China's growing role in African peace and security

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Preface

THE MATURING OF SINO-AFRICA STUDIES, a once obscure and even anodyne area of scholarship, can be measured in part by the proliferation of books and journal articles on the subject. New works by academics, especially those from China and Africa, are beginning to reshape the conventional perspectives which had already come to assume the status of unassailable truths in the field. This is evident, for instance, in the empirical research conducted in economic sectors outside of the well-trodden path of analyses of China's drive for resources, illuminating aspects of the relationship that were effectively 'hidden' outside of the established discourse.

But as much as the diversity of authors and the growing incorporation of field-based research are extending the disciplinary parameters of Sino-African studies, it is the broadening of the subject matter into untrammelled areas and their concurrent influence over policy that signifies the rapid coming of age for this area of research. In this regard, organisations like Saferworld, the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament and the Africa Peace Forum are to be congratulated for taking the lead in identifying and defining new themes in this emerging relationship. Recognising that Africa's development ambitions would be stymied without a serious discussion of the continent's need for stability and security, in June 2010 these partner institutions convened a well-received international conference on the topic of peace and security in Africa.

This report represents a further important step in the effort to unpack the issues, actors and concerns surrounding Africa's security challenges and the role that China plays in addressing these matters. As the first of its kind in this area, it is necessarily broad in its reach, but – to the credit of the authors – it is not lacking in serious, in-depth analysis of some of the critical issues facing African security as seen by Africans or Chinese scholars. It is this willingness to tackle the hard issues, be they African failures to move beyond rhetoric to action in particular conflicts or China's part in the trade in small arms, that informs the contributions to this report and makes it a significant addition to our understanding of Sino-Africa relations.

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Acknowledgements

Disclaimer There exists a wide spectrum of opinions, perspectives and normative judgements on China's role in African peace and security. As such, Saferworld's China Programme has strived to gather and represent the views of experts from China, Africa and other regions in the most accurate and balanced way possible. However, we cannot totally exclude the possibility of errors. The authors of this independent report bear the sole responsibility for its content.

Contents

Acronyms

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AMIS	African Mission in Sudan
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APFO	African Peace Forum
APV	armoured personnel vehicles
ASF	African Standby Force
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty (United Nations)
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the People
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Company
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Sudan)
CPAPD	Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament
CPC	Communist Party of China
CRS	US Congressional Research Service
CXXC	China Xinxing Import and Export Corporation
DDR(R)	Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (& rehabilitation)
DPKO	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EU	European Union
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Co-operation
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoS	Government of Sudan
ICAT	International Committee for the Accompaniment of the Transition (DRC)
ICBC	Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
ICC	International Criminal Court

ICG	International Crisis Group
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IRTC	Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (Gulf of Aden)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MIIT	Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (China)
MOFCOM	Ministry of Commerce (China)
MONUC	UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NISAT	Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers
NORINCO	China North Industries Corporation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Peace and Security Council (African Union)
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
P5	Permanent Five Members of United Nations Security Council
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SASTIND	State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (China)
SHADE	Shared Awareness and Deconfliction
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSR	Security sector reform
TFG	Transitional Federal Government (Somalia)
UN	United Nations
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNROCA	UN Register of Conventional Arms
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

Executive summary

CHINA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH AFRICA has deepened substantially over the past decade. For African nations, this engagement presents both opportunities and challenges at a critical conjuncture in the continent's history. This report critically assesses China's growing role in Africa and its effect on both the factors that drive conflict and those that promote peace. With 54 nations and one billion people, the African continent is far from a homogenous unit of analysis. Its security challenges are numerous and varied, and as such it is not possible to form an all-encompassing assessment of the way in which China's engagement on the continent affects these challenges. Instead, the report takes a thematic approach, looking at a number of topics: China's bilateral relations with African states; its military co-operation with their armed forces; the China-Africa arms trade; China's relations with African regional organisations; its involvement in international co-operation; China's role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding; and its economic engagements on the continent. The report draws on a wide spectrum of views and perspectives from Chinese, African and international experts. It also makes recommendations for how China's engagement can better support the common goal of peace, security and development in Africa.

Deepening relations, pressing challenges

Economic co-operation lies at the forefront of contemporary China-Africa relations. In just ten years, between 1998 and 2008, China's trade value with Africa grew from under $6 billion to $107 billion. Natural resources have a prominent role in the trade relationship, but Africa also presents a growing market for China's own goods and investments. China has committed itself to becoming a development partner for Africa and has started to deliver development assistance. Strategic objectives also have a place in China's engagement, including cementing the diplomatic isolation of Taiwan and strengthening its own international position. China's relations with Africa – often referred to in terms of "south-south co-operation" – are largely managed through state-to-state bilateral relations. In complement to this, the triennial Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) provides an important multilateral mechanism for forging new commitments and strengthening political ties.

China's engagement in Africa has been welcomed by many African leaders, who see it as an opportunity to fuel economic growth, to put them into a better negotiating position with traditional Western donors and to amplify Africa's voice in international forums. At the same time, these leaders face the challenge of capturing the benefits of the relationship while avoiding some of the pitfalls that have marked Africa's past engagement with outside powers. China itself faces challenges in better regulating the conduct of its commercial actors, improving its relations with a vocal African civil society and maintaining its image as a developing-country partner that shares the same interests as Africa.

One challenge for China-Africa relations is continued insecurity and conflict on the continent. It holds only 14 percent of the world's population but from 1990–2005 Africa accounted for half of the number of deaths caused by conflict. While in recent years the continent has experienced a decline in levels of conflict, a host of factors continue to challenge both the security of African states and the security of their citizens, ranging from ongoing insurrection to politically motivated violence to armed crime.

Between 1990 and 2005, conflict cost African countries almost $300 billion – roughly the same amount as these countries received in aid during the same period. Clearly, if development is to be successful and lead to a reduction in poverty, stakeholders both within and outside the continent must find ways to reduce the incidence of violent conflict. Solutions to African peace and security threats are to be found primarily within the continent itself, in the hands of governments, politicians and civil society who proactively use state institutions, regional structures and activism for peaceful ends. However it would be wrong to assume that Africa's conflicts are Africa's problems alone. The repercussions of Africa's internal problems reach beyond its natural borders. Furthermore, external actors can play direct roles in the continent's security landscape – with both positive and negative ramifications.

China is one such influential actor. Its growing presence on the continent has meant that it inevitably plays a role – albeit often indirect – in some of Africa's conflicts. China's interests have increasingly come under threat, placing its energy security, economic investments and the lives of its citizens at risk. More broadly, China has an interest in acting – and being seen to act – as a responsible global power, and therefore one that assists Africa in addressing its interrelated peace and development challenges.

Defining the boundaries of non-interference

Since the end of the Cold War, China's bilateral relations with African states have been largely determined by the principles of non-interference and respect for state sovereignty. Domestic political affairs are seen as the exclusive concern of national governments: other states must respect this basic principle no matter the conduct of the government. China has developed close relationships with African regimes that the international community, or more specifically Western countries, only engage with in a manner that is conditional on improvements in governance. Chinese officials maintain that such improvements must come from within and that, in order to allow this to happen, sovereignty must be respected.

Many would agree that good governance cannot be imposed from the outside. However, through its diplomatic relations and growing economic role – not to mention through its co-operation on military affairs and trade in arms – China already has an impact on the internal affairs of many African countries. China's own investments are placed at risk when these countries become unstable. In addition, Beijing's principle of non-interference has led it to become closely associated with ruling elites in countries with which it has relations. This makes China and Chinese investments a target for opposition leaders, civil society activists and rebels, some of whom may come to be power holders themselves. By choosing to ignore the political situation in countries in which it invests, China places both its interests and image at stake.

During periods of violent domestic crisis in Africa, Chinese policy has tended to recognise the legitimacy of the relevant government's position. Because of this, China has been accused of allowing crises to continue. Chinese officials and scholars reject the proposition that China is a passive actor and suggest that instead it has started to use 'influence' to press for a resolution of conflicts. There is some evidence that this is the case. For example, after 2006, China played an important role in securing Khartoum's acceptance of the deployment of peacekeepers in Darfur. In late 2008 China actively pushed the governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda to resolve the conflict in eastern DRC, where Rwanda was supporting rebel groups.

Several Chinese scholars argue that in recent years China has become more flexible in its interpretation of non-interference and is willing to take a more active diplomatic role in the resolution of internal conflicts. This should be strongly welcomed by those with an interest in Africa's peace and security. However, non-interference and sovereignty will remain at the core of China's engagement and any policy changes to their interpretation will be gradual, cautious and in many cases restricted to *ad hoc* responses to specific contexts. China has little experience of engaging on conflicts overseas and remains reluctant to take the lead. More generally China's bilateral influence should not be overemphasised: it cannot magically solve conflicts alone. But as China's presence in Africa increases, Beijing should prepare for the fact that in many cases it will be expected to play a major role. It should do so more regularly if it seeks to prove that it is not a passive actor in the face of ongoing conflicts and human suffering. Policy focus could also be placed on how China can move beyond crisis reaction to more proactive conflict prevention. Sudan, where at the time of writing tensions are mounting between the North and the South, presents a specific case where this will prove to be the less costly option for China in the long term.

Ultimately, China's impact on a given country is determined by how its leaders choose to utilise Chinese support. African governments and civil society hold the key to both improving governance in their countries and to holding China to account. However, Chinese policy makers need to be more sensitive to the impact of China's engagement in Africa's internal affairs. While Beijing is unlikely to start pushing for a political reform agenda as part of its state-to-state relations, better distinguishing between the interests of regimes and those of their citizens will ultimately serve its long-term interests. For their part, Western states need to avoid singling out for criticism China's relations with problematic African regimes – unless they can also acknowledge that they have very often acted similarly. Failure to do so feeds into Chinese fears that the foundation of Western criticism is geopolitical. Greater levels of dialogue and engagement with Beijing on what are very often shared concerns – for both internal and other external stakeholders in Africa – could help to resolve what is a complex web of differing perspectives, normative judgements and national interests.

China's military co-operation in Africa

China's military co-operation is modest compared to its wider engagements in Africa, and it is primarily used to strengthen political ties with African governments. It is facilitated through high-level political delegations, military exchanges and defence attachés based in embassies. The content of military co-operation varies from country to country, but includes financial assistance for military infrastructure, de-mining support and training for African armed forces. Although China has contributed to peacekeeping operations in Africa and participates in anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden, it maintains no permanent military presence on the continent.

That China has committed to supporting African militaries to develop their peace-keeping capabilities and given assistance to de-mining operations is positive and should continue. On the other hand, given the secrecy surrounding the extent of Chinese-African military co-operation, it is difficult to fully assess its impact on African peace and security. This lack of transparency may reinforce problems related to the civilian accountability of African armed forces. A serious challenge for all external actors is that while African security might be improved by providing training to militaries, these very militaries are often themselves obstacles to security. In Guinea, Chinese-trained commandos were involved in the killing of 150 protesters in 2009, while the national armed forces of the DRC – to which China has also provided training – have been accused of various violations of international humanitarian law.

These are in fact challenges faced by all external actors. For example, American and French trained units were also implicated in the events in Guinea in 2009 and several countries provide military assistance to the national army in the DRC. Greater levels

of co-operation between external actors would help resolve some of the problems they face and make assistance more effective. China itself should ensure that the principles of civilian protection and international humanitarian law are a significant component of its training. Military assistance is most effective when it supports the emergence of armed forces that are accountable to civilian oversight, delivered as part of a holistic process of security sector development. African policy makers and civil society should ensure that military co-operation with China is congruent with these wider processes.

End-users and the impact of Chinese arms

The paucity of reliable data and information makes it difficult to provide a completely accurate and comprehensive picture of China's arms transfers to Africa. Although China remains a modest player in the global arms market, between 2006 and 2009 over 98 percent of its exports went to the developing world. In fact, according to some estimates, China was the single largest arms exporter to sub-Saharan Africa during this period, providing a wide range of conventional weapons to a large number of states. China is a particularly large supplier of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Africa is seen as a growing market for China's state-owned but commercially focused defence industry. China presents a source of affordable weapons for African militaries, while for some it is a viable alternative to Western states that refuse to supply them. More broadly, China's arms agreements with African states are used to cement political ties as part of its wider diplomacy.

The challenge with Chinese arms exports lies with how some of these weapons are used and the hands in which they end up. Chinese arms, utilised responsibly by legitimate and accountable police forces, militaries or peacekeepers, can serve to improve security. At the same time, in several contexts Chinese-made weapons and ammunition are likely to have worsened conflict and insecurity. For example, Chinese weapons have been used in Sudan to commit violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by government forces, militias and rebel groups. Furthermore, China has continued to supply Khartoum despite the Sudanese Government's persistent violations of a United Nations (UN) arms embargo on Darfur.

China's arms trade came under the spotlight in April 2008 when a Chinese vessel tried to deliver to Zimbabwe significant quantities of weapons during a period of violent internal unrest. While the shipment was recalled and justified as a case of mistaken timing, China's image as a responsible global actor was tarnished. Supplies to Zimbabwe have played a facilitating role in allowing the government to suppress opposition and hang on to state power. China's regulations governing arms transfers state that they should not interfere in the internal affairs of recipients. However, if arms transfers contribute to undermine stability, or facilitate human rights violations, one could well argue that such transfers do interfere in the internal affairs of recipient countries.

While China's arms regulations oppose the re-transfer of weapons and the supply of weapons to non-state actors, lax risk assessments and monitoring mechanisms mean that they have at times been diverted and ended up in the wrong hands. For example, in the DRC Chinese-made weapons are commonly found among rebel groups. Weapons deals are often shrouded in secrecy, making it difficult to track supply and disrupt illegal arms supply chains. Although China has made commitments within FOCAC to assist African efforts to help tackle the illicit trade in SALW, these have yet to materialise on the ground.

Policy makers and scholars in China are increasingly aware of the problems and contradictions of China's arms transfers. While the responsibility for their end-use lies primarily with recipient states, China's policy makers need to start better assessing the risks associated with end-use of arms when making transfer decisions and work to improve transparency and information sharing.

China is hardly alone in transferring arms that are eventually used in African conflicts. Most of the African countries that have received arms from China have also received arms from the other major exporters. Any critical engagement with China needs to reflect a nuanced understanding of the responsibility of all key actors and a willingness to address the problem collectively. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) discussions at the UN present a real opportunity to take this next step.

The regional landscape

The multilateral political landscape of Africa has seen many changes over the past decade with the African Union (AU) and sub-regional organisations playing a larger role in peace and security issues. The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the Africa Standby Force (ASF) allow it to more actively engage and intervene to prevent or resolve conflicts and insecurity. It has deployed peacekeepers in Burundi, Somalia and Sudan and has taken diplomatic measures in response to various other conflicts. Sub-regional organisations have been equally active in peacekeeping and diplomatic efforts, as well as creating early warning systems and measures to prevent the proliferation of SALW. Even though regional mechanisms for responding to conflict and insecurity have suffered from weak capacity, limited resources and in some cases an absence of political will, their role and influence are slowly growing.

As these multilateral organisations take on greater roles, China is increasingly engaging with the AU and, to a lesser degree, sub-regional organisations. China has played a constructive role in encouraging the international community to support African regional and sub-regional actors in tackling security threats. China has also made pledges to assist regional security bodies. Financially, this support has largely been symbolic, for example China has provided the AU with $1.8 million for its peacekeeping mission in Sudan and given smaller amounts of money to the AU mission in Somalia and West Africa's sub-regional peace fund. Though China may yet be reluctant to provide financial assistance on the scale of other donors, institutionalising dialogue on security matters with the AU PSC and the relevant bodies of sub-regional organisations will allow China to identify other ways in which it can provide support. The provision of peacekeeping training to the ASF could be one such area.

As regional bodies continue to play a larger role in African political relations, China will follow suit. Yet for their part, the AU and its member states do not have any collective strategy to guide their own dealings with China. For China to provide greater levels of support to their peace and security efforts, African leaders will have to work more closely together and make a collective demand for it.

Co-operating with others

Currently, most of China's diplomatic engagement on African peace and security takes place at the UN Security Council (UNSC). Since regaining China's seat at the UN in 1971, Beijing has become slowly but progressively more engaged at the UNSC, where nearly 60 percent of discussions focus on African security issues. China's FOCAC commitments state that it will use its position on the UNSC to bring African conflicts to the attention of the international community. In this regard China has played a generally positive role, for example in pushing for action on Somalia. However, China maintains that military intervention in a state's internal affairs is only legitimate if it has both UNSC authorisation and the consent of the host state. More broadly, China has argued that many internal crises fall outside of the UNSC's mandate. Officials have also made clear their scepticism regarding the effectiveness of sanctions and other tools of coercion.

Critics have argued that China has used the UNSC to protect partner regimes and its economic interests in Africa. For example between 2004 and 2007 China consistently abstained from or weakened resolutions on the Darfur issue, including those related to sanctions and the deployment of UN peacekeepers. However, in 2007 China voted

for the deployment of a joint UN-AU force in Darfur after Khartoum gave its consent – and this consent was to a large degree the result of Chinese pressure. While this development perhaps signified that Beijing was beginning to accept a more active role for UN intervention, it also shows that China has kept to its principled stance throughout. Some argue that this stance obstructs urgently needed international action. Overall however, that Beijing is willing to demonstrate a commitment to multilateral responses to African security challenges is positive – even if some doubts remain about the extent of this commitment.

Through various FOCAC agreements China has pledged to represent African views at the UNSC, and in 2007 Chinese and African delegates at the UN set up a consultation mechanism. When China vetoed a UNSC resolution for sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2008, it claimed that the sanctions were not only ineffective and poorly timed, but that China was representing the views of African states. However, some critical observers feel that China hides behind its stated policy of promoting African positions as a means of legitimising its resistance to international action. On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that China has voted for resolutions it would otherwise have opposed, on the basis of African pressure. How China balances and adapts its diplomatic role at the UNSC in relation to various demands placed on it from different stakeholders within Africa remains to be seen.

It is also unclear to what extent Beijing is willing to participate in other international initiatives. China has endorsed the principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), although its interpretation of its implementation remains qualified and cautious. China also supported the principles behind the International Criminal Court (ICC), although it refused to endorse the Rome Statute that activated it. Beijing has since remained vocally critical of the timing of the ICC's indictments of Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir and while it has agreed that individuals must be bought to justice over violations of human rights and humanitarian law in Darfur, it has argued that no one has the right to challenge the immunity of a head of state.

Another important aspect of China's multilateral engagement on African peace and security has been its participation in anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden. While this deployment is in part motivated by geo-politics and the protection of national interests, Chinese scholars have argued that it shows that China is willing to share the burden of upholding international peace and security as a responsible big power. This recognition is positive in view of China's specific responsibilities vis-à-vis Africa's challenges. In fact, Chinese officials have consistently argued that the international community must do more to tackle the root of the problem: Somalia's perpetual crisis. Furthermore, China's participation in the anti-piracy mission has demonstrated that it is willing to work in closer co-operation with other external actors.

This example may be an exception. In general, China's international co-operation with other external actors in Africa is extremely limited. Both the United States and the European Union have made efforts to co-operate more closely with China, with disappointing results. A host of factors undermine such co-operation, including a degree of scepticism in parts of Africa as to the underlying intentions of Western powers and the actual benefits of trilateral co-operation. Instead of seeking co-operation on a broad range of generalised issues, Western states and China should look for specific areas for practical co-operation. However, it is African leaders who hold the key to successful co-operation and if they are serious about maximising the effectiveness of outside support they should actively promote it. In the long term, encouraging co-operation between traditional and emerging powers may prove to be pivotal in tackling growing suspicion between external actors 'competing' in Africa, and in preventing geopolitical competition from being violently played out in Africa as it has in the past.

Keeping and building the peace

UN peacekeeping missions in Africa play a significant role in international efforts to help resolve some of the continent's most persistent peace and security challenges. The 2009 FOCAC agreement states that the Chinese government will "continue to support and participate in [these] peacekeeping missions." In parallel with its growing engagement at the UNSC, China has increasingly supported the deployment of UN peacekeeping operations. This marks a dramatic change from the 1970s when it refused to even vote on resolutions related to peacekeeping. From 1999 onwards, China's stance on the use of force has become more flexible and less conservative, with some Chinese officials arguing that peacekeepers need to intervene "earlier, faster and more forcefully". Despite this shift, China continues to require host state consent to peacekeeping interventions. Given that some regimes lack legitimacy and may have only tenuous claims to represent the wishes of all parties to a conflict, this position will continue to cause tensions with other members of the international community. Nonetheless, that China has become an engaged party in UNSC deliberations on peacekeeping and become more flexible over their mandate is a very positive development.

China has also begun to participate more actively in peacekeeping operations on the ground. Since 2000, when it deployed less than 100 peacekeepers, China has increased contributions of personnel 20-fold. Of the Permanent Five members (P5) of the UNSC, China is the largest contributor of troops. The majority of China's peacekeepers are stationed in Africa. China has not yet contributed any combat troops to UN missions. Its peacekeepers instead hold positions as military observers, civilian police and units that provide infrastructure, medical, logistical and transport support.

China's growing personnel contributions to peacekeeping may be greatly beneficial to African peace and security. The UN's demand for peacekeepers far outstrips supply: larger contributions from China help address this problem. Operationally, the professionalism of Chinese peacekeepers has been praised. There are significant opportunities for China to widen the roles that its peacekeepers play to include combat troops and involvement in more complex operations, for example actively carrying out the disarmament of combatants. China's participation in peacekeeping is likely to push it towards becoming a more engaged actor on African peace and security challenges. This will also expose some of the latent contradictions of its current engagements, for example deploying its peacekeepers to a country where the government continues to fuel conflicts with arms that may be supplied by China.

Chinese scholars suggest that their country is preparing to become more involved in post-conflict peacebuilding, i.e. the use of a spectrum of security, civilian, administrative, political, humanitarian and economic tools in order to support the establishment of longer term peace. China's growing interest in this area is notable as in the past Beijing was reluctant to get so involved in what it saw as domestic affairs. Given that half of all civil wars are actually post-conflict relapses, extra support from China for peacebuilding initiatives will potentially be very valuable. While China shares with the West a belief in the benefits of strong state-building and economic development for post-conflict states, officials remain deeply sceptical towards peacebuilding agendas that include democratisation. Clearly, as in other areas, differences in approach may become obstacles to co-operation. There is a need for more discussion on what peacebuilding should constitute in order to find areas where international actors can co-operate more closely or, at the very least, identify areas where Western states and China may be able to make complementary contributions.

Conflict, security and development

Chinese scholars and officials subscribe to the view that underdevelopment is a root cause of conflict. They argue that through its trade, investment and development assistance, China contributes to African economic growth and thus plays a positive role in promoting African peace and security. That Chinese scholars and policy makers recognise the relationship between development and conflict and believe that

China can play a beneficial role in seeking to address these issues is commendable. However there are some critical questions over whether this engagement is as effective as believed.

Firstly, while economic development is important, it cannot be delivered in a context of insecurity. For example in post-conflict states China can potentially play a very constructive role in providing investment, much-needed infrastructure and employment. However, there is a risk that economic assistance will come to be prioritised at the cost of security factors such as tackling arms proliferation or demobilising militias. Peacebuilding must be delivered in a holistic manner: economic assistance is not a substitute for working directly to tackle conflict. There is a wider danger that the supposed benefits of economic assistance will be used to justify inaction on other equally important fronts such as addressing deeply entrenched political grievances.

China's non-interference principles mean that it is uncomfortable becoming involved in what it understands to be internal political affairs. However, through its economic engagements China inevitably does. This is illustrated most strikingly by its involvement in conflicts surrounding natural resources. China's unparalleled and rapid economic growth over the last three decades has created a demand for energy and mineral resources from outside China. In 2006 alone, its increase in oil demand represented nearly half of the world's total increase. Today China is the world's largest consumer of oil.

Africa has assumed a critical role in meeting China's demand for resources. However, this quest for resource security has drawn China into internal conflicts surrounding natural resources. Chinese oil installations and workers have been directly targeted by armed groups in several countries. In cases where the ownership of natural resources is highly contested – as in Nigeria – China's role in their extraction has made it a party to the conflict in the eyes of those who feel cheated of the profits from resources. Revenue from resources sold to China has on occasions been used to buy weapons that fuel conflict, for example in Sudan. More broadly, there have been instances where this revenue has allowed patronage-based regimes to maintain their grip on power and enrich themselves. In the long term, this impact on governance may lead to further cycles of instability and violence. China's demand for natural resources has meant that it has not only become an involved actor in internal affairs, but that in some cases it has reinforced and fuelled pre-existing conflict dynamics. This being the case, it is of fundamental importance that Beijing develops better policies and regulations governing the trade in resources from countries or regions facing ongoing conflicts.

Such dynamics are by no means unique to China. Plenty of Western companies operate in the resource sectors of the same unstable countries as China and have been dragged into local dynamics, fuelled conflicts and enriched dubious regimes. That China buys African resources is by no means inherently negative and it is African governments that hold primary responsibility for their management: resources do not cause conflict on their own. Moreover, many of the resources China imports from Africa are manufactured into consumer goods that are sold on international markets. In a globalised world the attribution of blame for Africa's resource conflicts is multi-layered and complex. As such, the solutions must be global. Initiatives such as the Kimberly Process to stop trade in conflict diamonds and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) suggest that progress in this direction is starting to be made. Chinese officials and scholars frequently contend that globalisation benefits rich Western countries at the expense of the poor. Taking the lead in driving international co-operation to more effectively ensure that the global trade in Africa's natural resources best serves Africa's people would be a positive example of south-south co-operation.

China's role in Africa's water management illustrates how even seemingly harmless development assistance can fuel conflict. As part of China's wider participation in Africa's infrastructure development, Chinese finance and companies had been

involved in the construction of 25 dams in Africa by 2008. Some of these projects have been highly controversial because they may fuel localised conflict dynamics and competition over scarce water supplies. Peaceful aims do not always guarantee peaceful outcomes and even well meaning development programmes can fuel conflict.

As the cases of post-conflict economic assistance, natural resource extraction and water all highlight, the assumption that China's economic relations and assistance to Africa are always inherently pro-peace is a simplified and mistaken one. Without abandoning what are admirable intentions, Chinese scholars and policy makers should begin to take a more conflict-sensitive approach to development if their country is to become the partner for African development that they aspire it to be.

Towards a more co-operative approach to African peace and security

China's role in Africa and the impact of this role on Africa's various conflict and insecurity challenges has been neither wholly positive nor wholly negative. Given its deepening interests on the continent, its commitment to African development and its wish to be seen as a responsible power, there is scope for China to become more supportive of African peace and security. In some cases, most pressingly with regards to arms transfers, policies could and should be improved. In other cases, such as its economic engagement, policies could be made more sensitive to conflict risks. In other areas, such as peacekeeping, China's successful contributions should be built upon.

Several themes are highlighted throughout this report. Firstly, although economic co-operation will remain a priority in its relations with African countries, China is increasingly engaging on conflict and insecurity issues across the continent. This engagement has gradually become more proactive and, to a degree, more flexible. Secondly, and despite these tentative changes, there clearly remain entrenched differences with traditional Western states over how assistance to Africa is best delivered. Greater levels of dialogue between Western and Chinese policy makers will help navigate differences and promote greater co-operation to meet common goals and overcome shared failings. Thirdly, solutions to Africa's peace and security challenges are ultimately the responsibility of the continent's own governments and civil society. To this end they should demand that China contributes more to supporting peace, that it is sensitive to African security and that it is held to account when it is not. Furthermore they must ensure that all external actors work together rather than against one another. At such a critical juncture in Africa's history, the management of these relations will greatly determine future prospects for the continent's peace and development.

Introduction

OVER THE PAST DECADE China has rapidly deepened its engagement in Africa. The development of this relationship is of considerable importance – whether viewed from African, Chinese or international perspectives. A decade into the 21st century and on the threshold of 50 years of independence, Mwesiga Baregu states that "Africa stands at a very critical historical conjuncture."[1] For Baregu, it is China's growing involvement with the continent that makes the period so significant. This involvement offers both opportunities and challenges for the continent's future. Chinese scholars, such as Huang Zhaoyu and Zhao Jinfu, have argued that China's involvement in Africa in fact marks a new chapter in the history of international relations not only for China but for the world.[2] Chris Alden identifies China's emerging role on the continent as a reflection of wider changes globally:

China's re-emergence as a global power of consequence is most clearly reflected not at the media spectacle which constitutes the G20 summits but rather in the oil fields, forests, and commercial markets of contemporary Africa. It is here, at the proverbial margins of traditional sites of power and its expression, that the new international politics of the 21st century are being made.[3]

This report examines what is perhaps one of the most controversial aspects of China's relationship with Africa: China's growing role in African peace and security. This is a topic of importance for several reasons. Firstly, African leaders and civil society are increasingly prioritising peace and security as a core means of improving economic and social development. How China supports these efforts may prove pivotal. Secondly, as China's engagement deepens in Africa, the attention of its policy makers and policy community is increasingly turning to the challenges that African peace and security present for China's own interests. How China will approach these challenges in the future is being informed by its experience in Africa today. Lastly, Africa is becoming a testing ground for the degree to which China and other states in the international community co-operate to meet common goals. This international community includes not only traditional Western powers but also emerging economies such as India. Clearly an analysis of China's role in African peace and security raises some critical questions about the future of international relations. This report aims to take the first steps towards answering them.

The report has its origins in the first 'China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development', which was organised by Saferworld, the Chinese People's Association

1 Baregu, Mwesiga (2010) 'Africa-China Reciprocal engagement: An historical opportunity', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.
2 Huang, Zhaoyu & Zhao, Jinfu (2009) 'China's Relations with Africa: Building a Harmonious World' in *Contemporary International Relations* 19 (1), pp 65–78.
3 Alden, Chris (2010) 'China and Africa: a survey of past, present and future', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) and the Africa Peace Forum (APFO) and held in Beijing in June 2010. The Forum brought together over 60 African, Chinese and international experts with the aim of exchanging views and perspectives on effective ways for China to assist African countries facing security challenges. 16 Chinese, 15 African and five international speakers drawn from prominent universities, research institutes and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) presented papers and discussed a wide range of security issues, including peacekeeping, anti-piracy, African peace structures, natural resources, and arms proliferation.

The Forum covered several of these issues in substantial detail. However, discussions also highlighted that there was a need for more research into China's role in African peace and security and that there was a demand for the development of a stronger knowledge base on this topic. As such, Saferworld decided to launch an independent research project to begin exploring some of the key themes and topics related to China's role.

In an effort to capture and contrast the wide range of existing views on this issue, this research has examined and used a broad selection of sources. Firstly, it has relied on the high quality of the papers that were presented at the Forum. Secondly, the research has drawn on a large number of other papers, reports, books and media sources to assess topics not addressed in the Forum and to reflect a broader set of opinions and perspectives. Lastly, the research has been informed by a series of discussions, consultations and interviews Saferworld carried out with a broad range of partners in China, Africa and Europe. This report publication represents the main findings and outcomes of Saferworld's research project.

So far, mainstream commentary in the West on China's involvement in Africa has focused overwhelmingly on a small number of topics, to the neglect of other important dynamics. China's role in specific conflicts, and especially in Sudan, has received substantial attention, while other aspects of its engagement, for example its relations with regional organisations on the continent, have received less. This report aims to provide a more comprehensive and balanced analysis of China's role in African peace and security. While the report is by no means all-inclusive, it lays the thematic foundations for future research and deeper discussion

With 54 different countries and more than a billion people, Africa is by no means a homogenous unit. Although referred to in the short-hand throughout this report, it is obvious that there exist substantial differences between the continent's varied security challenges. This means that it is impossible to form an all encompassing picture of China's role. Instead the report draws on specific cases to illustrate particular themes and topic areas. While the report uses cases from across the African continent, much of its focus is on sub-Saharan Africa.

Chapter 1 of the report provides a contextual overview of China's deepening relationship with African countries. It illustrates how China's engagement has changed dramatically since the Cold War period, which was defined by ideological and geopolitical competition, to a type of relations that are more reflective of contemporary economic globalisation. Deepening trade and investment – especially but not exclusively in natural resources – are a major driving factor in this change. China's engagement in Africa also includes development assistance and attempts to deepen co-operation at the international level. China's no-strings-attached economic engagement and assistance is broadly welcomed by African leaders, although as the chapter concludes, the China-Africa relationship faces several challenges.

African peace and security is one of these challenges. Chapter 2 argues that while Africa today is more peaceful than it was a decade ago, conflict and insecurity continues to manifest in several different ways. This chapter provides an overview of the most pressing challenges, and makes clear that external actors can play both positive and negative roles in helping to resolve them. China is one of these actors,

and chapter 3 explains why African peace and security increasingly matters for China, suggesting that it is becoming a critical area of focus for Chinese policy makers.

Chapter 4 examines China's bilateral diplomatic relations with Africa, exploring how its policy of non-interference and respect for sovereignty affects modes of governance as well as ongoing conflicts. Some of the criticisms this policy are assessed, as too is the degree to which its interpretation in China is becoming more flexible. Chapter 5 covers a specific dimension of China's bilateral relations with African states, namely military co-operation, exploring its structure and content, the motives that underpin it and its possible ramifications. Chapter 6 explores China's arms transfers to Africa, a topic that has become perhaps the most contentious aspect of China's engagement. China's share of the arms market and its African customers are shown to be growing, and it is suggested that in several cases the impact of this growth is overwhelmingly negative. A potential area where China may come to play a more positive role is in its relations with Africa's regional and sub-regional peace architecture, the topic of chapter 7.

Chapter 8 explores China's co-operation at the international level. Its role at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is assessed, as is its engagement with the principle of the Responsibility to Protect, the International Criminal Court (ICC), international anti-piracy efforts and its co-operation with other external powers. One important dimension of China's international co-operation is its participation in UN peace-keeping operations, which is the subject of chapter 9. This chapter assesses the impact of China's rapidly growing troop contributions and its deepening engagement in decisions surrounding peacekeeping missions. Furthermore it briefly explores some of the potential challenges and opportunities associated with China's emerging role in peacebuilding. Chapter 10 explores some of the economic dimensions of China-Africa relations, and as well as the ways in which they have an impact on conflict. The links between development and security are examined, as are the links between conflict and natural resources, including land and water.

The concluding chapter argues that African actors hold primary responsibility for peace and security on the continent: external actors can only play a secondary supporting role. However, China needs to play this role, and as the chapter concludes, it needs to play it far more effectively. This chapter draws together recommendations relevant to each of the preceding topics and explores some of the key ways in which China's engagement can be made effective in meeting the common goal of safeguard-ing peace and security in Africa. Overall, this will demand that Chinese policy makers and officials, African leaders and civil society and Western actors show a greater willingness to adopt a more co-operative approach to African security.

China-Africa relations are by no means static. They have changed greatly in the past 50 years and will continue to do so in the future. This will have implications for security and socio-economic development in Africa, implications for how China learns to engage with the rest of the world as its rises to become an established power, and implications for the conduct of international relations and co-operation in the future.

1

Setting the context

THIS CHAPTER USES BROAD BRUSHSTROKES to paint an overview of China-Africa relations. After briefly describing the historical context of these relations, the chapter explores contemporary economic relations, China's development assistance, and the broader international strategic aspects of the relationship. Africa's place in Chinese foreign policy is then examined, as are the key actors who make and implement China's African relations. African leaders' responses to deepening Chinese engagement, and the reasons behind them, are then discussed. The chapter concludes with an assessment of some of the challenges that the relationship will face in the future.

From Zheng to Zhou: A history of peace?

While they have recently received greater attention, China's relations with Africa are not a new development. Between 1963 and 1964, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai visited ten African countries in what would mark the start of an almost continuous political engagement between the leaders of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and African countries. While this marked the starting point for relations with the People's Republic, Premier Zhou proclaimed that in fact "Intercourse between our countries dates back to 900 years ago."[4] Official references to historic relations that pre-date European colonisation are still made today.[5] Chinese officials and scholars often cite the example of Admiral Zheng He, a Ming dynasty explorer whose large fleet reached the eastern shores of Africa several times in the fifteenth century.[6] Chinese State Councillor Dai Bingguo stresses that Zheng's exchanges brought "porcelain, silk and tea rather than bloodshed, plundering or colonialism … Zheng He is still remembered as an envoy of friendship and peace."[7] According to such official discourse, it appears that China's role in African peace and security has *always* been benign.

However, "the record of Chinese engagement in Africa is more chequered than public proclamations in Beijing would have one believe."[8] Returning from his 1964 tour of Africa, it was Premier Zhou who declared that Africa was "ripe for revolution."[9] During the 1960s and 1970s, China actively gave aid, military support and training to several African guerrilla movements fighting in conflicts that were driven by anti-colonialism, nationalist rivalries, and more localised grievances.[10]

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4 Cited in Raine, Sarah (2009) 'Introduction' in *China's African Challenges*, Adelphi series 49:404, pp 1–12.
5 For example, in 2006 China's first 'Africa Policy' highlighted that 'China-Africa friendship is embedded in the long history of interchange.' Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2006) *China's Africa Policy*.
6 Brautigam, Deborah (2009) *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*, Oxford University Press.
7 Cited in BBC News (2010) 'Zheng He: Symbol of China's "peaceful rise"', 28 July 2010.
8 Alden (2010), p 4.
9 Brautigam (2009), p 37.
10 Beijing also made agreements with several African countries to train rebels in their territory. In the 1960s, the Mozambique group, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), was trained and armed by the Chinese in Tanzania, as too was ZANU-PF, the main resistance movement to white rule in Rhodesia. Armed groups were also directly supported in Algeria, eastern Congo, Niger and Cameroon. China also lent substantial military support to states, for example building up Tanzania's armed forces in the 1960s and providing small but not insignificant amounts of arms to various governments. See Shinn, David (2008) 'Military and Security Relations: China, Africa and the Rest of the World' in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence* (ed. Rotberg, Robert), Cambridge: Brookings.

While initially Beijing may have sought to export Maoist revolution and show solidarity with the like-minded movements of other developing countries, by the end of the 1960s – in the global context of deepening Sino-Russian tensions – "the struggle to counter the influence of the USSR had become the primary strategic focus of China's interest in Africa."[11] These Cold War imperatives led for example to China joining the USA and apartheid-era South Africa in supporting armed movements in Angola that were fighting the USSR-backed Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA).[12]

Although China did not always pick the winning side – the MPLA emerged victorious and formed a new government in Luanda in 1975 – China developed considerable goodwill among not only those movements it directly assisted but more generally in the popular imagination of Africa.[13] It seems that China's Cold War orientations have not had a long-term negative effect on its engagement today: for example, Angola, still governed by the MPLA, is currently China's largest trading partner in Africa.

Moving away from peace and security issues, Chinese development aid to Africa was far from insignificant in the post-independence period.[14] Between 1950 and 1980, China supported more than 800 projects in Africa covering a diverse set of development objectives,[15] and between 1970–76 China committed more aid to Africa than the USSR.[16] This period saw the construction of the 2000km Tazara railway between Tanzania and Zambia, which still "dwarfs any other infrastructure project to date."[17]

As with China's support for armed groups, aid was strategically directed in the context of Cold War geo-politics. Furthermore, it was used by the People's Republic to compete with Taiwan for diplomatic recognition and build support for China's 'One China' policy. This diplomatic activism eventually paid off and in 1971 the support of 26 African votes was key to passing the General Assembly motion that established the PRC as the only representative of China to the United Nations. Chairman Mao explained this bluntly: "We were brought back into the United Nations by our black African friends."[18] That it was votes from these 'friends' which delivered this diplomatic blow to Taiwan is significant: historically, Africa appears to have had a role in China's peace and security as well.

The official Chinese history of China-Africa relations paints a picture of continuity and shared developing country identity.[19] Events of the 1980s questioned both elements of this discourse. Firstly, Deng Xiaoping's reforms in China saw a refocus away from international ideological engagement to domestic economic development. While relations with African countries were by no means totally abandoned, this did lead to their downgrading and to what Ian Taylor labels the "decade of neglect".[20] Secondly, China itself began to move down the path of rapid economic development. This would change the nature of its developing country identity substantially.

