Kenya, Somalia and Sudan, despite poor human rights records in all three countries, in order to protect strategic sea routes for transporting oil from the Middle East. The US base in Djibouti has been viewed by some as a similar strategy to protecting American security interests. In 2003, a US-supported programme totaling \$100 million – the East

67 See, for example, Roger Southall and Henning Melber (eds.), *The New Scramble for Africa: Imperialism, Investment and Development in Africa* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009).

68 See the presentations by Kweku Ampiah and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira on “FOCAC, China, and the West in Africa” at the CCR/IGD seminar, *Taming the Dragon?*, 13 and 14 July 2009.

69 See CCR policy seminar report, “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon? China and Africa: Engaging the World’s Next Superpower”, Cape Town, South Africa, 17 and 18 September, 2007 (www.ccr.ac.za).

Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) – was launched to provide training and equipment to the region, while President Bush reopened the US Agency for International Development (USAID) office in Djibouti. The US also strengthened security ties with Eritrea as well as Ethiopia. In February 2007, Washington announced plans to establish a new Africa Command (AFRICOM) to facilitate American efforts to fight terrorism, prevent conflict and provide humanitarian assistance to Africa.⁷⁰

China’s engagement with the continent has been largely welcomed by African governments, particularly its different approach to the West. For instance, rhetoric giving respect to principles of sovereignty coupled with ideas of equality and partnership have been readily accepted by African states. Yet China’s impact has been sector-specific, and, more importantly, regime-specific. Beijing’s engagement has often been focused on striking bargains with Africa’s political and economic elite. This, in turn, has seen the counter-elite opposing China’s engagement, sometimes using xenophobic approaches in places like Zambia.



TOP: Dr Gwinyayi Dzinesa, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa, *left*; Dr Lesley Masters, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa
ABOVE: Dr Khabele Matlosa, Electoral Institute of Southern Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa, *left*; Professor Rok Ajulu, University of South Africa, Tshwane, South Africa
RIGHT: Mr Aziz Pahad, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa, *left*; Dr Emmanuel Kisiangani, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

70 This paragraph is from Adekeye Adebajo, "An Axis of Evil? China, the United States and France in Africa".

The relationship between Africa, China, and powerful Western countries is more complex than merely noting that the West thinks ill of China's involvement in Africa. Western investments and business partnerships in Africa have often not been undermined by China's engagement with the continent. Indeed, many Western firms are heavily invested in China, and, as such, have an interest in Africa's resources. China's largest two-way trade is with the EU at 300 billion euros, and both parties hold regular summits.

It should be noted that, though Washington has been critical of China's role in places like Sudan and Angola, there are increasing contacts and co-operation between American and Chinese officials on Africa – through a China-US dialogue – that appear to have been helpful in efforts to deploy a UN/AU peacekeeping force to Darfur in 2007.

There has recently been a growing recognition from the West that China may have a contribution to make to Africa's development challenges, not least because Beijing has applied developmental methods to solving problems that are much closer to the situation of African countries. Over time, a more nuanced assessment of Sino-African relations has emerged within Western research and policy circles. The indications are that the earlier panic and hysteria are evolving into an increasing attempt by some Western governments to collaborate with China on Africa, drawing Beijing into multilateral arrangements on the continent. African governments must, however, devise a strategy to transform the geo-strategic rivalry between China and the West into a triangular relationship that benefits the continent's development aspirations.



Participants of the policy advisory group seminar, "Taming the Dragon? Defining Africa's Interests at the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC)", Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa, 13 and 14 July 2009

There have been several success stories in Sino-African relations, which need to be built upon as a way of developing and strengthening this engagement. The fact that Beijing is prepared to invest in the much-needed road and railway infrastructure that Africa badly needs for its industrial take-off, and that China's purchase of Africa's raw materials has helped to increase global prices, has been widely seen as positive for the continent. There is also a need to study financial loan mechanisms in order to develop an understanding of China's investments in Africa, and to strengthen the capacity of African institutions in engaging China. Western policy makers have had to re-assess their initial knee-jerk reaction to Beijing's role in Africa. Western countries, however, still have much larger, often long-standing political, military, and trade ties on the continent than China. One should, therefore, not exaggerate Beijing's ability to dislodge Western interests from Africa in the short-term.

Policy Recommendations

The policy advisory group proposed ten actionable policy recommendations for enhancing Sino-African relations through FOCAC that should guide discussions in Egypt in November 2009.

