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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
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Exercise NEW HORIZONS

**CHINA IN AFRICA:
A CHALLENGE OR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADA**

By /par

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, China has been particularly active in Africa, where its efforts have been focused on securing natural resources, gaining access to consumer markets and positioning the nation as a leader of the developing world. However, China's competitiveness in the region has challenged the interests of some countries, which have subsequently cast suspicious eyes on China. This has resulted in the perpetuation of the so-called "China threat" that permeates much of the current writing regarding China's actions in Africa. This paper discusses China's declared objectives in Africa and investigates its role and influence in African nation states, where Canadian Forces are currently deployed. The paper concludes that there is scant evidence of a significant "China threat." China's interest is based upon trade and investment, an interest shared by Canada. China has also used persuasion and appeal instead of the threat of military force in support of its grand strategy to be recognized as a global power. These motives do not pose a threat to Canadian Forces operations in Africa but offer instead enormous potential for cooperation and collaboration.

*China's rapid rise over recent years as a regional political and economic power with growing global influence is an important element in today's strategic landscape – one that has significant implications for the region and the world.*¹

INTRODUCTION

One region where the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been particularly active in recent years is in Africa, where its efforts have been focused on securing natural resources, gaining access to consumer markets and positioning the nation as a leader of the developing world. Chinese President Hu Jintao's African tour in 2006 marked the 50th anniversary of the beginning of diplomatic ties between China and Africa. As of 2006, 47 African countries had established diplomatic relations with China. A product of economic cooperation, exports have continued to grow to the point that in 2005 Africa had a trade surplus of 1.7 billion U.S. dollars with China, as part of an overall two-way trade volume of 39.8 billion U.S. dollars.²

However, the further cooperation and China's stronger competitiveness in this region have no doubt challenged the interest of some countries, which then cast suspicious and scared eyes on China. A speculation about the so-called 'China threat' has been created.³

It is this so-called "China threat" theme that permeates much of the current writing regarding China's actions in Africa. However, to meet the definition of a threat, there

¹ Department of Defense, "Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008," *Annual Report to Congress* [Report on-line]; available from http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Report_08.pdf; Internet; accessed 19 March 2008, 1.

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "State councillor: 'China threat' in Africa 'unfounded,'" <http://www.focac.org/eng/gfbd/t402633.htm>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2008.

³ People's Daily Online, "China chance, not China threat to Africa," http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200604/26/print20060426_261401.html; Internet; accessed 27 February 2008.

must be a declaration of intent to take some hostile action.⁴ This declaration of intent is not evident in China's published policies. Consequently, there are differing views on the PRC's real motivation for its extensive involvement in Africa. Given the existence of opposing views, this paper discusses the PRC's declared objectives in Africa and investigates China's role and influence in African nation states where Canadian Forces are currently deployed. The essay also assesses the implications of this threat for Canadian objectives and engagement in the region. Through this assessment, the paper demonstrates that China does not pose a threat in Africa. Rather, China's interest is in trade and investment, an interest that is shared by Canada. China has used "persuasion and appeal" instead of the threat of military force in support of its grand strategy to be recognized as a global power. These motives do not pose a threat to Canadian Forces operations in Africa. Moreover, there is enormous potential for cooperation and collaboration between Canada and the PRC in Africa.

China Threat

The differing views concerning the PRC's motivation for its activities in Africa may be the result of a lack of transparency in Chinese foreign policy and specifically in military modernization. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) modernization has been classified as a threat by the United States (U.S.) Department of Defense (DoD) 2006 Quadrennial Defence Review (QDR). The primary concern identified in the QDR is that

⁴ Oxford University Press, *Pocket Oxford English Dictionary* ed. Catherine Soanes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 951.

“The outside world has little knowledge of Chinese motivations and decision-making of key capabilities in supporting its military modernization.”⁵

The QDR goes so far as to define the “China threat” in the following terms:

Of the major emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional U.S. military advantages absent U.S. counter strategies.⁶

China’s Foreign Ministry is, understandably, of the view that the QDR exaggerates the threat that its military expansion poses. Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told a press conference that the U.S. DoD was distorting “China’s normal defence construction.”⁷ Kong further countered that the criticism concerning a lack of transparency is unfounded as “China has publicized white papers on its national defence annually for many years.”⁸ China also produced its first white paper on peaceful development in 2005 in order to clarify the Chinese government’s policies of reform.⁹ The white paper published in 2005 highlighted that the foundation of China’s peaceful development is a purely defensive national defence policy that is coordinated with economic development.¹⁰

⁵ United States, Department of Defence, *Quadrennial Defence Review Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 6 February 2006), 29.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Australia, “US Slammed for Playing Up “China Military Threat,” <http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/xw/t234207.htm>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2008.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ CHINA.ORG.CN, “White Paper on Peaceful Development Road Published,” <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm#5>; Internet, accessed 8 April 2008.