By the start of the 1990s, China's opening-up led to substantial foreign investment and economic growth fuelled by globalisation. Yet change had not only occurred in China. Pushed by donor conditionalities and structural adjustment programmes, African countries had liberalised and opened up their economies to outside investment and trade.[21] Just as the end of the Cold War and the onset of globalisation marked change inside China and across Africa, so too did it drive change in the relationship between

11 Raine (2009), p 18.
12 Shinn (2008), p 157.
13 Ibid, p 156.
14 Brautigam (2009).
15 Raine (2009), p 20.
16 Ibid, p 21.
17 Brautigam (2009), p 40.
18 Cited in Mwanzia (2010), p 8.
19 Alden (2010).
20 Cited in Raine (2009), p 21.
21 Taylor, Ian (2009) *China's New Role in Africa*, London: Lynne Rienner, p 14.

the two, with a new emphasis on economic relations.[22] After the quiet 1980s, and with this new focus in mind, Beijing sought to revitalise the relationship. In 1995 President Jiang Zemin made a trip to Africa to lay the foundations for a summit that would eventually come to be known as the 'Forum on China-Africa Co-operation' (FOCAC).[23] Between 1990 and 1999, trade between China and the Africa grew from $1.66 billion to $6.48 billion.[24]

The contemporary context

Beijing announced 2006 to be the 'Year of Africa', and the same year, 48 African leaders gathered in Beijing for the third FOCAC. This was also the year that many in the West were surprised to note that in fact, China was *in* Africa. Some of the resulting commentary was critical, at times drawing on anecdotal myths – rather than concrete analysis – as evidence.[25] It is, of course, impossible to accurately describe the exact nature of China's relations with 54 African countries, let alone fully capture the multitude of interactions between Chinese and Africans that occur below the official level. The following section attempts to provide some clarity by examining some broad thematic issues.

Economic relations

The nature of China's relationship with Africa is predominantly economic. China is now Africa's largest trading partner after the EU. The speed at which trade relations have deepened is impressive: between 2001 and 2006, trade grew at a rate of nearly 40 percent each year[26] and in 2008 hit $107 billion, a substantial increase on 1999's $6.48 billion.[27] As figure 1 illustrates, trade slowed down in 2009, largely due to the financial crisis.

Figure 1: China-Africa trade, 1995–2009[28]
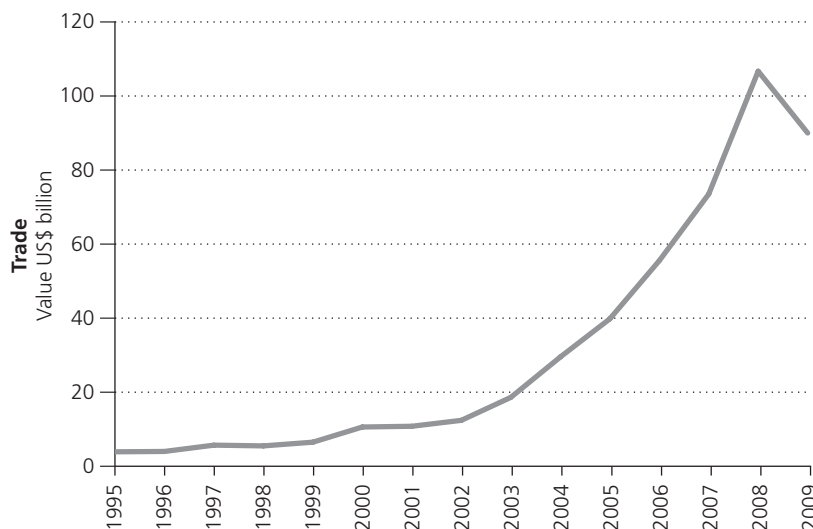
Natural resources make up the bulk of Africa's exports to China. Of these resources, oil accounts for 62 percent of total exports, with ores and metals at 17 percent and agricultural raw materials at 7 percent.[29] Raine cites figures demonstrating that oil is

22 Mwanzia, Philip (2010) 'How African Countries Manage their External Relations with China', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.
23 Raine (2009), p 23.
24 Yu, Jianhu & Wang, Zhen (2008) 'China-Africa Strategic Partnership Ushered in a New Era' in *China-Europe-Africa Co-operation: Chances and Challenges: Proceedings of the 6th Shanghai Workshop on Global Governance*, 14–15 March 2008.
25 See Brautigam (2009), p 1–21.
26 Aning, Kwesi & Lecoutre, Delphine (2008) 'China's Ventures in Africa' in *African Security Review*, vol.17 no.1, pp 40–50.
27 China Daily (2009) 'China-Africa trade up 45 percent in 2008 to $107 billion', 11 February 2009.
28 Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa (2010) *Online Trade Data: Africa's Trading Relationship with China – 2010*.
29 Osita, Eze (2010) 'Africa's Perspectives on China-Africa Relations: The Post Egypt FOCAC', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing 2–4 June 2010.

key to China's trade with sub-Saharan Africa: in 2005, the sub-continent had a $5.9 billion trade surplus with China, yet if oil sales are subtracted from this figure, it returns a $7.9 billion trade deficit.[30] China's top five trading partners in Africa are mostly exporters of natural resources and in 2008 made up 61 percent of China's total trade with Africa (see table 1).

Table 1: Rankings of top five African countries in two-way trade with China[31]

Ranking	2006	2007	2008
1.	Angola	Angola	Angola
2.	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
3.	Sudan	Sudan	Sudan
4.	Egypt	Egypt	Nigeria
5.	Nigeria	Nigeria	Egypt
Top 5 countries as a % of total trade with Africa	56%	58%	61%

That natural resources make up a large amount of Africa's trade to China is unsurprising. Africa has them, and China needs them. Its booming economy demands increasing resources, especially oil, iron ore, copper, cobalt, aluminium, platinum and timber. As a result, "it would be difficult to overstate the importance of Africa to China's own development."[32] This has political implications inside China because the Communist Party of China (CPC) has staked a large amount of its legitimacy on continued and high-rate economic growth. As such, "Africa has assumed a critical role in achieving this objective."[33]

Nonetheless, Chinese officials and scholars go to great lengths to stress that "China's Africa policy transcends a mere quest for resources."[34] As David Shinn makes clear, in comparison with other investors in Europe, China's share of Africa's natural resources is comparatively low:

Some critics argue that China is a neo-colonial power that is simply using Africa as a source of raw materials, especially petroleum … But the argument is disingenuous. The same argument could be made for the United States, Europe and Japan. China purchased only 9 percent of Africa's petroleum in exports in 2006 while the United States took 33 percent and Europe 36 percent.[35]

Indeed in 2006, the total output of all Chinese national oil companies in Africa was 267,000 barrels per day, while one US company, ExxonMobil, pumped 780,000 per day.[36] Few European actors or the US would accept that their *only* interest in Africa is energy. The same goes for China.

While China might import energy from Africa, Africa is a potentially lucrative export market for Chinese goods. Just as it was a political imperative for the Chinese government to secure the flow of global resources into its own domestic economy, it also needs to secure markets for the goods it produces with these resources. In the words of He Wenping, to "maintain the momentum of economic growth brought on by more than 20 years of opening up and reform, China must expand markets for its domestic industry."[37] She argues that many goods with limited demand in the Chinese domestic

30 Raine (2009), p 35.

31 Chinese Ministry of Commerce – cited in Naidu, Sanusha (2010) 'China's engagement in Africa and the prospects for sustainable development' Paper presented at *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development, Beijing*, 2–4 June 2010.

32 Taylor (2009), p 15.

33 Alden, Chris & Alves, Ana Christina (2009) 'China and Africa's Natural Resources: The challenges and implications for development and governance' in *SAIIA Occasional Paper no. 41*.

34 He, Wenping (2007) 'The Balancing Act of China's Africa Policy' in *China Security*, vol. 3 no. 3, p 24.

35 Shinn (2007) cited in Aning & Delphine (2008), p 47.

36 Raine (2009), p 52.

37 He (2007), p 26.

market, such as low-cost electrical appliances, are in high demand across the African continent – with its one billion potential customers.

China also exports entrepreneurs: a flood of Chinese émigrés are found "selling car parts in Accra, growing vegetables in Khartoum and running restaurants in most African capitals."[38] On the other end of the market spectrum, Chinese firms have also invested in high-tech markets such as the telecommunications sector. The commercial side of China-Africa relations is perhaps most visible in the infrastructure sector, where many of the 800 Chinese companies in Africa are operating (see below). Chinese firms invest in Africa's financial services as well. For example, in 2007 the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) purchased a 20 percent stake in South Africa's successful Standard Bank for $5.6 billion.[39] This non-resource stock investment is one of China's largest in Africa. Overall, Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) has grown markedly, reaching $32 billion by 2010.[40] Much of this investment has gone to the extractive industry sector.

Just as China's relations with Africa were once shaped by the Cold War, the current period of economic globalisation now marks China's engagement in Africa. While the official discourse of the PRC surrounding China's relations with Africa still centres on south-south co-operation, Alden argues that China is in fact "pursuing an approach that benefits from neo-liberalism's decades-long effort aimed at restructuring African economies, including the removal of barriers to foreign investment and the privatisation of state-owned enterprises … far from characterising China's action engaged in a 'scramble' for African resources and markets, surely it would be more accurate to describe Beijing as pushing on a door deliberately left ajar by a disinterested West."[41]

Development assistance

He Wenping argues that China's development assistance to African countries is quite distinctive from Western aid in that there are no political conditionalities placed on it and that China does not highlight Africa's poverty or seek to establish a donor-recipient relationship.[42] In 2006, Beijing committed to doubling this assistance by 2009.[43] However, it is difficult to fully analyse Chinese aid to Africa because exact figures are currently unavailable. It is also hard to clearly isolate development aid from economic co-operation. Most of China's development aid has been directed towards infrastructure development. These projects are seen in China as integral to its own experience of development, following the dictum *yao xiang fu*, *xian xiu lu* (if you want to be rich, build a road first).

Infrastructure assistance comes in the form of loans, some of which is technically not defined as aid, and infrastructure projects are often implemented by Chinese companies.[44] The World Bank estimated that infrastructure loans from the China Export Import Bank amounted to over $12.5 billion by 2006.[45] Much of this assistance has gone to resource-rich countries (most notably Nigeria, Angola and Sudan), illustrating that it remains guided by Beijing's strategic priorities. Indeed, Chinese assistance to resource-rich African countries has taken the form of loans-for-resources: for example a 2005 $2 billion loan to Angola was traded for 10,000 barrels of oil per day.[46] The economist Paul Collier has argued that Africa's infrastructure needs have been neglected and that China's assistance in this area is on the whole very positive.[47]

38 Financial Times (2010) 'Africa-China Trade Special Report', 14 June 2010.
39 Reuters (2007) 'ICBC to buy Standard Bank stake', 25 October 2007.
40 Reuters (2010) 'China aims to boost bank loads to Africa', 9 October 2010.
41 Alden (2010), p 1.
42 Ibid, pp 2–8.
43 BBC News (2006) 'China to double aid to Africa', 4 November 2006.
44 See Brautigam (2009) for a full discussion.
45 Cited in Taylor (2009), p 22.
46 This is not in fact unique to China as several European banks have made similar deals with the Angolan government. See Taylor (2009), p 20. Furthermore this method of assistance was actually used in China's own development, with Western and Japanese loans to the government taking the same form. Brautigam (2009), p 308.
47 Collier, Paul (2010) 'Managing Natural Resource Rents: China in Africa' *ICG Growth Week Public Lecture*, 20 September 2010, London School of Economics.

The World Bank estimates that Africa requires $93 billion in annual infrastructure spending to meet its development needs, with at least $45 billion coming from external financers.[48] In addition to hard infrastructure projects, Chinese assistance has also been used to build schools, universities and hospitals[49] and for assistance in other areas such as agriculture and anti-malaria programmes.[50] Eight new areas of assistance were announced at the 2009 FOCAC meeting, which further diversified assistance into areas such as clean energy projects and joint-scientific research projects (see annex 1). A final way in which development assistance is provided is through debt cancellation, with periodic announcements made in 2000, 2006 and 2009 stating that highly indebted countries would have some debts forgiven.

Strategic objectives

China's deepening economic relations and widening development partnership with Africa continue to be shaped by Beijing's strategic objectives, including its 'One China' policy with regards to Taiwan. With the exception of the Vatican, Taiwan is only officially recognised in developing countries, of which four are African.[51] Since first being recognised by Egypt in 1956, Beijing's considerable diplomatic efforts in this area culminated in recognition from South Africa in 1998. While Beijing certainly wants to consolidate these gains, whether further competition with Taiwan remains a pressing strategic objective today is questionable.[52]

Beijing has also relied on diplomatic partnerships with African states to gather support at the UN. African support has been important in blocking repeated proposals to agree on an agenda to allow for Taiwan to participate in the UN.[53] He Wenping identifies 11 cases where Western countries have sought to bring proposals against China concerning its internal human rights record, and notes that "China could not have defeated such proposals without the stalwart support of Africa."[54] Moreover, Raine points out that "Africa is becoming one of the unspoken battlegrounds for votes on Security Council reform."[55] Beijing has also utilised the support of African states in other multilateral forums. A good example – which is related more to Chinese national pride than to geo-strategic aims – is that African states supported Beijing in its successful quest to host the 2008 Olympics.[56]

More broadly, Gill, Huang and Morrison argue that Africa is seen as integral to Beijing's strategic ambition to "ensure China's peaceful rise as a global power and strengthen relations with key neighbours and regions."[57] Yu and Wang argue that "over time the two have been supporting and coordinating with each other to fight against Western colonialism and hegemony."[58] Alden argues that since the Maoist period Chinese foreign policy has in fact placed China as the leader of developing countries.[59] According to some Chinese scholars, this alliance allows China to face up to a Western, and especially US, hegemony over international affairs. As one scholar puts it, "Strengthened Sino-African relations will help to raise China's own international influence and that of developing countries as a whole."[60]

48 Reuters (2010).

49 For example, at the 2006 FOCAC China committed to construct 30 hospitals and 100 rural schools in Africa.

50 In 2007 Beijing donated $8 million to the World Health Organisation to build African public health capacities. Bates, Gill; Huang, Chin-Hao & Morrison, J Stephen (2007) 'Assessing China's Growing Influence in Africa' in *China Security*, vol. 3 no. 3, p 7.

51 Swaziland, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Sao Tomé and Principe.

52 Aning & Lecoutre (2008), p 43.

53 Raine (2009), p 50.

54 He (2007), p 27.

55 Raine (2009), p 50.

56 Mwanzia (2010), p 4.

57 Bates, Huang & Morrison (2007), p 8.

58 Yu & Wang (2008), p 81.

59 Alden (2010), p 3.

60 He (2007), p 27.

Africa in China's foreign policy

Africa clearly sits squarely within China's wider worldview and Beijing's objectives vis-à-vis global politics. Qi Chengzhang notes that, after stepping into the 21st century, "the consolidation and development of China-Africa friendly co-operation remains as one of the key footholds of China's foreign policy."[61] Beijing's 2006 Africa Policy Paper covered a wide range of issues including political, economic, social, cultural and peace and security relations.[62] The policy states that these relations are guided by four main principles:

1. Sincerity, friendship and equality
2. Mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity
3. Mutual support and close co-ordination
4. Learning from each other and seeking common development.

Chinese foreign policy is still informed, at least in official discourse, by the 1955 Bandung Principles,[63] which stressed state sovereignty and non-interference to be of vital importance. While in 1955 this may have been a reference to the shared experience of colonisation held by the newly independent developing countries, today Beijing uses it to explain why China's relations with Africa are overwhelmingly state-centric (i.e. government-to-government). The issue of non-interference is explored in more detail in chapter 4.

The adoption of the Bandung Principles symbolised south-south co-operation, another central tenet of China's current relations with Africa. Just as Chinese officials and scholars stress China's shared history with Africa, so too do they stress their shared southern country identity. An oft-repeated mantra is that China is the world's largest developing country, while Africa contains the most developing countries. The concept of developing country co-operation is important in several ways. Firstly, it is argued that their shared identity means that they have shared interests and can pursue these interests as political equals. Secondly, south-south co-operation will supposedly bring 'mutual benefit' in the form of 'win-win' economic relations. Furthermore, geopolitical gains can also be made from co-operation. One scholar argues that "Today in the modern era, [Africa and China] also share the goal of common development for survival in the Western-dominant international order."[64] The combination of shared history and shared identity, along with the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference, make China's relations with Africa entirely different from Africa's prior experiences with external actors. Indeed, by 2006, China-Africa relations were referred to as a "new type of strategic partnership". For Alden, it is exactly this discourse that defines what he terms as "China exceptionalism"[65].

Creating and implementing China's Africa relations

A range of key actors are involved in the formation and implementation of Beijing's relations with Africa.[66] The State Council has overall responsibility for China's Africa policy. The CPC's International Department, the Politburo's Leading Group of Foreign Affairs and other party bodies are crucial in policy formation. The CPC also sends its own delegations of party members to Africa to strengthen ties with African political parties and ensure agreement on large economic deals.[67] Military and security agencies provide input into policy formation on peace and security issues. Think-tanks and academics are also increasingly playing a role in advising the direction of policy as the "CPC seeks new ideas and new solutions rather than simply relying on sources that justify already-held beliefs."[68] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has official responsibility for the implementation of China's diplomatic relations. However, it is understood by many that the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) has more influence as it manages economic relations and

61 Qi, Chengzhang (2010) 'The Prospects of China-Africa Co-operation in the New Century', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010, p 1.
62 China's Africa Policy (2006).
63 They are: 1) Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; 2) Mutual non-aggression; 3) Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; 4) Equality and mutual benefit; and 5) Peaceful co-existence. Alden (2010), p 3.
64 He, Wenping (2010b) 'How Far Can China Go in Africa?' in *People's Tribune*, 3 August 2010.
65 Alden (2010), p 1.
66 For a wider analysis see Jakobson, Linda & Knox, Dean (2010) *New Foreign Policy Actors in China*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 26.
67 Cao (2010), Keynote Speech.
68 Raine (2009), p 71.

distributes development assistance. The Ministry of Finance, the government-owned China Development Bank, the China Export Import Bank, the China-Africa Development Fund and the China Investment Corporation also play important roles in the economic relationship. It is important to note that provincial governments in China have are also involved in policy formation while some conduct their own foreign relations through overseas trade delegations.

There is a proliferation of Chinese actors on the ground in Africa. Besides political delegations, the most visible and influential of these are the state-owned enterprises, which make up 90 percent of all Chinese companies operating overseas, and especially the main energy state-owned corporations: Sinopec, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and the China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC).[69] In addition to these commercial actors are provincial firms and private companies, all with their own profit incentives in a highly competitive market. Below these institutional private actors are the many individual Chinese traders, workers and farmers who now make their living on the continent.

Several scholars have noted that Beijing does not have full control over this plethora of actors involved in making and implementing China's engagements in Africa.[70] This is problematic when these actors raise negative publicity, which in turn reflects badly on Beijing, or when these actors pursue their own objectives, which can run contrary to those of Beijing. These facts all "coalesce to undermine the notion of a unitary Chinese state relentlessly pushing forward a single agenda, in Africa or elsewhere."[71]

Managing the China-Africa relationship

In 2000 the first FOCAC meeting took place in Beijing, with subsequent meetings held in 2003 in Addis Ababa, 2006 in Beijing, and 2009 in Sharm el-Sheikh. The FOCAC process is a result of "Beijing's endeavour to formalise, institutionalise and strengthen China-Africa relations."[72] The process and its Action Plans serve as the overarching framework through which China's bilateral diplomatic relations with Africa are managed. The FOCAC also allows for agreements, usually made by officials prior to the conference,[73] to be publicly and symbolically announced in the spirit of south-south co-operation. Chinese scholars stress that the FOCAC process is unique in that it exists outside of Western-orientated multilateral forums.[74]

While the multilateral FOCAC process is significant, Beijing's bilateral relations with African states are of greater importance. As noted, China's political relations with Africa are essentially state-centric. Bilateral engagements occur at all levels, but most visibly in the trips of senior Chinese government officials to African countries, which are used to cement relations and emphasise the importance with which China's senior leadership regards Africa. Between 1999 and 2009, President Hu Jintao made six trips to the continent. In 2006 and 2007 alone, President Hu visited 17 states in Africa, more than any other world leader during that period. Premier Wen Jiabao has also made several trips to Africa and the Chinese Foreign Minister traditionally makes his first overseas visit to the continent. African leaders, often with large delegations, make frequent trips to China.

These visits serve commercial as well as political purposes. For example, Premier Wen's tour of Africa in 2006 resulted in eleven commercial and trade deals in Egypt, six in Ghana, seven in the Republic of Congo, a $2 billion infrastructure deal in Angola, thirteen deals in South Africa and more agreements in Tanzania and Uganda.[75] Chinese development assistance is also delivered bilaterally to states rather than through multilateral organisations. He Wenping argues that this is partly because China's "poor-help-poor" model does not fit with current Western-structured multi-lateral mechanisms and because officials believe that aid is more efficiently delivered in this way.[76]

69 Taylor (2009), p 5.
70 See both Raine (2009) and Taylor (2009).
71 Taylor (2009), p 8.
72 Centre for Chinese Studies/Rockefeller Foundation (2010), p 4.
73 In fact, senior officials met one year before the 2009 Egypt FOCAC.
74 Yu & Wang (2008), p 77.
75 Raine (2009), p 32.
76 He (2010), p 6.

Africa's response

It goes without saying that it is impossible to paint a single African view of China.[77] While it might make sense for a report to refer to Africa in the shorthand, how different African countries and their citizens view China is defined by thousands of different interactions with different 'Chinas' in different contexts every day. However, at least at the official level, many African leaders and political elites have responded to China's engagement positively. What is the attraction of China?

History plays a role. Aning and Lecoutre state that "Africa is not suspicious of China, nor does it feel threatened by China, because China also experienced colonialism, was occupied and utilised."[78] In addition, China's support of liberation movements and rebels in the Cold War is often referred to by African leaders.[79]

However, the relevance of references to history made by officials should not be over-emphasised. It is the economic benefits that have arisen from contemporary trade and investment with China that are more likely to be the key reason why African leaders have sought to strengthen ties.[80] Much of Africa's recent high gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates have been spurred by Chinese demand for African commodities and resources.[81] African leaders have broadly appreciated that China looks at Africa as a business opportunity rather than as a hopeless development challenge.

In an article entitled 'Why Africa Welcomes the Chinese', Rwandan President Paul Kagame argues that the scale of Chinese investment and trade has the "potential to bring jobs and rising incomes in Africa, which will ultimately bring lasting development … Given the choice, people would prefer to work and provide for themselves, rather than receive charity."[82] President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal has argued that trade with China has given African consumers access to goods such as cars and electrical appliances at an affordable price.[83] However, the shape and form of Africa's economic relationship with China has not been without criticism. For example in 2006 South African ex-President Thabo Mbeki warned that "the potential danger … was of the emergence of an unequal relationship similar to that which existed between African colonies and the colonial powers. China can not just come here and dig for raw materials [but] then go away and sell us manufactured goods."[84]

China's own development model has made it attractive in Africa. That in three decades China has become the world's second largest economy is not without drawing power for Africa's people and their leaders. Between 1981 and 2005, China lifted 600 million people out of poverty. In the same period, the number of Africans living in poverty increased by 180 million.[85] Although Chinese officials stress that Africa must find its own solutions to poverty, the allure of China's own experience is strong. Liberia's former Finance Minister noted as much: "Clearly for us, in Africa, we have a lot to learn from China, beyond its financial capacity to assist. China has made the most progress over the past several decades in reducing poverty. That experience is of great interest to us."[86]

77 A recent Pew Global Attitudes survey of public opinions of China found that views in Kenya were 86 percent favourable, 76 percent favourable in Nigeria and 52 percent favourable in Egypt. By comparison, the US respectively scored 94 percent, 81 percent and 17 percent. See Pew Global Attitudes (2010) *Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home*, Global Image of US Continues to Benefit: Chapter Five Pew Research Centre.

78 Aning & Lecoutre (2008), p 47.

79 For example in 2006 Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin said 'China has given Africa a lot of support in the fight against colonialism and for independence' which he pointed to as a central reason why the relationship was strong. Xinhua News Agency (2006) 'Ethiopian FM: China, Africa stand on firm foundation of trust', 11 March 2006.

80 An optimistic view would be that African leaders welcome this China-fuelled growth because it meets their development objectives for the wider population, while a more cynical would suggest that many elites have welcomed this growth, especially in the form of resource revenues, because it has sustained elaborate patronage networks that keep leaders in power.

81 Davies, Martin (2010) *How China is Influencing Africa's Development*, Africa-Asia Presentation hosted by the Royal African Society, 10 February 2010, House of Commons.

82 Kagame, Paul (2009) 'Why Africa Welcomes the Chinese' in *The Guardian*, 2 November 2009.

83 Wade, Abdoulaye (2008) 'Time for the West to practice what it preaches' in *Financial Times*, 24 January 2008.

84 Cited in Taylor (2009), p 2.

85 Raine (2009), p 54.

86 Cited in Brautigam (2009), p 12.

China's development assistance has also been well received by many leaders. The nature of this assistance is important. Firstly, it has been aimed at infrastructure projects. Secondly, it has been efficient and delivered quickly. President Wade of Senegal makes a compelling argument: "I have found that a contract that would take five years to discuss, negotiate and sign with the World Bank takes three months when we have dealt with Chinese authorities."[87] In addition to the type and efficiency of Chinese assistance, the fact that it is given without political conditions (with the exception of the 'One China' policy) is greatly attractive to African leaders. For many African leaders and scholars, this hands-off Chinese approach is a refreshing break from Western development assistance.[88] At the same time, assistance from China has put African states in a better negotiating position with Western donors.

China's partnership with African countries has also had positive repercussions for Africa's role and position in global politics. Philip Mwanzia argues that the FOCAC process can "promote the overall new world system moving in a more equitable direction and allow China *and Africa* a louder voice in the world system commensurate with their importance and global role."[89] China's UNSC seat and veto mean that "Beijing can offer its African partners a 'diplomatic package' thanks to its double status as a developing country, as well as a great power able to make its weight felt in the arena of world politics."[90] While China utilises its relations with 54 states to give it power of numbers in international politics, Africa utilises the power of one with its relationship with China.

Too often, analysis of China-Africa relations fails to take note of African agency in shaping the relationship. Africa is often seen to be a passive victim of China's active and relentless pursuit of its own interests. As President Kagame points out, "Africans are not seen to be proactive in setting their own priorities and terms of engagement."[91] This perception is clearly misplaced. In Ghana, parliamentarians have played a large role in scrutinising trade deals and pushing for better terms with China. In Angola the leadership secured a commitment that Chinese firms would employ a higher percentage of local workers. In South Africa, after a flood of cheap Chinese textiles damaged the domestic industry, trade union action forced a concession from China and a textile quota was established to lessen the impact. It is thus African governments and civil society that will greatly determine whether the relationship is positive for African countries as well as for China. Mwanzia asks "can the interests of China and Africa be reconciled?" His answer is "Potentially but not automatically" – it depends on whether Africa can strike a good deal.[92] For Mwesiga Baregu, "All the prior phases of Africa's history over the last five hundred years have been driven by external forces and promoted the interests of those forces. The crucial question, this time around, is whether Africa will seize the opportunity to shape and drive its own future to serve its own interests."[93]

Glancing into the future

"China is now a powerful force in Africa, and the Chinese are not going away" writes Brautigam, "Their embrace of the continent is strategic, planned, long term and still unfolding."[94] Despite a slowdown during the financial crisis, China's own economy will continue to grow, and continue to need African resources to fuel it.[95] China became a net importer of oil in 1993, but ten years later was the second largest consumer of oil in the world. At current rates, it will take pole position by 2015 and by 2030 China will

87 Wade (2008).
88 Taylor (2009), p 23.
89 Mwanzia (2010), p 5 (emphasis added).
90 Aning & Lecoutre (2008), p 43. For example, during the appointment of the 2010 UN Group of Experts on the DRC, China used its veto against one candidate-member of the Group after the Congolese authorities opposed the appointment of the expert, a former human rights researcher. Interview with diplomatic source, 1 November 2010.
91 Kagame (2009).
92 Mwanzia (2010), p 7.
93 Baregu (2010), p 3.
94 Brautigam (2009), p 311.
95 China's demand for commodities will remain at double digit rates until at least 2020. Naidu (2010), p 5.

quadruple its demand for oil, a large amount of this supplied by African countries.[96] African growth will also potentially transform the continent into a booming market for Chinese goods. In the long-term view of Beijing, political ties will need to be strengthened over the coming decade to facilitate this future.

The future for China-Africa relations is also littered with challenges. Chinese companies have been accused of operating below environmental and other international standards and using cheap Chinese labour at the expense of African jobs. Chinese companies winning contracts in Africa also potentially squeeze out locally-owned competitors. When Chinese commercial actors create image problems for China in Africa, Beijing defensively argues that they are private actors. At the same time, these very actors are key to meeting economic and energy objectives and China's delivery of development pledges.[97] There also exists for Beijing a "tension between the key principle of non-interference and the dilemma of maintaining Chinese established economic interests."[98] As the economic relationship deepens, it will be increasingly difficult for Chinese actors to avoid becoming enmeshed in domestic affairs. Beijing will inevitably come under pressure to politically intervene on behalf of these actors, should disputes arise.

While African political leaders have often commended the role of China in Africa, African civil society actors as well as opposition leaders have often publicly condemned certain aspects of its engagement. In Zambia, labour standards in Chinese businesses became so highly politicised that in 2007 an opposition leader campaigned on an anti-China ticket.[99] Chinese labour practices continue to come under criticism from regional labour movements.[100] Further still some of the media in Africa has also questioned China's role. For example a commentator for *The East African* sums it up as "Strike deals to get oil and other natural resources; bring as many Chinese workers as you can; build roads, airports and bridges in record time and at very low prices, sell cheap goods, and don't do anything else."[101]

Whether China can become more adept at engaging with civil society and responding to their criticisms by improving its practices remains to be seen. Inter-state political competition on the continent is also likely to generate challenges for Beijing. For example, Beijing has pledged its support for an African representative on the UNSC – and will ultimately have to choose whether to support Nigeria, South Africa or Egypt, who are all vying for a nomination. More serious diplomatic disputes and even full blown conflicts between states that have close relations with China will inevitably put pressure on Beijing to take sides. An additional challenge for Beijing will be managing relations with other outside actors engaging on the continent, including not only Western states but other emerging economies such as India.

Finally, the image of China as a 'developing' or 'southern' country, on which it bases its rhetoric of co-operation with African countries, will increasingly fracture as its national interests evolve to reflect its rapid economic development. This has implications for the notion of political equality between China and African states. Some Chinese scholars continue to defend the view of China as a developing nation, rightly pointing to the fact that on a *per capita* basis income in China is lower than in some African states.[102] However, this position is becoming harder to maintain as "China's remarkable economic growth has put it on the cusp of global economic and political leadership."[103] It is China's contemporary international position rather than its domestic

96　Raine (2009), p 53.

97　Alden (2010), p 7.

98　Ibid, p 6.

99　New York Times (2007) 'China's Trade in Africa Carries a Price Tag', 21 August 2007.

100　For example the African Labour Research Network finds that Chinese employers in Africa pay low wages, resort to union-bashing strategies, violate international labour standards and are a threat to the limited social protection unions have achieved over the years. Baah Yaw, Anthony & Jauch, Herbert (2009) *Chinese Investments in Africa: A Labour Perspective*, African Labour Research Network.

101　Onyango-Obbo, Charles (2010) 'Chinese takeover? I'm not losing any sleep' in *The East African*, 15 March 2010.

102　He (2007), p 27.

103　Alden (2010), p 5.

per capita wealth that is of relevance, and this may change how it views its interests. China's international behaviour may increasingly look more in line with those at the top than those at the bottom.

Clearly, the China-Africa relationship will continue to grow into the future. Equally clear is that there will be challenges along the way, a fact accepted even by the most optimistic of Chinese scholars.[104] This report focuses on conflict and insecurity in Africa which, as is explored, will present various challenges in the relationship that China (and African countries) will be forced to navigate. It is also important to reiterate that the evolution of China-Africa relations have implications not only for Africa or for China, but for the rest of the world too. Alden captures this well:

What is so compelling about the China-Africa case is that the stakes are so varied and consequential – for Africa, as it seeks to make good on development aims, for China, which hopes to pursue a sustainable partnership that breaks with the mould of the past, and for the world as it charts the shift in global power away from the West to an ascendant East.[105]

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104 See for example Li, Anshan (2010) 'Assistance and Co-operation in Africa: The Chinese way of thinking and action', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.
105 Alden (2010), pp 8–9.

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Africa's security challenges

THE STAGGERING INCONGRUITY between a rich soil and the abject poverty so widespread across many parts of Africa has generated many analyses of the root causes of Africa's underdevelopment. Yet it is only in the past ten years that the links between conflict and development have started to be analysed more thoroughly and consistently. As Ian Taylor argues, "for most of the post-colonial-period, much of Africa has been trapped in a circle of underdevelopment, which has stimulated societal conflict, both at the extreme level of wars and at the more mundane juncture where numerous states stagger from one crisis to another."[106]

From 1990 to 2005, half of all deaths caused by armed conflicts worldwide occurred in Africa. Millions of people were displaced and Africa became host to the largest number of refugees in the world. In recent years, the level and intensity of African armed conflicts seems to have eased.[107] The Heidelberg Conflict Barometer for 2009 classified 30 conflicts in Africa as crises and 9 as highly violent, compared to 31 crises and 12 highly violent conflicts in 2008.[108] The 2006 Human Security brief found that although sub-Saharan Africa endured 143 campaigns of deadly violence against civilians between 1989 and 2005 – more than any other region in the world – between 2002 and 2005 the region had seen a decrease in armed conflicts.[109]

Nonetheless, while the frequency of conflicts may currently be decreasing, the tensions and contradictions that have driven them in the past still exist. Many post-conflict states maintain only a tenuous stability. Peace remains fragile while in many cases the latent tensions that threaten it remain unresolved.

This chapter provides a general background of the key features and examples of Africa's most pressing conflict and security threats. The chapter also illustrates the interdependency of development and security, and briefly examines the role and impact that external actors can have on these dynamics. The specific causes and drivers of conflict and insecurity are explored in more detail in the following chapters where they are examined in relation to China's engagement.

106 Taylor, Ian (2010) 'China's potential for Building Peace, Security and Development in Africa', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.
107 Human Security Report Project (2009) *Human Security Report 2009 – The Shrinking Costs of War*, Simon Fraser University.
108 Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (2010) *Conflict Barometer 2009*, Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research 18th Annual Conflict Analysis, p 22.
109 Human Security Centre (2006) *Human Security Brief 2006*, Vancouver: University of British Colombia, pp 6–13.

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Defining conflict and security

Terms like 'conflict' and 'security' can have different meanings and interpretations. For the purposes of this report, Saferworld uses the following definitions:

Conflict results when two or more parties have incompatible goals and interests, and act upon those differences. In this report, 'conflict' is used as shorthand for 'violent conflict', i.e. when conflicting parties resort to violence to achieve their objectives.

Security is an individual or state's feeling of safety or well-being, protected from attack or violent conflict. In this report, security encompasses not only traditional understandings of national state security, but also the concept of human security, which focuses on the security of individuals and communities rather than that of states or regimes.

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Conflict and insecurity in Africa

A number of different types of conflict create insecurity across the African continent: inter-state wars, intra-state conflict, low-intensity conflicts, communal violence and political violence. These types of conflict are often inter-linked and conflicts can also escalate and develop from one type to another. They are described briefly below.

Inter-state wars

Inter-state war is waged by conventional military forces of two or more states along established frontlines. Several African countries have experienced inter-state wars since gaining independence. Perhaps the most obvious recent case is the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1998, open war broke out between the two countries, which cost 70,000 lives and millions of dollars by the time the war formally came to an end in 2000. Since then, the two countries have continued to clash indirectly through supporting and sponsoring opposing armed groups operating across the region.[110] As this example suggests, inter-state conflict continues to this day between some African countries, but has shifted to less conventional means.

Intra-state conflict

Intra-state conflict refers to civil war, or continuous high intensity conflict inside a country, usually involving the state as one party. The end of the Cold War saw the proliferation in Africa of intra-state conflicts. Many of these conflicts have involved the targeted killing and displacement of civilians by belligerents, leading to serious breaches of international humanitarian law, human rights violations and mass displacement. In some cases the intensity of intra-state wars has led to the collapse of the state. Among the states that have experienced intra-state conflict are: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, Côte D'Ivoire, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and Uganda. These conflicts are more devastating, costly, and intense than any of the inter-state wars experienced in Africa. Three examples of recent intra-state conflicts in the DRC, Sudan and Somalia illustrate some of these characteristics.

Since the outbreak of fighting in the DRC in August 1998, millions of people have died, mostly from the grave humanitarian crisis sparked by the war, which has been described as the world's deadliest conflict since World War II.[111] Despite the signing of peace accords in 2003, fighting, often intense, continues in the east of the country. The largest war in modern African history, the DRC conflict has resulted in the intervention of eight African nations[112] and numerous armed groups with various security, political and economic agendas, including the desire to access rich minerals and other

110 International Crisis Group (2003) *Ethiopia and Eritrea: War or Peace?*, Africa Report no. 38, p 3; BBC (2007) 'Eritrea "arming" Somali Militia', 27 July 2007.

111 Reuters (2008) 'Congo war-driven crisis kills 45,000 a month-study', 22 January 2008.

112 Angola, Burundi, Congo, Namibia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Sudan.

resources. In the meantime, the people of the DRC are currently among the poorest in the world, having the second-lowest nominal GDP per capita.[113]

Civil war has been a persistent part of Sudan's history since 1958. North-South tensions led to renewed conflict in the 1980s between the Khartoum government and the separatist Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). This conflict resulted in over a million civilian deaths and more than four million internally displaced people. Ethiopia, Uganda and Eritrea all supported belligerents. Although a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2005, it remains unclear what will happen in 2011 when a referendum will afford the South the opportunity to separate from the North. Peace between the North and the South remains extremely fragile, which is related to continued insecurity *within* Southern Sudan, where 90 percent of the population live on less than $1 a day and where violence flares up regularly.[114]

Sudan's west also remains marred by violence. Fighting between several non-state armed opposition groups against the Government of Sudan (GoS) military, and GoS-supported Janjaweed militia groups, intensified in the three states of Darfur during late 2003. This fighting has caused 300,000 deaths, more than two million refugees and prompted an ICC arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for crimes against humanity. The Darfur conflict has its roots in localised communal conflicts and political grievances, but it is also heavily affected by continued hostilities between Khartoum and the government of neighbouring Chad.

Somalia has been mired in violent conflict for many years and has not had a stable government for nearly two decades. The current fighting engages many different actors: the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Islamist groups of Al-Shabab and Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a, secular warlords, peacekeepers from neighbouring African countries, the United States and foreign jihadists. Currently, the TFG has only partial control over small areas of the country. At the same time, 3.6 million Somali citizens – half of the population – depend on aid for survival while 1.6 million are displaced, in what is now become one of the most challenging humanitarian crises in the world.[115] Somalia continues to be a source of refugees, illegal arms and insecurity for its neighbours.

The DRC, Sudan and Somalia are examples of embedded and cyclical conflicts. Although the incidence of civil war appears to be falling in Africa, the above cases illustrate that in some countries and regions the security of millions of civilians remains at risk while the pace of economic and social development is very limited. Furthermore, these cases illustrate that civil conflicts need to be understood in the regional context, not only in effect (for example with regards to cross-border flows of refugees and arms) but also in cause, due to the interventions of neighbouring states. While local and national factors drive intra-state wars, the significant role of external actors suggests that conflicts between states may not be as rare in Africa as is often assumed.