1. Economic co-operation

- First, African countries should ensure that China observes proper labour and safety standards. African, and not Chinese, labour and professionals should be used where possible, and China must be sensitive to concerns regarding the undermining of Africa's industrial base, particularly in the textile sector;
- Second, Africa's Regional Economic Communities such as ECOWAS; SADC; IGAD; the EAC; ECCAS; and the AMU must determine constructive forms of regional economic engagements with China through FOCAC that promote economic integration and development. The Special Economic Zones being set up by China must also be used more effectively to promote economic integration and development in Africa;

2. Political Affairs

- Third, the African Union should consider establishing a formal and institutionalised political mechanism for enhanced dialogue and interaction with China through FOCAC. This may include the need to set up a dedicated African secretariat to engage China's FOCAC secretariat in Beijing. The AU and Africa's RECs could play a significant role in co-ordinating Africa's response to China. Beijing should also send a representative to the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, as the US and the EU have done;
- Fourth, Africa must, through its diplomatic community in Beijing, forge a common position in the continent's engagement with China's FOCAC Secretariat. Africa also needs to use its rotating position as co-implementing Chair of FOCAC – held by Egypt in 2009 – to co-ordinate African governments more effectively in Beijing as well as in African capitals;

3. International Affairs

- Fifth, African governments must improve the quality of their representation at the UN, as well as pressuring China, as one of the five veto-wielding permanent members of the powerful 15-member UN Security Council, to ensure that UN Security Council expansion includes two additional African permanent members and more effective international peacekeeping;
- Sixth, China should work with its African allies to strengthen the representation of the global South in economic institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO, to ensure the annulment of Africa's \$290 billion external debt and to ensure fairer trade for Africa;

4. Social Development

- Seventh, in the area of social development, African governments should second representatives from its RECs and the AU to serve on China's Implementation and Follow-up Committees for FOCAC, while a mechanism to assess implementation on a sectoral basis (environment, labour, education, and media) should also be developed;
- Eighth, FOCAC should promote people-to-people relations, with African and Chinese civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that should be incorporated into FOCAC processes, and a business forum should also be developed as part of FOCAC;

5. FOCAC, China and the West in Africa

- Ninth, any China-US or EU-China summit that includes discussion on Africa should have an African input through the African Union; and
- Finally, African governments and their allies, while noting the double standards of the US and some of its allies on human rights issues, must not allow Beijing to mobilise African support in the UN Human Rights Council to condone egregious human rights abuses around the globe. China should also not be allowed to condone autocratic misrule or sell arms to tyrants while trading profitably in Africa.

Annex I

Agenda

Day One Monday 13 July 2009

09h00-09h30 Welcome and Opening

Chair: Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, Executive Director, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town

Speakers: Mr Aziz Pahad, former South African Deputy Foreign Minister and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, "Taming the Dragon? Defining Africa's Interests at the FOCAC"

Dr. Garth le Pere, Executive Director, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand

09h30-11h00 Session I: China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics

Chair: Professor Rok Ajulu, Professor of Political Economy, University of South Africa, Tshwane

Speakers: Professor Suisheng Zhao, Executive Director, Centre for China-US Co-operation, University of Denver, US, "China in the Context of Current Global Dynamics"

Professor Garth Shelton, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, "Overview of FOCAC and Action Plan 2007-2009"

11h00-11h15 Coffee Break

11h15-12h45 Session 2: FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Economic Co-operation

Chair: Ms. Bharti Daya, Director of NEPAD, South African Department of Trade and Industry, Tshwane

Speakers: Dr. Martyn Davies, Executive Director, Centre for Chinese Studies, Stellenbosch University, Western Cape

Mr. Liliang Teng, Representative of the China-Africa Development Fund, Johannesburg

12h45-13h45 Lunch

13h45-15h15 Session 3: FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Political Relations

Chair: Ambassador Rob de Vos, Ambassador of the Netherlands to South Africa

Speakers: Dr. Garth le Pere, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand

Mr. Daniel Large, School of Oriental and African Studies, London

15h15-15h30 Coffee Break

15h30-17h00 Session 4: FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: International Affairs

Chair: Ambassador James Jonah, Former United Nations Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs

Speakers: Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, Executive Director, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town

Mr. Peter Draper, Head of Development Through Trade Programme, South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg

17h15-18h30

Books Launch Chair: Professor Sheila Bunwaree, University of Mauritius

China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace, edited by Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (London: Hurst & Co, 2008)

Presented by Dr. Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, St. Peter's College, Oxford University, England