¹⁰ Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, “China’s National Defense in 2006,” <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194485.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 September 2007.

The U.S. DoD, however, does not fully accept the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman's response indicating in its 2006 Annual Report to Congress that while it has seen some improvements in the official Defense White Papers "... in other areas China takes a selective approach to transparency restricted to secondary areas of military activity such as military exchanges, joint exercises, and confidence-building measures involving visits to previously secret facilities."¹¹

Despite the comments in the 2006 Annual Report, China will continue on a path towards peaceful development as it is unlikely that the PRC will directly challenge the U.S. in general conflict. Such a conflict would be of concern to Canada, as the Canadian Forces would almost certainly be involved due to Canada's commitment to collective defence with the U.S. However, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence does not foresee a direct conflict between the PRC and the U.S. as Chinese leaders have indicated in public statements that they are in a twenty-year "window of opportunity" favouring the country's growth.¹² Consequently, Beijing is seeking a constructive relationship with the U.S. in order to capitalize on this opportunity. "Indeed, Chinese officials consistently emphasize the need to seek cooperative relations with Washington, because conflict with the United States would risk derailing China's economic development."¹³

Susan Shirk, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State responsible for U.S. relations with China, supports the concept of a window of opportunity. Shirk contends

¹¹ United States, Department of Defense, "Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006," *Annual Report to Congress* [Report on-line]; available from <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/pdfs/China%20Report%202006.pdf>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2008, 14.

¹² J. Michael McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence*, Report Prepared for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence 5 February 2008 (Washington: Director of National Intelligence, 2008), 32-32.

¹³ McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence* ..., 32.

that China is “racing the demographic clock” as it currently has a very large segment of population that is of working age, who can support both the very young and the very old.¹⁴ However, by 2065 “... 54 percent of the population will be over sixty and only 22 percent will be working.”¹⁵ To place these figures in context, “by 2030, China will have 348 million citizens over the age of 60, nearly as many people over age 60 as the projected total population of the United States.”¹⁶ This will place an enormous burden on China’s health-care systems. Barry Naughton, Professor of Chinese Economy at the University of California contends, “China will grow old before it has the opportunity to grow rich.”¹⁷ Shirk offers that this demographic timetable explains why China’s leaders have declared that the two decades leading to 2020 are a “period of strategic opportunity.”¹⁸ Twenty more years of rapid growth could quadruple the size of the economy. Chinese leaders recognize that “China’s economic strength also translates into international political influence,”¹⁹ since no country wants to upset their biggest trade customer. Thus, China is within reach of its goal of being respected as a world power. All that China’s leaders need to do is avoid any international conflicts “... that could trip up their race against the demographic clock.”²⁰

¹⁴ Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ United States, United States Joint Forces Command, *Joint Operating Environment: Trends & Challenges for the Future Joint Force Through 2030* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December, 2007), 9.

¹⁷ Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007), 176.

¹⁸ Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* ..., 21.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Esther Pan of the Council on Foreign Relations adds that “A war with the United States would threaten China’s two greatest policy priorities, continuing strong economic growth and maintaining internal social stability.”²¹ A reasonable conclusion is then that a direct conflict is unlikely. However, despite the Director of National Intelligence drawing the same conclusion, the U.S. DoD continues to refer to a “China threat.” It is therefore appropriate to consider a possible U.S. motivation for continued reference to a “China threat.”

Some experts support Chinese objections to continued references to a “China threat” believing that the U.S. is simply using the “China threat” to justify its own enormous spending. While they acknowledge that China is spending large sums on defence, these experts believe that China does not intend to challenge U.S. military dominance.²² Ted Galen Carpenter, Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, states that “it’s hard to justify spending half a trillion dollars each year because China might emerge as a security challenge twenty or thirty years in the future.”²³ The argument that the U.S. is simply using the China threat to justify its own military spending is plausible and is certainly the view of the PRC.

²⁰ Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* ..., 21.