Low-intensity conflicts

Low-intensity conflict refers to sporadic violent clashes which usually occur at the local level but directly involve the state's security forces. Localised rebellions currently take place in many parts of Africa, including Nigeria, Chad, Liberia, Rwanda, Senegal, and Uganda, and are characterised by low-intensity warfare, guerrilla warfare, or even banditry. In all these cases, non-state armed groups are major players in the security and conflict dynamics. For example, militant groups in Nigeria, particularly the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), have waged a violent campaign against the energy industry and the Nigerian state since 2005. Calling for a

113   International Monetary Fund (2010) *World Economic Outlook Database*.

114   United Nations Development Programme (2010) *Sudan – Overview*.

115   Reuters (2009) 'Oxfam: Somalia biggest challenge for aid workers', 5 October 2009.

bigger share of the vast revenue from oil crude extracted locally, gangs have attacked foreign oil companies' pipelines and kidnapped both expatriate and national staff. As a result, Nigeria's oil production has dropped by 25 percent in the last four years.[116]

In Southern Sudan several non-state groups that were armed and organised during the civil war have continued to obstruct security after the signing of the CPA.[117] A wide plethora of non-state armed groups also operate in countries such as Ethiopia, the Central African Republic and Chad.[118] Some of these groups cross inter-state borders on a regular basis. For example the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), one of Africa's most tenacious and destructive non-state armed groups, has moved between Uganda, Sudan, DRC and the Central African Republic (CAR). This cross-border movement – alongside several other factors – has allowed the group to maintain its survival and continue to prey on civilian populations.[119]

Communal violence

Communal conflicts involve small-scale clashes between local communities that do not usually directly involve the state, and which predominantly affect pastoralist communities. Removed or excluded from the centres of political and economic activity, pastoralists inhabit marginal borderlands.[120] In the Horn of Africa, such borderlands unite the region of the Ogaden on the Ethiopian-Somali border with northern Kenya and up into the Karamoja triangle between Sudan, Kenya and Uganda – and carry on even further westward right across the Darfur-Chad and the Sahel regions. Conflicts within and between African pastoralist communities, especially raiding and cattle rustling, have a long history within pastoralist cultures. However, as further pressures on water and land resources develop due to increased farming activities, population growth and recurrent droughts, conflicts involving pastoralists have become more widespread, increasingly destructive and less manageable, posing a continuing challenge for development.[121] The proliferation of small arms across the African continent in the past two decades has transformed isolated low-intensity cattle rustling incidents into large-scale violent clashes, killing between dozens and hundreds at a time. Politicisation of these conflicts has often made matters worse and limited the neutrality of the state in its interventions.

Ethnicity has come to mark much inter-communal violence in Africa, not simply through outbreaks of violence in pastoralist areas. There are at least 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria alone and thousands of different ethnic groups across the continent. Where there are high levels of poverty, the competition to access scarce resources such as land and jobs has in some cases created politicised tensions that have led to outbreaks of localised inter-ethnic violence.[122]

Political violence

In some African countries, violence has erupted in periods of intense political competition or transition. For example, political violence – often in conjunction with inconclusive or highly controversial electoral results – has occurred recently in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and Egypt. Three new conflicts erupted in 2009 in Gabon, Madagascar and Niger over the transfer or extension of presidential powers.[123]

116 The Economist (2010) 'Can a local man make good – Nigeria's troubled Delta', 26 June 2010.
117 Small Arms Survey (2009) 'Conflicting Priorities: GoSS Security Challenges and recent responses' in *Human Security Baseline Assessment*, no. 14.
118 Young, John (2007) *Armed Groups Along Sudan's Eastern Frontier: An Overview and Analysis*, Small Arms Survey, p 34.
119 International Crisis Group (2010) *LRA: A Regional Strategy Beyond Killing Kony*, Africa Report no. 157.
120 Overseas Development Institute (2009) *Getting it right: Understanding livelihoods to reduce the vulnerability of pastoral communities*, ODI HPG Synthesis Paper, p 2.
121 See for example Saferworld's recent Karamoja literature review and conflict and security report (2010).
122 See for example BBC (2010) 'Nigeria ethnic violence leaves hundreds dead', 8 March 2010.
123 Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (2010), p 22.

In many cases, ethnic identity has become politicised and fuelled outbreaks of large-scale violence. In no other country has the politicisation of ethnicity been more murderous and devastating than in the case of Rwanda, where politically orchestrated communal violence led in 1994 to a genocide that cost the lives of almost one million people. Following the disputed outcome of the presidential elections in Kenya in December 2007, political protests degenerated into widespread ethnic violence, killing 1,200 people and causing the displacement of a further 350,000.[124] Although a power-sharing agreement and recent political reforms have largely calmed the situation, thousands of internally displaced persons have still not been resettled.

Other security threats

Terrorism

The US State Department annual terrorism report issued in 2009 noted that rebel insurgencies in North Africa and Horn of Africa were ripe targets for the involvement of al-Qaida affiliated groups.[125] Although some terrorism experts have warned against the "oversimplification of both the nature of terrorist recruitment and the terrorist threat in Africa" and rejected the dictum that "failed states lead to terrorism",[126] the African continent has faced a number of internationally-linked terrorist attacks in recent years.

Various terrorist attacks have taken place in the Sahel, the broad desert region stretching from Africa's north Atlantic coast inland to the border of Darfur, over the past few years.[127] Terrorism has also visited Eastern Africa. In August 1998, mid-morning explosions targeted the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, killing more than 200 people. On 11 July 2010 suicide bombers detonated themselves among crowds watching a football match at two locations in Kampala. Al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Crime

In many parts of Africa, economic and security vulnerabilities create opportunities for crime to flourish. Although the data are often incomplete, "all available indicators suggest that Africa has a serious crime problem, including both violent and property crime, which may be interfering with the continent's development".[128] Crime, particularly violent crime as witnessed in major cities in South Africa and in capitals like Nairobi and Lagos, is a prominent security threat in many parts of the continent.

In this context, the lines between criminal, ethnic and political objectives sometimes become blurred. In Kenya, the pseudo-religious/ethnic Mungiki sect, which is involved in serious organised crime, has also committed acts of political violence during electoral periods. Africa is also affected by a steep rise in transnational organised crime, including drugs, arms and human trafficking, which thrives in "increasing ungoverned and ungovernable spaces" and is detrimental to security at both national and international levels.[129]

Maritime piracy, which emanates mainly from the Somali coast, has also become increasingly common in the last decade. Figures compiled by the International Maritime Organization show that there were 135 attacks during 2008, with 44 ships seized by pirates and more than 600 seafarers kidnapped and held for ransom. Piracy attacks increased throughout 2009.[130] Piracy has not only disrupted international

124 IRIN News Service (2009) *In-Depth: Kenya's post election crisis*.

125 US State Department (2009) 'Chapter 2: Africa Overview' in *Country Reports on Terrorism 2008*.

126 Piombo, Jessica R (2007) *Terrorism and U.S. Counter-Terrorism Programs in Africa: An Overview*, Center for Contemporary Conflict.

127 Newsweek (2009) 'The Maghreb Myth', 20 November 2009.

128 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2005) *Why Fighting Crime Can Assist Development in Africa*.

129 Aning, Kwesi (2007) *Africa: Confronting Complex Threats*, International Peace Academy, p 1.

130 International Chamber of Commerce (2009) *Piracy attacks almost doubled in 2009 first quarter*.

trade, causing severe financial repercussions, but it has also impeded the delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia. Despite a decline in pirate attacks in the first two quarters of 2010, the coast of Somalia remains particularly vulnerable, while pirates have started extending their operations as far as Madagascar in the Indian Ocean and Oman in the Arabian Sea.[131]

The importance of security for Africa's development

Conflict has a high human cost. Not only are lives lost as a direct result of violence, but also due to the humanitarian disasters that conflicts spark. Families are divided, communities are displaced and whole generations can miss out on their youth. In the longer term, conflict and insecurity have implications for economic and social development. There is a strong connection between the ability of individuals and communities to lead rewarding and peaceful lives, and the levels of insecurity and violence that they experience. The following quotation, made in 2006 by then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, encapsulates this succinctly:

There is no long term security without development. There is no development without security.[132]

Conflict and insecurity undermine development both because of the direct costs of conflict (such as the destruction of infrastructure and the death or displacement of the workforce) and indirect costs (such as shrinking public service provision).[133] These costs are placed not only on governments and citizens within their own borders, but on neighbouring countries in the region as well.

In 2007, Saferworld and its partners released a report which showed that, between 1990 and 2005, armed conflict had cost Africa almost $300 billion – about the same amount as the con¬tinent received in aid during the same period.[134] Without including crime and other forms of insecurity, it is estimated that Africa loses $18 billion every year to armed conflict.[135] Civil war has been most destructive. The economist Paul Collier has calculated that the average civil war lasts seven years, during which the country's economy will lose about 15 percent of its GDP. It will then take ten years to return to pre-war growth rates and twenty-one extra years to reach the point where the country would have been had the civil war not occurred.[136]

Clearly, if development is to successfully reduce poverty, it must also address the issue of violent conflict. This has led some to believe that "preventing and ending conflicts will do more to create a climate for poverty reduction than any amount of costly aid programmes".[137] Many African leaders openly recognise this. The Liberian President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, has stressed that "I am acutely aware of the devastation to African economies due to armed violence … on top of the human misery suffered by millions during armed conflict, these conflicts cost Africa billions of dollars each year."[138] This being the case, Africa is unlikely to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

As a result, the African Union (AU) has placed peace and security high on its agenda, declaring 2010 to be a 'Year of Peace in Africa'. That African leaders have collectively agreed upon the need for an African regional peace and security architecture as part of the AU lays testament to the importance they attach to the issue.

131 RTT News (2010) 'Pirate Attacks On Ships Drop In First Quarter' in *RTT News – Global Financial Newswire*, 21 April 2010.
132 Annan, Kofi (2006) *Address by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the United Nations Association of the United Kingdom*, Central Hall, London, 31 January 2006.
133 World Bank (2003) *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, Washington: World Bank & Oxford University Press.
134 IANSA, Oxfam & Saferworld (2007) *Africa's Missing Billions: International arms flows and the cost of armed conflict*, London: Oxfam Great Britain.
135 Ibid.
136 Collier, Paul (2007) *The Bottom Billion: why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*, Oxford University Press.
137 House of Commons (2006) *International Development Committee Conflict and Development: Peacebuilding and Post-conflict Reconstruction, Sixth Report of Session 2005–06, Volume I*.
138 Johnson-Sirleaf, Ellen (2007) 'Foreword' in IANSA, Oxfam & Saferworld (2007).

External actors and African peace and security

It is primarily issues *within* Africa that determine peace and security on the continent. Solutions to threats to African peace and security are to be found within the continent itself, in the hands of governments, politicians and civil society who proactively utilise state institutions, regional structures and activism for peaceful ends. The primary responsibility for securing progress that has been made and for confronting challenges that still exist lies in these hands.

Yet as Ochieng Adala warns, it is wrong to assume that Africa's conflicts are Africa's problems alone. He rejects the often-repeated cliché of 'African solutions for African problems' on the basis that external actors are deeply – and directly – involved in the internal dynamics of African security.[139] Some of this participation is negative and direct, as continuing transfers of weapons to unstable regions by a wide range of international actors illustrates (see chapter 6). External actors can also play a less direct role in security and conflict dynamics on the continent, as the relationship between Africa's natural resources, persistent insecurity, and international markets makes clear (see chapter 10).

At the same time, external actors in Africa can play a key role in supporting national or regional efforts to address security challenges. The contribution of peacekeepers and peacebuilding assistance to Africa (see chapter 9) or financial and technical support to regional security institutions (see chapter 7) are examples of direct support, while indirect support is demonstrated by commitments to longer term socio-economic development (see chapter 10). Furthermore, in an increasingly globalised and interdependent world, the challenges of Africa have resonance beyond its shores and implications for global security, as the case of Somali piracy has so dramatically demonstrated. In this way, African security has an impact on external actors.

Given that many external actors have an impact on African peace and security and that African peace and security has an impact on them, the provision of support to African-led efforts should not be understood in terms of compassion, but in terms of duty, responsibility and self interest. With the importance of external actors in mind, the following chapters examine the role and impact of an increasingly important new player: China.

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139   Adala, Ochieng (2010) 'Role and Impact of China's Interventions on Security in Africa' paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010, p 3.

3

China's interest in the promotion of peace and security in Africa

THE RHETORIC OF PEACE "is a prominent, core feature in China's official presentation of its purpose in international affairs and Africa."[140] This chapter makes the case that engagement on Africa's peace and security is in China's interest and that it will increasingly become a focus for policy makers in Beijing.

Chinese scholars regularly highlight the importance of peace. For example, Yu and Wang state that the Chinese government "tries its best to support and promote peace and stability in Africa" and they go as far as to argue that "peace-orientation is the first and foremost characteristic of China-Africa relations. It sets China-Africa relations apart from others."[141] This discourse is also captured in statements by Chinese leaders who have committed to assisting Africa. For example on a visit to Tanzania in 2009, President Hu promised that China will continue to "play a constructive role of settling conflicts and hot issues and maintaining peace and security in Africa".[142]

Such pledges are also captured in official documents. China's *Africa Policy* (2006) outlines several areas where China will support Africa in confronting its peace and security challenges (see annex 3). The FOCAC Action Plans also all contain specific sections that outline China's three-year commitments to African peace and security (see annex 2). However, compared to sections on economic relations, these commitments are brief, ambiguous in detail and appear to be somewhat rhetorical. This reflects that fact that Africa's peace and security issues are not at the forefront of China's relations with the continent: it is largely economic interests that have drawn China to the continent, and it is these interests that dominate Beijing's attention.[143]

Yet China's interest in African peace and security is by no means purely rhetorical. It is becoming clear that "the deeper China ventures into the resource-abundant African continent, the more it stumbles upon various security challenges."[144] Chin-Hao Huang

140 Large, Dan (2008) 'China's role in the mediation and resolution of conflict in Africa' *Background Paper for The OSLO Forum of Network Mediators 2008*, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, p 37.
141 Yu & Wang (2008), pp 79–80.
142 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2009) 'Hu Jintao delivers an important speech in Dar es Salaam', Press Release.
143 Large (2008), p 37.
144 Holslag, Jonathan (2009) 'China's security policy towards Africa' in *Parameters*, June 2009.

concludes that because of this, Beijing is increasingly taking note of Africa's peace and security challenges, and several other scholars have come to similar conclusions.[145]

Why does African peace and security increasingly matter to China?

Wang Xuejun provides a succinct answer to this question: "In the wake of continuously expanding and deepening interests in Africa, China is facing more and more security pressures."[146] As its presence on the continent grows, China has inevitably become enmeshed in Africa's numerous local, domestic and regional conflicts. This fact is made visibly – and violently – clear by direct threats to Chinese citizens. For example, in 2008 the Chinese government organised the evacuation of 212 Chinese citizens from Chad to Cameroon after violent clashes in the capital N'Djamena.[147]

Most Chinese citizens in Africa are employed by enterprises pursing commercial objectives, and nowhere else have they come under more threat than in the energy sector. Chinese citizens working for oil companies have been directly and frequently targeted in Ethiopia, Sudan and Nigeria (see chapter 10). Chinese sailors have been kidnapped by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden (see chapter 8). Given these developments, the security of its citizens in Africa is one factor that is of increasing concern to the Chinese government.

That these civilians are commercial actors highlights another challenge for China's engagement with Africa, namely that armed violence and conflicts in Africa directly threaten Chinese economic interests. There are numerous Chinese investments in energy and mineral extraction across the continent, a significant proportion of these in areas afflicted by violent instability. China's global quest for resource security has thus resulted in a local confrontation with African insecurity (see chapter 10). This has inevitably forced Beijing to take an interest in the stability and development of those countries where its companies have invested.[148]

Over the longer term, African markets are a potential growth area for Chinese goods and investments, which is an important consideration in Beijing's desire to sustain high domestic growth rates through expansion into new global markets. Yet, without growing prosperity on the African continent, markets will never meet their full potential for Chinese goods and investments. In many parts of the continent, this potential prosperity is limited by continued insecurity. To paraphrase Deng Xiaoping, safeguarding African peace may contribute to China's domestic development.

While economic interests will no doubt continue to sit at the centre of China-Africa relations, political relations and their global implications matter too. As part of its broader foreign policy, China aims to strengthen political ties around the world in order to ensure its peaceful rise as a new international power.[149] Thus one Chinese scholar argues that promoting "security co-operation is an indispensable choice for both sides. It has become an important part of the strategic co-operation and will lay a solid foundation for the development of mutual political trust between the two."[150]

As it rises as a global power, there is an increasingly open acceptance in Beijing that China must shoulder more international responsibilities through providing international public goods.[151] Global security is one of these public goods and, as the Somali

145 Huang, Chin-Hao (2010) 'China, the UN and African Security: The Way Forward', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010. Also see Bates, Huang, & Morrison (2007), Holslag (2009), Raine (2009), Teitt, Sarah (2009) 'Strengthening China's Role in Protecting Populations from Mass Atrocity Crimes', paper presented to the International Studies Association 2009 Conference.

146 Wang, Xuejun (2010) 'Viewing China-AU Co-operation from the Perspective of the Development of the African Collective Security Mechanism', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

147 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2008) Foreign Ministry Spokesman Liu Jianchao's Briefing on Foreign Ministry's Assistance in Evacuating the Chinese Citizens Out of Chad.

148 See Raine (2009), p 151.

149 Gill, Huang & Morrison (2007), p 4.

150 Wang, Wei (2010) 'China and Africa envision new security co-operation' in *China.org News*, 9 July 2010.

151 Yu and Wang explicitly highlight Africa's security and socio-economic development as areas that fall under this responsibility. Yu & Wang (2008), p 81. Also see Smith, Henry; Wheeler, Thomas, & Mariani, Bernardo (2009) 'Peace and Security in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for China-Africa Co-operation' in *Global Review*, vol. 3 no. 3, Nov/Dec 2009, Shanghai Institute for International Studies.

piracy case makes clear, this includes African security. China's role in international security, and the implications this has for Africa, is explored in chapter 8. Given the links between conflict and underdevelopment, African security is important to China not only because of its responsibility to uphold global stability, but also due to its commitments to the continent's economic development as both a southern partner and a member of the wider international community. For example, in his speech following the 2009 FOCAC, Premier Wen Jiabao stated that the international community had a duty to show a "greater sense of urgency and take more concrete steps to support Africa's development."[152]

Africa's security matters for China's international relations in other ways too. China is investing an increasing amount of effort into branding itself as a reliable member of the international community trying to build a 'harmonious world'.[153] For example Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing wrote in 2005 that in the vigorous pursuit of peace, development and co-operation, "China's diplomacy has made bold headway, serving domestic development and contributing to world peace and common development."[154] Yinhong notes that "international responsibility has become the primary keyword to China's grand strategy".[155] In this regard, China "has quickly realized that Africa will become an important stage where its image as a responsible global actor is forged."[156]

It has become all but too easy for western and other international actors to put China on spotlight and try to hold it accountable to its aspirations and projected world image. For example, China's relations with the ruling regimes of Sudan and Zimbabwe during periods of violent instability led to claims that China was failing to act as a responsible power. While some of this criticism has been unnecessarily confrontational, and occasionally reflected knee-jerk reactions rather than measured analysis, the damage to China's international image, especially in the run up to the 2008 Olympics, has aroused significant concern in Beijing. Of equal concern is that African civil society actors have also voiced their dissatisfaction with China's role in conflict afflicted countries, threatening its image on the continent.[157] Such criticism generates further impetus for Beijing to take more of an interest in its own role in Africa's security concerns and at least be seen to be utilising its power responsibly.

How peace and security are understood in China is also changing. As scholars like Xia Liping have pointed out, since the end of the Cold War the understanding of global security issues has evolved greatly in China – as elsewhere.[158] There has been a shift in the Chinese understanding of security, towards a more pragmatic, inclusive and accommodating stance towards the outside world. This means moving away from unilateral support for state-imposed solutions to security towards more co-operative and multilateral means of dealing with conflict and insecurity. Chinese scholars and officials have also become more receptive to the concepts of human security and the principle of the responsibility to protect, as well as the impact these ideas have on China's interests. Policy makers in Beijing are becoming aware that development and security are two sides of the same coin and that, like the EU and the US, in order to be a credible strategic partner for Africa, China needs to develop a more proactive strategy to support the continent. However, it is important not to over-emphasise these changes: security is still seen as an inherently state-orientated issue.

In fact change should not be overstated or exaggerated. As is highlighted throughout this report, shifts in Chinese policy to greater engagement have on the whole been cautious and gradual. Yet, Chinese policy makers and officials have demonstrated

152 Cited in Xinhua News (2009) 'Premier Wen Jiabao urges increased international efforts to support Africa', 9 November 2009.
153 People's Daily (2009) 'President Hu elaborates the theory of a harmonious world', 26 November 2009.
154 Li, Zhaoxing (2005) 'Banner of Diplomacy Stressed' in *People's Daily*, 23 August 2005.
155 Shi, Yinhong (2008) 'China's peaceful development, harmonious world and international responsibility: achievements and challenges' in *SIIS Global Review*, Spring 2008, pp 19–28.
156 Chin-Hao (2010), p 8.
157 See for example Kendo (2008)
158 Liping, Xia (2009) 'Opportunities and Challenges for China-Africa Co-operation', presentation made at Saferworld/Royal Africa-Asia Society seminar, School of Oriental and African Studies, 27 November 2009.

increasing interest in African peace and security, as has China's broader policy community, which previously focused mainly on economic factors. This shift in focus has been to a large degree sparked by debates both on how Beijing should react to specific challenges, such as the Darfur crisis, and on broader policy issues, such as the principle of non-interference, which the following chapter examines in more detail. These debates reflect the fact that African peace and security looks set to become a more prominent issue in the China-Africa relationship.

4

State-to-state relations

CHINA'S ENGAGEMENTS WITH AFRICA are managed largely through state-to-state relations. These relations are governed by principles of state sovereignty and non-interference: Beijing maintains that it is national governments and national governments alone that should focus on and respond to matters related to domestic political, economic or social affairs. China's own history and its sensitivity on contemporary issues, such as Taiwan and Tibet, heavily inform this view of how international relations should be conducted.

This chapter examines some of the criticisms of China's diplomatic engagement in Africa. It explores three different aspects of these criticisms: China's impact on broader governance and human right issues, China's use of bilateral relations during periods of crisis and China's role in diplomacy and mediation in the face of conflicts. The chapter then explores the degree to which China is adapting its policies and becoming more flexible in interpreting the principles that govern its bilateral engagements.

Non-interference

Beijing clearly disregarded non-interference principles during the Cold War when it supported belligerents fighting in civil wars. Today, China's role is far more limited in this respect.[159] Given that support from the USA, USSR and China to various actors in Africa during the Cold War prolonged the duration and deepened the lethality of these conflicts, a fair argument can be made that, through *not* intervening, China does not exacerbate conflict: non-interference is inherently peaceful. Yet critical commentators have in fact argued exactly the opposite: through doing nothing, China has worsened internal situations in countries that are either authoritarian, human rights violators, in conflict or all of these things together. Critics maintain that for economic and energy interests, China has developed close relationships with African regimes that the international community, or more specifically Western countries, would not deal with or would only engage with in a conditional manner. As such, the problem for critics is not China's principle of non-interference, but that Beijing uses this position as a justification for sustaining relations with 'rogue regimes' and others with a questionable record on governance and human rights.[160]

China's close links with the regimes of Sudan and Zimbabwe have come under special scrutiny from Western activists and media. The ruling regime in Zimbabwe has been accused of state-sponsored human rights violations, including extra-judicial killings,

159 Li, Anshan (2007) 'China and Africa: Policy and Challenges' in *China Security*, vol. 3 no. 3 pp 69–93.
160 Taylor points to an op-ed from the *New York Times* which illustrates such criticism well: 'Misspent your country's wealth? Waged war against an ethnic minority? Or just tired of those pesky good governance requirements attached to foreign aid by most Western governments and multilateral institutions? If you run an African country and have some natural resources to put in long-term hock, you've got a friend in Beijing ready to write big checks with no embarrassing questions. That's nice for governments, but not so nice for their misgoverned people.' Cited in Taylor (2010), p 1.

oppression of political activists, disappearances and torture.[161] After a disputed election in 2008, the country entered a period of extreme and often violent instability. In Sudan, the conduct of government-backed militias in Darfur continues to attract international attention and condemnation of China's relations with the Khartoum government. The Chinese "have steadily become among the most important foreign investors in Zimbabwe"[162] while in Sudan Chinese oil companies continue to provide revenue to state coffers. This has led one human rights organisation to go as far as to suggest that "it is not possible to understand why Darfur's suffering has gone on for so long without understanding how deeply entwined China has become with the Sudanese government."[163] Critics have claimed that continued Chinese economic investments into Zimbabwe and Sudan, and the associated political relations that facilitate this, provide legitimacy and resources to regimes that would otherwise be isolated, shamed and ultimately forced to either cave in to outside pressure or internal dissent. Additionally, the delivery of Chinese arms to Zimbabwe and Sudan at critical periods has been criticised for fuelling conflict and repression, while Beijing's protection of the two countries at the UNSC (through its veto power) has been received with equal condemnation. The former issue is dealt with in more detail in chapter 6 while the latter is explored in chapter 8.

While officials in Beijing have dismissed Western criticism as biased and hypocritical, the fact that Africans have shared and articulated these same concerns is more problematic. Sudanese political activist Ali Askouri takes a very critical view and argues that "both the Chinese and their elite partners in the Sudanese government want to conceal some terrible facts about their partnership. They are joining hands to uproot poor people, expropriate their land and appropriate their natural resources."[164] While dismissing fears of a Chinese takeover of Africa, a commentary in *The East African* accepts that Beijing is "morally blind and does business with governments irrespective of how corrupt they are, whether they hold elections or not, and whether a regime has only recently slaughtered one thousand protestors."[165] A Kenyan commentator likens China's non-interference policy to an indifference to suffering that makes it resemble "the Hyena of folklore that found two brothers fighting each other to the death. While proclaiming non-interference, the hyena promised it would, however, feed the warriors as they fought over nothing."[166] To a degree, these criticisms represent a much more potent threat to China's image on the continent than those of Western actors.

China and African governance

The criticism that China does not hold states to account over human rights or internal conflicts is part of broader concerns that China's relations with African states are not conditional on more generalised improvements in long-term governance, most pressingly democratisation, the rule of law, anti-corruption and other political reforms. Given the linkages between weak governance and conflict,[167] when external actors develop political, aid and commercial relations with corrupt or patronage-based regimes they can inadvertently consolidate or exacerbate cycles of underdevelopment, insecurity and conflict.

At the same time, these very external relations can be used as leverage by outside actors to try to attain their desired changes within the country, a basic diplomatic strategy that the West has long attempted to employ in Africa in regards to what it sees as good

161 Amnesty International (2009) *Human Rights in Republic of Zimbabwe: 2009 Report*.
162 Taylor (2009), p 101.
163 Human Rights First (2008) *Investing in Tragedy: China's Money, Arms, and Politics in Sudan*, p i.
164 Askouri, Ali (2007) 'China's investment in Sudan: displacing villages and destroying communities' in *African Perspectives of China in Africa* (eds. Manji, Firoze & Marks, Stephen), Cape Town: Fahamu.
165 Kendo (2008).
166 Ibid.
167 See Taylor (2009). That weak governance and conflict are interrelated is illustrated by the Ibrahim Index of Governance in Africa which uses a wide set of measures to make its assessments. Starting from the lowest score, the bottom ten are: Somalia, Chad, DRC, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Central African Republic, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire. All of these countries have recently experience civil war or significant violent instability. Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2010) *2010 Ibrahim Index of African Governance*.

governance. Because it does not seek to predicate relations on internal reform, China acts as an alternative partner to these traditional outside actors. Some civil society organisations have openly complained that this has weakened the leverage of these traditional actors.[168]

Chinese officials and scholars have maintained that resorting to diplomatic pressure would lie in deep opposition to the principles that guide its relations with African governments. Premier Wen argued in 2006 that "China supports the development of democracy and the rule of law in Africa. But we never impose our own will on others. We believe that people in every region and country have the right and the ability to properly handle their own affairs."[169]

Unsurprisingly, this position has been well received by several African leaders. For example, in an interview in 2007, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi argued that "it would be wrong for people in the West to assume that they can buy good govern- ance in Africa. Good governance can only come from inside. It cannot be imposed from outside. People can have illusions of doing so but the reality is that it never works. What the Chinese have done is explode that illusion."[170] While at the official level China states its support for the development of democracy, few in Beijing share prominent Western beliefs that link stability, democracy and long-term development. Many instead, at least unofficially, see democratisation as an often destabilising force. This is unsurprising coming from a country that has a strictly enforced one-party political system.

With regards to the Western argument that human right laws are universally required to protect citizens, Chinese scholars stress that instead state sovereignty is *sine qua non* for protecting citizens: "developing countries, including China and most African nations, argue that state sovereignty is paramount, not least because the human rights protection regime is a state-backed mechanism."[171] In short, developing countries have learnt from historical experience that sovereignty is required to protect their citizens' rights from outside powers who "have always made the rules in the global community."[172] In this way, upholding state sovereignty is actually seen as a require- ment that allows internal political change to happen.

While many might agree that good governance cannot be externally imposed, China's strong attachment to non-interference and state sovereignty is extremely problematic for numerous African civil society activists, for several reasons. Firstly, some activists reject the proposition that a policy of non-interference means that China has no impact on the internal affairs of African states. Ali argues that "Chinese leaders keep repeating the misleading statement that China does not interfere in the internal affairs of the countries it deals with. This statement is untrue, provocative and insulting to many Africans who are aspiring to further democratic values. China interferes deeply in the domestic affairs of its partners, but always to the benefit of the ruling group."[173] As some regimes prioritise their own survival above all else, they use strong state-to- state relations with China, whether in the form of political or financial support, to further this end. Without this, internal affairs might in fact look quite different. Even if China were to maintain exclusively economic relations with African countries, this would still inevitably have an effect on internal politics. This is especially the case in heavily neo-patrimonial states where the allocation of economic resources is tightly tied to political hierarchies. While economics can be distinguished from politics in official rhetoric, it is impossible to divorce the two in reality.

Secondly, the assumption that all sovereign African states are legitimate representatives of their citizens, yet alone protectors of their rights, is not necessarily well founded.

168 Human Rights Watch (2006) 'China-Africa Summit: Focus on Human Rights, Not Just Trade'.
169 Cited in Huang & Zhao (2009), p 68.
170 Financial Times (2007) 'FT Interview: Meles Zenawi, Ethiopian Prime Minister', 6 February 2007.
171 Li (2007), p 75.
172 Ibid, p 78.
173 Ali (2007), p 73.

For example, Chadian human rights activist Delphine Djiriabe describes human rights violations, dictatorship, impunity, misuse of public funds, rigged elections, untrained security services, the centralisation of power by the President and his relatives and the lack of democratic institutions as the main factors that characterise the Chadian regime and contribute to the country's conflicts.[174] This is not a unique case. As Nigerian analyst Akwe Amosu notes, "Africa's peoples need to be as wary of being trampled underfoot by their own governments as they are of foreign powers."[175]

Furthermore, some African civil society actors see China as unsympathetic or even openly hostile to their efforts to bring about internal change. In reaction to the post-election violence in Kenya in 2008, several neighbouring states, Western donors and regional and international organisations rapidly deployed heavy diplomatic pressure on the country's divided leadership to contain the violence and restore peace. Of all of the major external actors engaged in Kenya, only China omitted to add its voice or send an envoy. Instead the Chinese Ambassador Zhang Ming stated that China saw the crisis as an internal matter that it would not interfere in.[176] A few days later a commentary appeared in the Chinese state-owned media arguing that the violence illustrated that Africa was not yet ready for democracy. To the many Kenyan civil society activists who had for years campaigned for democracy (and endured hefty prison sentences and worse as a consequence) this provoked outrage. The managing editor of one of Kenya's two main national papers attacked China's policy of non-interference: "By taking such an unconscionable diplomatic position in the face of murders, displacement, vandalism of the economy, entrenchment of ethnic animosity and tribalisation of the political crisis, China has proved it is not a true friend of Kenya. China has promised to continue with business as usual, building roads and toilets, when the lives of the users of such facilities are in danger."[177]

Beijing's preference for conducting relations in a highly state-centric manner may ultimately make matters worse for China's interests in Africa. By failing to distinguish between African regimes and their citizens and by continuing to see the former as the only legitimate representatives of the latter, Beijing has left itself open to becoming closely associated with those regimes that happen currently to be in power, but whose position in power could itself be precarious. This perception is reinforced by China's reluctance to engage with non-state groups.

Rebel leaders and armed groups in African countries where conflict has broken out have publicly criticised China's role in their country and attacked Chinese citizens and companies. This is especially the case in countries where natural resources have played a role in conflicts and where China has been involved in their extraction (for example in Sudan, Nigeria, the DRC and Ethiopia's Ogaden, described further in chapter 10). Given the political economy of these conflicts, it is wholly unsurprising that China is seen as a patron of the regime and thus a strategic target for those with grievances against the state. In short, despite its intentions China has clearly become an involved actor rather than a non-partisan outsider. Problematically for China, civil society activists, opposition politicians and armed groups are also potential future power holders. In many countries, their image of China may outlast the life of the ruling regimes with whom they are associated.

Influencing crisis   During periods of violent domestic crises in Africa, Beijing often officially recognises the position of the government in question as these are considered to be internal matters. Critics maintain that through distancing itself in this way and failing to take

174 Djiraibe, Delphine (2010) 'Resources and Conflict in Chad', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

175 Amosu (2007).

176 The Economist (2008) 'The sound of silence: The murky role of one of President Mwai Kibaki's closest new allies', 7 February 2008.

177 Kendo, Okech (2008) 'China has proved it's not a friend to count on' in *The Standard*, 21 February 2008.

a strong position, China allows these conflicts to continue. However, Chinese officials and scholars reject the proposition that China is a passive actor in the face of African conflicts and instability. While China does not interfere, Beijing does sometimes 'influence'.[178] Diplomatic relations with Khartoum after 2006 are regularly referred to as an example of where Beijing has used its bilateral influence to push for an end to the conflict.[179] In June 2006 Special Envoy Lu Guozong was sent to the Darfur region and in 2007 Special Envoy Zhai Jun followed. Shortly after this, Ambassador Liu Guijin was appointed the first Special Representative of China to Africa and assigned the Darfur crisis as his priority area of focus. According to Wang and Yu, the objective of these envoys to Sudan was to convince the Khartoum regime to work towards a settling of the Darfur conflict. Indeed, Ambassador Liu himself stressed that China "tried every means" to encourage President Bashir of Sudan to accept the demands of the international community.[180] This was reinforced by President Hu's visit to Sudan in 2007 and his outlining of four key principles for resolving the Darfur conflict. These were that Sudan's sovereignty should be respected, that there should be peaceful settlement through dialogue and consultation on equal footings, that the AU and the UN should play constructive roles and that regional stability and the livelihoods of local people should be safeguarded.[181] In private, President Hu "reportedly intervened personally to press Bashir to abide by international commitments",[182] in addition to putting pressure on the Sudanese president during a private meeting on the sidelines of the 2006 FOCAC.

This pressure was not simply rhetorical: Sudan was symbolically taken off China's list of countries with preferred trade status,[183] and in 2007 Ambassador Liu reportedly stated that China was dropping all assistance to Sudan except humanitarian aid.[184] Chinese pressure greatly contributed to the Khartoum regime's eventual agreement to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's three-phase plan for the resolution of the conflict, including the deployment of a joint AU-UN peacekeeping force in Darfur. This application of bilateral pressure was also evident during the 2008 political crisis in Zimbabwe.[185] When in 2008 Beijing announced it would supply humanitarian aid to Zimbabwe, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson noted China's "concern with the current constant deterioration of the economic and political situation in Zimbabwe."[186] It was also reported that Beijing pushed Harare into negotiations with the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change.[187] However, in the Zimbabwe case words went only so far: in late 2008 a Chinese embassy official in Harare predicted that despite an economic crisis in the country, trade between the two countries was set to almost double from 2006 levels.[188]

Negotiations and diplomacy

Chinese scholars argue that China has a low-key but unique approach to conflict resolution, illustrated by the second of President Hu's four principles on resolving the Darfur issue: peaceful settlement through dialogue and consultation on equal footings. China seems to prefer negotiations and dialogues to heavy-handed sanctions, public confrontation, outside pressure and the diplomatic isolation of regimes.[189] There is limited evidence that China is actually driving or playing a role in such mediation. Chinese diplomats, including Ambassador Liu, took observer roles in various

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178 Li (2007), p 77.
179 For an overview see Karrar Ahmed, Gaafar (2010) 'The Chinese Stance on the Darfur Conflict' in *SAIIA Occasional Paper, no. 67*.
180 Cited in Large (2008) p 39.
181 Yu & Wang (2008), p 87.
182 Huang (2010).
183 Ibid, p 4.
184 Taylor (2009), p 107.
185 Ibid, p 106.
186 Cited in Raine (2009), p 159.
187 Evans, Ian (2009) 'Robert Mugabe forced into talks with opposition after China told him "to behave"' in *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 July 2009.
188 Cited in Raine (2009), p 160.
189 See Yu & Wang (2008), Li (2010), He (2007).

negotiations between the actors in the Sudanese conflict, for example in the Paris conference in June 2007 and in the Surt conference in October 2007.[190] Liu also announced in 2008 a willingness to play a mediating role between Khartoum and Darfur's rebel groups, stating that China is "ready to operate as a diplomatic bridge among the parties to the conflict to assist in ending the crisis and stopping the bloodshed."[191] In fact, the full extent of China's participation in such negotiations was fairly limited.[192] During the post-election power-sharing negotiations brokered by South African President Thabo Mbeki between the Zimbabwean government and opposition, Raine notes that China "contributed substantially but discreetly … However, the Chinese convention of non-interference and the country's relative inexperience in conflict mediation made China somewhat uncomfortable with developing its behind-the-scenes role in negotiations."[193]

China has also acted as a mediator over the conflict in eastern DRC, where the Rwandan-backed militia led by Laurent Nkunda, the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), returned to fighting after a peace deal fell apart. According to one report, in late 2008:

[*When*] *the Nkunda insurgency began to accuse China of promoting bad governance in the DRC through government contracts detrimental to the Congolese people's interests, envoy Liu Guijin was sent to Kinshasa and Kigali to engage in direct mediation between Rwanda and the DRC. He called on both sides to co-operate to resolve the conflict, insisting to Kigali in particular that Nkunda's accusations against China had to be stopped. This Chinese pressure on Kigali contributed to a radical shift of Rwandan policy, as Kigali decided to withdraw its support to Nkunda, who had become a liability, and replaced him with a more docile leadership.*[194]

Shortly after Liu's visit to the region, official talks began between the DRC government and the CNDP, which initiated a process of rapprochement between Kinshasa and Kigali. While it is of course difficult to ascertain China's exact role in the process, given its close relations with both the Rwandan and Congolese leadership it can be assumed that Chinese pressure played a significant role.

Re-defining the boundaries of non-interference

Yu and Wang observe that China's involvement in dialogue on the Darfur conflict "indicates that China's diplomacy in Africa has entered a new stage."[195] Scholar He also notes that "Darfur illustrates how China is adapting to new circumstances in Africa."[196] As early as 2006, the Chinese policy community had become more critical about the depth of relations with Khartoum. This "triggered an important debate, with voices emerging within China that it should not maintain an uncritical embrace of such an autocratic and corrupt regime that has committed atrocious crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur."[197] For Huang, this debate is evidence that "Beijing appears to be more attuned to the sensitivities and complexities of regional conflict in Africa."[198]

For several observers,[199] gradual changes in some of Beijing's policies demonstrate a subtle but significant policy shift regarding the principle of non-interference.[299] Raine notes that "some greater flexibility on the non-interference principle is emerging. It is no longer quasi-sacrilegious in China to question the limits of sovereignty." She points to revisions to the policy being discussed in Beijing, to incorporate terms such as

190 Large (2007), p 39.
191 Cited in Karrar Ahmed (2010).
192 Large (2007).
193 Raine (2009), p 158.
194 International Crisis Group (2009) *China's growing role in UN Peacekeeping Asia*, Report no. 166, p 16.
195 Yu & Wang (2008), p 88.
196 He (2007), p 36.
197 Huang (2010), p 7.
198 Ibid, p 1.
199 See for example Bates, Huang & Morrison (2007), Holslag (2009), Raine (2009) and Teitt (2009).
200 Alden (2010), p 7.