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon? Africa and China, edited by Kweku Ampiah and Sanusha Naidu (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008)

Presented by Dr. Kweku Ampiah, Academic Fellow, Leeds University, England

The Forum on China-Africa Co-operation: A Strategic Opportunity, by Garth Shelton and Farhana Paruk (ISS Monograph no. 156, 2008) Presented by Prof. Garth Shelton, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

20h00-22h00 Dinner

Day Two Tuesday 14 July 2009

09h30-11h00 Session 5: FOCAC Action Plan 2007-2009: Social Development

Chair: Ms. Aseghedech Ghirmazion, Independent Consultant, Nairobi, Kenya

Speakers: Ms Sanusha Naidu, Research Director, Fahamu, Cape Town, South Africa

Ms. Lucy Corkin, School of Oriental and African Studies, London

11h00-11h15 Coffee Break

11h15-13h00 Session 6: FOCAC, China, and the West in Africa

Chair: Dr. Mzukisi Qobo, Chief Director: Trade Policy, International Trade and Economic Development Division, South African Department of Trade and Industry, Tshwane, South Africa

Speakers: Dr Kweku Ampiah, Academic Fellow, Leeds University, England

Dr. Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, St. Peter's College, Oxford University, England

13h00-14h00 Lunch

14h00-15h30 Session 7: Rapporteurs' Report and the way forward

Chair: Ambassador James Jonah, former United Nations Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs

Dr. Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa, Senior Researcher, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa

Dr. Lesley Masters, Researcher, Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa

Annex II

Opening Statement by Mr Aziz Pahad, former South African Deputy Foreign Minister and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Global Dialogue

Today's conference organised by the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Institute for Global Dialogue is very timely. It takes place a year after South Africa and the People's Republic of China celebrated 10 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations. It is therefore appropriate to assess the state not only of South Africa-China relations, but also of Africa-China relations. The international economic crisis has brought into sharp focus the growing reality of the crisis of capitalism and the emergence of new economic and political powers in Asia, which is challenging Western economic and political hegemony. It is now generally accepted that China will become an economic superpower by the year 2020. This therefore demands that we have a correct assessment of the importance of China in the world economic and political order.

We can also not ignore the political reality that:

- China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council;
- China is a leading member of ASEAN;
- China participated in the Bandung conference of 1955 which gave rise to the Non-Aligned Movement and, while not a member of the non-aligned movement, it is a very important partner;
- China is a member of the G77+ China grouping at the UN; and
- China played a major role in the launching of the New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership in 2005.

In the opening address of President Hu Jintao at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on Africa-China Co-operation in November 2006, attended by 43 African Heads of State and Government, he said:

"Today, China-Africa friendship is deeply rooted in the hearts of our two peoples, and our friendship has endured the test of time and changes in the world. This is because we have never strayed from the principle of enhancing friendship, treating each other as equals, extending mutual support and promoting common development in building our ties. Treating each other as equals is crucial for ensuring mutual trust. We both respect the development path independently embarked upon by the other side. Mutual support is the driving force behind the ever growing China-Africa co-operation. We are committed to pursuing mutually beneficial co-operation to bring the benefits of development to our peoples."

Jintao further announced that China will strengthen co-operation with Africa in five key areas:

- First, deepen political relations of equality and mutual trust;
- Second, broaden "win-win" economic co-operation;
- Third, expand exchange of cultural enrichment;
- Fourth, promote balanced and harmonious global development; and
- Fifth, strengthen co-operation and mutual support in international affairs.

As we deliberate over the next two days, we should seek to assist African governments to determine ways in which they can develop mutually beneficial political, economic and social relationships with the People's Republic of China, to which President Hu Jintao referred.

In the economic field, trade has shown dramatic increases. In 1999, Africa-China trade was \$6.5 billion; by 2006, this figure had reached \$56 billion. Today's figures will probably be much higher.

The establishment of FOCAC was a further indication of China's intentions to consolidate and strengthen its economic relations with Africa. President Hu Jintao announced that:

"Unity and co-operation with Africa is a key principle guiding China's foreign policy; and China will continue to support Africa in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development."