²¹ Esther Pan, “The Scope of China’s Military Threat,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, [backgrounder on-line]; available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10824/>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2008.

²² Ibid.

²³ Pan, “The Scope of China’s Military Threat,”...

Western Hype

The People's Daily Online reports that "Western media hypes up China's 'economic colonialism' in Africa, cooking up stories about China's oil-and-nonferrous metal motivated investment increase in Africa and playing up the 'threat'"²⁴

Although accusing Western media of using hype, China has acknowledged that there are some legitimate concerns about its engagement in Africa. Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan admits that some problems are unavoidable in a process of continuous expansion. However, he adds that these are minor problems that "can be resolved through cooperation and consultation in accordance with the principles of equality and mutual accommodation."²⁵

Whether or not you accept the argument that the West, or more specifically the U.S., is embellishing the "China threat," there is a lack of understanding of the PRC's intentions with respect to Africa. A more detailed analysis of China's formal policies and its actions in Africa is therefore appropriate.

One view of the PRC's motivation for its involvement in Africa is that trade and investment are at the centre of China-Africa economic relations.²⁶ Jian-Ye Wang, of the International Monetary Fund, believes that, "Africa will become an increasingly

²⁴ People's Daily Online, "China chance, not China threat to Africa," ...

²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "State councillor: 'China threat' in Africa 'unfounded,' ...

²⁶ Jian-Ye Wang, *What Drives China's Growing Role in Africa?* International Monetary Fund Working Paper Prepared for the International Monetary Fund (Washington: IMF, 2007). 23.

attractive market as incomes rise and progress in regional integration makes its markets even more attractive.”²⁷ Esther Pan supports this view adding that:

From 2002 to 2003, trade between China and Africa doubled to \$18.5 billion, and then nearly doubled again in the first ten months of 2005, jumping 39 percent to \$32.17 billion. Most of the growth was due to increased Chinese imports of oil from Sudan and other African nations ... China is now the continent’s third most-important trading partner, behind the United States and France, and ahead of Britain.²⁸

China has become the fourth largest economy in the world with annual growth in Gross Domestic Product continuing at the rate of over 10% since 2003.²⁹ The most immediate pressure created by this economic growth is the demand for oil. Consequently, access to fuel imports has become a central foreign policy theme for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).³⁰

Donovan C. Chau of the Strategic Studies Institute expresses an opposing view concerning the PRC’s economic interest in Africa. Chau asserts that other interests, such as access to raw materials and energy resources, are often overemphasized at the expense of “... recognizing Beijing’s primary objective of becoming a global power.”³¹ Chau contends that the PRC “... seeks to exercise predominant influence over Africa – its

²⁷ Wang, *What Drives China’s Growing Role in Africa?* ..., 23.

²⁸ Esther Pan, “China, Africa, and Oil,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, [backgrounder on-line]; available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/9557/china_africa_and_oil.html; Internet; accessed 6 September 2007.

²⁹ Jane’s, “China and Northeast Asia,” *Jane’s Sentinel Country Risk Assessments* [assessment on-line]; available from <http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/fullTreeSelection.do?isLastLevel=true&treeName=ZCountryRoot&fullTreeName=taxRoot.full&startNode=&pathSelected=Asia%3EChina%20and%20Northeast%20Asia%3EChina&from=popup&>; Internet; accessed 3 December 2007.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Donovan C. Chau, *Political Warfare in Sub-Saharan Africa: U.S. Capabilities and Chinese Operations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 20.

governments and people – and eliminate Western influence.”³² Chau adds that, “The central aim of the PRC’s grand strategy is to become a global power, restructuring the world order – including the African continent – to achieve this objective.”³³

Chau offers that the PRC pursues the objective of restructuring the African continent through the use of “political warfare.”³⁴ In all four of the “anchor countries,”³⁵ “... the PRC demonstrated that it was able to gain access to and influence the affairs of the African governments, businesses, and communities using political warfare.”³⁶

There are others who share Chau’s view that China is attempting to challenge U.S. hegemony. Joshua Eisenman, an American Foreign Policy Council Fellow in Asian Studies, concludes that Beijing “... has expanded the depth and breadth of its political, economic, diplomatic, and military relationships with African leaders in a manner that may have adverse implications for U.S. interests in the region.”³⁷

The emphasis the PRC places on the convergence of Chinese and African interests may explain why China has been so successful in the use of political warfare. The use of this strategy has resulted in many African countries developing the perception

³² Chau, *Political Warfare in Sub-Saharan Africa* ..., 50.