"proactive non-interference" or "constructive mediation".[201] For some, this shift is due to international pressure and China's self-perception of its role within the international community: Beijing has had to change its approach to its bilateral relations with African states to better reflect the fact that China is a responsible power that co-operates with the international community.[202] Being associated with problematic regimes in the eyes of those living under them and elsewhere on the African continent is also forcing change, as Nkunda's criticism of China's role in DRC perhaps demonstrates. Taylor attributes this to Beijing's deepening recognition that its commercial investments and interests in Africa require stability and security, which in turn require stable, rather than problematic, governance. As such, Beijing can no longer remain strictly passive on issues related to internal politics.[203]

Beijing's engagement on African peace and security may come to be tested again in Sudan. The 2005 CPA, which ended two decades of conflict between the North and the South, is coming under strain as Sudan approaches a 2011 referendum during which the South will very likely choose to secede from the North. While Beijing maintained close political, economic and military relations with Khartoum during the 20-year conflict, it has also recently established ties with semi-autonomous government in Southern Sudan, which is led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). In the past, Beijing saw the SPLM as a rebel group and even after the signing of the CPA its engagement with the South was restricted to channels through Khartoum. However, in 2008 a Chinese consulate was established in Juba, illustrating that China has had to adjust to changing realities on the ground, especially considering that a large amount of Chinese oil investments are in areas that may come more directly under control of the SPLM should the South secede.[204]

The likelihood of a reversion to conflict between the North and the South in Sudan is significant. Given its substantial energy investments in the country and its develop-ment of relations with both Khartoum and Juba, China is a key actor. The depth of China's willingness to engage on internal peace and conflict issues, the limits to how it defines sovereignty and non-interference, and its capacity to take the lead in facilitating negotiations will be tested should a crisis break out.

China now has multiple relationships with states in Africa, many of which are hostile to one another or even actively sponsoring instability in one another's territories. This also has the potential to re-shape Beijing's policy of non-interference. For example, after China and Chad established diplomatic relations and signed oil deals, the regime in N'djamena made it clear to Beijing that Sudan's support for rebel groups within Chad had to cease, and that Beijing had to apply pressure on Khartoum to ensure that this occurred.[205] The demands of China's African partners, who already intervene heavily in one another's internal affairs, create a set of competing pressures on Beijing, potentially drawing it into African national and regional politics. However, despite the best efforts of Chad's leaders, Dan Large notes that "Ambassador Liu Guijin was careful to insist that China would not become involved in mediating proxy conflict between Khartoum and N'djamena, although he urged both parties engaged in proxy war to practice 'good neighbourliness'."[206] Unlike in the case of the DRC, here China opted not to become involved, illustrating that its engagement remains limited and *ad hoc*.

Indeed, Large suggests that, at least for now, it is unlikely that Beijing intends to play elsewhere in Africa a similar role to that which it played in Darfur. China's strategic and economic interests within Sudan, enormous amounts of international pressure and frustration with the Khartoum regime forced Beijing to take such a role in the conflict. For Large, this specific response to a specific context should not be too

201 Raine (2009), p 155.
202 Alden (2010), Huang (2010), Raine (2009).
203 Taylor (2009), p 111.
204 Large, Dan (2009) 'China's Sudan Engagement: Changing Northern and Southern Political Trajectories in Peace and War' in *China Quarterly*, 199, pp 610–626.
205 Holslag (2009), p 25–26.
206 Large (2007), p 40.

strongly interpreted as a deepening of China's bilateral engagement on African conflicts.[207] He further notes that China has had little experience in dealing with conflicts overseas and little capacity or expertise to play a prominent role at the bilateral level, preferring instead to 'free-ride' off the efforts of others.[208] Beijing's perceived closeness with governments and its general uneasiness in dealing with non-state actors means that its ability to facilitate or even participate in negotiations with all parties to a conflict is limited. Expectations of changes in Chinese policy, especially surrounding issues such as non-interference, should not be overestimated: any changes will remain "piecemeal, limited, and tactical, rather than broad-ranging and strategic."[209]

How important is China's role?

When discussing China's engagement on conflict issues in Africa, Western critics of China, especially some human rights organisations and the media, greatly overestimate China's influence. China is "seen as both the cause and the potential solution to an armed conflict."[210] This view may make a good advocacy message but it is clearly inaccurate: China alone cannot magically end conflict in Sudan, or anywhere else for that matter. Effective and sustainable solutions to African peace and security threats are to be found within the continent itself, in the hands of governments, politicians and civil society. This view is consistently repeated by Chinese scholars, and the 2009 Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan officially reiterates this position: "The Chinese government appreciates the concept and practice of 'solving African problems by Africans.'"[211]

Furthermore, while China has good relations with regimes in Sudan and Zimbabwe, it also has good relations with Ghana and South Africa, countries that have chosen relatively liberal democratic political systems. Herein lies an obvious but largely overlooked point, which is that China's impact on a given country is determined mostly by the internal political dynamics of the state in question. African governments hold the key to harnessing bilateral relations with China to the advantage of their populations, a fact which several African scholars have sought to stress.[212]

Chinese officials and scholars feel that China is unfairly singled out for criticism for the nature of its engagement with African regimes. This is not without foundation: many internationally owned companies continue to invest in Zimbabwe, and in 2008, British mining firm Anglo-American was set to "make what is believed to be the largest foreign investment in Zimbabwe to date" with a £200 million mine.[213] While China is a big player in Sudan's oil sector, Malaysian, Swedish and Austrian firms also operate there.[214] Western countries also have close ties to the ruling regime in Rwanda, which has a highly problematic human rights record alongside deep involvement in the ongoing conflict in neighbouring DRC.[215] The West and China also share close ties with Ethiopia, whose government has been accused of committing widespread war crimes in the turbulent Ogaden region and repressing political opposition.[216] President Obiang's regime in Equatorial Guinea, Africa's third largest oil exporter, has been accused of violating human rights,[217] but at the same time, with "investments estimated at over $12 billion, the United States is the largest cumulative bilateral foreign investor in Equatorial Guinea. Exports to the USA totalled over $2.39 billion in 2009 and consisted overwhelmingly of petroleum products."[218] As Taylor points out, "Although

207   Ibid, p 40.
208   See Holsag (2009).
209   Raine (2009), p 162.
210   Large (2007), p 36.
211   *Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan (2010–2012): 2.6.2.*
212   See Mwanzia (2010), Alao (2010), Baregu (2010).
213   Robertson, David & Webster, Philip (2008) 'Outrage over £200 million UK investment in Zimbabwe' in *The Sunday Times*, 25 June 2008.
214   Sunderland, Ruth (2010) 'Oil companies accused of helping to fuel Sudan war crimes' in *The Guardian*, 13 June 2010.
215   Amnesty International (2010) *Rwanda: Annual Report 2010*.
216   Human Rights Watch (2009) *Ogaden: War Crimes in Ethiopia*.
217   Amnesty International (2009) *Equatorial Guinea: Annual Report 2009*.
218   US Department of State (2010) *Background Notes: Equatorial Guinea*.

justifiable disquiet surrounds those aspects of Chinese engagement in Africa that may undermine political and economic reform, much of Africa's predicament is complex, so erecting a scapegoat to blame makes little sense – beyond masking ulterior anxieties regarding China's African sojourn."[219]

Conclusion   While China's bilateral engagement with African countries will continue to operate within the broad confines of the principle of non-interference, the growing flexibility awarded to its interpretation by scholars and officials in Beijing suggests that this is not an insurmountable obstacle to China's more proactive engagement on peace and conflict challenges in Africa. Jiang Hengkun writes that as its global engagements have developed "the intention, extension and the role of China's non-interference principle has been in constant adjustment."[220] Senior officials have noted that there is a willingness in Beijing to take a more proactive stance at the country level in the future to better align China's growing responsibilities with its growing influence.[221]

That China has started to show some willingness to play a more proactive role should be strongly welcomed by those with an interest in Africa's peace and security. At the same time, expectations should be limited. Beijing is inherently cautious and remains reluctant to become involved in a country's internal crisis unless it feels compelled to do so, either by its own interests or by pressure from others.

China appears to have utilised its bilateral relations with Rwanda, the DRC, Zimbabwe and Sudan to pressure them to enter into negotiations. Notwithstanding the clear merits of such an approach, there are few known examples where China has actually played a more direct role in facilitating negotiations or mediating dialogue between conflicting parties in Africa. If a more active role in this area for China is to be realised, field research, capacity building, learning and the formation of clear policy guidelines will be required. Politically, Beijing will need to interact more widely with non-state actors such as civil society groups, opposition leaders and, in some cases, with armed groups themselves. Lastly, in many places where it has become the key external actor, China will find that the rest of the international community expects it to take the lead. Beijing needs to begin to do so more regularly if it seeks to prove to its critics that it is not a passive actor.

Regarding governance, it is African actors, not external actors, who hold the key to finding sustainable solutions to political problems and security challenges. The repercussions of Chinese economic investment will differ greatly between a relatively well-governed state with an elected and accountable leader and a state characterised by extreme neo-patrimonialism and authoritarian rule. Nonetheless, *all* external actors, including China, need to better recognise how they affect these dynamics – and to act accordingly. Through its diplomatic relations, and through its growing role in their political economies, China does have an impact on the internal affairs of African countries. This is recognised in Beijing.

China is not a traditional development donor in Africa and does not explicitly seek to improve governance and generate political reform. It believes that such changes must come from the inside. Given its own domestic political realities, Beijing is unlikely to start pushing for a political reform agenda as part of its state-to-state relations. Yet internal instability does not bode well for China itself: its investments and interests come under risk and its political association with some regimes, especially during periods of conflict, makes it a target. The damage to China's image may last longer than some of the regimes it is seen to support. This means that Beijing will need to carefully

219 Taylor (2009), p 109.
220 Jiang (2010).
221 Africa-Asia Centre/Royal Africa Society (2010) 'Africa: The view from China' seminar, 6 September 2010, London.

consider where its economic investments are likely to be more costly than profitable in the long term.

Finally, ignoring the 'inconvenient truth'[222] that China's investments in some parts of Africa are not too different to those of Western states is unwise. It feeds into Chinese suspicions that the foundations of Western criticism of China-Africa relations are in fact geopolitical. This undermines more legitimate concerns that China's policy of non-interference might make matters worse in periods of crisis in the short term, and constrain the development of better governance over the long term. Instead of making over-simplistic accusations, the West needs to better engage with Beijing on how such obstacles can be overcome. This is a complex issue as it involves reconciling differing perspectives on how and when bilateral pressure should be applied and to what ends. This only makes the case for furthering efforts at engagement and dialogue stronger.

222 Brautigam, Deborah (2010) 'Africa's Eastern promise: What the West can learn from Chinese Investment in Africa' in *Foreign Affairs*, 5 January 2010.

5

Military co-operation

CHINA'S 2006 AFRICA POLICY notes that "China will promote high-level military exchanges between the two sides and actively carry out military-related technological exchanges and co-operation. It will continue to help train African military personnel and support defence and army building of African countries for their own security."[223] Similarly, the FOCAC action plans make references to China assisting African states to better develop their defence sectors. This chapter explores the structure of military co-operation, its basic content and the motivations that underpin it. The chapter then raises some critical questions as to whether China's military co-operation with African states is beneficial to broader peace and security, highlighting some of the challenges that are common to many external actors beside China.

The structure of co-operation

China-Africa military co-operation, which has an evident bearing on peace and security, is under-examined for two reasons. Firstly, as Holslag notes, China's "military diplomacy in Africa remains modest", especially when compared to diplomatic efforts to deepen trade and commercial ties.[224] Secondly, Huang points out that bilateral military relations remain extremely opaque,[225] making it difficult to assess the nature, detail and depth of bilateral military co-operation between China and African countries.

Despite this secrecy, a broad picture can be outlined. In one of the few detailed examinations of the issue, David Shinn states that "China offers at least modest quantities of military assistance or training to nearly every African country with which is has diplomatic relations."[226] Shinn argues that ten countries have more established military ties with China than others: Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.[227]

Nearly all of China's known military engagements in Africa have been implemented on a bilateral basis. Ties are maintained through high-level political delegations that meet with their counterparts or with senior military officials. For example, in March 2010 President Joseph Kabila of the DRC met with the Deputy-Chief of the People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s General Staff "to discuss the development of bilateral ties and military co-operation."[228] Defence Ministers also meet one another in Beijing and in African capitals, while there are frequent delegations from African states to China and vice versa.

223 China's Africa Policy (2006), 4.(1).
224 Holslag, Jonathan (2009) 'China's New Security Strategy for Africa' in *Parameters*, Summer 2009, pp 23–37.
225 Huang (2010), p 3.
226 Shinn (2008), p 161.
227 Ibid.
228 China Daily (2010) 'President of DR Congo meets Chinese army official', 13 March 2010.

China's 2008 Defence White paper notes that:

The PLA develops co-operative military relations with other countries that are non-aligned, non-confrontational and not directed against any third party, and engages in various forms of military exchanges and co-operation in an effort to create a military security environment featuring mutual trust and mutual benefit.[229]

These military-level relations are "a strategic level activity in support of the larger foreign, diplomatic, economic and security agenda set by China's leadership. The PLA does not engage in freestanding military initiatives conducted by military professionals for military reasons. In other words, the PLA is not an independent actor, it must coordinate its activities with the party and state bureaucracy."[230]

The frequency of high-level military delegations visits between China and Africa increased at the end of the 1990s, but has largely remained constant over the past decade.[231] This is surprising given that China has significantly increased its military exchanges over the same period with the rest of the world.[232]

Figure 2: Major military exchanges between China and Africa[233]
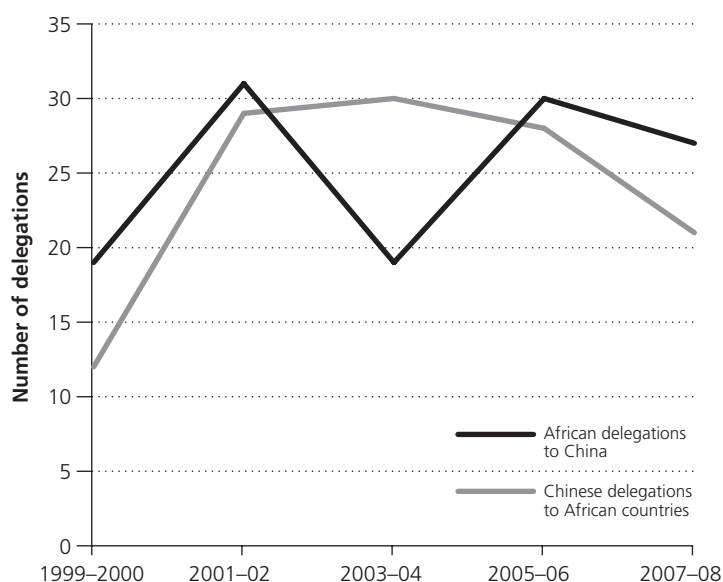
While the PLA maintains security consultations (instituted and regular military-level contacts) with several countries globally, it only holds one in Africa: the Sino-South African Defence Committee, established in 2003.

At a lower level, an increasing number of African countries maintain military attachés in their embassies in Beijing.[234] In this regard, Africa appears to have increased its engagement with China. Since 1985 China itself has nearly doubled its number of defence attachés worldwide from 59 to 109. However in Africa the increase has been far more modest, from nine to fifteen.[235] This is in contrast to Europe, where nearly every capital has a Chinese defence attaché. In fact, despite its rapidly growing political and economic ties with Africa since 1985, China has maintained the share of its attachés in Africa at only about 15 percent of its total.[236]

229 Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2009) *China's National Defence in 2008*.
230 Shinn (2008), p 162.
231 *Chinese National Defence White Papers:* 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008.
232 Holslag (2009), p 28.
233 People's Republic of China Information Office of the State Council (2010) *Chinese National Defence White Papers 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008*.
234 In 1988 only nine African countries maintained permanent attachés in Beijing. This had increased to 13 by 1998, 18 by 2007 and 28 by 2010. Shinn (2008), p 161; Puska (2007), p 1; and Shinn, David (2010), 'International perspectives: Involvement of Non-Western States' in *Introduction to African Security Issues*, seminar hosted by the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, National Defence University.
235 Holslag (2009), p 26.
236 Puska (2007), p 1.

For Holslag, the comparatively low number of exchanges and attachés with Africa confirms that military ties have not kept pace with the growth of political and economic ties.[237] However, a recent flurry of military exchanges with Africa in 2010 might suggest a widening and, more importantly, deepening of China's military engagement in Africa. Furthermore, the number of attachés cannot be taken as a full measure of the depth of engagement: the content rather than the frequency of military exchanges is of primary importance.

Content of co-operation

There are several components of China's military assistance to, and co-operation with, African countries. Clearly, as the Defence White Paper notes, "military-related technological exchanges", including conventional weapons transfers, are an important component. China's weapons transfers are explored in more detail in chapter 6.[238] Chinese financial assistance to African militaries has come in the form of both grants and aid. For example, in April 2010 it was revealed that China was donating $1.5 million to Mauritania to buy military engineering equipment.[239] After a two-week visit to China in 2005 by the Liberian defence minister, it was announced that the Chinese government would pledge $600,000 for the capacity building of the Liberian military,[240] and in 2001 China granted Nigeria $1 million to upgrade its military facilities.[241] In 2007, China's Export Import Bank signed a $30 million loan for Ghana's government to "acquire military equipment and build a dedicated communications system for the police, armed forces, prison services and other security agencies."[242] A Chinese company, the ZTE Corporation, was the contractor.

Indeed much of the assistance which China provides to African governments to finance military infrastructure development is in turn spent on Chinese companies who carry out the implementation of the projects. For example, in partnership with the Chinese Ministry of National Defence, the China Xing Xing Corporation constructed the $5.5 million barracks donated by China to the Liberian army.[243] In 2006 Angola "announced the creation of an elite tactical and operational support unit, with US$6 million in financing from China for the unit's training centre. Angola selected a Chinese company, Jinagsu International, to build the centre."[244]

China has also made commitments that are clearly not of a commercial nature. For example, in 2007 China launched a de-mining assistance programme for Africa, providing training for de-mining personnel and landmine removal devices. Courses have been held for personnel from Angola, Mozambique, Chad, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Sudan with equipment and funds being supplied to those countries, in addition to Ethiopia and Egypt. In 2010 the Engineer Command College of the PLA gave a six-week training course to 21 Sudanese de-miners in China.[245] In fact, despite China being not a signatory to the 1997 Ottawa Treaty banning the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines, the PLA has taken a relatively active role in de-mining: according to its own figures, it has trained over 300 de-miners in nearly 20 countries and instructed in the clearance of more than 200,000 square meters of minefield in the last ten years.[246]

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237 Holslag (2009), p 26.
238 It is also important to note that China has begun to engage on policing issues. In August 2010 the South African Police Deputy Minister and his Chinese counterpart signed a police co-operation agreement and 'issued a statement outlining ways of consolidating and exchanging intelligence information on drug trafficking, illegal immigration, money laundering, arms smuggling and trafficking of women and children.' Global Times (2010) 'South Africa, China sign police agreement', 1 August 2010.
239 Voice of America (2010) 'China Donates $1.5 million to Boost Mauritania's Defence', 20 April 2010.
240 FOCAC website (2005) 'China Pledges $600,000 for capacity building of Liberian army'.
241 Shinn (2008), p 167.
242 Ibid, p 167.
243 The Informer (2009) 'China Again! – Turns over US$5.5 million Barracks', 30 April 2009.
244 Shinn (2008), p 165.
245 PLA Daily (2010) 'International humanitarian mine-sweeping training class for Sudan concluded' 9 July 2010.
246 Xinhua News (2009) 'China trains deminers for nearly 20 countries', 11 September 2009.

The training of African military personnel has been carried out by China since its support for armed groups in the Cold War. Reflecting changes since then, training is currently referred to as 'capacity building' and Wang Xuejun explains that "training is in two forms. One is that military personnel of the African countries come to China for training, and the other is that the Chinese military officers take the training to African countries."[247] An example of the former is that in May 2010 15 senior military officers from 15 African countries took part in a 12-day course organised by the College of Defence Studies and the PLA National Defence University.[248]

Some of this training is more regular. For example, up to 30 Angolan military personnel receive training in China every year.[249] However, the extent of in-country capacity building of African militaries is unclear. One known case is the training of the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), by Chinese instructors in the country's eastern Katanga province. In 2008 the PLA sent 16 trainers to DRC as part of a training programme that continued throughout 2009.[250] In August 2009, China notified the UN Sanctions Committee on DRC of a follow-up training programme to be conducted by 23 Chinese instructors.[251] In Guinea, China trained elite commando units (named the *Commandos Chinois*) between 2004 and 2008,[252] and PLA army instructors have been seconded to the Zimbabwe Staff College.[253] Holslag suggests a significant amount of Chinese training in Africa focuses on teaching militaries how to use equipment bought from Chinese defence companies.[254]

Although China has held joint-military exercises with several nations in recent years, it has only held one in Africa, a humanitarian and medical training operation between the Chinese and Gabonese militaries in 2009 named Operation Peace Angel.[255] The 2008 Defence White Paper also notes that the Chinese Navy conducted a bilateral joint maritime exercise with South Africa in that year, but provides no further details.[256] South Africa and Egypt are the only two African countries to have been officially invited to observe Chinese military exercises within China. The two countries have also received Chinese Navy visits. In 2002 a Chinese destroyer passed through the Suez Canal and docked in Alexandria during the PLA navy's first around-the-world trip, while in 2000, during the first ever cruise to Africa, Chinese navy vessels docked in Tanzania and South Africa. In 2008, the first South African navy ship docked in Shanghai. More recently, Chinese naval vessels conducting counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden have docked in Djibouti.

The involvement of the Chinese navy in the multilateral anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia is the first known operational deployment of the Chinese military 'in' Africa (with the exception of its UN peacekeeping troops). This has led to some suggestions from Chinese military officials that China should establish a permanent base in East Africa to support its operations in the Gulf of Aden.[257] In a 2009 interview, retired Rear Admiral Cheuk Yin argued that a long term base would be necessary to avoid the long journeys required to re-supply the Chinese navy.[258]

The permanent deployment of the Chinese military in Africa, operating outside of traditional peacekeeping missions, would mark a significant development in China's

247 Wang, Xuejun (2010) 'Viewing China-Africa AU Security Co-operation from the Perspective of the Development of the African Collective Security Mechanism', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

248 PLA Daily (2010) 'Ma Xiaotian meets commanders from English speaking African countries', 27 May 2010.

249 Shinn (2008), p 165.

250 United Nations Security Council (2009) *Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo* S/2009/603. p 63. The UN report also suggests that part of the military equipment delivered by China to the DRC in 2009 was a component of the military co-operation between China and DRC and was transferred in order to be used during the training provided by the Chinese instructors.

251 Ibid.

252 International Crisis Group (2010) *Guinea: Reforming the Army Africa*, Report no. 164.

253 Shinn (2008), p 174.

254 Holslag (2009), p 26.

255 Sina English News (2009) 'Peace Angel 2009 Kicks Off', 22 June 2009.

256 *China's National Defence in 2008* (2009), p 50.

257 Kostecka, Daniel (2010) 'The Chinese Navy's Emerging Support Network in the Indian Ocean' in *China Brief*, vol. 10 issue 15.

258 China.cn News (2009) 'Cheuk Yin: Chinese Navy should establish long-term supply base in Djibouti', 28 December 2009.

military relations with African states. Despite unsubstantiated rumours of PLA troops being deployed in Sudan,[259] there is no evidence of unilateral Chinese military action in Africa. Holslag is sceptical that this will change, at least for the foreseeable future, due to a number of factors including the Chinese military's own capacity limitations and negative reactions from other powers.[260]

Motivations

A potentially important factor motivating China's bilateral military co-operation is China's own interests on the continent: in countries with large Chinese commercial investments and/or which are important energy suppliers, supporting the capacity of host states to safeguard those interests using their own security forces may be a significant motivation.[261] However, the depth of economic ties does not seem to be reflected in the depth of military co-operation, which is certainly not limited to countries from which China imports natural resources. Both Shinn and Holslag point to the fact that countries such as Ghana or Uganda, which currently export few resources, have deep military ties while Libya, which exports large amounts of oil to China, has none.[262]

In fact the commercial benefits accrued from military co-operation itself may be important, whether in the form of arms sales or in the form of Chinese firms being allocated contracts for infrastructure projects, themselves paid for by Chinese aid or loans.

More generally, it is clear that the consolidation of military ties is simply one dimension of China's wider diplomatic relations with Africa, which serves to strengthen ties with governments on the continent and reinforces China's political weight on the international arena, especially within the UNSC. However, the fact that military ties have not developed to the same extent as China's economic and political relations suggests that military relations are currently a supporting factor rather than an end in themselves. At the same time, and as with participation in peacekeeping missions, military exchanges, training and joint exercises provide an opportunity for the PLA itself to tentatively engage overseas.

China's stated commitment to assist African countries with their peace and security challenges may be a motivation in itself, and African governments have turned to Beijing to request support in meeting their needs. As with weapons transfers, China does not make its military assistance conditional (except on the 'One China' issue) and has built strong ties with countries that have not been able to access such support from the West, as is the case with Sudan and Zimbabwe. This makes China an attractive source of military assistance, which may explain why African governments have been posting military attachés in Beijing with increasing frequency.

Impact on African peace and security

With little information, few details and the generally secretive nature of military-related issues, it is difficult to assess what impact China's military relations have for African peace and security. This represents a particular concern given that the military in Africa has "kept the defence and security debate outside the domain of civil society and led to mystification of defence and security issues. It has effectively prevented transparency and accountability in defence management in many countries on the continent."[263]

259 For example in August 2000 *The Sunday Telegraph* published a story that claimed as many as thousands of Chinese troops had been deployed to Sudan. The story was found to be untrue and was withdrawn. The Sunday Telegraph (2000) 'China Puts '700,000 Troops' on Sudan Alert', 26 August 2000. Also see Shinn (2008), p 171.

260 Holslag (2009), pp 34–36.

261 For example, see Puska, Susan (2007) 'Military backs China's Africa adventure' in *Asia Times Online*, 8 June 2007.

262 Shinn (2008), pp 161–2, Holslag (2009), p 29.

263 Le Roux, Len (2006) 'Challenges for defence planners in Africa: Ensuring appropriate, adequate, accountable and affordable armed forces' in *African Security Review*, 15:4, p vi.

Despite this, some might argue that any assistance is beneficial: many African militaries are under-resourced, poorly equipped and lack the necessary training to fulfil their functions, which most obviously includes upholding security. However, assistance needs to be appropriate to actual security challenges faced on the ground. As Le Roux argues, this is not always the case and the "hype of defence against external military aggression and major conventional battles that is so often used as the sole driver for the design of African armed forces should be left to those who see Africa as an arms market only."[264] That China has committed to supporting African militaries develop their peacekeeping capacities suggests that, at least in this regard, Chinese assistance is appropriate to needs and so can be effective.[265] Given the widespread harm caused to civilians by landmines, especially in post-conflict countries, China's role in de-mining should clearly be very welcome.

In comparison to global standards, African governments generally invest smaller proportions of their budgets on military spending.[266] Nonetheless, the allocation of Chinese assistance to military spending, rather than to more pressing socio-economic development projects, may come at a cost. Furthermore, military training and assistance need to be delivered in the framework of wider security sector development, tied to other state institutions such as the police or the judiciary. In short, Chinese military assistance may not always be effective when isolated from broader public policy, governance and development issues that may be equally important to upholding peace and security in the long term.

China's support of militaries which, rather than acting as a neutral force that upholds state security and territorial integrity, have become politicised tools used by regimes to hold onto power in the face of internal opposition, constitutes a negative impact on African security. For example in Guinea, Chinese-trained elite Commandos were one of the units involved in the killing of 150 people in response to a political protest in September 2009.[267]

A recent UN Group of Experts report on the DRC highlights that the FARDC have been involved in violations of international humanitarian law, the displacement of communities and has generally failed to protect citizens in the east.[268] The Congolese government has primary responsibility for these failures. However, China is currently training the FARDC troops in the east of the country where the conflict is taking place, and so it too holds responsibilities as a participating external actor.

Whether Chinese military assistance is beneficial for peace depends on whether it is delivered in a manner that builds a more responsible and accountable military that protects its citizens or whether assistance only strengthens the military's capacity to entrench its power. As with the transfer of arms, providing training assistance to militaries needs to be carefully considered.

Clearly there are challenges and difficult questions to be asked as to whether Chinese military co-operation in Africa is conducive to supporting peace and upholding the security of civilians. These are difficulties faced by all external actors. For example, in Guinea units trained by South Africa, France and the USA were also heavily implicated in the violence in September 2009.[269] In the DRC case, various external actors, including the USA, the EU, individual European countries and South Africa, are involved in supporting security sector reform (SSR), including training and assistance for the FARDC.

264 Ibid, p vii.
265 For example, the Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan notes that China will 'intensify co-operation with African countries in peacekeeping theory research, peacekeeping training and exchanges and in supporting the building of peacekeeping capacity in Africa.' *Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan 2.6.2.*
266 Smaldone, Joseph P (2006) 'African military spending: Defence versus development?' in *African Security Review*, 15:4, p 29.
267 Amnesty International (2010) *Guinea: You did not want the military, so now we are going to teach you a lesson – The events of September 28 2009 and their aftermath*, p 32.
268 UNSC (2009), p 4.
269 Amnesty International (2010), p 23.

Part of the solution in such situations is for external actors to "have a shared under-standing of SSR, and to work collectively to provide coherent and co-ordinated support to partner countries."[270] China has participated in the International Committee for the Accompaniment of the Transition (ICAT), a body that seeks to co-ordinate external actors on issues such as SSR within DRC.[271] Despite this, China has not made public detailed information on its military assistance to the FARDC. UNSC resolution 1807 explicitly notes that all states must notify the sanctions committee in advance of not only arms transfers to the DRC, but of "any provision of assistance, advice or training related to military activities."[272] While China has made notifications to this effect, these remain insufficiently detailed and do not fully respond to the rationale of establishing this UN monitoring and transparency mechanism.[273]

Conclusion

Beijing's military ties with Africa are relatively insignificant when compared with China's economic and political engagement. Bilateral military co-operation with African states is restricted to high-level political meetings, military level exchanges and military attachés. This engagement has led to China's loan and aid financing of military infrastructure projects, de-mining assistance, training programmes for African personnel and very limited joint exercises.

As is the case for all countries providing military assistance to Africa, the impact for peace and security, and most pressingly for the protection of civilians, depends on to what ends and by which methods this assistance is delivered. If it improves account-ability, supports civilian protection, is adequate to needs and continues to focus on pressing issues such as peacekeeping and de-mining it will surely have a positive impact. Additionally, it needs to be coherent with wider SSR programmes in a trans-parent and co-operative way.

At a conference in 2009, Ma Xiaotian, PLA Deputy Chief of General Staff noted that "Looking ahead, the position and the role of the military contact with foreign countries will be more important in the overall work of the CPC, the state and the PLA."[274] What this might mean for African peace and security, and how other external actors might react, is open to future observation.

270 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2007) *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, Paris: OECD, p 14.
271 International Crisis Group (2006) *Security Sector Reform in the Congo*, Africa Report no. 104, p 18.
272 UNSC Resolution 1807 (2008), paragraph 5, p 4.
273 UNSC (Report S/2009/603), p 63.
274 PLA Daily (2009).

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The arms trade

THE TRANSFER OF CHINESE ARMS TO AFRICAN STATES has been one of the most controversial aspects of China's engagement in Africa. This chapter firstly provides an overview of China's place in the African arms market, its customers and its products, the main actors involved in arms transactions and the motivations underpinning the arms trade. It then aims to provide a fair and balanced assessment of the problems associated with the import of Chinese arms into African states, and how this trade affects African peace and security.

China's place in Africa's arms market

Few accurate figures exist of the extent and scope of China's arms trade with Africa. The relative paucity of measurable open source data on China's arms production and trade means that it is not possible to provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of the Chinese arms trade with Africa. Nonetheless, from what open sources exist, it is possible to establish that China's global exports are rising. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), between 2006 and 2009, China ranked eighth among the leading suppliers of major conventional arms worldwide,[275] while the US Congressional Research Service (CRS),[276] finds China to be the world's fifth largest arms exporter, exporting nearly $7.6 billion worth of arms between 2006 and 2009.[277]

While China is a relatively small player in global markets, nearly all of its arms are exported to developing countries. Between 2006 and 2009, 98.6 percent of its transfers were to the developing world.[278] Whereas some other major arms suppliers are reducing – or at least stabilising – their sales to developing nation markets, this represents a growth area for Chinese manufacturers. According to SIPRI, during the period 2005–2009, Africa accounted for only 12 percent of China's global arms sales: the majority went to South Asia (57 percent) and the Middle East (21 percent).[279] Yet Africa remains a potentially important – and growing – market for China. For example, China was the biggest exhibitor at the Africa Aerospace and Defence 2010 expo in South Africa.[280] According to the CRS, China's $600 million worth of arms trade agreements from 2006–2009 made it the largest single supplier[281] to sub-Saharan Africa.

275 SIPRI (2010) SIPRI Armed Transfers Database.

276 The values of arms transfer agreements (or deliveries) in CRS reports refer to the total values of conventional arms orders (or deliveries as the case may be), which include all categories of weapons and ammunition, military spare parts, military construction, military assistance and training programmes, and all associated services.

277 Grimmett, Richard F (2010), *Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 2002–2009*, United States Congressional Research Service, p 32.

278 Ibid, p 32.

279 SIPRI (2010) *SIPRI Yearbook 2010: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Oxford University Press.

280 Business Standard (2010) 'China to be biggest exhibitor at Defence expo', 2 September 2010.

281 Given the paucity of information and the lack of transparency on how the data are collected and processed by CRS, it is important not to overemphasise the accuracy of these findings.

Table 2: Arms transfer agreements with sub-Saharan Africa by supplier, 2002–2009 (in millions of current US dollars)[282]

Supplier	Transfer agreements with sub-Saharan Africa, US dollars in millions	
	2002–2005	2006–2007
United States	173	166
Russia	800	200
France	100	0
United Kingdom	0	0
China	**800**	**600**
Germany	0	0
Italy	300	200
All other European	800	600
All others	500	300
Total	**3,473**	**2,066**

Table 3: Percentage of total agreements value by supplier to sub-Saharan Africa, 2002–2009[283]

Supplier	Percentage of total transfer agreements with sub-Saharan Africa	
	2002–2005	2006–2009
United States	4.98%	8.03%
Russia	23.03%	9.68%
France	2.88%	0.00%
United Kingdom	0.00%	0.00%
China	**23.03%**	**29.04%**
Germany	0.00%	0.00%
Italy	8.64%	9.68%
All other European	23.03%	29.04%
All others	14.40%	14.52%
Total	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

According to China's reports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), between 2006 and 2008 China exported a range of major conventional arms to several African countries.[284] Like many other countries, China only submits data to UNROCA on those transactions that it feels 'comfortable' reporting on. With the exception of portable surface-to-air missiles, such data does not cover small arms and light weapons (SALW).[285] The task of establishing exact figures for China's arms trade with Africa is made no less challenging by the lack of public transparency on the part of African importing states, evidenced by the incomplete submissions or non-submissions by most African states to the UNROCA. However, it is clear from the limited data and information available that China exports a wide range of military equipment to many African countries.

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282 Grimmett (2010), p 37.
283 Ibid, p 39.
284 In 2007, China resumed reporting to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms data on the annual transfer of seven major categories of conventional arms.
285 Some countries have started to include references to SALW in their UN submissions, for example Albania in 2010. However, this is still rare.

Table 4: China's submission to the UN Register of Conventional Arms

China's arms exports to Africa – Calendar year 2006[286]

Category	Final importer	Number of items
II. Armoured combat vehicles	Republic of Congo	4
	Gabon	6
	Tanzania	2
III. Large-calibre artillery systems	Niger	6
IV. Combat aircraft	Namibia	6
	Zimbabwe	6

Calendar year 2007[287]

Category	Final importer	Number of items
II. Armoured combat vehicles	Tanzania	2
	Kenya	32
	Chad	10
III. Large-calibre artillery systems	Rwanda	6
IV. Attack helicopters	Ghana	4

Calendar year 2008[288]

Category	Final importer	Number of items
II. Armoured combat vehicles	Rwanda	20

Calendar year 2009[289]

Category	Final importer	Number of items
II. Armoured combat vehicles	Namibia	21
	Republic of Congo	9
	Ghana	48
IV. Combat aircraft	Nigeria	15
	Tanzania	2

Because its small arms and ammunition are relatively inexpensive, China is becoming the provider of choice in Africa for SALW such as the AR-56 assault rifle, a Chinese version of the Russian AK-47. The exact volume and value of Chinese SALW exports are unknown. Using COMTRADE data,[290] among other sources, the Small Arms Survey has ranked China as the world's third top producer of SALW after the United States and Russia, and one of the leading international exporters.[291] The 2009 Small Arms Survey estimates that between 2000 and 2006, China increased its global SALW exports by 1,815 percent.[292] During this time, China has reportedly delivered SALW to at least 27 of Africa's 54 countries.[293] In addition to SALW, according to Amnesty International, China also manufactures and supplies electroshock weapons such as stun guns and electroshock batons, and supplies mechanical restraints such as hand-cuffs, leg irons and shackles.[294]

Today, Chinese military and security equipment can be found in many African countries. Some examples of sales to Africa in recent years illustrate the different recipients of different types and amounts of Chinese weapons. China has provided the

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286 United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (2010) UN Database, date of submission: 31 August 2007.

287 Ibid. Date of submission: 9 July 2008.

288 Ibid. Date of submission: 9 June 2009.

289 Ibid. Date of submission: 28 June 2010.

290 COMTRADE data is not comprehensive as it only refers to deliveries reported by customs authorities. In a number of cases, military goods imported by state authorities are not cleared through customs and there is therefore no record of their entry into the country in the COMTRADE database.

291 Small Arms Survey (2009) *Small Arms Survey 2009: Shadows of war*, Oxford University Press.

292 Ibid.

293 Shinn, David (2009) 'Chinese Involvement in African Conflict Zones' in *China Brief*, vol. 9:7.

294 Amnesty International (2006), *China: Sustaining Conflict and Human Rights Abuses: The Flow of Arms Continues*, 9 June 2006.

Angolan armed forces with eight Chinese built Su-27 SK fighter jets in addition to an extensive range of light weapons and ammunitions. According to media reports, in 2009 the Angolan army was in contact with China's defence manufacturer NORINCO for the purchase of artillery guns, armoured vehicles and ammunition.[295] China's defence industry has started to slowly penetrate into Nigeria.[296] In 2005 Nigeria spent $251 million on the purchase of 15 Chinese fighter jets, after a series of substantial oil deals were made between China and Nigeria.[297] In Chad, SIPRI has documented the transfer of ten armoured personnel vehicles (APV) in 2007 from China.[298] China sold a large quantity of weapons to both Ethiopia and Eritrea during their 1998–2000 war, and Ethiopia has continued to be a significant customer for Chinese arms. It is estimated that in 2006, Ethiopia imported $13 million of SALW from China and a further $43 million worth in 2007.[299] Egypt is one of the countries with the most Chinese-made weapons in Africa. The largest project between the two countries was the agreement on the production of 80 K-8 trainer aircraft, signed in February 1999, to a value of $347 million, with further deals in 2004.[300] Sierra Leone received $10 million worth of arms from China in 2006, mostly in the form of patrol boats, while Ghana paid $9 million to exchange its Gulf Stream aircraft for Chinese fighter jets in 2007.[301] Ghana also bought 627 pistols and revolvers from China in 2008.[302] Botswana bought $1.9 million worth of military small arms from China in that year while in 2007 Uganda received $1.7 million worth of various SALW.[303] As all of these examples make clear, a wide variety of arms deals have taken place in recent years between China and African states, which differ in scale, value and type of weapon.