To forge a new type of China-Africa strategic partnership and strengthen co-operation in more areas and at a higher level, the Chinese Government will take the following eight steps:

1. Double its 2006 assistance to Africa by 2009;
2. Provide \$3 billion of preferential loans and \$2 billion of preferential buyer's credits to Africa in the next three years;
3. Set up a China-Africa development fund which will reach \$5 billion to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa and provide support to them;
4. Build a conference centre for the African Union to support African countries in their efforts to strengthen themselves through unity, and support the process of African integration;
5. Cancel debt in the form of all the interest-free government loans that matured at the end of 2005 owed by the heavily indebted poor countries and the least developed countries in Africa that have diplomatic relations with China;
6. Further open up China's market to Africa by increasing from 190 to over 440 the number of export items to China receiving zero-tariff treatment from the least developed countries in Africa having diplomatic ties with China;
7. Establish three to five trade and economic co-operation zones in Africa over the next three years; and
8. Over the next three years, train 15,000 African professionals; send 100 senior agricultural experts to Africa; set up 10 special agricultural technology demonstration centres in Africa; build 30 hospitals and provide a grant of 300 million Renminbi (RMB) for artisans; build 30 malaria prevention and treatment centres in Africa; dispatch 300 youth volunteers to Africa; build 100 rural schools in Africa; and increase the number of Chinese government scholarships to African students from the current 2000 per year to 4000 per year by 2009.

This conference is a good opportunity to assess whether Africa is benefitting from the FOCAC initiative. Why does the issue of “Taming the Dragon” arise? We are confronted with constant accusations about China being the new colonial and imperialist power in Africa.

Some Western governments, academics, think tanks and large sections of the media — as well as some South African think tanks, academics and media — have started a systematic campaign to expose what they allege are China’s support for autocratic governments, and violations of human rights and “good governance” in Africa. They also raise the issue of the danger of “Chinese dumping” and destruction of local industries. This is skillfully linked to an orchestrated campaign about China’s internal so-called “undemocratic” policies.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund also continuously allege that China fails to take into account many of the lending criteria - especially transparency, fair bidding for contracts, environmental impact studies, and the level of debts - of countries that it gives financial assistance to.

The People’s Republic of China does face many contradictions and challenges as reflected in the reported ethnic violence in its Urumqi province. This is a discussion for another day. The theme of today’s conference demands that we look at *Defining Africa’s Interests at the FOCAC*.

As we seek to analyse the consistent allegations against China, we cannot ignore the reality that Africans are conscious that, for many years, colonial/imperialist/neo-colonial and Cold War advocates overthrew democratic governments and propped up dictators. There was scant respect for democracy, human rights, and “good governance”. This was not only in Africa, but also in Asia and in Latin America.

During this era, economic relations were lopsided and based on the super exploitation of our natural resources. Western policies for centuries did not help us to create conditions for better trade terms, for foreign direct investment determined by our own developmental agenda, and for unconditional aid which would have helped us to diversify our economies, and enabled us to become more competitive in the world economy. There was also little regard for environmental degradation, infrastructure development, skills training and technology transfers. Is the phenomenal economic growth of China, and, to some extent, India, challenging the long-standing, uneven and exploitative economic domination of Africa by Western powers?

We have to ask ourselves the question: Are the recently new Western approaches to Africa — for instance, America’s African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the new French attitude to its former colonies, the Group of Eight Industrialised Countries — all responses to the fact that China as a growing economic superpower is now aggressively entering the African continent?

Another element that we must consider is the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 against the US which gave the neo-conservatives in the George W. Bush administration the green light to unleash its militaristic policies under the guise of fighting terrorism. We returned to the Cold War era of subversion of democratic governments, the support or strengthening of undemocratic regimes, and a militaristic approach to dealing with the many complex challenges facing humanity. In this respect, an important element of this neo-conservatism was the demonisation and undermining of China.

To “Tame the Dragon”, it is vital that Africa has a developmental and regulatory framework to guide our future economic relations with China and with any other country.

The international community, including the United Nations, has recognised that NEPAD is Africa’s developmental programme. The challenge for us is to determine how we position ourselves to ensure that FOCAC and the other bilateral aspects of Sino-African relations fit into the NEPAD agenda. Our mission should be to determine how we exploit the historic opportunity to attract Chinese investments; get better and equitable trade relations; and ensure that there are programmes to create excellent infrastructure in Africa and to receive technological transfers from the People’s Republic of China. This would go a long way to help us diversify our economies in Africa, and therefore become more competitive in a globalised world economy.

With the introduction of FOCAC, China introduced a long-term perspective of how its relations with Africa would develop. Does NEPAD provide Africa with such a perspective? If not, what is the alternative?