³³ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁴ In his article, Chau defines political warfare as a non-violent instrument of grand strategy, involving coordinated activities, and results in tangible effects on intended targets. Primary political warfare operations include economic aid; development assistance; and training, equipping, and arming military and security forces. Exchange visits and public pronouncements are secondary political warfare operations because they support and facilitate primary operations. Political warfare offers advantages over other instruments of grand strategy, particularly military power as it economical.

³⁵ In his article, Chau identifies the four anchor countries in Africa as being Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

³⁷ Joshua Eisenman, “China’s Post-Cold War Strategy in Africa: Examining Beijing’s Methods and Objectives,” in *China and the Developing World: Beijing’s Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Eric Heginbothman and Derek Mitchell, 29-59 (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2007), 29.

of "... the PRC as their representative in the Security Council, and also as a Third World country that has faced problems similar to theirs."³⁸ The PRC's growth therefore stands as a model for developing countries. A successful outcome of the PRC's grand strategy was the support African nations provided in the election of the PRC, over U.S. objections, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council in 1971.³⁹

A more palatable term than political warfare is offered by Esther Pan, who refers to the PRC's steady global expansion of its cultural and diplomatic influence as "soft power". "Soft power refers to a nation winning influence abroad by persuasion and appeal rather than by threats or military force."⁴⁰ In attempting to explain what China is attempting to achieve through its use of soft power, Pan contends that Beijing is trying to convince the world of its peaceful intentions while it secures the resources it needs to continue its soaring economic growth.⁴¹

Regardless of whether you prefer the term "political warfare" or "soft power," a logical conclusion is that the PRC used "persuasion and appeal" instead of the threat of military force to secure a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, which has given the PRC the necessary influence that it desired to pursue its grand strategy. This conclusion is consistent with China's policy of peaceful development and provides a plausible explanation of China's motives in Africa. It is therefore appropriate to examine

³⁸ Richard J. Payne and Cassandra R. Veney, "China's Post-Cold War African Policy," *Asian Survey* 38, no.9 (September 1998): 871.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 870.

⁴⁰ Esther Pan, "China's Soft Power Initiative," *Council on Foreign Relations*, [backgrounder on-line]; available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10715/>; Internet; accessed 14 September 2007.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

whether this conclusion is consistent with both China's formal policies and its actions in Africa.

China's African Policy (January 2006)

China's African Policy statement of January 2006 declares that "Enhancing solidarity and cooperation with African countries has always been an important component of China's independent foreign policy of peace."⁴² This foreign policy statement is consistent in that "China pursues a national defense policy which is purely defensive in nature."⁴³ Thus, building upon the tradition of China-Africa friendship and shared interests, the declared intent in the Africa Policy statement is to develop a new type of strategic partnership with Africa, featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic cooperation and cultural exchange. "China stands ready to develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence"⁴⁴ so as to contribute to peace, stability and common prosperity around the world."⁴⁵ To implement this policy, China prefers multi-level and multi-channel friendly exchanges based upon mutual respect, for the purpose of deepening understanding and cooperation.

⁴² Embassy of the People's Republic of China in South Africa, "China's African Policy January 2006," <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/zfgx/zgyfzgx/t230687.htm>; Internet, accessed 19 September 2007.

⁴³ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, "China's National Defense in 2006," ...

⁴⁴ The "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence," that guide China-Africa exchange and cooperation are sincerity, equality and mutual benefit, solidarity and common development.

⁴⁵ Embassy of the People's Republic of China in South Africa, "China's African Policy January 2006," ...

The preferred mechanism for multi-lateral exchange has proven to be the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. Established in 2000, the Forum has become an effective instrument for the collective dialogue and multilateral cooperation between China and Africa. The Forum has also established an important framework for a new type of China-Africa partnership featuring long-term stability, equality and mutual benefit. “China attaches importance to the positive role of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in strengthening political consultation and pragmatic cooperation between China and Africa.”⁴⁶

Eisenman acknowledges the effectiveness of the Forum in that it “... allows Beijing to institutionalize its diplomatic overtures, technical training, debt relief, loans, grants and infrastructure projects. Politically, the Forum allows Beijing and African nations to speak with one voice.”⁴⁷

Eisenman, however, makes a more negative assessment of China’s use of the Forum to increase its influence within international institutions. “One way China has done this is by using rhetoric intended to fuse the interests of developing nations with its own and then collaborating to pursue those mutual interests in international institutions.”⁴⁸

The People’s Daily Online counters:

As it is known to all, western powers, not China, colonized Africa and looted resources there in the history. There is no historical feuds or interest conflicts

⁴⁶ Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in South Africa, “China’s African Policy January 2006,” ...