Regulations and policy

The primary piece of legislation governing China's arms export trade is the 'Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Administration of Arms Exports' (1997), which were updated in 2002 and were accompanied by the adoption of a control list of items subject to legislation.[304] It has been argued that "China's transition from an administratively based and largely *ad hoc* export control system to one grounded solidly in law and official regulations represents the most significant development of Chinese non-proliferation policy in recent years."[305] In addition to these regulations, there are three basic principles guiding Chinese arms export licensing policy. Firstly, arms exports must be meant for the importing state's legitimate self-defence. Secondly, the export must not impair peace, safety or stability in the recipient's region or globally. Thirdly, exports should not be used as a means of interfering in the internal affairs of the recipient country.[306] In addition to these three basic principles, arms export applications will be denied if: "they are against the international conventions China has acceded to, or the international commitments China has made; they jeopardise China's national security and social interests directly or indirectly; the recipient party is under a UNSC military embargo, or is a non-state actor."[307] Furthermore, Chinese policy does not allow the unauthorised re-export of arms.

295 United Press International (2009) 'China sells heavy artillery to host of African nations', 30 January 2009.

296 Taylor, Ian (2007) 'Arms Sales to Africa: Beijing's Reputation at Risk' in *China Brief*, vol. 7:7.

297 Defence Industry Weekly (2005) 'Nigeria Spends $251 million for Chinese F-7 Fighters after oil deals', 30 September 2005.

298 SIPRI (2010) SIPRI Arms Transfers Database.

299 NISAT (2010) NISAT SALW Transfer Database.

300 SIPRI (2010) SIPRI Arms Transfers Database.

301 Ibid.

302 NISAT (2010) SALW Transfer Database.

303 Ibid.

304 Chinese Government's official web portal, *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Administration of Arms Export*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2010) *National Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Lights Weapons in All Its Aspects, and of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons*, p 7.

305 Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia (2005) *Export Controls in the People's Republic of China*, p 13.

306 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2009) *China's Policy and Regulation on Arms Trade*.

307 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, National Report, pp 14–15; Han, Binbin, North Institute of Science and Technology Information, *China's Perspective on the Illicit Arms Trade*, a presentation given at a seminar on *Proliferation of Conventional Weapons as a Threat to Global Security*, hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies and Saferworld, 25 November 2009.

The desire to curtail the illicit proliferation of arms has led to several regional and international initiatives, especially ones that focus on combating the spread of SALW. The most notable of these is the 2001 'UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects', which China is committed to implementing. In 2002, China became the 46th signatory of the 'UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms' and has claimed that it is "actively preparing for its ratification."[308] In 2007, China introduced new rules on SALW markings, which specify "requirements for the content, format, location and production of markings on small arms, spare parts and accessories, as well as their packing containers in conformity with the corresponding requirements of the Firearms Protocol and the International Tracing Instrument."[309] Since May 2006, records have been kept for the export of all SALW, including information on the contract, licence, importer, exporter, carrier, port of dispatch, port of transit, port of destination and marks.[310] These and other steps taken since the mid-1990s suggest that China has started to take steps towards better controlling its arms exports.

China has also made important commitments to assist in tackling the problem of SALW in Africa. China's 2006 Africa policy calls for "closer co-operation in combating terrorism, small arms smuggling, drug trafficking, transnational economic crimes, etc."[311] The FOCAC 2000 Beijing Declaration established that "the two sides are ready to enhance their co-operation in stopping the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons."[312] Most explicitly though, the 2006 Beijing Action Plan stated that China would:

… continue to support and take part in the effort to combat illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.[313]

Actors involved in arms transfers

Given the sensitivity and secrecy surrounding the topic, little is known about key actors involved in arms deals between China and African states. Evidently, African defence ministries and militaries play a significant role in seeking out supplies for new weapons, with military delegations to China and defence attachés in Beijing serving as the main links through which such deals are made.[314] For example, when the Rwandan Minister of Defence visited China in October 2010 it was reported that he would "visit a number of Defence industries, equipment exhibition centres as well as a Research and Development Centre."[315] Chinese military delegations and attachés in Africa play a similar role, as alluded to by China's 2006 Africa Policy, which outlines "military-related technological exchanges" as a component of China-Africa military co-operation.[316] Some of China's training co-operation with African militaries focus on training militaries on how to use Chinese-bought weapons, suggesting that the arms trade is an important component of military co-operation.

The Chinese military maintains very close ties to the state-owned arms industry. Some defence companies are run directly by departments within the PLA, such as the General Armaments Division or the General Staff Department. However the arms industry is ultimately under the supervision of the State Council. After a peak in the

308 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2009), p 20.

309 Ibid, p 17.

310 Han, Binbin (2009). The centralised collection and record keeping of SALW data is a very positive first step. However, such data is normally not made available to relevant international stakeholders for tracing purposes.

311 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2006) *China's Africa Policy*.

312 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2000) *Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China Africa Co-operation Declaration*.

313 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2006) *3rd Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Beijing Action Plan 2007–2009*.

314 Puska (2007), Shinn, David (2008) 'Military and Security Relations: China, African and the Rest of the World', in (ed. Rotberg, Robert) *China into Africa: Aid, Trade, and Influence*, New York: Brookings Institute, p 161. Shinn, David (2010) International perspectives: Involvement of Non-Western States' in *Introduction to African Security Issues*, seminar Hosted by the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, National Defence University.

315 Karuhanga, James (2010) 'Kabarebe meets top Chinese defence officials' in *The New Times*, 22 October 2010.

316 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2006), 4.(1).

mid-1980s, the Chinese defence industry's global exports fell dramatically. In fact, between 1993 and 2001, China's entire defence industry ran at a net loss and incurred large debts.[317] In 2007 China introduced various consolidating measures designed to create a defence industrial base to meet the long-term hi-tech requirements of the PLA and transform domestic companies into global entities that could make a profit.[318] Currently, there are 12 companies authorised by the Chinese government to engage in arms export activities, of which four are authorised to export firearms.[319] They include: the China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO), the China Poly Group Corporation, and the China Xinxing Import and Export Corporation (CXXC). While these companies are state-owned and staffed with military and politically connected appointees, they are profit-making enterprises with commercial objectives.

Five main authorities are involved in the management of Chinese arms export controls: the Ministry of Defence, the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (SASTIND), the Customs authority, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since 2008, SASTIND, which operates under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), has been the main licensing body for the administration of conventional arms export controls. SASTIND receives and vets all licences for conventional arms exports, including missile-related exports, in co-ordination with the Arms Control Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence.

MOFCOM is the principal licensing agency for the export of dual-use goods. It is responsible for issuing regulations, control lists, and the approval or denial of licence applications for the export of dual-use goods and technologies related to biological, chemical, nuclear and missile areas. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for relevant multilateral negotiations; coordinating the research and drafting of policies by various governmental agencies; and organising the implementation of relevant international agreements.

Motivations

Between 1955 and 1977 China sold $142 million of military equipment to Africa as part of its ideological support for liberation movements and its broader participation in Cold War rivalry.[320] After African nations gained their independence, China (along-side other exporting powers including France and Great Britain) also used weapons supplies as a way of consolidating diplomatic ties. Nowadays, China's arms trade with Africa is interwoven with its economic and strategic diplomacy in the continent.[321] For China's arms industry, African states present an opportunity in the market: there is not great competition from Western companies, and for African governments, China presents an affordable supplier of weapons.[322] Furthermore, Chinese arms deliveries are not subject to end-use human rights considerations, which means China is often an attractive source of weaponry for countries with poor human rights records that cannot access weapons from other major suppliers.

The desire to improve political ties with recipient countries is another important factor in the transfer of arms. Since the prospects of significant economic return on some arms sales are in fact limited compared to more lucrative commercial deals, it is reasonable to assume that Beijing facilitates such arms transactions as one means of cementing the political ties that underpin the more valuable commercial and economic dimensions of the China-Africa relationship.

317 Taylor, Ian (2010) *China's New Role in Africa*, London: Lynne Rienner, p 114.
318 These 'shareholding reforms' were intended to encourage defence corporations to list the majority of their subsidiaries on Chinese stock exchanges and to establish internationally recognised business structures, such as boards of directors. Analysis suggests that the reforms have been partly successful, although their progress has been affected by the global economic downturn. By March 2010 an estimated 15 percent of defence company subsidiaries had been floated on domestic stock exchanges, less than originally anticipated. *Jane's Defence Business* (2010).
319 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2009).
320 Servant, Jean-Christophe (2005) 'China's Trade Safari in Africa' in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2005; see also Shinn (2008).
321 Alao, Abiodun (2010), *China's Role in African Security*, unpublished report, June 2010.
322 African armies are mainly using ex-Warsaw Pact weapons, which are relatively cheap, not so sophisticated in terms of use and maintenance and absolutely compatible with Chinese-manufactured items (especially the calibre of the ammunition).

This may be especially relevant to increasing China's ability to obtain access to strategic natural resources, especially oil.[323] China is a major importer of Liberian timber and, at the same time, a supplier of arms to the country.[324] China's main oil suppliers in Africa (Angola, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, Congo Brazzaville and Nigeria) have all received weapons from China. Human Rights First argues that there is a clear link between oil and arms in China's relationship with Sudan:

Sudan's military expenditures have risen dramatically since 1997, the year of its first oil exports. Much of the money for this shopping spree for weapons came from profits made from oil exports to China. And much of the money has gone directly back to China, for purchases of small arms and other military equipment by Sudan.[325]

One of China's state-owned energy companies is the largest foreign stakeholder in Sudan's oilfields and some have suggested that there exists a link between its interests and Chinese arms deals with Khartoum.[326] However, the argument that China barters arms transfers for access to mineral and other natural resources is too simplistic to explain all arms deals with Sudan, yet alone China's exports across Africa. Nigeria, for example, has received only limited quantities of weapons from China, while Ghana and Uganda have received relatively large amounts of arms over previous years despite the fact that neither had – until very recently – very large energy deposits.

Part of China's motivation for supplying arms to African governments is to appreciate the state's capacity to enforce internal security. When, for example, Sudan is facing violent uprisings in the South and the West – areas where China has economic interests – part of the solution to the problem that both countries understand and agree upon is to increase the state's capacity to impose stability. In this regard China's arms transfers may be seen by some as a means by which China supports, rather than undermines, peace and security in Africa.

The impact of Chinese arms

Assessing the impact of Chinese arms in Africa is a challenging endeavour, not least because of the difficulty of establishing firm figures on the volume of arms transfers. Nonetheless, the context of arms transfers, where weapons go and how they are used matters more than just their quantity and value. Chinese arms that are utilised responsibly by legitimate and accountable security forces can serve to improve peace and security. This may be the case for Chinese arms supplies to African militaries partaking in AU or UN peacekeeping operations. For example, in September 2008 Ghana signed a $160 million deal with China to re-equip and prepare its armed forces explicitly for multilateral peacekeeping operations.[327] Zambian troops use Chinese manufactured armoured personnel carriers in peace support operations in Sudan,[328] and China has also supplied ammunition to the joint AU-UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan.[329]

At the same time, some of the recipients of Chinese arms in Africa are countries facing ongoing conflict and instability, or countries where the government has attracted international condemnation for large-scale violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Three case studies illustrate the impact of China's arms transfers to such regimes.

323 Grimmet (2010), p 14. See also Birtzinger (2009).

324 Amnesty International (2006b), *Dead on Time – arms transportation, brokering and the threat to human rights*.

325 Human Rights First (2008) *China's Arms Sales to Sudan: Fact Sheet*.

326 Taylor (2010), p 122.

327 Bates, Huang & Morrison (2007), p 29.

328 Ibid.

329 Small Arms Survey (2009) *Supply and Demand: Arms flows and holdings in Sudan* – Sudan Issue Brief 15, p 3.

Case study: Sudan

According to the Small Arms Survey, over the period 2001–08, China provided 72 percent of the SALW delivered to the Government of Sudan.[330] Using COMTRADE data, the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) calculates that Sudan imported $686,574 worth of SALW between 2000–08,[331] although this is probably a gross underestimate. China also delivered more sophisticated military equipment to Sudan in the same period, including missile launchers, tanks, combat aircraft, transport aircraft, helicopters, cannon, rocket guns and air defence guns.[332] In total, SIPRI estimates that $143 million worth of weapons was exported to Sudan by China between 2000 and 2009, although this does not include SALW.[333] China has also joined other countries in helping Sudan to develop its own weapons manufacturing capacity, with its companies helping to build at least three weapons factories outside of Khartoum.

There appears to be significant evidence that Chinese military transfers to Sudan have been used to commit violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Amnesty International reported in June 2006 that Sudanese armed forces and pro-state militias used arms delivered from China to Sudan to commit atrocities in southern Sudan and Darfur.[334] In Darfur in 2004, Amnesty International reported that military trucks were being used to transport both Sudanese military and Janjaweed militia personnel, and in some cases to transport people for extrajudicial execution.[335] In 2006, a UN panel found that 222 Chinese Dong Feng trucks had been shipped to Sudan.[336] Furthermore, Chinese-supplied aircraft were used to launch bombing raids on villages, conduct reconnaissance prior to attacks and ferry ground troops.[337] A 2006 United Nations panel of experts on the Sudan crisis has determined that "most ammunition currently used by parties to the conflict in Darfur is manufactured in either Sudan or China."[338] Chinese weapons have also been found among Chadian armed groups that operate in Darfur.[339] China has continued to allow military equipment to be sent to Sudan despite the use of this materiel in the well documented and widespread human rights violations in Darfur.

Not only have Chinese weapons been used to commit human rights violations in Sudan, but their transfer to either non-state actors such as the Janjaweed militia or to Sudanese Armed Forces operating in Darfur is in direct contravention of the UN arms embargo on Darfur.[340] In 2007 China's Special Representative to Africa, Ambassador Liu, stated that "We will do out best to prevent weapons from finding their way into the wrong hands and from doing the wrong things."[341] China reportedly suspended arms transfers to Sudan for a brief period in 2008.[342] However, since then China has continued to send arms to Khartoum, and in October 2010 China reportedly attempted to block a report to the UNSC by a Panel of Experts that showed that Chinese ammunition had been used in Darfur against UN and African Union Peacekeepers.[343] Given that China itself has peacekeepers in Sudan, the revelation was evidently an awkward one for Beijing.

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330 Ibid.
331 NISAT (2010) NISAT SALW Transfer Database.
332 SIPRI (2010) SIPRI Arms Transfers Database.
333 Ibid.
334 Amnesty International (2006).
335 Ibid.
336 Letter dated 30 January 2006 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, para 126.
337 Amnesty International (2006).
338 United Nations Panel of Experts on Sudan (2006), *Final Report of the Panel of Experts*, Document S/2006/65.
339 Ibid.
340 All armed groups operating in Darfur should fall under the UN arms embargo imposed by UN Security Council resolution 1556, which states that 'All States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the supply of arms and related materiel of all types and also of technical training and assistance to the following actors operating in the states of North Darfur, South Darfur, and West Darfur: all non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed; all parties to the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement; any other belligerents.' Chinese weapons may have also slipped through other UN arms embargoes. In Liberia, brokers allegedly traded Chinese arms into the country when it was under a UN embargo. See Amnesty International (2006), p 13.
341 Sudan Tribune (2007) 'China tries to prevent weapons in Darfur', 6 July 2007.
342 See Holslag (2008), p 10.
343 MacAskill, Ewen (2010) 'China tries to block Darfur weapons report' in *The Guardian*, 21 October 2010.

Case study: DRC

China provided large amounts of weapons to then President Laurent Kabila in the late 1990s. In 1998 alone, $27 million worth of SALW were transferred to Kinshasa.[344] More recently, China has been supplying weapons and ammunition to the FARDC armed forces, ostensibly for training purposes,[345] including millions of rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, thousands of submachine guns, hundreds of machine guns and grenade launchers.[346] Given that the FARDC regularly supplies military equipment to non-state armed groups in Congo, it is highly possible that Chinese weapons supplied to the FARDC are among those diverted to the FARDC's proxies. While the UN Sanctions Committee has to be notified by exporting countries prior to delivery of any military equipment sent to the DRC government,[347] China has only irregularly supplied this information,[348] increasing the difficulty of tracking weapons supplies and ensuring that they do not fall into the wrong hands.

Chinese assault rifles are common among both soldiers and militias operating in the Kivu Provinces and the Ituri District of DRC, as well across the Great Lakes region in general.[349] In 2005, of 1,100 weapons collected by UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) peacekeepers in Bunia in Ituri district, 17 percent were Chinese Type 56s assault weapons,[350] and in September 2006, bullets manufactured in Greece, China, Russia and the USA were recovered from rebel groups, also in Ituri.[351] Chinese arms may also found their way into DRC after having been transferred to Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zimbabwe, states that have actively deployed forces in the conflict.[352] Furthermore, other states in the region that have been supplied by China, such as Sudan, have transferred arms to the DRC,[353] which has become a transit point for arms, which flow into the DRC from Sudan and out of the DRC into Zimbabwe.[354]

The recently reported seizure in South Africa of North Korean arms supposedly intended for Congo-Brazzaville highlights an additional problem with China's role in the continuing flow of weapons into African conflict zones. In March 2010, South Africa reported to the United Nations that it had intercepted a concealed North Korean military cargo. The shipment, it said, violated a UN arms embargo on North Korea and may have been made in collusion with China. The T-54 and T-55 tank parts seized by South African authorities in Durban originated in North Korea, and had been loaded onto a container ship in the Chinese port of Dalian. There are suspicions that the North Korean military equipment was actually destined for the DRC, which is known to have T-55 tanks in its arsenal.[355] In this instance, China may have played a role in a transit of arms to Africa that violated both the embargo on North Korea and the international notification system in the DRC.

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344 NISAT (2010) NISAT SALW Transfer Database.

345 In 2009, China notified the UN Sanctions Committee of the delivery of military equipment to the DRC National Army, in the framework of the training provided by Chinese officers. As detailed in the 2009 report, the UN Group of Experts on the DRC could not verify if the cargo subsequently off-loaded in the DRC corresponded to the items listed in the notification submitted by the Chinese Government. United Nations Group of Experts on DRC (2009) *UN Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council Resolution 1857*.

346 Interview with diplomatic source, 26 November 2010.

347 UN Security Council resolution 1807 (March 2008). A similar provision applied to all forms of military assistance provided to the Congolese government.

348 United Nations (2008) *UN Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council Resolution 1857*.

349 Shinn (2009).

350 Amnesty International (2006), p 8.

351 Control Arms (2006) 'Bullets from Greece, China, Russia and United States found in rebel hands in Democratic Republic of Congo, Press Release, 16 October 2006.

352 Amnesty International (2005) *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Arming the East*.

353 United Nations (2009) *UN Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council Resolution 1857*.

354 Ibid.

355 Kelley, Kevin (2010) 'North Korea Arms to Africa – Unusual only because illegal', in *The East African*, 8 March 2010.

Case study: Zimbabwe

China's history of military co-operation with Zimbabwe spans more than three decades. In the 1970s, China became a close ally of Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) guerrillas fighting against white rule in Rhodesia. China provided logistical, training, arms and funding support to ZANU-PF. This support has continued beyond the end of white rule. China's overall arms sales to Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008 were valued to be at least $300 million.[356] These sales have included a range of military equipment, from small arms to armoured personnel carriers to aircraft. NISAT records over $1 million worth of small arms exported from China to Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008[357], although this probably only captures a portion of actual transfers. China has also supplied Zimbabwe with anti-riot and police equipment.[358] The country's main battle tanks and armoured transport vehicles are all made in China. The Zimbabwean air force is also armed with Chinese jets.[359]

China's arms trade with Zimbabwe came under the spotlight in April 2008 when a vessel loaded with Chinese weapons, later termed 'the ship of shame', tried to deliver significant quantities of weapons to Mugabe's regime. Although the arms transaction had been agreed long before, the actual delivery coincided with a phase of brutal post-election repression in Zimbabwe. After civil society groups and trade unions mobilised to prevent the vessel from docking and unloading its cargo in South Africa, Mozambique and Namibia, and following international condemnation in the run-up to the Olympic games in Beijing, China re-called the arms shipment.[360]

Chinese officials and scholars have defended the Zimbabwe shipment as an un-intentional outcome of poor timing, arguing that the transfer was agreed with an arms manufacturer long before the outbreak of instability within the country. Nonetheless, the 'ship of shame' raised the question of whether China's arms to Zimbabwe really match with the principle that arms exports should not interfere in the internal affairs of recipient countries. In 2006 President Mugabe publicly addressed "those who might harbour any plans of turning against the government", threatening "be warned, we have armed men and women who can pull the trigger … The defence forces have benefited from the government's Look East policy, through which we have not only acquired new equipment but also learned new military strategies."[361] A recent British newspaper article accused the Chinese military of transferring arms to Zimbabwean security services in direct barter for diamonds.[362] The accuracy of such reports may be questionable, but they thrive on the secrecy that surrounds Chinese arms transfers to Africa.

As all three of these case studies make clear, Chinese arms have come to play a role in the internal affairs of recipient countries. It is hard to reconcile the claim that arms exports do not impair regional or international peace and security with the reality on the ground in some of Africa's most unstable but heavily armed regions.[363]

While China is by no means responsible for the internal or regional dynamics that underpin such problems, it is much more clearly responsible for the impact that its arms transfers have on them. Despite the progress made in developing a legal frame-work for arms transfer controls, Chinese regulations and policy are at times ambiguous, leaving scope to different interpretation and falling below the standards enshrined

356 Human Rights First (2008) *China's Arms Sales to Zimbabwe – Fact Sheet*.
357 NISAT (2010) NISAT SALW Transfer Database.
358 Amnesty International (2008) *Zimbabwe: No supply of arms until state sponsored violence ceases*.
359 SIPRI (2010) SIPRI Arms Transfers Database.
360 See Spiegel, Samuel J & Le Billon, Philippe (2009) 'China's weapons trade: from ships of shame to the ethics of global resistance' in *International Affairs*, vol. 85:2, pp 323–346.
361 Cited in Taylor (2010), pp 124–5.
362 Malone, Andrew (2010) 'Mugabe's darkest secret: an £800bn blood diamond mine he's running with China's Red Army' in *The Daily Mail*, 18 September 2010.
363 Taylor (2007).

in most regional and multilateral arms control agreements.[364] China's regulations governing arms transfers do not include provisions to prohibit the transfer of arms where these arms are likely to facilitate violations of international law or fuel ongoing conflicts. Indeed, "the requirement of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states is interpreted by the Chinese government in its arms control decisions in a manner that is not consistent with states' existing obligations under international law. They exempt, for example, the Chinese authorities from taking into account the human rights record of a would-be recipient state."[365]

Nor do China's regulations take into account the role that governments and militaries supplied with Chinese arms may play in perpetuating insecurity and ongoing conflict inside that state. While China's regulations require exporters of military equipment to "hand in valid certificates and documents of the recipient country" and make the forgery of such documents a criminal offence,[366] China has no systematic procedures in place for monitoring the end-use of the arms exported, and very limited post-export verification of the arms transfers.[367] Furthermore there is little assessment of the risk of diversion of arms to unauthorised users following arms exports.

Although Chinese regulations prohibit "any individual from engaging in military products export",[368] there are no separate provisions on arms brokering, and Chinese weapons are also indirectly transferred to African recipients through middlemen or brokers. Explanations provided by Chinese officials at international gatherings still do not make clear whether brokering activities undertaken by "companies that have been specifically designated and authorized" by the State to carry out such activities are subject to the regulations and therefore a licensing requirement. It remains unclear whether the prohibition on individual export covers just Chinese individuals and companies (including companies based or registered in Hong Kong), or also foreign nationals and companies brokering Chinese weapons.

Chinese transfers of SALW and ammunition to regions already awash with weapons risk fuelling conflict and insecurity and contributing to wider regional instability as they are trafficked across borders. These weapons and ammunition not only threaten state security if they fall into the hands of rebels and insurgents, but also directly affect the security of communities across Africa. Violent crime has also been facilitated though the proliferation of handguns in countries like South Africa, where firearms seized from armed criminals have frequently been of Chinese origin. Unfortunately, China's clear commitments to help Africa 'combat the illicit trade in SALW' have yet to be implemented. SALW dropped off the agenda of the November 2009 FOCAC meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, with no specific references to SALW made in the agreed Action Plan for 2010–2012. This suggests that the issue is now less of a priority in China-Africa dialogue.[369]

Conclusion

China has become one of the biggest suppliers of small arms and light weapons to African states. Africa will continue to be an attractive market for China's arms industry, and for African states China will remain an attractive supplier of affordable weapons, especially for those states ostracised by other exporters. All states have the right to export and import weapons to meet their legitimate defence and security needs. The problem with Chinese arms exports lies with how some of these weapons are used and

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364　For example, the 1993 'OSCE Principles Governing Conventional Transfers', the 2000 'OSCE Document on SALW', the 2008 'EU Common Position governing control of exports of military technology and equipment', the 2002 'Wassenaar Arrangement Best Practice Guidelines on SALW', and the 'Best Practice Guidelines for Implementing the Nairobi Protocol on SALW'.

365　Amnesty International (2006).

366　Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2009) *China's Policy and Regulation on Arms Trade*, Art. 15, Art. 22.

367　CITS (2005), p 37.

368　*Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Administration of Arms Export*, Chapter IV, Art. 20.

369　See Nabudere, Richard (2010) 'The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in East Africa – opportunities for China-Africa co-operation' Paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010

the hands that they end up in. The record shows that in several cases Chinese weapons have undermined African peace and security. They have been used to commit grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, they have ended up arming non-state groups and they have fuelled conflicts. China's arms transfer policy states that arms can only be used for the legitimate self-defence of states. Yet in several African countries China is dealing with so-called 'legitimate' governments that in fact "are little more than glorified kleptocracies and quasi-states whose principal aim is ensuring the survival and enrichment of the elite."[370] In such cases, state security usually means regime security, which has little to do with safeguarding the security of the state's citizens.[371]

It is clear that Chinese export controls are either insufficient themselves or have been too weakly enforced to prevent the misuse of Chinese weapons. Additionally, transparency issues related to the arms trade risk undermining the positive benefits of China's transition to a law-based system from an *ad hoc* administrative system of arms export controls, fuelling the suspicions that surround China's arms exports.

The degree of control which some officials in Beijing – such as those involved in providing export licences or those in the MFA – have over the decisions and actions of Chinese state-owned but commercially-orientated companies that export arms to Africa is somewhat questionable. The case of the 'ship of shame' to Zimbabwe perhaps illustrates this best. It is doubtful whether MFA officials or regulators have the political clout to turn down requests for export licences and fully enforce regulations which are already purposefully weak and ambiguous.[372] In this regard, the problems associated with Chinese arms are clearly not simply the outcome of technical failures associated with weak export controls; they also reflect the failure of political actors to prioritise the issue and take seriously the harm that is being caused.

Some scholars and even officials in China admit that Chinese arms transfers are problematic for African security, and in some cases make conflicts worse and fuel violence. Such assessments will undoubtedly come to gain traction and be more influential over policy in the long term. Furthermore, China does not want to operate in an international atmosphere of permanent suspicion and condemnation. It is keen to be seen as both a champion of developing countries' rights and interests, and responsible leading power, as demonstrated by its more cautious actions in the run-up to the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that China is hardly alone in transferring arms that eventually are used in African conflicts. Western countries have inundated Africa with small arms, tanks and fighter aircraft, thereby fuelling wars, propping up dictators and even arming the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda. While Chinese military support for the regimes in Sudan and Zimbabwe is much condemned in the West, direct and indirect arms transfers to countries of concern by Western arms exporters do not always attract the same level of criticism.

This does not excuse China's wrongful practices in Africa, especially as arms transfers are concerned. However, any critical engagement with China needs to reflect a better and more nuanced understanding of the culpability of all stakeholders. Solutions to African peace and security threats are to be found within the continent itself, in the hands of governments, politicians and civil society. External actors, who have a shared interest in stability in Africa, must find ways to co-operate with one another in order to support peace and ensure their actions do not fuel or worsen conflicts. Collectively preventing irresponsible arms transfers will be a significant step in the right direction. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) discussions at the UN present a real opportunity to take this step.

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370 Taylor (2010), p 127.
371 Ibid, p 128.
372 Ibid, p 127.

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Regional organisations and China

OVER THE PAST DECADE, the multilateral political landscape of Africa has undergone significant changes, and China has consequently begun to adapt its preferred mode of bilateral engagement to reflect these changes. It remains to be seen how the nascent relations between China and Africa's multilateral organisations will affect China's role in African security. This chapter provides a necessarily brief overview of these relations, since they are only just beginning to take shape.

The emergence of African regional organisations

The transformation of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2003 reflected the intention of African leaders "to institutionalise Pan-African co-operation in key areas of diplomacy, development, peace and security".[373] Article Four of the AU Constitution has given the Union the right to intervene in a member state in the face of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.[374] These legal changes reflect some of the wider changes in global norms on the limits of sovereignty and the responsibilities of states to their citizens. As such, the AU's new sense of purpose and direction in the areas of peace and security has been characterised as a "more proactive policy of non-indifference to issues of human security."[375]

The AU has developed a number of institutional mechanisms to uphold this normative shift. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) consists of 15 elected and rotating member states and acts as an executive body to oversee decisions and actions related to security. An African Continental Early Warning System is under development and in 2007 the AU created a five person 'Panel of the Wise' to act as ambassadors for peace and to support mediation efforts. A Military Staff Committee made up of high-level military representatives from member states provides advice and assistance to the PSC. Finally, in 2010 the AU established an African Standby Force (ASF). Divided into five sub-regional brigades and with a headquarters in Addis Ababa, they are intended to support AU missions as observers, monitors and peace enforcers.

Africa has also seen the development of sub-regional institutions and organisations that have sought to provide comprehensive frameworks to advance economic

373 Cornelissen, Scarlett (2010) 'China & African Regional Organisations' in *The China Monitor*, issue 49.
374 Constitutive Act of the African Union, adopted by the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Lomé, Togo, 11 July 2000.
375 Institute for Security Studies (2007), *Complex Emergencies in the 21st Century – Challenges of New Africa's Strategic Peace and Security Policy Issues*, ed. Aboagye, Festus B, ISS Monograph Series no. 134, p xiv.

integration, as well as peace and security.[376] These include the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In 2000, IGAD developed the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) to respond to potential and actual violent conflicts in the East and Horn of Africa.[377] In Western Africa, ECOWAS has adopted a mechanism to provide it with the capacity to operate in the fields of conflict prevention, conflict management and resolution, peacekeeping, humanitarian support, peace-building and sub-regional security.[378]

AU and sub-regional peacekeeping forces have been mobilised and dispatched to war-affected countries. The AU's first peacekeepers were sent to Burundi in 2003, and the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was deployed in Darfur in 2004. Currently, 7,200 troops are deployed in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to prop up the transitional government. In West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) intervened in the Liberian civil war in 1990 and has since deployed troops in Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and again in Liberia. Sub-regional organisations have also been directly involved in peace negotiations. For example in 2008, under the leadership of South African President Thabo Mbeki, SADC led negotiations over Zimbabwe political crisis. IGAD is currently playing a similar role in Sudan. The AU is set to facilitate discussions between North and South Sudan following an upcoming referendum on the secession of the South in 2011.[379] While some of these interventions have had questionable impact, and many face considerable shortfalls in funding and capacity, the fact remains that the roles and influence of these new multilateral entities are continuing to grow.

China and Africa's regional organisations

China has historically preferred to establish bilateral relations with African countries.[380] However, over the past few years China has stepped up political, diplomatic, economic and security ties with Africa's regional and sub-regional organisations. China made an explicit commitment to co-operate with African regional and sub-regional organisations in the 2003 FOCAC *Addis Ababa Action Plan*, where it stated:

We are resolved to step up co-operation and work together to support an even greater role of the United Nations, the African Union and other sub-regional African organizations in preventing, mediating and resolving conflicts in Africa … [China will] provide, within the limits of its capabilities, financial and material assistance as well as relevant training to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. In order to strengthen the capacity of African States to undertake peacekeeping operations, we look forward to the strengthening of China's co-operation with African states and sub-regional organizations in the areas of logistics.[381]

In 2005, China appointed representatives to SADC, ECOWAS and COMESA, and the AU,[382] and in November 2008 the first annual AU-China Strategic Dialogue was held in Addis Ababa.[383] This has found expression in enhanced political relations, exchange visits at high levels and closer co-operation in several fields of development.[384] China

376 Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (2008) *African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations – Assessing Their Contributions to Economic Integration and Conflict Management*.

377 The seven IGAD Member States are: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

378 Didigu, Henrietta (2001) *Developing a Common Agenda for Sub-regional Organizations for Peace, Security and Conflict Prevention in Africa: A View from ECOWAS*, Legal Affairs Department, ECOWAS.

379 IRIN News (2010) 'Sudan: A test case for the AU', 29 June 2010.

380 Aning, Kwesi & Tsidi, Francis (2010) 'China and Africa: Towards a New Security Relationship', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

381 Forum on China-Africa Co-operation-Addis Ababa Action Plan (2004–2006), 2.2.2.

382 Van Hoeymissen, Sara (2010) 'China's Support to Africa's Regional Security Architecture: Helping Africa to Settle Conflicts and Keep the Peace?' in New Avenues for Sino-African Partnership & Co-operation – China & African Regional Organisations, *The China Monitor*, issue 49, March 2010.

383 African Union Commission (2008) 'Chair in strategic dialogue with Chinese Vice-Minister' *African Union Commission Newsletter*, issue 35, November 2008.

384 African Union Commission (2010) 'Addis Ababa: New African Union conference center a lasting testimony of strong Afro-Chinese relations' Press Release, 13 January 2010.

and the AU agreed that future strategic dialogue meetings would be held once a year, alternately in Addis Ababa and Beijing.[385] A key AU-China project currently lies in the construction of a new modern conference centre and a 25-storey office block at the AU headquarters, which is estimated to cost $150 million.[386]

In its 2006 Africa White Paper, China paid tribute to the AU's role in safeguarding peace and stability and promoting solidarity and development.[387] As part of the 2009 FOCAC Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan, China vowed to "support the efforts of the AU, other regional organisations and countries concerned to solve regional conflicts."[388] There seems to be a genuine belief held by Chinese scholars and officials that African regional organisations are better placed than any other international actor to make judgements on the sovereignty and internal affairs of its member states. For example in 2007 China's Representative to the UN argued that regional organisations have "a unique political, moral and geographical advantage in handling conflict prevention and resolution" in their particular region.[389]

At the UN, China has put emphasis on the need for greater co-operation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organisations towards the maintenance of international peace and security. In January 2010, the UNSC held a thematic debate at the initiative of the Chinese Presidency to review how best to maximise the relationship between the UN and regional and sub-regional organisations.[390] China's Ambassador to the UN, Zhang Yesui, called on the international community to assist regional organisations, noting that in recent years:

The African Union and sub-regional organizations in Africa have been committed to resolving hotspot issues in Africa through good offices and peacekeeping operations, but their efforts are constrained due to deficiencies in funding and capacity building. We support the establishment and deepening of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in maintaining peace and security in Africa. We support the United Nations in providing more assistance in strengthening the capacity building of regional and sub-regional organizations.[391]

China has also sought to represent the positions and opinions of African regional organisations through its permanent seat at the UNSC, for example voicing the AU's opposition to the ICC's arrest warrant against President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan. In the case of Darfur, China has supported the AU to continue to play a leading role in the process of peace and reconciliation. In 2007, the AU's position played a role in China's decision to support UN Resolution 1769, which created a hybrid United Nations African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).[392] On occasions, when China and Africa have been in disagreement on how best to address a crisis, the unified stance of African countries "has often swayed China into accepting certain UN actions it initially did not support."[393] This was typical, for example, of China's decision to align itself with the decisions of the AU to impose sanctions and arms embargoes on Côte d'Ivoire in 2004 and Eritrea in 2009.[394]

China has also aligned with the positions of African sub-regional organisations at the UNSC.[395] In 2008 China vetoed a Security Council measure intended to impose

385 African Union Commission (2008) 'Chair in strategic dialogue with Chinese Vice Minister' *African Union Commission Newsletter*, issue 35, November 2008,

386 Introductory remarks by H.E. Patrick Mazimhaka, Deputy Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Addis Ababa, 25 May 2007.

387 China's Africa Policy (2006).

388 Forum on China-Africa Co-operation, Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan (2010–2012), 2.6.2.

389 International Crisis Group (2009), p 24.

390 UNSC (2010) *Letter dated 4 January from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary General, S/2010/9.*

391 Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN (2010), *Statement by H.E. Ambassador Zhang Yesui, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations*, at Security Council Debate on Co-operation between the United Nations and Regional and Sub-regional Organizations in Maintaining International Peace and Security, 13 January 2010.

392 Jiang, Hengkun (2010) 'China and Darfur Crisis – A Chinese Perspective' paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010, p 4.

393 Van Hoeymissen (2010), p 11.

394 Ibid, p 11.

395 Ibid, p 6.

sanctions against Zimbabwe.[396] The Chinese representative Wang Guangya justified China's decision by arguing that African leaders had clearly stated their position against imposing sanctions, while the recent AU Summit had supported the good offices and mediation efforts of SADC. He argued that sanctions would run contrary to the positions of both the SADC and the AU.[397]

While China has committed itself to providing training and financial assistance to Africa's regional organisations, actual support has been limited. China has not provided any training to AU peacekeepers or the ASF. Unlike the EU and the United States, which provide financial assistance to African regional organisations through specific programmes, such as the EU African Peace Facility, or the US Global Peace Operations Initiative, China's assistance is given on an *ad hoc* basis in the form of grants to support specific mediation or peacekeeping initiatives.[398] By the end of 2006, China had donated $1.8 million to the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS), to date its largest financial contribution to AU security operations.[399] In 2009 China provided $300,000 to AMISOM[400] and in 2010 $1.32 million was donated by China to the AU, of which a portion was specifically intended for the mission in Somalia.[401] These are not substantial sums: AMISOM's running costs amount to $2 million per day. However, AU officials see these contributions as a "gesture of goodwill from the Chinese Government."[402] China has also given a small amount of financial assistance to the ECOWAS Peace Fund.[403]

Conclusion

In 2010, Dr Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, stated that "in the overall context of conflict resolution in Africa, it is our hope that China will continue to play an even greater role in the strengthening of the capacity of our continental organisation to undertake peacekeeping and peace support operations in Africa so as to enable us to bring about a lasting and sustainable peace and development to the continent."[404] There is demand such for support and China seems well placed to build upon its engagement with Africa's regional and sub-regional organisations and provide it. In November 2010 China's representative to the AU stressed that China strongly supported the African Union's capacity building and its endeavours to safeguard regional peace and security, suggesting that this potential is at least recognised by officials.[405]

China's interaction with regional bodies should not be overestimated. Above all, the regional dimension of Chinese involvement in Africa does not come at the expense of bilateral relations, which is what China currently values most. Chinese scholar Wang Xuejun notes that economic co-operation is still prioritised over security issues in relations with the AU.[406] He argues that there is a potential for China to specifically institutionalise dialogue on security matters, set up special bodies to work with the PSC and establish measures for more concrete co-operation. Furthermore, Wang notes that there is still little interaction between the sub-regional organisations and China to provide the framework for expanded interaction on security.[407]

396 Nine countries voted in favour (Belgium, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Italy, Panama, United Kingdom, United States), five voted against (China, Libya, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam), and one abstained (Indonesia).
397 UNSC Department of Public Information (2008) *Security Council Fails to Adopt Sanctions Against Zimbabwe Leadership As Two Permanent Members Cast Negative Votes*, 11 July 2008.
398 Van Hoeymissen (2010), p 14.
399 Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN (2008), *China's Position on the Issue of Darfur*, Sudan, March 2008.
400 Bates, Gill & Huang, Chin-Hao (2009) *China's Expanding Role in Peacebuilding: Prospects and Policy Implications*, SIPRI Policy Paper 25, p 29.
401 African Union Commission (2010) 'AU Commission Receives Important Financial Donation from China' Press Release, 29 November 2010.
402 Ibid, p 29.
403 Concord Times (2008) 'China gives $100,000 to ECOWAS Peace Fund', 18 December 2008.
404 Ping, Jean (2010) *Remarks by H.E. Dr Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission at the Shanghai Institutes of International Studies*, 1 November 2010.
405 African Union Commission (2010).
406 Wang (2010), p 8.
407 Shelton, Garth (2010), China: Transport Network Partner for African Regional Integration, published in *The China Monitor*, issue 49, pp 8–9.