We must base our approach on the reality that Africa contains most of the strategic resources that China needs for its continuing economic growth, and on the reality that China ranks today among the top three of Africa’s trading partners, after the US and Europe. On the burning issue of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Beijing Declaration of the FOCAC of 2000 stated the common approach of Africa and China on these issues. The Declaration notes that:

“The universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms should be respected and the diversity of the world and the principle of seeking common ground while reserving differences must be upheld and carried forward. Each country has the right to choose, in its course of development, its own social system, development model and way of life in light of its national conditions. Countries, that vary from one another in social system, stages of development, historical and cultural background and values, have the right to choose their own approaches and models in promoting and protecting human rights in their own countries. Moreover, the politicisation of human rights and the imposition of human rights conditionalities on economic assistance should be vigorously opposed as they constitute a violation of human rights.”

Does the conference agree with these perspectives?

In 2007, over and above its FOCAC commitments, the Chinese made available \$3 billion in preferential credit to Africa over three years. Beijing also took a decision that it would double and then extend more interest-free credit to African states.

The conference challenge is to answer the question:

Have we in Africa fully exploited the opportunities that FOCAC and the 2007 announcement provide for us? This, I believe, will go a long way to “Tame the Dragon”.

Thank you.

Annex III

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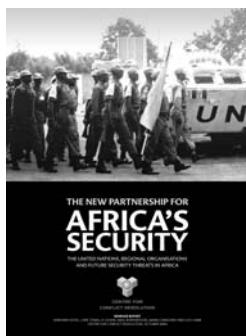
Annex IV

List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AFRICOM	Africa Command (US)
AMIS	African Union Mission in Sudan
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CADF	China-Africa Development Fund
CCR	Centre for Conflict Resolution
EACTI	East Africa Counter-terrorism Initiative
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Co-operation
G-8	Group of Eight Industrialised Countries
G-20	Group of Twenty
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGD	Institute for Global Dialogue
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PLA	People's Liberation Army
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEZs	Special Economic Zones
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	UN-AU Hybrid Mission in Darfur
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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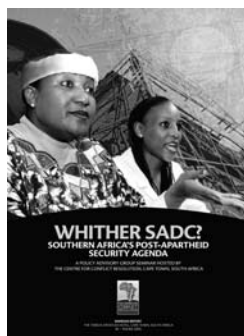
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VOLUME 1 THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S SECURITY

THE UNITED NATIONS, REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND FUTURE SECURITY THREATS IN AFRICA

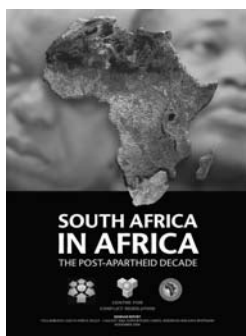
The inter-related and vexing issues of political instability in Africa and international security within the framework of UN reform were the focus of this policy seminar, held from 21 - 23 May 2004 in Claremont, Cape Town.



VOLUME 5 WHITHER SADC?

SOUTHERN AFRICA'S POST-APARTHEID SECURITY AGENDA

The role and capacity of the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) were focused on at this meeting in Oudekraal, Cape Town, on 18 and 19 June 2005.



VOLUME 2 SOUTH AFRICA IN AFRICA

THE POST-APARTHEID DECADE

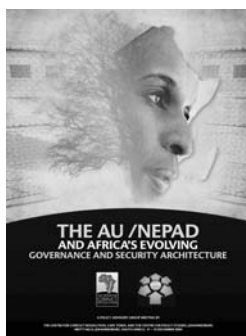
The role that South Africa has played on the African continent and the challenges that persist in South Africa's domestic transformation 10 years into democracy were assessed at this meeting in Stellenbosch, Cape Town, from 29 July - 1 August 2004.



VOLUME 6 HIV/AIDS AND HUMAN SECURITY

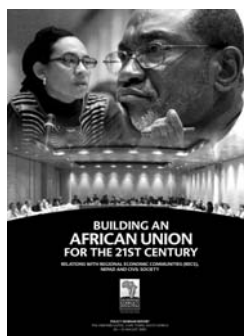
AN AGENDA FOR AFRICA

The links between human security and the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, and the potential role of African leadership and the African Union in addressing this crisis were analysed at this policy advisory group meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 9 and 10 September 2005.



VOLUME 3 THE AU/NEPAD AND AFRICA'S EVOLVING GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

The state of governance and security in Africa under the AU and NEPAD were analysed and assessed at this policy advisory group meeting in Misty Hills, Johannesburg, on 11 and 12 December 2004.