⁴⁷ Eisenman, “China’s Post-Cold War Strategy in Africa ...,” 35.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 34.

between China and African countries. The traditional friendship between China and Africa has a long history and is well-established.⁴⁹

Whether you accept Eisenman's or the People's Daily Online assessment, the key conclusion is that the purpose of the exchanges between China and the African nations is to increase understanding and friendship as well as seek trust and cooperation. These exchanges offer Western countries insight as to how to improve their relations with both China and African nations.

Donovan Chau of the Strategic Studies Institute compliments the PRC on the success that it has had in the China-Africa Cooperation Forum:

One of the PRC's strengths was its use of a multitude of coordinated operations from many different angles – using several types of organizations on various targets ... The PRC also benefited from its long-term perspective and persistent presence in target countries, which allowed personnel to understand the different African contexts over time.⁵⁰

It is this persistent presence in target countries that is probably the most effective means of improving relations and is also where most Western countries are deficient.

Following Chau's reference to political warfare, he contends that the U.S. is currently ineffective at conducting political warfare as it lacks a coordinated policy and does not include non-governmental organizations that are active abroad. "With the military at the forefront of U.S. political warfare operations, a negative perception will arise over the long term because the United States may be viewed as an 'occupying' force in foreign countries – especially across the African continent."⁵¹ This provides an important lesson for Canada as the Canadian involvement in Africa has lacked a persistent coordinated

⁴⁹ People's Daily Online, "China chance, not China threat to Africa," ...

⁵⁰ Chau, *Political Warfare in Sub-Saharan Africa* ..., 51.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

strategy. The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade concluded in their February 2007 report that the Canadian International Development Agency has failed in Africa.⁵² “The billions of dollars that have been spent in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past 40 years seem to have had little effect.”⁵³ Canada should therefore examine the Chinese approach to negotiation based upon the principle of mutual benefit.

In China’s African Policy statement under the principle of mutual benefit, China declared its support for the African Union to resolve regional conflicts and pledges “It will urge the UN Security Council to pay attention to and help resolve regional conflicts in Africa. It will continue its support to and participation in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.”⁵⁴

Participation in the UN is also an important part of Canadian Foreign Policy in that “the UN continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada’s global security objectives.”⁵⁵ This commitment to the UN is reiterated in the Canadian Defence Policy Statement as membership in the organization continues to serve Canadian interests and reflects Canadian values. Specifically, the Defence Policy Statement identifies the need to address threats both in Canada and at their source overseas to maintain the security of Canadians. This is especially true with respect to failed or failing states. By helping to

⁵² “Overcoming 40 years of Failure: A New Road Map for Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Report of The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade*, The Honourable Hugh Segal and The Honourable Peter A. Stollery, Co-Chairs (Ottawa: The Senate, 2007), 97.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁵⁴ Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in South Africa, “China’s African Policy January 2006,” ...

⁵⁵ Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, “Canada in the World: Canadian Foreign Policy Review 1995,” http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/cnd-world/menu-en.asp; Internet: accessed 25 February 2008.

stabilize failed or failing states, “... we prevent threats from spreading further and deny terrorist cells the haven and support that sustain them. In turn, this helps reduce the prospect that terrorists will reach our shores and threaten Canadians directly.”⁵⁶

In order to contribute to international peace and security and restore stability in failed and failing states, Canada has adopted a “whole of government” approach to international missions. This approach brings together both military and civilian resources on a focused set of objectives. As part of this strategy, the Canadian Forces must work more closely with other government departments “to further develop the integrated, ‘3D’ approach (defence, diplomacy and development) to complex conflict and post-conflict situations.”⁵⁷

On the surface, this whole of government approach would appear to comply with Chau’s recommendations as it implies a multitude of coordinated operations from several types of organizations. However, a whole of government approach requires a long-term perspective and a persistent presence to achieve the successes obtained by the PRC in Africa. As Drew Thompson of The Jamestown Foundation highlights:

China’s influence and sound relationships in Africa are the result of many years of investment in building relations through aid, trade, and cultural and technical exchange – not just the by-product of China’s recently booming economy and soaring demand for African raw materials.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Department of National Defence, “Defence Policy Statement,” http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/reports/dps/pdf/dps_e.pdf; Internet: accessed 19 September 2007.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Drew Thompson, “China’s Soft Power in Africa: From the ‘Beijing Consensus’ to Health Diplomacy,” *China Brief* Volume 5, Issue 21 (October 2005) [brief on-line]; available from http://jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=408&issue_id=3491&article_id=2370717; Internet; accessed 19 March 2008.