China has consistently stressed that regional and sub-regional organisations should play a larger role in Africa and that the international community should lend its support to this end. However, in material terms, China is yet to fully meet its own commitments in this regard. That Chinese scholars such as Wang have called for the establishment of an African Peace Fund is a positive step in the right direction.[408] While China may not be willing to commit the same degree of financial resources as Western donors, it seems likely that practical co-operation initiatives – such as the training of AU peacekeepers or the ASF – can be realised in the future.

Africa is increasingly turning to multilateral responses to peace and security challenges. As regional bodies have started playing a larger role in Africa, China has followed suit in forging ties with these multilateral organisations, in response "to the shifting realities of African realpolitik."[409] Yet for their part, the AU and its member states do not have any policy framework or collective strategy to guide their own dealings with China. Relations with China overwhelmingly remain the focus of individual states rather than that of collective organisations. According to some observers, this has resulted in "weakening the AU and its member states' ability to negotiate with China."[410] For China to provide greater levels of support to their collective peace and security efforts, Africans will have to work more closely together and make a collective demand for this support. It is here that regional bodies could well come to play their most important role, in collectively harnessing China's growing engagement in Africa to serve peaceful ends.

408 Wang (2010), p 10.
409 Ibid, p 14.
410 Ibid, p 14.

8

International
co-operation

A WIDE ARRAY OF EXTERNAL ACTORS play a role in supporting African peace and security. The more these actors co-operate with one another, the more effective their actions will be. This chapter assess the degree to which China co-operates with other actors in order to meet shared goals. It examines China's evolving position at the UNSC and its deepening engagement at this level. The chapter also explores China's position on the Responsibility to Protect Principles (R2P), the International Criminal Court (ICC) and China's participation in multilateral anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden. Finally, it explores attempts by traditional actors, and especially the EU, to co-operate with China and Africa on a trilateral basis.

China and UNSC diplomacy

Currently, a significant portion of China's diplomatic engagement on African peace and security issues takes place at the UNSC. China's attitude towards the UN has changed dramatically from its original perspective of the UN "as a mechanism for the US to contain China."[411] Upon taking its UN seat in 1971, China's "position in the Security Council was one of studied passivity", until the 1980s when it began to engage in a limited fashion, for example voting for the extension of a peacekeeping force in Cyprus in 1981.[412] Throughout the 1990s, Beijing generally acquiesced to UN multi-lateral interventions in intra-state conflicts (including in Somalia in 1991), some of which meant involvement in the internal affairs of host states at unprecedented levels.[413] At the same time, "between 1990 and 1999 China abstained 41 times when contentious issues were on the negotiating table, like the use of force, humanitarian intervention and the establishment of international criminal tribunals."[414] Nonetheless, as "China's thinking on security developed in the mid 1990s in the direction of greater engagement with the international community, its approach to multilateral engagement – alongside ongoing bilateral relationships – became more positive and proactive,"[415] to the point that Beijing now regards the UNSC as "holding primary responsibility for peace and security management."[416] Nowhere is this UN engagement better reflected than in China's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, explored in the next chapter.

411 Raine (2009), p 178.
412 Alden, Chris & Roque, Paula (2008) 'China and the UN Security Council: From Observer to Activist' in *SAIIA China in Africa Policy Briefing no.2*, April 2008, p 2.
413 Teitt (2009) p 6.
414 Alden & Roque (2008), p 2.
415 Raine (2009), p 176.
416 Large (2008), p 36.

Beijing maintains that three principles should govern any international intervention. Firstly, intervention (*gan yu*) in internal affairs is seen as legitimate as long as it has the authorisation of the UNSC. Without authorisation of the UNSC, any intervention is seen as interference (*gan she*), i.e. illegitimate.[417] Secondly, intervention must respect state sovereignty. Thirdly it should be authorised with the consent of the host state (*dangshi guo*).[418] More broadly, China remains generally committed to the principle that many internal crises cannot be defined as threats to international peace and security, meaning that they therefore fall outside of the UNSC's mandate.

China's current emphasis on the centrality of the UNSC is evident in official statements regarding African peace and security. For example, the 2009 Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan notes that the "Chinese Government will continue to support the United Nations Security Council in playing a constructive role in solving conflicts in Africa."[419] China's 2006 African policy notes that China "will urge the UN Security Council to pay attention to and help resolve regional conflicts in Africa."[420] In 2008, during a UNSC discussion on Africa, China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs stressed that the "Security Council bears a responsibility it cannot shirk regarding the maintenance of peace and security in Africa".[421]

China has often used its position in the UNSC to bring to the focus of the international community some conflicts in Africa. For example, when the "security situation in Somalia was unravelling in 2006, China played an important and constructive role in UNSC debates on sanctions and the arms embargo against the country. China also provided critical support for the passage of UNSC Resolution 1725 and the establishment of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and Peace Support Mission to Somalia."[422] Indeed China has repeatedly pushed the UN to pay more attention to Somalia and even re-deploy UN troops in the country, a measure that some other UNSC members have been reluctant to take. It also provided strong support for a French resolution on Chad in 2007.[423]

At the same time, China has prevented UN resolutions over the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region from being passed or has watered them down. When the Darfur conflict broke out in 2004, China continued to maintain that it was an internal affair that did not have a bearing on international peace and security, meaning that action by the UNSC, including the use of sanctions, was unwarranted.[424] In 2004, a proposed arms embargo on Sudan was diluted to a far more modest resolution that applied only to the Darfur region[425] and in 2005 China weakened sanctions placed by the UNSC on specific individuals within Sudan.[426] While some point to China's oil interests in the country to explain China's reluctance to agree to UN sanctions, Ambassador Liu Guijin argued that "China tries its best to convince Western colleagues that toughness is not the only way out, that economic sanctions will only complicate the matter further by raising the Sudanese government's resistance."[427] This argument was not purely rhetorical: there exists a significant degree of scepticism in China over the efficacy of sanctions as a tool of coercion.[428]

In 2006, China refused to support Security Council Resolution 1706 (which would have extended the UN's Southern Sudan peacekeeping mission into Darfur to support the execution of the Darfur Peace Agreement) without consent from the Sudanese

417 Taylor (2009), p 134.
418 Alden & Roque (2008), p 2.
419 *Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan (2010–2012)*, 2.6.1.
420 China's Africa Policy (2006), 4.2.
421 UNSC (2008) *Peace and Security in Africa: UN Security Council Verbatim Record S/PV.5868*, p 11.
422 Huang (2010), p 4.
423 Holslag (2009), p 14.
424 International Crisis Group (2008) *China's Thirst for Oil – Crisis Group Asia Report no.153*, p 25.
425 Raine (2009), p 188.
426 Ibid, p 188.
427 Cited in Yu & Wang (2008), p 88.
428 Wuthnow, Joel (2009), 'China and the Processes of Co-operation in UN Security Council Deliberations' in *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 3, pp 55–77, p 64.

government. Yu and Wang contend that for China, host state consent was important since "the aim of peacekeeping missions is to solve problems, UN peacekeepers should obtain the Sudanese government's approval before entry into Sudan; otherwise the problem won't be solved."[429] Chinese resistance also rested on the argument that the timing of the resolution would derail efforts at peaceful negotiation. While China did not go as far as to use its veto, from 2004 up until 2007, China "consistently abstained on all major resolutions, serving to lessen their weight and undermine their chances of implementation."[430]

Despite its initial reluctance to support strong UN resolutions against Sudan, China was later credited with using diplomatic means to persuade the Khartoum government to accept UN peacekeepers (see chapters 4 and 9). In 2007, China voted alongside the other UNSC members to deploy a 26,000 joint AU-UN hybrid mission – but only once the deployment had been accepted by the Khartoum government. The UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations concluded that China had ultimately played "a key and constructive role" in securing this approval through bilateral pressure.[431]

Some Western scholars claim that Beijing's willingness to apply bilateral pressure on a government in order to allow for a UN intervention in Sudan was "a clear indication that China is changing the contours of its non-interference policy" in relation to UN action.[432] At the same time, the Darfur episode has demonstrated that China continues to be wary of the use of sanctions, and holds host-country consent to be a prerequisite for UN intervention. Indeed, for some Chinese scholars the Darfur issue demonstrates how China has supported a clear role for the UN to play in African conflicts but has at the same time ensured that the interests of all parties involved, especially governments, are considered and that the principles of sovereignty – viewed as an equally important component of the UN Charter – continue to be upheld.[433]

Chinese officials and scholars also maintain that China's position on African security issues at the Security Council is directly informed by the position of African states. For example in relation to the Darfur crisis, Ambassador Liu argued that "We have been playing a role of bridge."[434] Huang Zhaoyu and Zhao Jinfu argue that at the UNSC "China dares to speak out to maintain justice for African nations, support African countries to independently handle their internal affairs and to equally participate in international affairs."[435] Chinese and African foreign ministers "jointly decided to launch a political consultation mechanism at the UN headquarters in September 2007 to ensure a more calibrated approach in addressing regional security issues."[436] China's willingness to support African views strengthens its own ties to African leaders: they no longer have to rely on traditional Western states, and especially ex-colonial powers, to represent their interests on the UNSC.

Some scholars argue that China's changing position over Darfur was, at least partially, driven by the views of African leaders. For example, both China and the AU objected to the deployment of peacekeeping troops without Sudan's permission. However Huang suggests that over time a majority of African states became "frustrated with Sudan's lack of sincerity to follow through with its international commitments; as a result, the African Union has refused to allow Sudan to take on the role of the organisation's presidency for several consecutive years. Many leaders in sub-Saharan

429 Yu & Wang (2008), p 87.
430 ICG (2008), p 25. China's abstentions are less obstructive than sometimes assumed, given that China could have in fact use its veto to block any measure against Sudan. See for example Gaafar Karrar Ahmed (2010) 'China and Conflict Resolutions in Africa – New Policy: Darfur Conflict in Western Sudan as a Case Study'. The PRC has only used its veto six times since taking a UNSC seat. In 2004 Sudanese President Bashir described the states that abstained from voting as the 'real friends of Sudan'. Karrar Ahmed (2010), p 8.
431 Yu & Wang (2008), p 89.
432 Alden & Roque, Paula (2008), p 3.
433 Yu & Wang (2008), p 87.
434 Cited in Holslag, Jonathan (2008) 'China's Diplomatic Manoeuvring on the Darfur Question' in *Journal of Contemporary China*, 17:54, pp 71–85, p 83.
435 Huang & Zhao (2009), p 67.
436 Huang (2010), p 2.

African states find Sudan's actions in Darfur offensive on human rights, religious, and racial grounds."[437] For Huang, these views eventually forced China to take a more forceful position in its bilateral relations with Khartoum to allow for the deployment of UN and AU peacekeepers. Holslag also points to China's role in UNSC deliberations on Somalia as another case where African states lobbied the Chinese representative to act more forcefully.[438] Indeed in this case it was the other Council members who were more reluctant to take action.[439]

However, 'representing Africa' at the UNSC can entail balancing competing interests. When China vetoed a UN resolution imposing sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2008 (along with Russia), Beijing did so on the basis that Zimbabwe's crisis was not a threat to international peace and security, and that the timing of the sanctions would only make matters worse – but also that China was simply following Africa's position on the issue.[440] While it is indeed the case that several African leaders were sceptical as to the utility of international sanctions, Raine points out that many others were not.[44] As is the case with many such issues, there was no unified position among the African states. Aning and Tsidi question whether China's representation of African views is simply used to "provide a veneer of authenticity to its policy' and 'to deflect attention and criticism."[442]

China and the principle of the responsibility to protect

As noted in chapter 4, over the past few years there has been increasing flexibility around Beijing's interpretations of the principles of non-interference, sovereignty and host country consent. Raine points to a statement by a senior US official that captures this:

China's diplomatic activity reflects an evolution beyond its previously strict insistence on non-interference in internal affairs of other countries' to a more pragmatic recognition of the merits and obligations working with the international community on areas of concern. In the past few years … China has adopted policies that would have been hard to imagine several years ago.[443]

This evolution is reflected in China's support for the principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which asserts that the exercise of state sovereignty entails responsibilities for the protection of civilians from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. When states fail to fulfil this obligation, the international community bears the responsibility to deploy diplomatic, humanitarian and, as a last resort, collective intervention and the use of force to protect civilians.

Despite the fact that it champions state-sovereignty and non-intervention, China has endorsed the doctrine of R2P twice, once at the 2005 World Summit and in its 2006 endorsement of UNSC Resolution 1674 on the protection of civilians.[444] China's position paper on the R2P clearly stated that "When a massive humanitarian crisis occurs, it is the legitimate concern of the international community to ease and defuse the crisis."[445] Sarah Teitt's careful examination illustrates that China's interpretation of the R2P principles is cautious. It argues that the implementation of R2P should not be misused, that civilian security is the primary responsibility of states and that the will of host governments should always be respected. Above all, China has argued that forcible intervention should be avoided and only used as a very last resort. In addition, Chinese officials stress that conflict prevention, rather than crisis response, should be

437 Ibid, p 6.
438 Holslag (2009), p 31.
439 Alden & Roque (2008), p 3.
440 Raine (2009), p 158.
441 Ibid, p 156.
442 Aning & Tsidi (2010).
443 Cited in Raine (2009), p 162.
444 Teitt (2009).
445 Cited in ibid, p 8.

the central objective of R2P.[446] Despite these qualifications to its commitment to R2P, Teitt notes that Beijing now accepts that "states bear responsibilities to their population [and] that the UN must take measures to assist states to uphold these responsibilities."[447] In reference to China's wider attitude towards a more proactive role of the UN in peace and conflict, Teitt concludes that as with an "icecap melting, China's contained support for R2P is subtle, but in no way insignificant."[448]

China and the ICC

The ICC, established in 2002, was created to bring to account individuals who have committed genocide, war crimes and other crimes against humanity. Despite taking an active role in the drafting of the Rome Statutes which established the ICC, China refused to endorse it, on the basis that it disagreed with the definitions of crimes put forward in the Statute, and because it believed that any ICC investigations would be politically motivated.[449] At the same time the Chinese government states that:

[China] consistently understands and supports the establishment of an independent, impartial, effective and universal criminal court. If the operation of the court can really make the individuals who perpetuate the gravest crimes receive due punishment, this will not only help people to establish confidence in the international community, but will also be conducive to international peace and security at long last.[450]

While China is not a signatory of the ICC, it did not use its UNSC position to block a referral of the Darfur issue to the Court's prosecutor in 2005 (although some argue that this may have been because the Chinese underestimated its eventual impact and believed the USA would block the motion regardless).[451] The failure to use its veto was met with public condemnation by Sudanese officials.[452]

When discussing the role of international sanctions on individuals involved in the Darfur conflict, China's UN Ambassador Wang Guangya remarked that "We also endorse the idea that those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights must be brought to justice."[453] However, when the ICC prosecutor issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in March 2009, China hotly protested, claiming that it undermined the ongoing peace process. Ambassador Liu made clear that in the case of Darfur, the ICC indictment was an obstacle to peace. More fundamentally, he added that "no one has the right to take away the immunity of a head of state, not even the UN Security Council."[454]

This stance was in line with that of the AU, which was equally vocal in its opposition to the timing of the warrant and instructed its members not to allow the arrest of President Bashir. In August 2010, Kenyan ambassadors were summoned in several European countries to explain why, given that Kenya is a signatory to the ICC, President Bashir was invited to attend a political ceremony in the country.[455] Several days later Chen Zhili, a senior CPC official, visited Kenya and publicly pledged China's support for the government's invitation to Bashir.[456] This example makes it clear that China's involvement in the mechanisms of international justice beyond the UNSC is cautious and often likely to be trumped by its interests in fostering diplomatic relations with African countries.

446 Ibid, pp 9–12.
447 Ibid, p 19.
448 Ibid, p 31.
449 See Amnesty International (2007) *Fact Sheet: China and the International Criminal Court*.
450 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2003) 'China and the International Criminal Court' in *China's work in the Legal Field of the United Nations*.
451 Holslag (2008), p 82.
452 ICG (2008), p 26.
453 Cited in Teitt (2009), p 14.
454 Cited in Tisdell, Simon (2010) 'China needs Sudan to vote peacefully' in *The Guardian*, 7 September 2010.
455 BBC (2010) 'Kenyan ambassadors summoned over Omar al-Bashir's visit', 1 September 2010.
456 KBC News (2010) 'China supports Kenya's Regional Peace Initiatives', 3 September 2010.

China and anti-piracy

Outside of the UN, an important aspect of China's multilateral engagement on African peace and security has been its participation in anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden. Not since Admiral Zheng He's 15th century mission to Africa has China's navy operated in such far away waters.

In December 2008, Beijing sent two warships and a supply vessel to the Gulf of Aden. This fleet has been rotated roughly every four months, with the sixth fleet arriving in July 2010.[457] Initially, the Chinese navy operated independently, escorting ships through its own route which ran parallel to that of the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) managed by a combination of EU, US and NATO operations. Between January and December 2009, the Chinese convoy escorted a total of 1,326 ships, of which 405 were foreign.[458]

The primary motivation behind China's deployment of ships into the Gulf of Aden is clear. China "possesses one of the world's largest commercial shipping fleets and relies heavily on international maritime commerce"[459] and Chinese ships passing through the Gulf of Aden have been targeted by pirates on a regular basis. Up to 20 percent of China's maritime traffic was subject to pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden during 2008.[460] For example, in October 2009, the *De Xin Hai*, a Chinese coal ship, was hijacked with 25 crew members on board[461] while in June 2010 another Chinese-owned vessel and its 19 Chinese crew were abducted.[462] Commercial and national security interests are the main reason behind the deployment of China's navy to protect Chinese ships from piracy.[463]

Moreover, the Chinese navy has been developing its longer term capabilities to operate as a 'blue water' navy beyond its own coasts.[464] Shinn argues that the Indian Ocean is a key area where China will in the future extend such operations as a means to securing its commercial, and especially energy, lines of supply with the Middle East and Africa. As it stands, this area is currently secured by the US, and to a lesser degree, India, which China must rely on as protectors of its sea-lanes. For Shinn, this "situation is not tenable over the long term for a power that has global aspirations."[465]

As with peacekeeping deployment, the mission in the Gulf of Aden also provides an excellent opportunity for China to gain valuable experience. In 2009 Rear Admiral Du Jingchen, commander of the first Chinese naval escort taskforce, argued that the mission allowed the navy to test its capabilities, identify problems with training, equipment and operations and further develop its modernisation programme.[466] Furthermore, the anti-piracy mission fulfils a core objective of the Chinese military. China's 2006 National Defence White paper put forward the concept that its military should be able to conduct multiple tasks, including military operations other than war while the 2008 White Paper elaborated on this theme and further prioritised such capabilities.[467] The anti-piracy mission is regularly highlighted as the successful implementation of China developing its capabilities in new areas.[468]

China has also claimed its mission as a successful example of its positive contribution to African peace and security. The Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan notes that "The African side welcomed China's counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia in line with the spirit of relevant UNSC resolutions, which the two

457 Global Times (2010) 'Chinese navy continues to monitor waters in Gulf of Aden', 15 July 2010.

458 Zhao, Lei (2010) 'China's International Peace Involvement Strategy and Anti-Piracy Efforts', paper presented to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

459 Weitz, Richard (2009) 'Priorities and Challenges in China's Naval Deployment in the Horn of Africa' in *China Brief*, vol. 9:24, p 2.

460 Raine (2009), p 161.

461 Reuters (2009) 'Somali Pirates say $4 million ransom paid for coal ship', 27 December 2009.

462 All Africa News (2010) 'Hijacking of MV Golden Blessing in the Horn of Africa', 28 June 2010.

463 Zhao (2010).

464 Shinn (2008), p 181.

465 Ibid, p 182.

466 PLA Daily (2009) 'Du Jingchen: Escort is conducive to navy building', 29 April 2009.

467   Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2009) *China's National Defence in 2008*.

468 Zhao (2010), p 10.

sides believed are conducive to security of the shipping routes in the waters concerned and peace and security in the region."[469] The transitional government in Somalia has welcomed the Chinese contribution. For example, after noting Somalia and China's "strong and historical ties", the speaker of Somalia's Parliament stressed that China plays a vital role in combating piracy, while at the same time the mission would strengthen bilateral ties with Somalia.[470]

Speaking at a UNSC meeting on piracy in June 2010, Li Baodong, China's permanent representative at the UN, cautioned that "the root causes that give rise to piracy off the coast of Somalia have not been eradicated and these pirates remain … This calls for further comprehensive efforts by the international community so as to eradicate the Somali piracy both from its phenomenon and from its root cause … With endless internal conflict in Somalia and the lack of governance, these are fundamental reasons giving rise to the phenomenon." Li went on to argue that the international community needed to give more support to political dialogue, the AU peacekeeping mission, economic development assistance and to the development of a regional strategy.[471]

Despite this rhetoric, the co-ordinated and sizeable response from the international community, including China, can largely be explained as a response to the commercial and economic threats that piracy attacks in this key shipping corridor represent. It is global, rather than African, peace and security that is at stake. China's initial deployment of navy vessels operated outside of the IRCT area and escorts were primarily intended for Chinese ships. While the Chinese navy (along with representatives from the other navies operating in the area) did participate in the monthly co-ordination meetings organised by the EU and the US in Bahrain, known as Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE), it was reluctant to take a larger role in co-operative efforts.[472] However Chinese navy officials reportedly voiced a willingness to integrate into the international structure and in January 2010 it was announced that China would join escorts in the IRCT area and take on a rotating chairmanship of the SHADE leadership.

For some Chinese scholars, China's participation in the international anti-piracy mission is important because it symbolises that China has begun acting as a "big responsible power".[473] Zhao Lei argues that, along with its participation in peace-keeping, China's contribution to multilateral anti-piracy efforts is reflective of a change in how Beijing understands global security and its role in providing it:

China has increasingly become a positive factor and a staunch force in maintaining world peace and has kept abreast of the times in updating its new security concept and peace ideas: its understanding of security has expanded from sovereign security, territorial security and collective security to civilian security, international security and individual security and its contribution to peace has expanded from maintaining its own stability to promoting universal and sustainable peace in the world.[474]

For Zhao, China has supplied an 'international public good' by providing security for all ships in the gulf, rather than only for Chinese ships, which has in turn safeguarded international free trade and upheld international laws governing the navigation of commercial ships. Chinese media has also celebrated China's involvement in the anti-piracy mission as a strengthening of China's role as an international actor.[475]

China's co-operation with external actors

China's anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden are the only concrete example of China's co-operation with other external actors on African security issues; otherwise this remains largely limited to discussions and dialogues. China has discussed African

469 *Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan (2010–2012): 2.6.3.*
470 Xinhua News (2008) 'Somalia welcomes Chinese naval deployment off its coast', 22 December 2008.
471 Xinhua News (2010) 'China backs fight against Somali Piracy', 26 August 2010.
472 Weitz (2009), p 1.
473 Zhao (2010), p 6.
474 Zhao (2010).
475 BBC News (2010) 'China's anti-piracy role of the Gulf of Aden expands', 29 January 2010.

security in dialogues with the US and the EU. In March 2007 the US-China Senior Dialogue focused on Africa, including peacekeeping and Darfur. This resulted in an agreement to form sub-dialogues on specific issues.[476] China does participate in the ICAT group of donors in the DRC. However, this is also an exception to its normal type of engagement with external actors in African countries as China does not usually participate in groupings of donors focusing on security and development concerns.[477]

The EU has proactively sought to include African security in its strategic dialogues with China, with the 2009 China-EU Summit statement noting that the two sides "welcomed trilateral dialogue between the EU, China and Africa, and agreed to explore appropriate areas for co-operation."[478] The EU's China policy explicitly states finding areas of co-operation with China on Africa is an important objective,[479] and in 2008 the European Commission (EC) adopted a communication entitled *The EU, Africa and China: Towards trilateral dialogue and co-operation* which highlights peace and security as an important area of focus.[480] Within various EU security initiatives, issues related to China's security relations with Africa have also been highlighted. The EU Council's SALW action plan stresses the need to "seek consensus" with other exporting states,[481] and the *Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, which foregrounds peace and security issues, states that "in order to ensure coherence and complimentarity with the work of other international actors, including emerging partners, Africa and the EU recognise the need to broaden their co-operation with third partners through enhanced tripartite dialogue."[482]

Despite these efforts at engagement and dialogue on the part of the EU, Holslag concludes that "co-operation with China has remained disappointing".[483] Indeed, besides a British training programme with China for African peacekeepers,[484] there are no clear examples of trilateral co-operation between China, Africa and other external actors on African security outside of the multilateral anti-piracy efforts. There are several possible reasons for this. Firstly, given that Western countries have been late to notice China's growing role in Africa, it could be argued that finding agreed areas for co-operation on security issues will take more time. A less optimistic view might point to the fact that problematic issues in China's own relations with Western countries are of a higher priority for Beijing and so act as obstacles to its co-operation on issues related to Africa. For example, whether Chinese officials are willing to meaningfully engage on issues related to arms transfers to Africa while the US continues to transfer conventional weapons to Taiwan, or while the EU continues to maintain an arms embargo on China, is questionable.

Additionally, as a late convert to multilateralism, Beijing continues to stress that the UN is the appropriate body through which external actors should co-operate on African security. While Beijing may simply be more comfortable operating through established institutions rather than on a more *ad hoc* trilateral basis, this is also because some in China continue to see the UN as a "tool for bringing about a more balanced, multi-polar world, free of US hegemony."[485]

Perhaps more fundamentally, there exists general disagreement over how external actors ought to engage with Africa. In some ways, China's approach to its African relations is greatly different to that of the West. Beijing sees this as an advantage. If co-operation with the West means that China is seen by African leaders to be

476 Gill, Huang & Morrison (2007), p 15.

477 Large (2008), p 36.

478 Council of the European Union (2009) *Joint Statement of the 12th EU-China Summit*.

479 European Commission (2006) *EU-China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities*.

480 European Commission (2008) *The EU, Africa and China: Towards trilateral dialogue and co-operation*.

481 Council of the European Union (2006) *EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition*.

482 Council of the European Union (2007) *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership: A Joint Africa-EU Strategy*.

483 Holslag, Jonathan (2010) 'The Limits of Socialisation: The search for EU-China Co-operation Towards Security Challenges in Africa', paper presented to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

484 UK Department of International Development (2010) *DFID's China Country Programme, 2004–2009 – Evaluation Report*, p 52.

485 Raine (2009), p 178.

abandoning non-interference and adopting political conditionalities, this advantage will be lost. Linked to this is the fact that China continues to, at least partially, legitimise its engagements in Africa based on south-south co-operation. Working alongside Western donors, including with those who colonised Africa in the past, may make this discourse ring even more hollow.

Officials and scholars in China are sceptical as to the motives behind US and EU efforts to court China's co-operation in Africa. Some simply do not see what the concrete benefits are for China. Instead they perceive Western 'engagement', 'dialogue' and 'co-operation' initiatives as cloaked efforts to make China's Africa relations more reflective of Western norms and values. The notion that China needs to be socialised into Western norms as a basis for co-operation is seen as patronising at best and geopolitical at worse.

Some of the most ardent critics of closer co-operation between external actors are found on the continent itself. Several African scholars fear, not unjustifiably, that EU-China or US-China co-operation on Africa will take place without the participation of Africa itself.[486] For some African leaders, a China that co-operates more closely with states that are pressuring for political reform in their countries is a less attractive partner. Geofrey Mugumya, the AU's Peace and Security Department Director, notes that many African leaders like playing China and traditional donors off against each other.[487] Lastly, the discourse of south-south co-operation is attractive for many in Africa. One Congolese newspaper editorial sees potential co-operation between Western donors and China in Africa as being little more than an attempt by the ex-colonial powers to hold onto the country's resource wealth: the DRC would end up "the butt of the joke of a tri-lateral co-operation in which she would be hoodwinked."[488]

Others in Africa take a more measured and positive view of the benefits of co-operation. Mugamya, for example, argues that closer policy harmonisation between external actors on Africa could be beneficial.[489] Mwanzia stresses that "far from developed countries resisting and battling with China over their interests and perceived conflicts in Africa, it is now clear that in many areas they can, and should, work together."[490] He illustrates this in relation to peace and security issues:

There are other areas where external powers share interests with Africa. Support for African peace-making efforts goes beyond technical support. It has to be guided by political consensus and co-ordination, without which such efforts it risks incoherence and costly failure. The absence of unity in international efforts runs the risk of infecting entire regions … Chinese and American support in the United Nations for fully-funded African peacekeeping missions would not only be practically expedient but a signal of political partnership, as would their co-operation over painfully intractable issues such as Darfur.[491]

All external actors have a shared interest in African peace and security. While there are clearly differences in how the West and China engage with African countries, closer co-operation would make the delivery of outside support more effective, both practically on the ground and politically in capitals. Ultimately, however, it is African governments and leaders who will hold the key to successful co-operation.[492]

Co-operation is also important if the potentially destructive consequences of extreme competition between external actors are to be avoided. Aning and Tsidi fear that the "new China-Africa partnership symbolises a new economic and diplomatic 'Cold

486 Baregu (2010), p 3.
487 Mugumya, Geofrey (2008) 'China-Europe-Africa: Is there a possible collaborative partnership?' *China-Europe-Africa Co-operation: Chances and Challenges: Proceedings of the 6th Shanghai Workshop on Global Governance*, 14–15 March 2008, Shanghai Institute for International Studies/Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
488 Le Potentiel News (2010) 'Tripartite Chine-OCDE-Afrique – RDC, grand perdan', 1 September 2010.
489 Muguyama (2008), p 22.
490 Mwanzia (2010), p 5.
491 Ibid, p 7.
492 Baregu (2010), Mwanzia (2010), Muguyama (2008).

War' on the African stage."[493] While this competition could be beneficial for Africa, if poorly managed it might also have disastrous effects for peace and security. Mwanzia warns that "as the Chinese presence in Africa spreads and deepens, it is increasingly likely that conflicts between Chinese and Western interests will emerge, particularly in the competition to secure energy supplies."[494] Mugamya adds that unmanaged power-struggles would "result in reverting to the Cold War trends where Africa becomes a battle ground for great powers to assert their position in the international arena, and the scramble for resources" especially between a rising China and a defensive US.[495]

Robert Rotberg illustrates how relations between external actors in Africa are at least partially informed by how they perceive one another's interests and objectives on the continent: "Despite what Washington may believe, China is not pursuing its engagement with Africa primarily to humble the US or Europe, or to score political points in the ongoing battle for global hegemony. However, China is defensive, fearing that Washington may attempt to contain China's ambitious global agenda."[496]

For the moment, rivalry between powers on the continent remains largely restricted to economic competition. However, some within China and the US remain especially suspicious of one another's intentions. For example Yu and Wang read deeply into the fact that Washington announced the establishment of the Africa Command (AFRICOM) whilst President Hu was visiting Africa in February 2007. They go on to state that besides fighting terrorism, AFRICOM aims "to secure US energy security in Africa and to contain other powers' influence there."[497] They continue "Public opinion in Africa believes that the US attempts to achieve overall control of the African continent in military, economic and political affairs."[498] In the US, a report written for a US Army research institute views the full spectrum of China's engagement with Africa as part of a well-co-ordinated and inherently anti-US grand strategy:

Today, as in the past, the People's Republic of China (PRC) exerts influence on the African continent. Unlike the United States, which also attempts to sway African nations and people, the PRC uses an instrument of grand strategy called political warfare as its primary means of influence. In operational terms, political warfare includes economic aid and development assistance, as well as training, equipping, and arming military and security forces. Exchange visits and public pronouncements are secondary political warfare operations, supporting and facilitating primary operations. … The PRC sought – and continues to seek – to become a global power. It seeks to exercise predominant influence over Africa – its governments and people – and eliminate Western influence.[499]

While it is questionable whether such suspicious views are shared widely, these perspectives suggest that relations between external powers in Africa have the potential to be viewed through prisms similar to those of Cold War power rivalries. Further complicating matters is the fact that it is not only Western external powers and China who operate in Africa, but other emerging economic powers too, including India and Brazil. All of these countries have sought to develop political relations, sign economic co-operation agreements and deliver development assistance. Raine notes that "sub-Saharan Africa is becoming one of the first significant regional testing grounds for multi-polarity or even non-polarity … it is here that the early dynamics are being set in motion that will help to determine how co-operative or competitive such a world will become."[500] In September 2010, Ambassador Liu stressed that "China does not seek hegemony or dominance in Africa; we try best to avoid confrontation

493   Aning & Tsidi (2010), p 10.

494   Mwanzia (2010), p 9.

495   Muguyama (2008), p 21.

496   Rotberg, Robert (2008) 'China's Quest for Resources, Opportunities, and Influence in Africa' in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence*, Cambridge: Brookings Institution, p 3.

497   Yu & Wang (2008), p 79.

498   Ibid, p 79.

499   Chau, Donvan (2007) *Political Warfare in Sub-Saharan Africa: US capabilities and Chinese Operations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa*, US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute.

500   Raine (2009), p 8.

with established interests. We see Africa as a platform for co-operation."[501] It should not be underestimated how important it is for the continent's future that all external powers, including China, see Africa as such a platform and continue to pursue co-operation over confrontation.

Conclusion   China's proactive stance in the UNSC on Somalia illustrates that it is now far from a passive actor in multilateral forums debating African security. However, when China chooses to apply a strict policy of non-interference and host country consent – as in the cases of Sudan and Zimbabwe – it has acted as an obstacle to collective international action. While China has maintained that its stance has been based on its principles, it is difficult to dismiss the role that China's economic interests seem to play in deciding whether or not to block collective action.

China's positions on Zimbabwe and Sudan were also in line with several voices on the continent. At times, China has sought to represent the interests of African states and the African Union at the UNSC, which suggests that south-south co-operation is far from empty rhetoric. However, African positions are not always themselves coherent, and China has not attempted to act as arbiter as well as representative of these views. As a result, Beijing will continue to stand open to accusations that it only represents the interests of problematic regimes when it suits its own interests.

Overall, Beijing's belief in multilateral solutions and responses to African security challenges is commendable. A China that is deeply involved in Africa and engages at the UNSC is preferable to a China that is deeply involved in Africa and cares little for the UNSC. As with other major states, it is also clear that R2P, the ICC and other international initiatives will never be fully effective and meaningful without the participation of China. However this may come at the cost of compromises on behalf of Western actors who originally envisioned them.

China's participation in the anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden is a positive development. Firstly, the PLA Navy's participation in the mission has been justified and explained in terms of 'big power responsibility', meaning that it is at least rhetorically recognised by China that its engagement with African security should not only protect its national interests but also serve international interests in a more 'harmonious world.' Secondly, that China has persistently highlighted that the root of the problem – Somalia's perpetual security crisis – needs to be more effectively tackled by the international community is positive. Thirdly, China has increasingly become more involved in the multilateral co-ordination of the mission. To a degree this might signify that at least in some cases Beijing is willing and open to dealing with security issues in Africa on a more co-operative basis.

Anti-piracy may even serve as the entry point to closer co-operation in other areas between external actors on the continent, although this currently appears to be unlikely given the low success rate of the EU's efforts to court Chinese co-operation in Africa. Finding practical on the ground areas for co-operation – for example on tackling the proliferation of SALW – instead of seeking co-operation on a broad host of generalised issues may be more effective. There are various reasons why co-operation has been limited, but the most notable factor is the reluctance of African leaders to see it implemented. While there are certainly short-term political benefits to be gained from this strategy, at the end of the day if African leaders are serious about maximising the effectiveness of outside support to meet their security challenges, then this support should be provided in a coherent and harmonised fashion. In the long term, encouraging co-operation between external actors may prove to be pivotal in avoiding confrontation over their competing interests in Africa. Any heightened geopolitical tensions will undoubtedly be played out in Africa in the future. This would be Africa's loss.

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501 Africa-Asia Centre/Royal Africa Society (2010) 'Africa: The view from China' seminar, 6 September 2010, London.

9

China's role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding

UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN AFRICA play a significant role in international efforts to help resolve some of the continent's most persistent peace and security challenges. Currently, seven of the UN's fifteen peacekeeping operations are in Africa, and the 70,000 UN peacekeepers in Africa account for 70 percent of total peacekeepers deployed around the world.[502]

As member of the UNSC, China plays a significant role in the decisions surrounding the deployment of peacekeepers and the actions they are mandated to take. China's position on peacekeeping missions has evolved dramatically over the past four decades from a position of deep scepticism to one of active engagement; this engagement has been mirrored by an equally dramatic increase in the amount of Chinese peacekeepers participating in missions. Peacekeeping features in official co-operation agreements between China and Africa such as the 2004 Addis Ababa Action Plan and the 2009 Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan.[503] Clearly peacekeeping is an important factor in assessing China's role in African peace and security and is the subject of this chapter. The chapter also briefly examines China's potential emergence as a key player in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.

Keeping the peace

China's participation in peacekeeping missions has become a source of significant pride in China and is often pointed to as a tangible contribution to addressing African peace and security issues by the Chinese media, scholars and officials. As described in the previous chapter, China's attitude to the UNSC and thus to peacekeeping operations has radically evolved since China assumed its seat on the UNSC in 1971, from a position of deep suspicion to one of careful involvement.[504] China's first deployment of civilian observers on UN peace operations was in 1989 to Namibia. In April 1990, China deployed military observers to the Middle East, marking the PLA's first participation in a UN peacekeeping operation.[505] Throughout the 1990s, China remained

502 Jiang, Zhenxi (2010) 'China's Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations in Africa', paper presented at the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010, p 2.
503 *Addis Ababa FOCAC Action Plan (2004–2006)*: 2.2, *Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan (2010–2012)*: 2.6.1.
504 He, Hin, cited in Taylor (2009) p 139.
505 Zhang, Ping (2007), *Remarks on the Chinese People's Liberation Army's Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, 26–27 March 2007.

wary of peacekeepers using force other than in self-defence as is permitted under Chapter VII (threats to international peace) of the UN Charter.

From 1999 onwards, China's stance on the use of force under Chapter VII became more flexible and less conservative.[506] This change resulted from a recognition that traditional peacekeeping was ill-suited to the type of conflicts in which peacekeepers were currently operating.[507] For example, in 2003 China officially stated at the UN that "traditional operations were no longer suited for certain types of conflict; the situations of the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Liberia, for example, had high-lighted the need for rapid, early and robust intervention."[508] Furthermore the need for consent from *all* warring parties to the conflict became less important for China.[509] China has supported the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) to use force in order to protect civilians who were facing significant human rights violations in the east of the country.

However, as described at length in previous chapters, there are limits to the extent to which China is willing to authorise intervention. In 2006 China refused to support the expansion of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to enter and use force in Darfur to protect civilians. China's reasoning was that, unlike in the case of the DRC, the Sudanese government had not given its consent.