VOLUME 7 BUILDING AN AFRICAN UNION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECS), NEPAD AND CIVIL SOCIETY

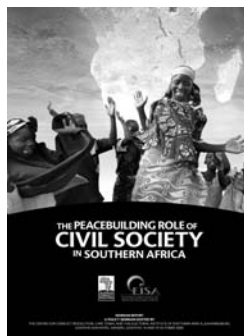
This seminar in Cape Town from 20 - 22 August 2005 made policy recommendations on how the AU's institutions, including NEPAD, could achieve their aims and objectives.



VOLUME 4 A MORE SECURE CONTINENT

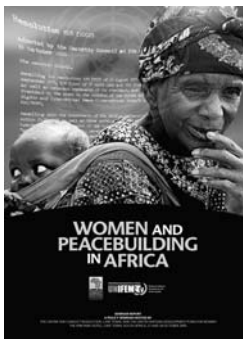
AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE UN HIGH-LEVEL PANEL REPORT, A MORE SECURE WORLD: OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

African perspectives on the United Nations' (UN) High-Level Panel report on Threats, Challenges and Change were considered at this policy advisory group meeting in Somerset West, Cape Town, on 23 and 24 April 2005.



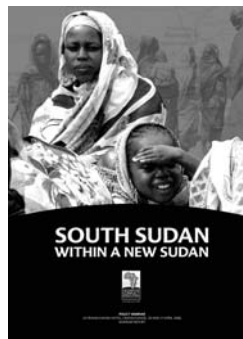
VOLUME 8 THE PEACEBUILDING ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

This meeting, held in Maseru, Lesotho, on 14 and 15 October 2005, explores civil society's role in relation to southern Africa, democratic governance, its nexus with government, and draws on comparative experiences in peacebuilding.



**VOLUME 9
WOMEN AND
PEACEBUILDING IN
AFRICA**

This meeting, held in Cape Town on 27 and 28 October 2005, reviewed the progress of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peacebuilding in Africa in the five years since its adoption by the United Nations in 2000.



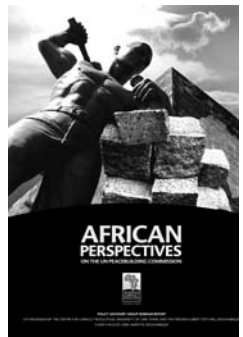
**VOLUME 13
SOUTH SUDAN WITHIN
A NEW SUDAN**

This policy advisory group seminar on 20 and 21 April 2006 in Franschhoek, Western Cape, assessed the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in January 2005 by the Government of the Republic of the Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM/A).



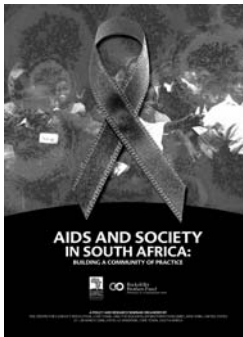
**VOLUME 10
HIV/AIDS AND
MILITARIES IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA**

This two-day policy advisory group seminar in Windhoek, Namibia, on 9 and 10 February 2006 examined issues of HIV/AIDS and militaries in southern Africa.



**VOLUME 14
AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES
ON THE UN
PEACEBUILDING
COMMISSION**

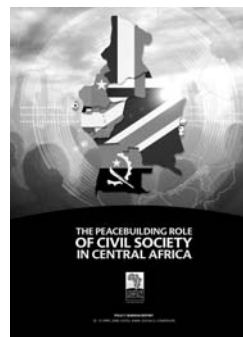
This meeting, in Maputo, Mozambique, on 3 and 4 August 2006, analysed the relevance for Africa of the creation, in December 2005, of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and examined how countries emerging from conflict could benefit from its establishment.



**VOLUME 11
AIDS AND SOCIETY
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

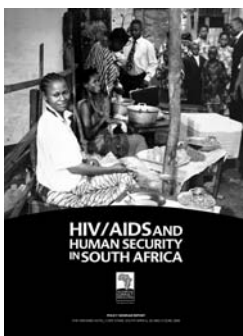
BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

This policy and research seminar, held in Cape Town on 27 and 28 March 2006, developed and disseminated new knowledge on the impact of HIV/AIDS in South Africa in the three key areas of: democratic practice; sustainable development; and peace and security.