China's investment in Africa has included forgiving more than one billion dollars in debt from African countries. China has also trained more than 100,000 Africans in Chinese universities and sent more than 900 doctors to work across Africa. China has also made major investments in infrastructure, agriculture, and energy.⁵⁹

In Zambia, Chinese investment has revived the Chambishi mines, which were abandoned by western investors. China has also established its first economic cooperation zone in Zambia due to skyrocketing bilateral trade between the two countries.⁶⁰ However, David Lampton, Dean of Faculty at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, raises a concern with the use of Chinese workers in development projects. "If China extracts resources from poor nations, brings in its own laborers to low-income countries, already burdened by unemployment, they will face resentment as recently occurred in Zambia."⁶¹ Despite, Lampton's concerns, the Zambian Vice President Rupiah Banda, supports Chinese investment as it has created thousands of jobs over the past decade.⁶² The success of the Chinese model of development, as demonstrated in Zambia, warrants further analysis.

The Chinese model of development is very effective as it alleviates poverty through a comprehensive strategy that does not focus solely on development aid but also includes "... other critical instruments like democracy promotion, support to

⁵⁹ Pan, "China's Soft Power Initiative," ...

⁶⁰ People's Daily Online, "Projects with Africa going on well," <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/6302010.html>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.

⁶¹ David M. Lampton, "The Faces of Chinese Power," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 86, no 1 (January/February 2007): 125.

⁶² People's Daily Online, "Projects with Africa going on well," ...

peacekeeping, trade concessions, and investment promotion.”⁶³ This approach is extremely important, as it is poverty that perpetuates civil conflict.⁶⁴ This is particularly true in poor countries, where conflict centres on an economy’s dependence on natural resources.

Two examples of dependence on natural resources of particular interest to Canada are Sierra Leone and the Congo, where the conflict over diamonds have caused many analysts to note “... that this funding source caused these wars to drag on for much longer than they otherwise would have.”⁶⁵ Therefore, a whole of government approach is required to alleviate poverty in these countries. However, Canada has not employed a whole of government approach in Africa, outside of Sudan, limiting the effectiveness of Canadian Forces operations.

Canadian Forces Operations in Africa

As of 2 January 2008, there are approximately sixty-six⁶⁶ Canadian Forces personnel deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Sierra Leone.⁶⁷ Of

⁶³ Susan E. Rice and Susan Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 2008), 22.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Susan E. Rice, Corine Graff, and Janet Lewis, *Poverty and Civil War: What Policymakers Need to Know*, Global Economy and Development Working Paper #02 (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 2006), 12.

⁶⁶ National Defence and the Canadian Forces, “Current Operations,” http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/Operations/current_ops_e.asp; Internet, accessed 4 February 2008.

⁶⁷ Of the 66 personnel, 10 are deployed with the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) – Operation CROCODILE. Approximately 34 personnel are deployed with the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) – Operation SAFARI. Four personnel are deployed with the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) – Operation AUGURAL. Seven personnel are deployed with the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) – Operation SATURN. Eleven personnel are deployed

all of the African missions, it is in Sudan that the Government has adopted the most expansive whole of government approach involving the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.⁶⁸ The commitment to this approach is due to Canada's long relationship with Sudan, which dates back to the late 1960s. However, Canada's direct bilateral development activities gradually tapered off due to the Sudan's human rights record. Canada's involvement is now limited to humanitarian relief activities and support to implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.⁶⁹

Although Canada has a long relationship with Sudan, the support provided falls short of the Chinese model of a persistent presence using a multitude of coordinated operations. Consideration should be given to expanding Canada's efforts in the Sudan and/or in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to become more closely aligned with the proven Chinese model.