As of July 2010, 2,013 Chinese peacekeepers were serving on nine of the 15 UN peace-keeping operations around the world. While the number of Chinese peacekeepers worldwide is much smaller than that of Bangladesh (10,757), India (8,919) and Pakistan (10,656), China currently ranks as the largest contributor to UN peacekeeping operations among the five permanent members of the UNSC. France has contributed 1,682 personnel, the Russian Federation 357, the United Kingdom 282, and the USA 90.[510] As of December 2009, China was the seventh top provider of financial contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, after the USA, Japan, the UK, Germany, France and Italy.[511] In 2010, China's share of the UN regular budget and peacekeeping contributions reached $80 million and $300 million respectively.[512]

Figure 3: China's increasing contributions to United Nation peacekeeping missions[513]
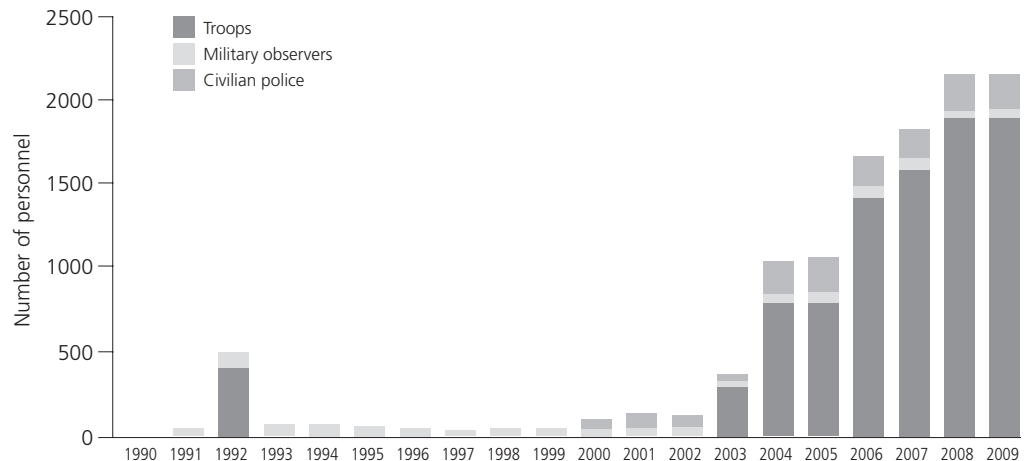
Since dispatching its first civilian observers to Namibia in 1989 and its first military observers to the Middle East in 1990, China has participated in 18 UN peacekeeping

506 Hirono, Miwa & Lanteigne, Marc (2010) 'China and United Nations Peacekeeping', unpublished manuscript, p 10.
507 Furthermore, China felt that its concerns over the use of force had been addressed in the Brahimi Report on reform of UN peacekeeping (which China had played a significant role in forming). Stahle (2008), p 649.
508 Ibid, p 649.
509 Zhang (2007).
510 UN DPKO (2010), *UN Missions Summary by country*.
511 UN Department of Public Information (2009), *United Nations Peace Operations 2000: Top 10 Providers of Assessed Financial Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations*.
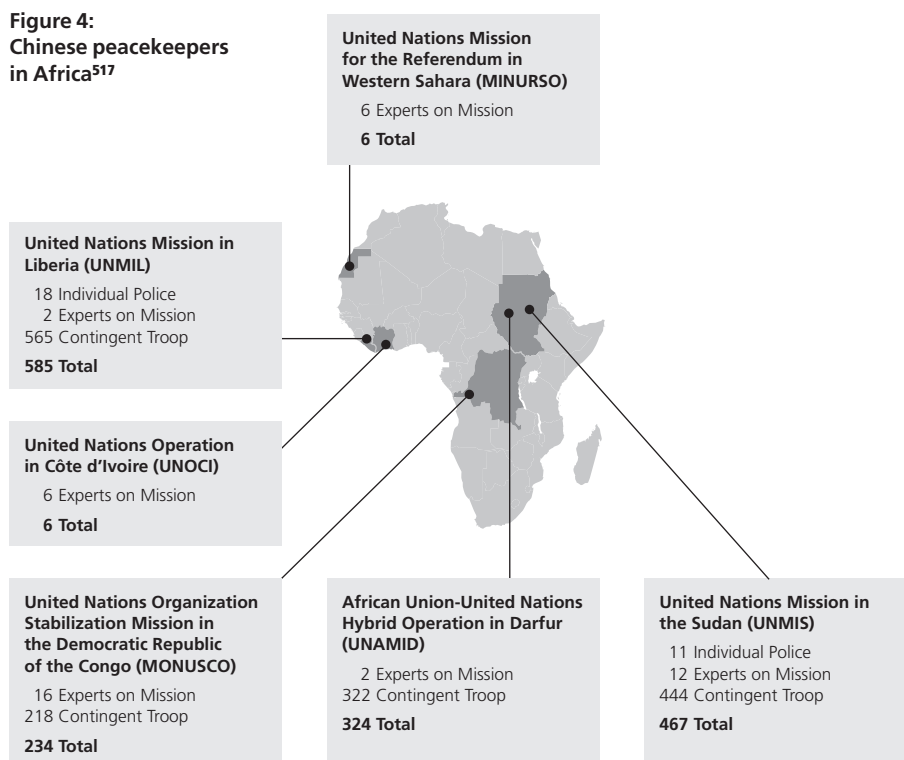512 Jiang (2010), p 3.
513 Gill & Huang (2009), p 6.

operations, and dispatched a total of 15,000 peacekeepers.[514] In Africa, it has sent personnel to peacekeeping operations in Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Sudan, Western Sahara, Ethiopia and Eritrea (see figure 4). Currently, the great majority of Chinese peacekeepers (1,622) are deployed in Africa.

China has not – as of yet – contributed any combat troops to UN missions. Its peacekeepers instead hold positions as military observers, civilian police, with the majority acting as 'force enablers', i.e. those units that provide infrastructure, medical, logistical and transport support. For example in DRC, which has the second-largest contingent of Chinese peacekeepers after Liberia, there are 16 observers and staff and 218 troops (a contingent of 175 engineers and a medical team of 43) working with MONUC. The engineering units have taken on projects such as constructing roads, helipads and storage facilities.[515] China has not only increased the number of personnel contributions to peacekeeping missions, but has also gradually involved its personnel in mission leadership roles and decision-making capacities. For example in the DRC, the senior officer in charge of military observers is Chinese.[516]

**Figure 4:
Chinese peacekeepers
in Africa[517]**

United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
6 Experts on Mission
6 Total

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)
18 Individual Police
2 Experts on Mission
565 Contingent Troop
585 Total

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)
6 Experts on Mission
6 Total

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)
16 Experts on Mission
218 Contingent Troop
234 Total

African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)
2 Experts on Mission
322 Contingent Troop
324 Total

United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)
11 Individual Police
12 Experts on Mission
444 Contingent Troop
467 Total

In recent years, China has also improved its peacekeeping training facilities. The Chinese Civilian Peacekeeping Police Training Centre, which takes the responsibility of selecting and training Chinese police officers who will be deployed to UN missions, was established in Hebei Province in August 2000. The Centre is under the command of the Ministry of Public Security and is supported administratively and logistically by the Chinese People's Armed Police Academy. To date, the training centre has held 21 training courses.[518] In December 2001, the Peacekeeping Affairs Office of the Ministry of National Defence was formally established with a mandate to oversee the comprehensive management and co-ordination of the PLA's participation in UN peacekeeping operations.[519] A new peacekeeping centre for the training of Chinese military peacekeepers became operational Huairou in November 2009.[520] The centre

514 Xinhua News (2010) 'UN official lauds China's contribution to peacekeeping efforts', 31 July 2010.
515 Gill & Huang (2009), p 26.
516 Ibid, p 26.
517 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) (2010) *Current Operations – Online*.
518 Chinese Ministry of Public Security (2006) *A brief Introduction to the China Peacekeeping Civpol Centre*.
519 Taylor (2009), p 144.
520 Jiang (2010), p 4.

also provides a venue for international exchanges, including conferences and training with foreign peacekeepers.[521]

China has carried out international exchanges with other countries and undertaken professional training together with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). Numerous Chinese officers have taken part in international training courses and exchanges with other peacekeeping countries.[522] In the last few years, China has also invited specialists from DPKO to China for pre-deployment visits to peacekeeping contingents. Peacekeeping specialists from the British military have also assisted China with pre-deployment training.[523] China has started to host and co-host international seminars on peacekeeping affairs in Beijing and to take part in international seminars on peacekeeping in other countries.[524] These exchanges have not only promoted the Chinese forces' peacekeeping capability, but also brought closer the relationship between China, other countries and international organisations involved in peacekeeping operations.[525]

China and peacekeeping in Liberia

The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established on 19 September 2003 under UNSC Resolution 1509 to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protect UN staff, facilities and civilians; and support humanitarian and human rights activities. The mandate also includes a mission to implement a disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) programme for combatants and to support security sector reforms, from national police training to the development of a restructured Liberian army.[526] UNMIL started peacekeeping operations in October 2003 and its total personnel by July 2010 totalled 9,369.[527]

The Chinese contingent mainly consists of an engineering company and medical personnel. In July 2010, China's peacekeeping personnel within UNMIL was 585 strong, the fifth strongest contingent after Pakistan (2,978), Nigeria (1710), Bangladesh (1470) and Ghana (740).[528] UNMIL "currently depends entirely on [a] Chinese transport company to transport personnel, fuel, water and other essential goods around Liberia."[529] UNMIL Chinese engineers have been engaged in the rehabilitation of various roads in the country, as well as the maintenance of supply routes, construction and maintenance of bridges, and maintenance of runways at Liberia's international airport and at various airfields.

Since April 2004, the Civil Engineering Section, together with UNMIL's military engineers, mainly from Bangladesh, China and Pakistan, has rehabilitated approximately 2,000km of road networks and bridges have also been repaired or constructed. While civil engineers guide assessment and planning, as well as providing technical advice and materials, the UN military personnel provide equipment and implement projects.[530]

The Chinese hospital conducts medical outreach tours to provide basic health care to local communities and Chinese medics also work on building local capacity. Chinese police officers mentor, monitor and advise their Liberian counterparts and have trained the police force in anti-armed robbery operations and conducted training in weapons handling and riot control.[531] In January 2010, while awarding UN peacekeeping medals for maintaining peace and stability in Liberia to UNMIL police officers from China, UN Envoy Ellen Margrethe Løj praised the contingent for its contribution in strengthening the daily operations and skills of the national police force. She described the training of Chinese police officers for critical missions as "commendable".[532]

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521 Gill & Huang (2009), p 26.

522 Zhang, Ping (2007).

523 Ibid.

524 For example, in March 2004, March 2005 and September 2006, three UK-China seminars on peacekeeping were held in Beijing in association with the British Ministry of Defence. In November 2004, the Peacekeeping Affairs Office of the Ministry of National Defense co-hosted an international seminar with the Bernard College of Sweden. Zhang (2007) In November 2009, the Ministry of National Defense hosted held an international peacekeeping conference in Beijing. Hirono & Lanteigne (2010).

525 Jiang (2010), p 6.

526 UNSC (2003) *Resolution 1509 (2003) Adopted by the Security Council at its 4830th meeting*.

527 United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (2010).

528 Ibid.

529 Gill & Huang (2009), p 30.

530 United Nations Mission in Liberia (2010).

531 UNMIL (2010) 'UN Envoy extols Chinese police peacekeepers for strengthening Liberian police capacity' 6 January 2010.

532 Ibid.

China's incentives for supporting peacekeeping missions

A range of factors motivate Chinese involvement in peacekeeping. For China, supporting peacekeeping is seen as a means of supporting multilateral, rather than unilateral, solutions to global security challenges.[533] Being part of peacekeeping operations gives China influence within them and allows for Beijing to ensure that its views over what is and what is not a legitimate UN intervention are not only heard but are also consequential to decision making. This engagement also gives China a higher profile throughout the UN system, which allows it to make diplomatic gains in other areas.[534]

China's involvement in peacekeeping also stems from the recognition that China's own long-term growth and development are increasingly linked to international peace, and that UN peacekeeping operations are "important means of maintaining international peace and security".[535] As with its participation in anti-piracy, China's expanding peacekeeping role also reflects the country's effort to raise its international profile as a constructive and responsible power. Beijing wants to be seen as sharing the burden of upholding international security. Furthermore, Jiang Zhenxi emphasises that China had to put in practice concrete actions to prove that its promotion of the idea of 'a harmonious world' was not an empty slogan.[536]

As African trouble spots such as the DRC, Liberia and Sudan stabilise and emerge from protracted conflict, China wants to be recognised as having tangibly contributed to greater peace and stability on the African continent.[537] Chinese scholars stress that "while other Security Council permanent members are recalcitrant to deploy their troops on the ground, China's increased involvement in peacekeeping sends a signal that China is a strong force in safeguarding world peace and development."[538] One report argues that the end result has been "a public relations success" in terms of how the PLA is viewed overseas and how China's foreign policy is received more broadly.[539] This may be an especially important consideration in Africa, where Beijing wants its engagement to be seen as a south-south partnership that encompasses more than commercial ties.

For some, China uses UN peace operations in order to increase its strategic presence in Africa, "whose resources may prove crucial for meeting China's energy needs."[540] The presence of Chinese peacekeepers in resource-rich countries such as the DRC or Sudan is pointed to as evidence for this. However this argument is rather simplistic. Chinese peacekeepers do not only deploy to resource-rich countries, as confirmed by their presence in Western Sahara. Additionally, peacekeepers are not a strategic pre-requisite to resource access, and more often than not economic ties have existed before China made its peacekeeping commitments. In some more general ways, peacekeepers do serve China's economic interests: they promote peace in countries where Chinese banks and commercial actors have made significant investments and have an interest in restoring stability. They also improve bilateral relations with the governments that have given their consent to peacekeeping missions.

In the past, Beijing's 'One-China' policy has had an impact on its decisions to support peacekeeping missions. In fact "the only peacekeeping-related vetoes that China has exercised at the UN Security Council have been against the establishment and extension of UN peacekeeping missions in states that had diplomatic relations with Taiwan."[541] After Liberia switched relations from Taiwan to China in 2003, China deployed its largest peacekeeping contingent in Africa to support UNMIL. However it appears that today the One China policy no longer plays such a significant role, as evidenced by the current deployment of Chinese peacekeepers to Haiti, which recognises Taiwan.

533 ICG (2009) *China's Growing Role in UN Peacekeeping Asia*, Report no. 166, p 8.

534 Taylor (2009), p 143.

535 Wu, Miaofa, quoted by Ian Taylor (2009), p 141.

536 Zhao (2010a), p 3.

537 Huang (2010), p 3.

538 Jiang (2010), p 7.

539 ICG (2009), p 9.

540 Anurag, Viswanath (2008) 'China plays its Africa card' in *Business Standard*, 21 September 2008.

As with anti-piracy, participation in UN peacekeeping missions also brings operational benefits, as it is conducive to accelerating the modernisation of the Chinese military, which has become the armed forces' main priority. Given the PLA's limited ability to project power away from China's territory, as well as its lack of operational and combat experience, peacekeeping operations provide the Chinese army with important field experience.[542] Furthermore the operations represent a fulfilment of the military's ambitions to conduct military operations other than war. Lastly, peacekeeping missions bring the Chinese military into close contact with other national militaries, providing significant opportunities for bolstering co-operation and building confidence.[543]

The impact of peacekeeping on African peace and security

China's increasing contributions to UN peacekeeping missions have helped to address the problem that the UN's demand for peacekeepers far outstrips supply. Operationally, Chinese peacekeepers have received significant praise for their work.[544] In July 2010, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Affairs, Alain Le Roy, told Xinhua news agency "We are extremely pleased with China's participation in the UN peacekeeping operation". He added that Chinese peacekeepers have demonstrated "a great degree of professionalism, discipline and dedication."[545] As one comprehensive report concludes, "Chinese peacekeepers are consistently rated among the most professional, well-trained, effective and disciplined in UN peacekeeping operations."[546] However one operational challenge for Chinese deployments is that their foreign language skills remain weak, which to a degree has contributed to the isolation of peacekeepers from local populations.[547] Despite this challenge, Chinese peacekeepers have overall fulfilled their tasks with significant professionalism.

On the ground, Chinese contributions to policing and to the training of local police forces fulfil an important role in post-conflict states where the provision of public security is often weak if non-existent. The majority of China's peacekeeping forces in Africa provide vital support as force-enablers, which can contribute to improving infrastructure. The case of Liberia illustrates some of the positive benefits of such operations. In November 2007, the advance force of Chinese engineers in Darfur took the lead in building a large-scale and fully equipped camp that would be used by peacekeepers following behind them.[548] Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang highlight that by "providing engineers, transport battalions and field hospitals, China contributes critically needed capabilities – as well as a degree of legitimacy – at a time when UN peacekeeping is severely overstretched."[549]

Since their first deployment under the UN banner, it is estimated that Chinese peacekeepers have altogether built or repaired more than 8,000 km of roads and more than 200 bridges, dismantled 8,700 mines and explosives, transported 4,300,000 tonnes of goods and provided medical treatment for 60,000 patients.[550] In March 2010 the Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf praised Chinese peacekeepers for contributing not only to the security and peace of Liberia but also to the West African country's post-war reconstruction and development by helping build infrastructure and providing medical treatment to local communities.[551] These activities both improve China's image and the image of peacekeeping operations as a whole.

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541 Ibid, p 17.

542 Gill & Huang (2009), p 16; ICG (2009), p 14.

543 For a fuller account see Zhao, Lei (2010b) 'Two Pillars of China's Global Peace Engagement Strategy: UN Peacekeeping Operations and International Peacebuilding Operations', unpublished manuscript, p 5.

544 Zhang (2007).

545 Xinhua (2010).

546 Ibid.

547 Gill & Huang (2009), p 30.

548 Jiang (2010).

549 Gill & Huang (2009), p 12.

550 Jiang (2010), p 3.

551 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2010) 'Liberian President Paid Tribute to Chinese Peacekeepers', 3 March 2010.

The legitimacy of peacekeeping missions in the eyes of local populations and political elites is crucial for mission success. The active participation of a P5 member in peace-keeping missions has helped boost the legitimacy of the UNSC and its decisions to deploy troops with robust mandates to use force.[552] Furthermore, the fact that China is a developing country with close relations to some of the regimes in countries where it has deployed peacekeepers has been important. Senior UN and AU officials "believe that China's participation in peace operations in sensitive areas such as Darfur, southern Sudan and the DRC helps to temper the host governments' suspicions that the missions are really Western-led military interventions."[553]

At the same time, China's close relations with some of these very regimes have been problematic for its peacekeepers. Miwa Hirono points out that some actors in Darfur believe that China's close relationship with Khartoum makes it a belligerent, putting its peacekeepers, who are not seen as neutral, in danger.[554] Furthermore, there has been no contact between Chinese peacekeepers and non-state armed groups operating in Darfur. While this may be related to the potential danger involved, it also reflects Beijing's unease with interacting with non-state actors (although it has slowly built up relations with the SPLM in the south of Sudan). For Holslag, Beijing's state-centric approach "fails to consider other important actors in the region of Darfur. A peace mission will need to deal as much with private militias and rebel movements as with regular forces, and neglecting this will constrain its impact."[555] In many African contexts, it is unlikely that Beijing will become more comfortable with interacting with non-state parties to conflicts in the near future. This limits the effectiveness of its contribution to peacekeeping operations.

China has yet to contribute combat troops to peacekeeping missions. This stems from China's current reluctance to engage with African conflicts in a hands-on and direct way. It is also partially explained by nervousness about putting troops in the direct line of fire, by a reluctance to be seen as using force, and by a lack of experience in doing so. Instead, China has cautiously taken a step-by-step approach to its participation in peacekeeping. However, it appears that China is now prepared to take the next step: as early as 2008 Chinese leaders publicly made offers to contribute combat troops and a "number of analysts speculate that China is likely to send combat forces in operations in the near future."[556]

Chinese troops will also most likely partake in a wider spectrum of activities as part of the broader aspects of peacekeeping missions. While China has yet to implement disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and small arms control programmes in post conflict countries, it is training the military in the DRC and so it is, to a degree, already an actor in SSR. Yet, as highlighted in chapter 2, this assistance has been provided unilaterally and been extremely opaque. Its current unwillingness to co-operate with other actors, let alone openly share information with MONUC, suggests that China's engagement in peacekeeping activities might not always be as co-operative as others may wish. This may change as China becomes more confident about partaking in complex multilateral efforts. Indeed, "UN officials are exploring with the Chinese Mission to the UN ways of supporting SSR and issues related to DDR of ex-combatants in many of these fragile states."[557] As with the probable deployment of combat troops, this evolution into new areas of peacekeeping activities reflects China's cautious but growing engagement on African peace and security affairs.

Such developments are positive and are also reflected by the evolution of China's attitude to peacekeeping at the UNSC level. That China has become an increasingly active participant in deliberations surrounding the deployment of UN peacekeepers

552   Gill & Huang (2009), p 27.

553   Ibid.

554   Hirono, Miwa (2010) 'China's Charm Offensive and Peacekeeping: The Lessons of Cambodia – What Now for Sudan?', unpublished manuscript.

555   Holslag, cited in Hirono (2010), p 13.

556   Hirono & Lanteigne (2010), p 4.

557   Huang (2010), p 3.

illustrates a broad acknowledgement of its global responsibilities, including to Africa. Compared to Western states, in the 1990s China remained cautiously conservative in its voting and remained reluctant to support peace enforcement missions where peacekeepers used force and where Chapter VII of the UN Charter was invoked. While the reluctance to allow for the use force or for the flexible interpretation of what constitute threats to international peace might be commendable, many African conflicts of the 1990s required urgent and forceful action by the international community rather than cautious restraint. The tragic experience of Rwanda exemplifies this. That this has now been recognised by Chinese diplomats is important, and it has prompted Chinese diplomats to go as far as saying that the UN should intervene in conflict areas "earlier, faster and more forcefully."[558] Furthermore, China has also become more willing to extend mission mandates and support increases in troop numbers, a development explained by Gill and Huang as resulting from Chinese policy makers in Beijing and its diplomats in New York having a much deeper understanding of the conflicts in questions because of the very presence of China's troops in these countries.[559]

There are of course areas where China could do more. It still does not play as large a role at the DPKO headquarters level as other countries. Greater Chinese participation at other levels, for example within the work of the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations, would mark a step in the right direction.[560] Peacekeeping would also benefit from further Chinese discussions with other P5 states and large troop contributors on how peacekeeping policies and mandates can be made more effective, especially with regards to improving civilian protection. While some missions, such as MONUC in the DRC, have prioritised the protection of civilians and been given wide mandates to meet this task, they have fallen far short of their aims. This urgently needs to be improved, and China, with troops in the DRC, needs to actively work with others to find solutions. Lastly, raising its financial contributions to peacekeeping in line with China's rising economic power would reflect China's commitment to its wider responsibilities.[561]

While China's position on peacekeeping has evolved in some areas such as the use of force, the need for host country consent remains an area of contention between it and other members of the P5.[562] This was illustrated in the case of Darfur, where it is difficult to separate Beijing's refusal to allow for a deployment without Khartoum's consent from prolonging violence in Sudan during a period when international action was desperately needed. However, as has been explored in more detail in previous chapters, China did utilise its bilateral relations with Sudan to pressure for its consent, and China was one of the first countries to deploy troops in Darfur once this agreement was found. In the end, China managed to juggle its economic and political interests in Sudan, its position on the legitimacy of UN interventions, the pressure of others in the international community and the urgent need for solution to the crisis.

The evolution of China's position on legitimate intervention shows that more "pragmatic policymakers have gradually moved away from the hard-line interpretation of state sovereignty, at least on a case-by-case basis."[563] The DRC might present a test for China in the near future. The Congolese government has demanded that MONUC leave the country by the end of August 2011, after which the mission will lose its host country consent. At the same time, violence continues in the country and it is unlikely that the government's security forces will have the capacity to take over from UN peacekeepers by that date. For China – which has close relations with the government in Kinshasa – this potentially presents a serious challenge to its commitments to peace

558 Zhang, Yishan, Chinese Ambassador to the UN, cited by Gill & Huang (2009) p 11.

559 Gill & Huang (2009), p 27.

560 ICG (2009), p 32.

561 Ibid.

562 China makes exceptions to this for cases where the state has collapsed or failed, as is the current situation in Somalia.

563 Hellström, Jerker (2010), *China's role in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), unpublished briefing paper presented at a seminar on 'China's Response to Security Threats in Africa' hosted by the Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies (BICCS), Brussels, 17–19 May 2010.

in the country. However, it is also an opportunity for Beijing to use its bilateral relations to work with the Congolese government to avoid the crisis that a sudden withdrawal of peacekeepers could cause.[564] This will require Beijing to take a proactive, strategic and above all more flexible approach, which focuses on preventing conflict, rather than simply reacting once it is too late.

Starting to build peace?

One area of peace operations where China has yet to play a significant role is in peace-building, i.e. the use of a wider spectrum of security, civilian, administrative, political, humanitarian, human rights and economic tools and interventions to build the foundations for longer term peace in post-conflict countries. Given that half of all civil wars are actually post-conflict relapses, support for peacebuilding in these countries has a potentially enormous benefit for Africa's peace and security.[565] In the past, Beijing has shown great reluctance towards multilateral missions that interfere so heavily in what it considers to be the domestic and sovereign affairs of states.[566] Today it is an area of great interest for many Chinese scholars and policy makers and it is clear that China is set to play a larger role alongside more traditional international actors in the future.

Some Chinese scholars argue that through its peacekeeping activities – building roads and other infrastructure projects, providing medical care or removing mines – China is already participating in peacebuilding.[567] Without dismissing these efforts, Zhao Lei argues that in reality China needs to both substantially "increase the proportion of peace building in the peacekeeping missions" and to play a wider role in activities beyond peacekeeping.[568]

This already appears to be official policy. For example, the most recent FOCAC Action Plan from 2009 states that China "will strengthen co-operation with countries concerned in the UN Peace Building Commission and support countries in their post-war reconstruction processes."[569] As early as 2001, China stated at the UN that it recognised that "peacekeeping operations, conflict prevention and peace-building activities had become increasingly intertwined"[570] even though it stressed that the host country state had to play the dominant role. In 2005 President Hu publicly and officially embraced a "comprehensive strategy featuring prevention, peace restoration, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction."[571] However, he stressed that the UN should refrain from "imposing a predetermined model of governance."[572] This reflects a clear tension. The problem, argues Zhao, is that China and Western countries have different understandings over what constitutes peacebuilding:

The main thought of the Western countries' involvement in peace building is liberal democracy … under special conditions, the international community can use active humanitarian interventions to promote democratic systems. After the end of conflicts, those measures include the amendment of the constitution, holding a general election, establishing a multi-party system, fostering the opposition party and developing civil society. These are always the panacea used by Western countries to heal conflicts. However, China believes every country has its own priorities and to promote democratic system immediately after the end of conflicts is not necessarily a must choice. Instead, measures such as reducing poverty and resolving unemployment are usually the most important tasks.[573]

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564 Hellström (2010), p 154.
565 Collier (2007).
566 See Stahle (2008), p 650.
567 For example see Jiang (2010), Zhao (2010a).
568 Zhao (2010a), p 4.
569 *Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan (2010–2012)*: 2.6.1.
570 Chinese UN delegation, cited in Stahle (2008), p 650.
571 Cited in Stahle (2008), p 650.
572 Ibid.
573 Zhao (2010a), p 3.

Shen Guofang, China's Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN, argues that because poverty leads to instability, the longer term objectives of peacebuilding must be "the eradication of poverty, the development of the economy as well as a peaceful and rewarding life for people in post-conflict countries and regions."[574] Chinese approaches take a heavily state-centric view, namely that the "focus of work should be on enhancing the concerned country's capacity building instead of weakening its leadership."[575] This means direct government-to-government support to strengthen the state. This approach, which gives little space for civil society, may create its own risks, especially when state actors are themselves conflict actors and heavy-handed top down impositions of security make matters worse.[576]

Table 5: A Chinese view of differences between Western and Chinese approaches to peacebuilding[577]

Peacebuilding issues	Western country view	Chinese view
The goal of peacebuilding	Liberal democratic system, priority of market economy	Priority of economic development
The focus of peacebuilding	Good governance	Good government
The principles of peacebuilding	Principle of democratic promotion and principle of intervention	Principle of aiding and principle of non-intervention
The strategic culture of peacebuilding	Pre-emptive	Reactive response
The main ways of peacebuilding	Interaction between up and down: amendment of constitution, holding general elections, establishing multi-party systems, strengthening civil society	Top-down approach: improve the administrative functions of the national organisations of the country concerned; enhance the capacity building of the country concerned.

For most areas of peacebuilding there is already broad agreement on the goals. It is the opinions on the most effective *means* to reach these goals that differ. While there may be legitimate questions over the liberal democratisation agenda which has dominated Western peacebuilding discourse, there are also serious questions over whether peace can really be built without tackling the political problems – such as the legitimacy of those who control the state – that drive conflicts in the first place. While China has the potential to contribute to post-conflict economic development, there are equally serious questions surrounding an approach that is purely economic. In fact such assistance can have serious implications for internal politics.

There is, and there will continue to be, a need for more discussion on what peacebuilding should constitute in order to find areas where international actors can co-operate more closely together or, at the very least, to identify areas where Western states and China may be able to complement one another.

Conclusion

The year 2010 marked the 20th anniversary of the PLA's participation in peacekeeping operations. China's growth in support for UN peacekeeping operations has undoubtedly had a positive impact in Africa. It seems likely that China's contributions to peacekeeping will continue, and the variety of roles these peacekeepers play will grow. That China has become far more engaged at the UNSC, and that its position on the legitimacy of operations has become more flexible, is equally positive. In some cases, for example over Somalia, China has even taken the lead at the UNSC in calling for peacekeeping missions. These developments reflect China's willingness to take on

574 Cited in Zhao (2010b), p 10.
575 Zhao (2010a), p 3.
576 Zhao Lei in fact argues that there is a possible role for Chinese civil society to play in the long run. See Zhao (2010b), p 11.
577 Zhao (2010a), p 3.

larger responsibilities within the international community's assistance to Africa. Its support for missions that use force to protect the human rights of civilians and deal with humanitarian crises illustrates that China is in some cases actively facilitating the implementation of the principle of R2P.

However there will continue to be debates, both within China and between China and others, over the boundaries that constitute a legitimate intervention. Currently, as long as missions are authorised by the UN with host country consent, China is supportive. Given that some regimes lack legitimacy and may have only tenuous claims to represent the wishes of all parties to a conflict, this position may continue to cause tensions with other members of the international community. The crisis in Darfur led to severe criticism of China. With regards to peacebuilding, further differences in approach may also become obstacles to co-operation, and here too Chinese concerns with the line between intervention and interference may limit its willingness to contribute. This will continue to be a balancing act for Beijing. At the same time, Chinese norms may come to change the current discourse surrounding peacebuilding as China starts to play a greater role in this field.

Overall, while peacekeeping might be seen as a rather 'safe' form of engagement, it has "the potential to nudge China toward greater familiarity with crisis management and conflict resolution, with a view to playing a larger role in the future."[578] Similarly, Naison Ngoma argues that through its participation in peacekeeping, Beijing "will be drawn into conflicts and post-conflict situations and will be forced to think through a coherent policy regarding how such conflicts start and why. This will inevitably have implications for how Beijing regards the make-up of African states."[579] Continued involvement in peacekeeping will also expose some of the latent contradictions in China's engagements, for example in deploying peacekeepers in a country where the government continues to fuel conflicts with arms that may have been supplied by China. In some regards, it may be the exposure of contradictions within China's own policies that turn out to be the most beneficial aspect of China's current contribution to peacekeeping.

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[578] ICG (2009), p 17.
[579] Cited in Taylor (2009), p 158.

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Economic engagements

IAN TAYLOR ARGUES THAT "for most of the post-colonial period, much of Africa has been trapped in a cycle of underdevelopment, which has stimulated societal conflict, both at the extreme level of wars and at the more mundane juncture where numerous states stagger from one crisis to another."[580] Similarly, Wang Xuejun states that "Conflicts and insecurity have plunged Africa into a development dilemma, which is rather difficult for Africa to shake off."[581] There exists an extensive literature on the links between conflict, security and development.[582] However, these links have yet to be thoroughly explored in relation to China's engagement with Africa.

This chapter looks at some of the ways in which China's economic engagement in Africa has a bearing on the continent's peace and security. As outlined in chapter 2, China has made clear its commitments to socio-economic development in Africa. This chapter explores the assertion made by Chinese scholars that through its development assistance and economic ties to Africa, China can play a positive role in promoting peace and security on the continent. This is critically examined in relation to four separate areas of Chinese engagement: post-conflict reconstruction, natural resources, land and water.

Conflict and development

The cost to African development of armed conflicts between 1990 and 2005 has been estimated at $284 billion.[583] On average, armed conflict shrinks an African nation's economy by 15 percent.[584] In Burundi it is estimated that 13 years of conflict led to a $5.7 billion economic loss, equivalent in this case to 37 percent of GDP.[585] Conflict and insecurity undermine development because of both direct costs (such as military expenditure or destruction of infrastructure) and indirect costs (such as rapidly declining investment, capital flight, inflation, economic shock, the destruction of markets, unemployment, debt and lack of public services).[586] These costs are placed not only on governments and citizens within their own borders, but on neighbouring countries too. That armed conflict and persistent insecurity are barriers to socio-economic development is clear.

Some have argued that underdevelopment is itself an underlying cause of conflict. Several scholars have sought to demonstrate that poorer countries are more likely to

580 Taylor (2010), p 4.
581 Wang (2010), p 1.
582 See for example: Collier (2007); Blattman, Chris & Miguel, Edward (2009) *Civil War – NBER Working Paper no. 14801*; Berdal, Mats & Keen, David (2000) *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner; IANSA, Oxfam & Saferworld (2007).
583 IANSA, Oxfam & Saferworld (2007), p 10.
584 Ibid.
585 Ibid.
586 World Bank (2003).

experience armed conflict.[587] A 2003 World Bank report argued that "Where development succeeds, countries become progressively safer from violent conflict, making subsequent development easier. Where development fails, countries are at high risk of being caught in a conflict trap in which war wrecks the economy and increases the risk of further war."[588] The World Bank estimates that doubling per capita income in a country halves the risk of civil war.[589]

While some have started to challenge this conventional wisdom,[590] Chinese scholars and officials are among those who frequently point to underdevelopment as a root cause of conflict. Zhao Lei argues that when approaching conflict and security issues in Africa, "measures such as reducing poverty and resolving unemployment problems are usually the most important tasks. Therefore, in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, development should always be the main line running through the whole process."[591] Jiang Hengkun argues that the low levels of socio-economic development in Darfur are the root cause of the conflict there.[592] Taking a similar line, Yu and Wang pose that "China finds poverty to be the root cause of the Darfur issue. The ultimate resolution of the conflict lies in development."[593] Chinese officials have used this very reasoning to justify their opposition to UN economic sanctions.[594]

Several Chinese officials and scholars have claimed that China already supports economic development in Sudan, and that this demonstrates that China is positively engaging to try and resolve the county's conflicts. Ambassador Liu declared in 2007 that "China will continue to support the development projects in the region; such as clean water supply and building agricultural technical centres, on the basis that the absence of socio-economic development is part of the causes of the conflict."[595] Scholar Li Anshan similarly argues that Chinese development and humanitarian aid in Sudan "targets the root cause of conflict – poverty."[596]

For scholars who take this tack, China's commercial relations with Sudan are perceived to be greatly beneficial:

The Chinese government has been actively promoting bilateral trade and economic relations, offering multiple development or humanitarian aid to Sudan. Chinese investments have helped to establish a complete system of oil refineries, petrochemical plants and trading companies. More than 100,000 Sudanese are employed by China-Sudan joint ventures. The Chinese National Petroleum Corporation has spent an additional US$35 million in building roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools for various Sudanese communities, benefiting over 1.5 million local residents.[597]

From this perspective, it is not only China's development aid that helps tackle African conflicts, but the entirety of China's economic engagement in Africa, including the activities of commercial actors. The claim is that as the economic relationship deepens, African economies will see increasing GDPs, which will serve to alleviate poverty. As such, China will have *de facto* contributed to building an Africa less prone to conflict and insecurity.

The belief held by Chinese scholars that reducing poverty reduces conflict is heavily informed by China's own experiences. Jiang compares the relatively poor western frontier regions of China and Sudan, both of which contain ethnic minorities. Jiang argues that Sudan can learn from the Chinese government's attempts to direct

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587 See for example Fearon, J & Laitin, D (2003) 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War' *American Political Science Review*, no. 97; Collier, Paul & Hoeffler, Anke (2004) 'Greed and Grievances in Civil Wars' *Oxford Economic Papers no. 56*.

588 World Bank (2003), p 1.

589 Ibid, p 58.

590 See for example Djankov, Simeon & Reynal-Querol, Marta (2008) 'Poverty and Civil war: re-visiting the evidence', *Centre for Economic Policy Research Working Paper DP6980*.

591 Zhao (2010), p 3.

592 Jiang (2010), p 4.

593 Yu & Wang (2008), p 88.

594 Africa-Asia Centre/Royal Africa Society (2010) 'Africa: The view from China' seminar, 6 September 2010, London.

595 Cited in Karrar Ahmed (2010), p 7.

596 Li (2007).

597 Yang & Wu (2009), p 88.

economic growth to its western regions through forming national strategies to develop them and through providing special support.[598]

That Chinese scholars and policy makers believe China can play a beneficial role in seeking to address the relationship between development and conflict is positive. However, whether China's aid to Africa, and its economic ties with the continent, are beneficial for longer term socio-economic development is still open to question. The exponential growth of Chinese trade and investment with the continent suggests that China has the potential to become an important partner in Africa's development. But sustainable economic growth needs to be equitably distributed and meaningfully used to meet the needs of whole populations rather than narrow elites.[599] In addition, conflict represents an obstacle to economic development, yet as China's growing engagement in post-conflict African states illustrates, there is a risk that economic factors may become prioritised to the detriment of attention on peace and security.

Post-conflict assistance

Zhao Lei argues that China can play an especially positive role in the economic dimension of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries.[600] After the civil war in Sierra Leone, China provided assistance and worked with other donors to help the country's post-conflict economic recovery. China cancelled several debts and signed at least eight separate agreements with Sierra Leone between 2001 and 2007 that involved grants, zero-interest loans or a combination of the two.[601]

China has also provided direct budget support to some post-conflict governments, for example giving $3 million to Liberia in 2004 and a further $1.5 million in 2006.[602] Chinese companies and entrepreneurs have also made investments in post-conflict countries. This combination of official assistance and commercial investment from China, particularly if it includes infrastructure reconstruction and other development projects, can create substantive opportunities for economic recovery in post-conflict states.[603] In areas like Southern Sudan or Eastern DRC, transport links, power genera-tion and basic structures such as schools and hospitals are often in serious disrepair or non-existent. Several post-conflict countries have received substantial infrastructure development from China. For example, in Sierra Leone, Chinese companies have built telecommunication networks and hydroelectric power stations.[604]

Boosting employment in post-conflict states has significant dividends for maintaining peace, creating occupations for young, unemployed men who have little other experience beyond war.[605] Although Chinese workers are employed in most Chinese construction firms undertaking projects in Africa, local workers account for about 90 percent of the work force.[606] Indeed, Brautigam argues that China's employment record is not as bad as it is often assumed.[607] All the same, its record in post-conflict states is less impressive. Research into the Chinese construction sector found that employment of locals in post-war economies such as Angola and Sierra Leone was substantially lower than in more stable states.[608] However, overall, it is clear that Chinese investment has the potential to make a significant economic contribution to post-conflict states across Africa.

598 Jiang (2010), p 4.
599 Naidu, Sanusha (2010) 'China's engagement in Africa and the prospects for sustainable development', paper submitted to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.
600 Zhao (2010), p 1–4.
601 Brautigam (2010), p 137.
602 Ibid, p 127.
603 Collier (2010).
604 Brautigam (2010), p 144.
605 Collier (2010).
606 Corkin, Lucy & Burke, Chris (2008) 'Constructive Engagement: An overview of China's role in Africa's construction industries' in *New Impulses from the South: China's engagement in Africa* (ed. Edinger, Hannah; Herman, Hayley & Jansson, Johanna), Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Stellenbosch.
607 Brautigam (2009).
608 Corkin & Burke (2008), p 4.