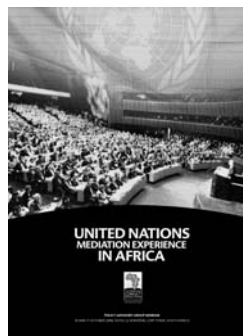
**VOLUME 15
THE PEACEBUILDING
ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY
IN CENTRAL AFRICA**

This sub-regional seminar, held from 10 to 12 April 2006 in Douala, Cameroon, provided an opportunity for civil society actors, representatives of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the United Nations (UN) and other relevant players to analyse and understand the causes and consequences of conflict in central Africa.



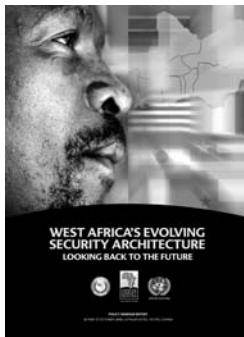
**VOLUME 12
HIV/AIDS AND HUMAN
SECURITY IN SOUTH
AFRICA**

This two-day policy seminar on 26 and 27 June 2006 took place in Cape Town and examined the scope and response to HIV/AIDS in South Africa and southern Africa from a human security perspective.



**VOLUME 16
UNITED NATIONS
MEDIATION EXPERIENCE
IN AFRICA**

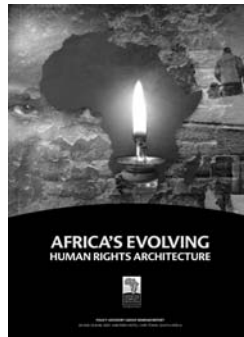
This seminar, held in Cape Town on 16 and 17 October 2006, sought to draw out key lessons from mediation and conflict resolution experiences in Africa, and to identify gaps in mediation support while exploring how best to fill them. It was the first regional consultation on the United Nations' newly-established Mediation Support Unit (MSU).



VOLUME 17
WEST AFRICA'S
EVOLVING SECURITY
ARCHITECTURE

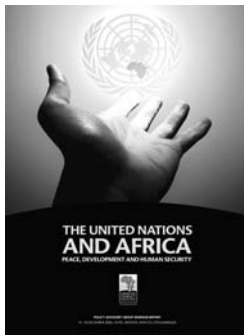
LOOKING BACK TO THE FUTURE

The conflict management challenges facing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the areas of governance, development, and security reform and post-conflict peacebuilding formed the basis of this policy seminar in Accra, Ghana, on 30 and 31 October 2006.



VOLUME 21
AFRICA'S EVOLVING
HUMAN RIGHTS
ARCHITECTURE

The experiences and lessons from a number of human rights actors and institutions on the African continent were reviewed and analysed at this policy advisory group meeting held on 28 and 29 June 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa.



VOLUME 18
THE UNITED NATIONS
AND AFRICA

PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN SECURITY

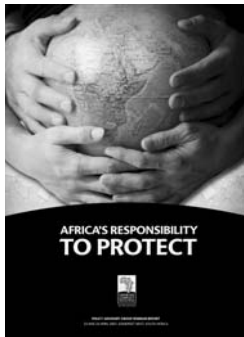
This policy advisory group meeting, held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 14 to 16 December 2006, set out to assess the role of the principal organs and the specialised agencies of the UN in Africa.



VOLUME 22
PEACE VERSUS JUSTICE?

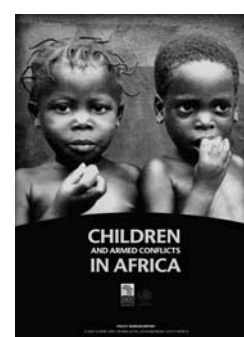
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSIONS AND WAR CRIMES TRIBUNALS IN AFRICA

The primary goal of this policy meeting, held in Cape Town, South Africa, on 17 and 18 May 2007, was to address the relative strengths and weaknesses of "prosecution versus amnesty" for past human rights abuses in countries transitioning from conflict to peace.



VOLUME 19
AFRICA'S
RESPONSIBILITY TO
PROTECT

This policy seminar, held in Somerset West, South Africa, on 23 and 24 April 2007, interrogated issues around humanitarian intervention in Africa and the responsibility of regional governments and the international community in the face of humanitarian crises.



VOLUME 23
CHILDREN AND ARMED
CONFLICTS IN AFRICA

This report, based on a policy advisory group seminar held on 12 and 13 April 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa, examines the role of various African Union (AU) organs in monitoring the rights of children in conflict and post-conflict situations.