Consideration should also be given to expansion of Canada's efforts as a possible Canada-China venture. The PRC has 230 civilian police and support personnel serving with MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo⁷⁰ and 315 military engineers in

with the International Military Advisory Training Team (IMATT) – Operation SCULPTURE – Sierra Leone.

⁶⁸ Government of Canada, "Canada: Active in Sudan," <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/sudan/cip-pic/library/diplomatic-en.asp>; Internet, accessed 13 March 2008.

⁶⁹ Shortly after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in January 2005, Canada committed \$90 million over two years to support the successful implementation of the CPA. Since May 2005, Canada has contributed \$190 million to support efforts by the African Union to resolve the conflict in Darfur, including peace building projects and diplomatic support measures for the political peace process. In March 2007, Canada announced an additional \$48 million, bringing the total support to the African Union to \$238 million.

Sudan's Darfur region.⁷¹ One concern that may be raised as an obstacle to implementing a combined Canada-China venture is the perceived threat posed by China's arms sales in Africa, which was identified by the U.S. Director of National Intelligence in his Annual Threat Assessment for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.⁷² However, there is arguably no threat posed by China's arms sales in Sudan.

The CCP has objected strongly to accusations concerning the perceived impact of China's arms sales to Sudan. Liu Guijin, special representative of the Chinese government, told a press conference:

... that among a total of seven countries exporting arms to Sudan, China only accounted for 8 percent of the country's arms imports in 2006. US, Russia and UK were the biggest arms exporters to the developing nations, including Sudan.⁷³

Liu also highlighted the fact that despite concerns regarding arms sales, the UN has not imposed an arms embargo on Sudan. More significant, Liu noted that according to U.S. figures released in 2007 "... the United States remained the world's largest seller of conventional arms to developing countries in 2006, with 36 percent of the total."⁷⁴

Yitzhak Shichor who noted in an article for The Jamestown Foundation that Beijing has reduced its arms sales to Sudan supports the Chinese statements concerning weapons imports. "According to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research

⁷⁰ United States, "Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006," ..., 12.

⁷¹ Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, "Chinese peacekeepers for Darfur to be deployed in early October," http://www.gov.cn/misc/2007-09/16/content_750899.htm; Internet, accessed 13 March 2008.

⁷² McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment* ..., 31.

⁷³ Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, "China refutes accusation on arms sales to Sudan," http://www.gov.cn/misc/2008-03/07/content_913083.htm; Internet; accessed 13 March 2008.

⁷⁴ Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, "China refutes accusation on arms sales to Sudan,"

Institute, most of Sudan's military arsenal has come from Russia (77.4 percent) – not from China.”⁷⁵ Therefore, if you place China's arms sales in the context of overall purchases, China is not a significant contributor to Sudan and does not pose a threat to Canadian Forces operations.

Despite the fact that China's arms sales do not pose a threat, it is clear that arms sales make cultivating a relationship with the Sudanese government a difficult issue. As noted in the Jane's Country Risk Assessment concerning China's use of soft credit, infrastructure and development aid to secure energy partners had forced the PRC to support countries like Sudan at the UN. “For instance, in November 2004 China used its influence at the UN to oppose calls for sanctions or intervention in Sudan.”⁷⁶

However, as China adjusts its role to become a “responsible stakeholder” in the world, it is using its good relationship and cooperation with the Sudanese government behind the scenes. Despite the comments claiming China opposed calls for intervention in Sudan, it was the Chinese ambassador to the UN who was credited with persuading Sudan to accept a UN force. As reported in The New York Times, Sudan's president Omar Hassan al-Bashir had repeatedly rejected requests for a UN force in Darfur. However, it was the Chinese ambassador, Wang Guangya who persuaded Sudan's foreign minister to accept a stronger peacekeeping force.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Yitzhak Shichor, “Sudan: China's Outpost in Africa,” *China Brief* Volume 5, Issue 21 (October 2005) [brief on-line]; available from http://jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=408&issue_id=3491&article_id=2370720; Internet; accessed 19 March 2008.

⁷⁶ Jane's, “China and Northeast Asia,” ...

⁷⁷ Robert F. Worth, “Sudan Says It Will Accept U.N.-African Peace Force in Darfur,” *The New York Times*, 17 November 2006, W1; http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/17/world/africa/17darfur.html?_r=1&sq=17%20November%202006&st=nyt&oref=slogin&scp=23&pagewanted=print; Internet; accessed, 13 March 2008.