VOLUME 20
WOMEN IN POST-
CONFLICT SOCIETIES IN
AFRICA

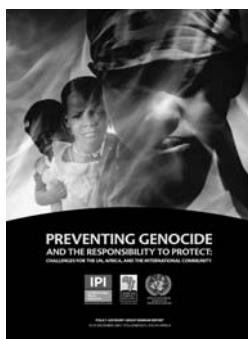
The objective of the seminar, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 6 and 7 November 2006, was to discuss and identify concrete ways of engendering reconstruction and peace processes in African societies emerging from conflict.



VOLUME 24
SOUTHERN AFRICA

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

This report is based on a seminar, held in Tanzania on 29 and 30 May 2007, that sought to enhance the efforts of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to advance security, governance and development initiatives in the sub-region.



**VOLUME 25
PREVENTING GENOCIDE
AND THE RESPONSIBILITY
TO PROTECT**

**CHALLENGES FOR THE UN, AFRICA, AND THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

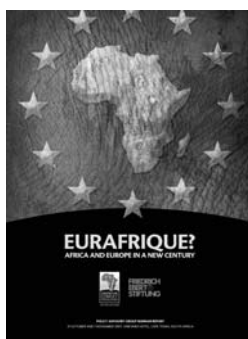
This policy advisory group meeting was held from 13-15 December 2007 in Stellenbosch, South Africa, and focused on six African, Asian and European case studies. These highlighted inter-related issues of concern regarding populations threatened by genocide, war crimes, "ethnic cleansing" or crimes against humanity.



**VOLUME 29
CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION
AND PEACEBUILDING IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**CIVIL SOCIETY, GOVERNMENTS, AND
TRADITIONAL LEADERS**

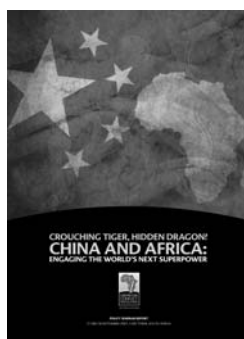
This meeting, held on 19 and 20 May 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa, provided a platform for participants from Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe to share insights on sustained intervention initiatives implemented by the Centre for Conflict Resolution in the three countries since 2002.



**VOLUME 26
EURAFRIQUE?**

AFRICA AND EUROPE IN A NEW CENTURY

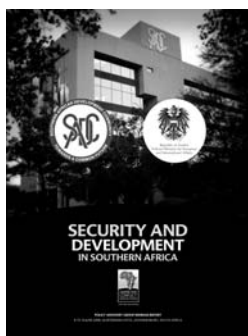
This seminar, held from 31 October to 1 November 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa, examined the relationship between Africa and Europe in the 21st Century, exploring the unfolding economic relationship (trade, aid and debt); peacekeeping and military co-operation; and migration.



**VOLUME 30
CROUCHING TIGER,
HIDDEN DRAGON?
CHINA AND AFRICA**

ENGAGING THE WORLD'S NEXT SUPERPOWER

This seminar, held in Cape Town, South Africa, on 17 and 18 September 2007, assessed Africa's engagement with China in the last 50 years, in light of the dramatic changes in a relationship that was historically based largely on ideological and political solidarity.



**VOLUME 27
SECURITY AND
DEVELOPMENT IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA**

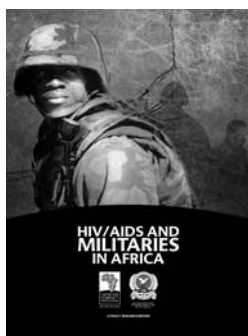
This seminar, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 8-10 June 2008, brought together a group of experts – policymakers, academics and civil society actors – to identify ways of strengthening the capacity of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to formulate security and development initiatives for southern Africa.



**VOLUME 31
FROM EURAFRIQUE TO
AFRO-EUROPA**

AFRICA AND EUROPE IN A NEW CENTURY

This policy seminar, held from 11-13 September 2008 in Stellenbosch, Cape Town, South Africa, explored critically the nature of the relationship between Africa and Europe in the political, economic, security and social spheres.



**VOLUME 28
HIV/AIDS AND
MILITARIES IN AFRICA**

This policy research report addresses prospects for an effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic within the context of African peacekeeping and regional peace and security. It is based on three regional advisory group seminars that took place in Windhoek, Namibia (February 2006); Cairo, Egypt (September 2007); and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (November 2007).

Notes

Notes



MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

The Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) has held three summits between 2000 and 2006. But, while Beijing has a structured and long-term view of its engagement with Africa, the latter is yet to develop its own coherent, multilateral response. The policy seminar captured in this report examined systematically how Africa's 53 states define and articulate their geo-strategic interests and policies for engaging China within FOCAC.



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