There is enormous potential to address international concerns by leveraging China's long-standing relationship with African countries to address international concerns. This will continue to be important as ongoing instability and conflict throughout Africa will pose an indirect threat to Canadian interests.⁷⁸ However, in forging a closer relationship with China, the tendency of China to overlook human rights abuses must be considered.⁷⁹

“Human rights groups have voiced concern that China might obtain resources in Africa with little regard for the environment or the human rights records of the governments it deals with.”⁸⁰ When the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was asked in 2006 about promoting human rights in Africa, Wen replied, “We follow the principle of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and non-interference of others’ internal affairs in our relations with African nations.”⁸¹ The protection of the environment and human rights are core Canadian values and are thus potential areas of friction between the Canadian and Chinese governments.⁸²

Despite the potential for friction, there is common ground for working together, as the PRC has made some progress with respect to protecting human rights. China's White Paper on Political Democracy indicates that in March 2004, an Amendment to the Constitution was adopted, which included the statement, “the State respects and

⁷⁸ McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment* ..., 39.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸⁰ Reuters, “Premier Says China Is No Threat in Africa,” *The Washington Post*, 19 June 2006, A18.

⁸¹ Reuters, “Premier Says China Is No Threat in Africa,” ...

⁸² Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, “Canada in the World: Canadian Foreign Policy Review 1995,” ...

safeguards human rights”⁸³ and stipulates that a number of laws were enacted to protect those rights. Canadians should be able to understand if not agree with the principle of non-interference as this is consistent with Canadian culture. Canada’s Inuit people emphasize early in life non-interference in the affairs of others.⁸⁴ It is this shared respect for non-interference and the desire to safeguard human rights that can be built upon when discussing any joint ventures in Africa.

Respect for human rights should not be a stumbling block to open dialogue between Canada and China. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien’s government did not let discussions on human rights limit trade negotiations. The Liberal government launched the Team Canada trade missions to China in 1994 in hopes of capitalizing on promising trade opportunities.⁸⁵ The conduct of these trade negotiations did not have a negative impact on Canada’s human rights record. In fact, the discussions gave Canada an opportunity to persuade Beijing to take a more active role in international affairs. The negotiations also offered Canada an opportunity to be a bridge for diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China. Unfortunately, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has not endorsed some of the progress made under the Liberal government.

Canada’s International Policy Statement on Commerce recognizes the potential that North African markets present given their rapidly growing populations. In particular, “North Africa offers Canadian companies future prospects for food and consumer

⁸³ CHINA.ORG.CN, “White Paper on Political Democracy Published,” <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Oct/145718.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 September 2007. 28.

⁸⁴ Canadian Heritage, *The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture* (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 2006), 34.

⁸⁵ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, “Team Canada 2001,” <http://www.teamcanada.gc.ca/China/canadian-en.asp#1>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2008.

products as well as infrastructure goods and services.”⁸⁶ Canada can thus understand the PRC’s economic interest in Africa. Consequently, the Canadian Government has declared that it remains open to more formal rules-based trading and investment relationships with North Africa as opportunities present themselves.⁸⁷ This opportunity has in fact presented itself. The initiation of discussions on a joint Canada-China venture in Africa would be one way to capitalize on this opportunity.

CONCLUSION

Despite the conflicting views concerning the PRC’s motives for its extensive involvement in Africa, there is scant evidence of a significant “China threat.” China’s interest in Africa is based upon trade and investment, an interest that is shared by Canada. China has also used “persuasion and appeal” instead of the threat of military force in support of its grand strategy to be recognized as a global power. These motives do not pose a threat to Canadian Forces operations in Africa. There is instead enormous potential for cooperation and collaboration between Canada and the PRC in Africa. Canada could leverage the good relations existing between the PRC and a number of African nations to further UN objectives in support of Canada’s Foreign Policy goals. In turn, this would provide the PRC with the recognition as a global power that it so desires. It would also present Canada the opportunity for more formal rules-based trading and investment relations that it seeks as well as allow Canada to exert greater influence in

⁸⁶ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada’s International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Commerce*, (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 2005), 21-22.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

Africa. However, such an initiative will require greater interaction, including high-level military exchanges and visits, to develop a common understanding. Issues such as human rights should not be a stumbling block as there is a basis for common understanding and shared interests that can be built upon. Canada should emulate Chinese policy of developing partnerships based on stability, equality and mutual benefit in pursuit of continued growth and development in the African continent.

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