That Zhao Lei and others see China playing this role on a larger scale in the future should be welcomed. Yet efforts to promote development in unstable and conflict-prone countries are wasted if security challenges continue to undermine any gains made. Longer-term peace is a prerequisite to deepening China-Africa economic ties that might spur development. In 2009 the Somali Minister of Trade for the transitional government pointed out that China could provide an important source of economic growth for the country – but peace and stability remain the primary obstacle.[609] In short, Chinese assistance and economic ties will unlikely spur development if support to peace and security is not given equal, if not greater, priority.

There is a wider danger that the supposed benefits of economic assistance will be used to justify inaction on other equally important fronts. Political factors are an obvious such area. Political grievances that have played a large role in driving conflicts cannot be ignored once they are over. As it has been explored in chapters 4 and 9, the non-interference principles mean that China is uncomfortable with becoming involved in what it understands to be internal affairs. However, through its economic engagements China inevitably does. This is illustrated most strikingly by China's investments in natural resource extraction in Africa.

Natural resources

Chinese investment and trade in natural resources sits at the centre of its economic relationship with Africa, if not at the centre of its wider interaction with the continent. China's rapid economic growth over the last three decades has created a demand for energy and mineral resources – in 2006 alone, the increase in China's oil demand represented nearly half of the world's total increase.[610] Today China is the world's largest consumer of oil.[611] Africa has assumed a critical role in meeting China's demand for resources[612] – and the African countries in which Chinese companies have sought to exploit natural resources very often have a history of conflict, in which China is increasingly becoming embroiled.

Chinese commercial actors, especially state-owned enterprises, have invested in regions that are unstable and risky because they are latecomers to a market mostly dominated by Western firms. Furthermore, high levels of risk are more acceptable to heavily state-backed Chinese commercial actors than their privately owned Western counterparts.[613] Of course, given that nearly one third of the world's civil wars take place in oil-producing countries, any state that needs to import oil is likely to find itself sourcing it from a conflict-ridden state.[614] As the following examples show, it is not easy to remain above the conflict when doing so.

Chinese workers and investments have been subject to attacks by rebel groups across the continent. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) detonated one bomb in the Niger River Delta area shortly after President Hu's 2006 visit to Nigeria, warning that "the Chinese government by investing in stolen crude places its citizens in our line of fire."[615] Following through on this threat, in 2007 MEND kidnapped nine Chinese oil workers, a practice inflicted on many Western oil workers over the previous years.[616] The same year, nine Chinese workers on a gas exploration project in eastern Ethiopia were killed and seven kidnapped during an attack by the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), an Ethiopian rebel group which had warned foreigners to stay out of the region.[617] In Darfur, nine Chinese

609   Cited in McDonald, Matthew (2010) 'Dire Straits: Examining Barriers to Somalia's International Integration' in *The China Monitor*, issue 55.

610   ICG (2008), p 3.

611   Wall Street Journal (2010) 'China Tops U.S. in Energy Use', 18 July 2010.

612   Alden & Alves (2009), p 5.

613   Raine (2009), pp 38–39.

614   Ibid, p 143.

615   BBC News (2006) 'Car blast near Nigeria oil port', 30 April 2006.

616   People's Daily (2007) 'Nine kidnapped Chinese workers safely released in Nigeria', 5 February 2007.

617   BBC (2007) 'Scores die in Ethiopia oil attack', 24 April 2007.

workers were kidnapped and four killed when an oil installation was attacked in 2008.[618] The rebel commander in charge of the operation stated that "China supports the Khartoum government militarily and helps it marginalise our region."[619] In the DRC in 2009, a spokesperson for the rebel CNDP group stated that "the state has sold its underground resources to China" and verbally attacked China's engagement in the country.[620] As all these examples make clear, China's global quest for resource security has necessitated a local confrontation with African insecurity.

As Abidoun Alao explains, there are clear links between natural resources and conflict: their accumulation or control can become an objective of war; their high profits are used to fuel and sustain conflict; they can be a source of political grievances when their ownership is contested; and they can have a distorting effect on governance.[621] Statistically, a country which has a high level of primary commodity exports has a 33 percent risk of violent conflict.[622] China's non-interference policy has by no means protected it from becoming a key actor inside internal affairs. In some cases it has financed the purchase of weapons by regimes involved in conflict. Chinese finance has been used by the Sudanese government to buy weapons from China and other countries.[623] In 2008, Chinese made a $9 billion loan to the government of the DRC in return for concessions to copper and cobalt resources in the unstable Katanga province.[624] Chinese firms in DRC have been accused of trading in 'conflict minerals', which are sold to buy weapons.[625] China's involvement can also be less direct. In cases when the ownership of natural resources is highly contested – as in the Niger River Delta – China's role in their extraction has made it a party to the conflict in the eyes of those who feel cheated. Furthermore, profits made by sales to China directly enrich regimes whose hold on power is violently contested.

Resource extraction can give ruling regimes a valuable source of revenue which is used to sustain their grip on power, either through spending on security services, through patronage networks – or as it is usually the case – both. These revenues free governing elites from dependence on taxation to fill state coffers, thereby cutting the link between state and its citizens and reducing the likelihood that funds will be directed towards addressing the needs of wider society. The deleterious effects of poor governance of such rentier states for the national economy and socio-economic development can fuel popular grievances. This situation is particularly explosive when combined with the desire of other actors to control power and therefore resources. Delphine Djiraibe's analysis of conflict in Chad traces exactly this pattern.[626]

China's consumption of African resources has led to an accumulation of revenue that has been severely mismanaged on the part of several regimes, allowing them to maintain their grip on power and further enrich themselves. However, China is itself no monolith. Taylor argues that one "must not exaggerate the Chinese government's ability to manage Chinese business on the continent."[627] For example the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) made its initial investment in Sudan "without central government approval."[628] In recent years, some Chinese scholars have gone as far as to openly suggest that China's state-owned energy companies have in fact hijacked China's foreign policy towards Sudan.[629] At the same time, Beijing has encouraged a 'going out' policy for energy companies and it would be a misinterpretation to think

618 BBC (2008) 'China hostages killed in Sudan', 27 October 2008.
619 Cited in Large (2009), p 618.
620 Agence-France Presse (2009) 'DR Congo's Nkunda attacks China to boost political kudos: analysts', 19 November 2009.
621 Alao, Abiodun (2010) 'China's Role in Managing Africa's Natural Resources for Peace' Paper presented to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010 pp 1–2.
622 World Bank (2003), p 58.
623 Dan Large (2007) *Arms, Oil and Darfur*, Sudan Issue Brief no. 7, Geneva: Small Arms Survey.
624 Alden & Alves (2009), p 14.
625 Global Witness (2009) *Faced with a gun, what can you do?*, p 59.
626 Djiraibe (2010).
627 Taylor (2008), p 58.
628 ICG (2008), p 10.
629 McGregor, Richard (2008) 'Chinese diplomacy 'hijacked' by companies in Beijing' in *Financial Times*, 17 March 2008.

that policy makers and party officials would prefer a dramatically different policy in Africa.[630]

Leaving the dynamics that drive Chinese engagement in Africa's natural resources aside, it is an inescapable fact that the political economies of some African states mean that resources have played a key role in conflicts. In this way China's demand for them has meant that it has become an actor involved in internal affairs and in many cases inadvertently reinforced pre-existing conflict dynamics.[631] This is by no means unique to China. While the case of Sudan stands out, plenty of Western companies operate in the resource sectors of the same unstable countries as China. As is noted by several observers, China is simply following in the footsteps of other external actors on the continent.[632] Chinese companies and workers are simply becoming subject to the same resistance to their investments that have been experienced by Western companies for many years.[633] MEND does not appear to hold any unique grievances against Chinese companies *per se*, but instead simply targets any foreign actor seen to be continuing the exploitation of the Niger Delta's resources for the benefit of the Nigerian government alone.[634] Chinese involvement in exploiting conflict minerals in DRC is also relatively small compared to companies from Belgium, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Thailand and neighbouring Rwanda.[635]

Furthermore, singling China out for criticism without referring to wider global dynamics does not provide a full picture. Any analysis of one particular country's role in exploiting Africa's resources to the detriment of the continent's peace and security cannot ignore the fact that economic globalisation means that culpability and complicity spreads far and wide.[636] Robert Rotberg highlights this point when he states that China "ravenously seeks raw materials … to feed its massive industrial surge and – ultimately – America's substantial consumer demand."[637] Indeed for Baregu, it is Africa's experience of globalisation itself that has undermined peace and security:

For Africa, globalization has unleashed a chain reaction which may be depicted as follows: Economic marginalization, resource plunder, impoverishment, state failure, political disintegration, social fragmentation, community polarization, conflict.[638]

Land

Since the majority of people's livelihoods are dependent on arable economies, land disputes are a central driver of conflict across Africa.[639] Armed groups fight over land to control territories, populations and resources. In some cases whole communities are forcefully displaced from their land. The scarcity of available arable land for rural communities only makes these pressures worse. The addition of other actors "competing for this scarce and contested resource can add to socio-political instability in developing countries."[640] At the same time, several African states have been keen to sell huge tracts of land to foreign investors with little regard to the plight of those communities that claim customary rights to its use.

While Middle Eastern countries have been at the forefront of this 'land grab' in Africa,[641] China is one such actor, with the state "now encouraging agricultural

630 Large (2008), p 38.

631 Ibid.

632 See for example Alden & Alves (2009), Large (2008).

633 Ibid.

634 Obi, Cyril I (2008) 'Enter the Dragon? Chinese Oil Companies and Resistance in the Niger Delta' in *Review of African Political Economy*, no. 117, pp 417–434.

635 Global Witness (2009), p 60.

636 Berdal, Mats and Keen, David (2000) 'Introduction' in *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

637 Rotberg (2008), p 1.

638 Baregu (2010), p 3.

639 See for example Pantuliano, Sara (ed.) (2009) *Uncharted Territory: Land, Conflict and Humanitarian Action*, London: Practical Action Publishing.

640 Von Braum, Joachim & Meinzen-Dick, Ruth (2009) *Land Grabbing by Foreign Investors in Developing Countries: Risks and Opportunities*, IFPRI Policy Brief 13, p 2.

641 Ibid.

companies to buy farmland in Africa."[642] China's economic relations with Africa include small-scale Chinese farmers emigrating to the continent and larger-scale agri-business investments.[643] The actual depth of China's accumulation of land in Africa is not clear. A report for the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) notes that:

A common external perception is that China is supporting Chinese enterprises to acquire land abroad as part of a national food security strategy. Yet the evidence for this is highly questionable … as yet there are no known examples of Chinese land acquisitions in Africa in excess of 50,000 hectares where deals have been concluded and project implemented.[644]

Brautigam agrees that much of the attention surrounding Chinese land grabs has been exaggerated.[645] However, is not unlikely that in the near future food security will become an important objective in Beijing's engagement in Africa and China may join other external actors in buying large tracts of land. For example it has been reported that a large-scale Chinese land purchase will potentially take place in the DRC in the near future.[646] This engagement may be justified as a way of improving agricultural efficiency in Africa, something to which China has is committed.[647] While Chinese investments in large scale farming in Africa might provide efficiency, jobs and even greater food security for African consumers, "signing over large tracts of land to foreign concessionaries without the informed consent of local communities is a strategy unlikely to end poverty in Africa."[648] In fact, it is more likely to create serious grievances and fuel, if not spark, conflicts in several regions where land remains a contested issue. The case of water illustrates how even the best of intentions can inadvertently make conflict dynamics worse.

Water

By the year 2025, Africa's population is expected to reach 1.3 billion people. It is predicted that by the same year around 25 African countries will face water scarcity.[649] For this reason "water is fast becoming a major issue in conflict."[650] In areas of water scarcity localised communal conflicts break out between groups over access to water sources. In the Horn and East of Africa, farming and pastoralist communities have frequently clashed over water. Water has also become a national security concern for some governments. "Africa has more than 60 trans-boundary river basins containing 93 percent of the freshwaters of the continent."[651] Inter-state tensions have arisen over these shared resources. This is especially pronounced in the Nile River Basin, where water "has in recent years acquired particular prominence as a major factor that defines peace and security in the Greater Horn and North-Eastern Africa."[652]

China plays a role in Africa's water management infrastructure, including in the Nile River Basin. By 2008, Chinese financial institutions and infrastructure companies had been involved in the construction of 25 dams in Africa.[653] In Sudan, China Export Import Bank is funding the construction of the Merowe dam, which has come under criticism by some organisations for causing the displacement of up to 50,000 people who do not "have a realistic source of income" in their new locations.[654] Another controversial example is the Gibe 3 Dam in Ethiopia. After it was refused funding for the project by international financial institutions and Western countries, Ethiopia

642 Raine (2009), p 41.
643 Brautigam (2009), pp 253–259.
644 Cotula, Lorenzo, et al. (2009) *Land Grab or Development Opportunity: Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa*, FAO, IIED, IFAD.
645 Brautigam (2009), p 258.
646 Ibid.
647 Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC (2009): Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Eight Pledges Announced by China (see annex 1).
648 Brautigam (2009), p 301.
649 ISS (2010) 'Emerging Regional Security Threats in the Nile Basin' in *ISS Peace and Security Council Report no. 13*.
650 Alao (2010), p 4.
651 ISS (2010), p 11.
652 Ibid, p 12.
653 International Rivers (2008) *The New Great Walls: A Guide to China's Overseas Dam Industry*. Berkeley, p 17.
654 Ibid, p 11.

announced in 2010 that it had secured a $450 million loan from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), although as of the time of writing it remains unclear as to whether ICBC has confirmed the finalisation of the deal.[655] The Gibe 3 dam not only has environmental implications, but will also affect communities that depend on the Omo river in Ethiopia and downstream in Kenya where the river feeds Lake Turkana. Many of these communities already clash with one another over access to water resources. A number of academics from the US, Europe and East Africa came to an alarming conclusion from their assessment of the dam:

Faced with an entirely new level of desperate circumstances, the region's already disenfranchised and impoverished ethnic groups – virtually all of them, heavily armed – will likely be forced into intense political conflict with one another over resources no longer adequate for their mutual survival. Combined with the repressive policies of the region's governments toward their indigenous pastoral populations and the likelihood of further eruption of armed conflict within the southern Sudan region, a human rights crisis of unprecedented proportion must be predicted. The threat of a major humanitarian disaster and political conflict, contributing to a massive human rights crisis zone in the tri-country Ethiopia-Kenya-Sudan border region, should be a matter for major international concern.[656]

While the report's conclusions may be overly alarmist, it is undeniable that the dam's construction will have repercussions on a number of complex factors related to peace and security dynamics in the region. The Merowe and Gibe 3 dams illustrate how China's economic assistance may potentially have unintended knock-on effects on conflict and insecurity. China's support for African infrastructure, including dams, is at least partially motivated by a willingness to support African development. However, as Bernardo Mariani points out, peaceful aims do not always guarantee peaceful out-comes and even well-meaning development programmes may fuel conflict:

Development is not only affected by conflict – it often has an effect on conflict too. In the best cases, this effect is positive, addressing the root causes of conflict and contributing to lasting peace. In some cases, however, ill-thought through development initiatives can actually exacerbate, or even cause, violence. This is true at all levels of development – from states providing money directly to the governments of developing countries right through to individual programmes and projects on the ground.[657]

Conclusion

Conflicts in Africa have an economic dimension. This is recognised by Chinese scholars and officials, who have sought to point to China's aid to the continent and its economic relations with its various nations as inherently pro-development and pro-peace. There are significant opportunities for China to play an especially positive role in post-conflict reconstruction, through the provision of investment and infra-structure. However, as the above examples have illustrated, this is not always how things unfold.

In some cases assistance may in fact make matters worse, as in the case of building dams without appropriate attention to the repercussions for communities affected by these projects. Chinese scholars and officials argue that China cannot dictate where and how its assistance is used and to do so would constitute political interference in what are internal affairs. Yet, economic engagements can have knock-on effects for internal affairs and conflict – and may ultimately jeopardise the very investments that are vaunted to improve prospects for peace and security.

655 Bosshard (2010) 'The Gibe 3 Dam – A Test Case for China's Role in Africa', *International Rivers Online*.

656 ARWG (2009) *A Commentary on the Environmental, Socioeconomic and Human Rights Impacts of the Proposed Gibe III Dam in the Lower Omo River Basin of Ethiopia.*

657 Mariani, Bernardo (2010) 'Conflict Sensitive Development: Lessons and suggestions for China-Africa', paper presented to the *China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development*, Beijing, 2–4 June 2010.

To "turn [Africa's] endowment 'curse' into 'blessing', the continent needs all the assistance it can get from its outside partners."[658] It is clearly in Beijing's interests to provide such assistance: China's energy security is dependent on security in the countries with which it trades. Given that China wishes to position itself as a "responsible big power" it would do well to assist African countries and their citizens in the effective management of their resources towards improved development. To do so appropriately requires greater international co-operation. As Zha Daojiong notes, the "challenge is for China and other leading energy-consuming countries to co-operate in defining and addressing the political and social challenges that arise in many of the oil states of the world."[659] International initiatives such as the Equator Principles, the Kimberly Process on conflict diamonds and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) are all examples of how international frameworks can be put in place to ensure good governance in the management of natural resource extraction and investment. Chinese officials and scholars frequently contend that globalisation benefits rich Western countries at the expense of the poor living in the developing world. Taking the lead in driving international co-operation to more effectively ensure that the global trade in Africa's natural resources serves Africa's people would surely demonstrate the true nature of south-south co-operation.

Economic co-operation will remain the priority for China-Africa relations. China's commitment to supporting economic growth in Africa, both through development assistance or through trade and investment, is positive and should be welcomed. In many cases this may very well come to have positive ramifications for peace and security. However, this is not always the case. Economic support cannot be seen as a substitute for action on urgent peace and security challenges. Furthermore, trade, investment and even well intentioned development assistance can fuel conflict. Lastly, economic engagements mean that China comes to have an impact on internal political dynamics. It is in China's interests to be more sensitive to these problems and to work closely with others to find longer term solutions.

658 Alao (2010), p 11.

659 Cited in Taylor (2008), pp 60–61.

Conclusion: A more co-operative approach to African peace and security

IN RECENT YEARS, many African countries have exhibited positive transitions to more firmly establishing peace. However violence continues to manifest itself and in many countries stability is fragile. For African states and their citizens, insecurity continues to obstruct the pace of economic and social development. It is impossible to assert whether China's role and impact has been wholly positive or negative for African peace and security. With 54 different countries and a billion people Africa is by no means a homogenous unit. Although referred to in the shorthand throughout this report, it is obvious that there exist substantial differences between the continent's varied security challenges. To an extent, it is the specific characteristics of these different contexts that determine what impact China has had.

Recognising this, the report has examined several specific topics related to China's engagement and has painted a broad thematic picture. It has been shown that the record is mixed. There is clearly scope for China to become more supportive of African peace and security. In some cases, most pressingly with regards to arms transfers, policies could and should be improved. In other cases, such as its economic engagement, policies could be made more sensitive to conflict risks. In other areas, such as peacekeeping, China's successful contributions should be built upon. This concluding chapter outlines possible recommendations to guide the important steps that can be taken to make China's growing role more conducive to supporting and consolidating an African-led transition to greater peace, security and development.

Before turning to the recommendations, several key themes that have consistently run through the report should be highlighted. Firstly, China is slowly becoming a major player in Africa's security landscape. The conflict dynamics that surround natural resources represent the most visible example of how China is coming to be embroiled and drawn into Africa's internal security challenges. Through its deepening relationship with African countries it is also coming to have a direct impact on conflict and insecurity as the problematic end-use of its arms transfers illustrates. Furthermore, China is coming to play a larger role in supporting efforts to tackle peace and security

challenges. This is because it has a stake in African peace and security. In some regards its direct interests are increasingly coming under threat: energy security, economic investments and the lives of its citizens are at risk. More broadly, China has an interest in acting – and being seen to act – as a responsible global power that assists Africa in its interrelated peace and development challenges. These facts are slowly coming to be recognised in Beijing where policy makers and members of the Chinese policy community are increasingly focusing their attention on African peace and security. To a degree, this has led to a more proactive engagement by China, best illustrated by its deepening diplomatic efforts at the bilateral level, the building of relations with regional organisations, its more vocal role at the UNSC, its growing contributions to anti-piracy and peacekeeping missions and its intention to become a larger player in post-conflict reconstruction. At the same time it must be recognised that Beijing's growing engagement on African security remains a cautious and piecemeal one. Further still it is clear that economic co-operation will remain the priority in China-Africa relations.

A second recurrent theme is that there are clear disagreements between China and the West over how assistance is best delivered. Through direct state-to-state relations and through taking leading positions in multilateral initiatives, Western actors continue to occupy their traditional position as the most significant external players in African peace and security. In comparison to its position three decades ago, China has shown considerably more flexibility over the interpretation of its own principles and some-what closer alignment to Western norms. However its policy of non-interference, its reluctance to support peacekeeping missions without host-country consent, its opposition to sanctions and its scepticism over political reform in post-conflict states are all clear examples of differences that obstruct co-operation with traditional actors. Peace and security in Africa is a common goal: greater levels of dialogue between the West and China will help navigate differences and promote greater co-operation to meet this goal. As has been noted, it is important for Western actors not to lose sight of the fact that they share many common failings with China. Rather than pointing at China and singling it out for criticism, these actors need to better prioritise meaning-ful engagement with its policy makers and wider policy community. As external actors with widely shared interests, it will be to Africa's benefit if China and the West begin to co-operate more extensively.

The third key theme that this report has highlighted is that solutions to Africa's peace and security challenges are to be found on the continent itself. Ultimately it is African governments, political leaders and civil society that are responsible for the maintenance of peace and for developing and implementing sustainable solutions to address direct violence and its underlying causes. External assistance can only play a secondary, supplementing role that is best guided by the decisions of African actors themselves. In this regard it is African actors – especially national leaders and governments – that will greatly determine the role and impact that China has in the future. They must harness the deepening relationship not only to fuel economic growth but also to safeguard progress towards a more stable continent. This means demanding that China contributes more to promoting peace, that it becomes more sensitive to African security and that it is held to account when it does not. Furthermore, African actors must ensure that all external states co-operate more effectively with one another to provide their support. The management of external relations at such a critical juncture in the continent's history will greatly determine its future.

Taking these themes into account, it is clear that action by several groups of actors is required in order to make China's engagement on African peace and security more effective:

■ **Chinese policy makers** and the **Chinese policy community** (including think-tanks, universities and scholars) need to recognise China's impact on conflicts, the short-comings of its engagement with Africa, and translate rhetorical ambitions into clear and tangible policies that are implemented in reality.

■ Other external actors, including **Western policy makers**, **civil society** and **international organisations** need to accept China's growing role and push for more co-operative approaches with this emerging power while accepting their own failings.

■ As the representatives of 54 states and more than one billion people, **Africa's policy makers**, **regional organisations** and **civil society** need to work better with one another and engage more effectively with China to ensure that it lends greater support and is held to account over its commitments.

All of these actors will need to take a more co-operative approach to Africa's peace and security challenges. To these ends, this section makes a number of topic-specific recommendations on ways in which all of these actors could enhance their contribution towards an international co-operation strategy to prevent conflict and promote peaceful development in Africa.

China's state-to-state diplomatic relations

■ **Recognise that China's actions have an impact on Africa's internal affairs.** The policy of non-interference may be understood as a more principled form of engagement in Beijing. However, Chinese policy makers can no longer claim that the policy means that China has no impact on internal conflict dynamics, or that the policy absolves it of any responsibility. It should be openly recognised that China, like all external actors, has an impact on internal affairs through its political and diplomatic relations with African states and through its increasing economic and commercial activities within these states. The solution may be for policy makers in both Beijing and in embassies to become more sensitive to internal conflict dynamics and carefully assess when close relations and economic investments are likely to be more costly than profitable in the long term. Furthermore, these same officials could do better to communicate the conditions and parameters of China's policy of non-interference to African and external actors.

■ **Better distinguish between African regimes and their citizens, including greater consultation with civil society.** Chinese policy makers should consider ways to better distinguish between African regimes and their citizens, as too often regimes act to the detriment of their citizens, thereby heightening insecurity. In the long term, close association with ruling regimes may undermine China's own interests. Beijing could visibly consult with African civil society actors in order to develop its understanding of the contexts of each country in which it operates. Involving African civil society in FOCAC meetings would be a first step. African civil society groups are by no means inherently hostile to engaging directly with Chinese policy makers or the broader policy community. Dialogue will help to overcome mutual suspicion and could translate into policy-relevant advice. At the same time, African civil society groups need to better co-operate with one another to more effectively communicate their perspectives and concerns to China.

■ **Be ready to take the lead in crises.** To realise its role as a key external player in Africa, Chinese policy makers should prepare to play a more proactive role in the face of crises. This includes starting to work more closely with other external actors during crisis periods in order to better co-ordinate policies or, at the very least, to share views and perspectives. However, in countries where China has significant influence, others on the continent and outside will expect China to take the lead. To this end, policy makers could start to develop diplomatic capacity to implement a unique Chinese approach to conflict resolution that includes facilitating dialogue and negotiations. This will require field research, co-operation with others, learning and the formation of clear policy guidelines, on the part of the Chinese policy community. Currently, China's engagement is usually one that is reactive to specific challenges where China feels impelled to respond as crises escalate. Ultimately, shifting policy focus away from *ad hoc* crisis reaction to conflict prevention will be in China's long-term interests.

■ **Continue high-profile diplomatic delegations.** China's appointment of a Special Representative for African Affairs and his ensuing efforts to persuade African leaders to find peaceful resolutions to ongoing conflicts has demonstrated the positive diplomatic role that China can play. Beijing could build on this foundation to deepen and widen the range of conflicts and security issues that its Special Representative focuses on.

■ **Research and investigate conflict dynamics.** There is an urgent imperative to further develop the knowledge base in China about the dynamics, trends and impact of conflict in Africa and to understand what actions can enhance security and prevent conflict. The Chinese policy community should examine these dynamics in greater detail, and focus on how China's engagement on the African continent can be improved. In doing so, Chinese scholars should work more closely with their African and international counterparts in order to share views and perspectives. It would be beneficial if Chinese policy makers were to increase funding to Chinese universities, think tanks, and defence academies to carry out policy research.

■ **Hold China-Africa relations to account.** African governments have primary responsibility for the maintenance of relations with China and the ends that they serve. African policy makers could provide clearer guidance to Beijing on how it might better use its bilateral diplomatic relations to support peace and security. African civil society actors, including analysts, academics and activists, continue to play important roles in improving governance in Africa and also in finding solutions to peace and security challenges. These specialists should analyse how different regimes manage their bilateral relations with China and the implications this has on governance and peace and security. Above all, they must continue to hold their own governments to account over their relations with all external actors.

■ **Find areas for co-operation.** All external actors, including China, need to better recognise when they negatively affect security dynamics within Africa and act responsibly to support African actors in finding solutions. China is not a traditional development donor in Africa and does not explicitly seek to improve governance and generate political reform. Clearly China does not share the same liberal norms that guide the discourse and engagement of Western states in Africa. Western actors need to accept these different starting points and, instead of singling China out for criticism, appreciate that China shares an interest in stability and so can be a partner in international co-operation. African leaders from both governments and civil society need to provide guidance and engage in these processes to make sure that their voices are clearly heard.

Military co-operation   ■ **Make the security of civilians the ultimate aim of military co-operation.** Chinese and African policy makers should ensure China's provision of logistics, infrastructure and training and other forms of military co-operation is focused on enabling militaries to more effectively protect the security of civilians. Chinese policy makers must ensure basic adherence to the international principles and laws to which China and African states are already party, especially with regards to international humanitarian law and human rights.

■ **Increase co-operation, information sharing and transparency.** Closer co-ordination and information sharing between external actors engaged in military co-operation in Africa is essential to ensure that assistance is delivered in an effective manner. China's current military co-operation partnerships with African countries are highly opaque. This will have to be remedied before the positive aspects of military co-operation can be capitalised on and recognised by others. China could start by improving the quality of the information it submits in compliance with existing UNSC resolutions. African governments need to make the content of military relations with external partners transparent whenever this does not jeopardise national security. Equally, African civil society should demand greater levels of transparency in the military dealings between their governments and external partners.

■ **Improve and enable civilian oversight.** African governments should encourage civilian oversight of all military matters to the highest degree possible, including military relations with China. For its part, African civil society must continue to call for the strengthening of civilian oversight of the militaries. This includes carefully scrutinising the allocation of outside financial and technical assistance to the military, and demanding that the overriding priority of externally provided military assistance is the security of the state's citizens.

■ **Integrate military assistance with broader security sector reforms (SSR).** In the interests of long-term stability, military assistance should not be provided in isolation from other security sector initiatives, such as police reform. African governments should ensure that Chinese assistance to militaries is part of a larger and more holistic programme of improving public security provision.

■ **Continue supporting de-mining.** In many post-conflict African states, landmines laid during years of conflict continue to indiscriminately maim and kill civilians. China has developed a significant degree of expertise and experience in the area of de-mining and policy makers should ensure that such skills continue to be transferred to Africa as a means to meet its FOCAC commitments.

■ **Continue training for peacekeeping missions.** The Chinese military is becoming increasingly experienced in peacekeeping operations and has acquired valuable skills that could be transferred to African militaries in order to build their capacity. Chinese policy makers should make this a priority area for military co-operation in order to fulfil China's pledges made in FOCAC agreements.

■ **Link military co-operation to combating illicit trafficking of arms.** Training and other military co-operation provided by China could include a 'stockpile management and security' component, as a means of contributing to efforts to reduce the illicit trade and trafficking of arms, in particular SALW.

Arms transfers   ■ **Improve the regulation of the arms trade.** All countries, including China, should ensure that national arms transfer controls fully reflect states' existing obligations under International Law. This includes not only observing UN sanctions and combating illicit trafficking, but also, when assessing whether to transfer arms, applying criteria that comply *inter alia* with states' obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law.

■ **Strengthen end-use controls and monitoring.** The hands that many Chinese weapons end up in and their end-use are troubling areas of China's engagement in Africa. The problems associated with Chinese arms transfers should be an urgent area for attention at the highest levels. Chinese policy makers must develop stronger clauses on end-use, final destination and re-export in arms export agreements. By establishing end-use monitoring mechanisms showing the chain of possession from manufacturer to end-user, China will be better able to ensure that arms licensed for export or import do not fall into the black market and are not diverted to unauthorised or destabilising purposes, including sanctions-breaking activities.

■ **Increase transparency.** China's arms deals in Africa remain opaque. There is substantial scope to improve the management and dissemination of information related to the arms trade without compromising national security, necessary commercial confidentiality, or law enforcement. In line with the practice by other leading arms manufacturers/exporters, Chinese policy makers should consider the publication of detailed information on the implementation of national arms export controls. At a minimum, China should publish details of export licences granted for all arms transfers. Policy makers in European countries and the US should set a good example by increasing levels of transparency in their own dealings with African states.

■ **Maintain SALW on the FOCAC agenda.** It is disappointing that the Fourth Ministerial Conference of FOCAC of November 2009 did not revisit some of the critical peace and security issues contained in the Beijing Action Plan of 2006. These included China's pledge to support efforts to combat the illicit trade in SALW by providing financial and material assistance to African countries. Such commitments offered vital entry points for enhancing dialogue and co-operation between China and Africa on SALW. African and Chinese policy makers could devote more diplomatic efforts to bring SALW back on FOCAC agenda. African civil society groups also need to advocate for its re-inclusion.

■ **Assist practical efforts to tackle SALW.** There are many opportunities for China to provide much-needed support to tackle the proliferation of SALW. China could support the implementation of Africa's existing regional agreements on SALW through: helping build the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat and reduce the trafficking of SALW; assisting to enhance the management and security of authorised stocks of arms held by police, armed forces and border guards; supporting public awareness and training programmes; aiding in weapons collection programmes and the destruction of surpluses; and providing resources for computerised record-keeping. Arms control best practices could also be part of future joint military exercises and training sessions, while exchange trips could be organised for Chinese and African officials to share information and best practices.

■ **Promote trans-regional partnerships.** Trans-regional partnerships between African states, regional organisations, the EU and China are needed to accelerate national implementation of the norms and commitments deriving from sub-regional and international SALW agreements. At an operational level, joint EU-China financial and technical support delivered to African states and regional bodies to implement some of the practical measures listed above would be a first step.

■ **Work towards an international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).** The increasingly complex and transnational nature of the arms trade requires high common standards to ensure that the current gaps in national and regional arms transfer controls cannot be exploited to facilitate violations of International Law. Current efforts within the UN to develop an ATT provide a crucial opportunity for doing so. The many African countries that support the ATT initiative should encourage China to lend its support to the development of a robust and effective treaty, which is very much in China's long-term interest too.

■ **Acknowledge the shortcomings of other arms exporting countries.** Those seeking to engage with China on international arms transfer controls need to acknowledge that China is not the only arms exporting country with a dubious record, if they are to establish any grounds for strong international co-operation. An accusatory stance will only serve to alienate China, rather than bringing it on board.

Regional and sub-regional organisations

■ **Establish common and co-ordinated regional positions.** It is imperative that policy makers from African countries and regional and sub-regional organisations, including the AU Peace and Security Council, build up a shared knowledge base on the security dimensions of China's role in Africa. Even more important is that this knowledge base informs co-ordinated initiatives to encourage China's positive contributions to African peace and security, and discourage behaviour that fuels conflict and insecurity.

■ **Promote civil society dialogues.** As a common assessment and strategy seem unlikely to be achieved in the short term, a starting point could be to engage in a frank and constructive dialogue through a series of high-level consultations involving African and Chinese policy community representatives. This would allow for the identification of common areas for action which can then be taken to policy makers

and officials. The identification of specific entry-points for dialogue (for example on SALW initiatives) will be a useful first step in this regard.

- **Formalise and institutionalise regional relations.** Initiatives such as the China-AU Strategic Dialogue Mechanism create channels for communication on pressing issues, and could be used as a focus for dialogue on peace and security issues. Chinese policy makers should seek to establish similar channels for dialogue with other sub-regional organisations. This would provide an excellent opportunity for China to meet its FOCAC pledges regarding support for regional African solutions to African problems.

- **Increase financial support.** Compared to other donors, China provides relatively little financial support to the AU's peace and security infrastructure. In order to meet its FOCAC commitments to the AU, the *ad hoc* provision of support to specific peace-keeping missions should be formalised and, where possible, increased to demonstrate that China understands regional bodies to be important security actors.

- **Increase technical support.** Even if Chinese policy makers are reluctant to provide large financial donations, China should greatly increase technical support to the AU and other sub-regional institutions to build on already-established Chinese expertise. Peacekeeping training for AU peacekeepers and the African Standby Force present clear opportunities for such engagement and the fulfilment of already agreed-upon FOCAC pledges. Chinese and African policy makers could also explore new areas for support, for example on SALW initiatives or the Continental Early Warning System. Sub-regional organisations should also seek to engage with Chinese policy makers on how China can best assist them to meet their specific needs.

- **Expand engagement with African peacekeeping initiatives.** Chinese policy makers should continue to provide support at the UNSC level for AU peacekeeping operations. China should encourage other members of the international community to continue to support AU peacekeeping operations and provide much-needed financial support to allow missions to fulfil their mandates on the ground.

- **Continue diplomatic support for regional organisations to take the lead.** In line with FOCAC agreements, Chinese policy makers should continue to support the AU and sub-regional actors to take primary responsibility in managing conflict and crisis issues as they arise. This includes continuing to diplomatically represent their positions at the UNSC. However, this support cannot come at the expense of any direct action by China, which must remain equally proactive in utilising its bilateral relations and its UNSC position to support and double the effectiveness of regional actors. When regional solutions appear to be ineffective in solving problems, China must be ready to step in.

International co-operation

- **Continue engaging on African security issues through the UNSC.** Chinese policy makers should continue engaging on African security at the UNSC level as has been collectively agreed upon in FOCAC agreements. Many conflicts in Africa continue to receive far less attention from the international community than their situation demands. Simply through putting these conflicts higher on the UNSC agenda, China can make valuable contributions on the behalf of Africa. However, at least for the fore-seeable future, there will be differences between China and other UNSC members on how the international community should best respond to these conflicts. As opposed to operating on an *ad hoc* basis, Chinese policy makers should better communicate the policies that guide their positions on UNSC decisions. In some cases collective action may be urgently needed to prevent ongoing violence and suffering. Greater flexibility on the behalf of Chinese policy makers may be required to allow this to happen. Other UNSC actors need to redouble efforts to find areas of agreement with China rather than painting China as obstructive to UNSC processes.

■ **Represent a wider Africa at the UNSC.** Chinese policy makers need to ensure that they consult with a wide spectrum of stakeholders in any African security issue, including with civil society actors, before purporting to offer an African perspective at the UNSC. Without visibly broadening consultation, Beijing will continue to stand open to accusations that it represents the interests of problematic regimes alone. At the same time, African leaders and civil society need to better engage with and communicate their positions to Chinese policy makers and the Chinese policy community to ensure their voices are heard at the UNSC.

■ **Seek Chinese commitments to the principle of the Responsibility to Protect and the principles underpinning the ICC.** Neither R2P or the ICC will ever be fully effective and meaningful without the participation of influential states such as China. Those African leaders and civil society actors who believe in such initiatives, and see their potential benefits, should seek to communicate their position to China. Western states that share these beliefs should engage with Beijing to find areas where China feels comfortable participating. This may require some compromises, which will have to be carefully balanced against the benefits of having China on board.

■ **Continue to participate in anti-piracy operations.** China's participation in the anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia is a welcome development. This signifies that policy makers are willing and open to dealing with security issues in Africa on a co-operative basis. Continued anti-piracy missions may serve as an entry point to closer co-operation on security issues between external actors on the continent. Chinese policy makers should continue to push the international community to engage more proactively on Somalia's security crisis itself.

■ **Co-ordinate outside support.** An exclusively African approach to the continent's security challenges – which does not take advantage of the necessary financial, logistical, technological and political commitments that the international community can collectively provide – is currently far off. African stakeholders therefore need to continue to engage international donors – among them China and the West, but also other emerging powers – and strike a balance between external support and local African leadership. African policy makers need to encourage more coherent, synergised and transparent interactions by external partners. In the short term, this will make the delivery of development and security assistance more effective. In the long term, encouraging co-operation between external actors may prove to be pivotal in avoiding confrontation over their interests in Africa.

■ **Increase focus on African peace and security and seek co-operation.** External actors must ensure that African peace and security issues take a higher priority in their strategic dialogues with China. Policy makers should also ensure that this is delivered in a co-operative manner. This can be effectively achieved through several ways. Firstly, supporting trilateral dialogues (for example Africa-EU-China civil society forums) will allow for frequent exchanges of views and perspectives that increase mutual understanding and slowly build consensus around key norms. Secondly, through discussing specific geographic or thematic issues (for example civilian protection in the DRC), policy makers can compare different policy approaches and start to develop consensus around best practice. Finally, through identifying on-the-ground projects to collectively support (for example jointly supporting SALW initiatives) the practical benefits of co-operation can be illustrated while confidence for future larger scale co-operation can be built. All of these approaches present clear entry points to facilitating closer co-operation in the future.

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding

■ **Consider greater flexibility on the deployment of peacekeepers.** While it has shown greater flexibility over the mandates that govern peacekeeping missions, China continues to require host state consent for their deployment. Given that there are circumstances where host-country regimes may lack legitimacy or have only tenuous

claims to represent the wishes of all parties to a conflict, this position will continue to cause tensions with other members of the international community and act as an obstacle to the deployment of peacekeeping missions. In the future this could be prevented if Chinese policy makers begin to consider whether they can show more flexibility in their position on host country consent.

■ **Increase contributions to peacekeeping.** China has committed itself to supporting peacekeeping operations in Africa in various FOCAC agreements. Chinese policy makers should continue to build upon China's positive contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, especially in regards to troop deployments. While force enablers will continue to play a critical role, Chinese combat troops would be a potentially beneficial addition in the future. Policy makers could allocate further resources to peacekeeping training in China and make peacekeeping a higher priority in relevant government branches. Policy makers could become more active in the work of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to help develop better peacekeeping policies and actions. They should also slowly increase financial support in line with China's rising economic power.

■ **Support disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes.** Supporting DDR programmes and ensuring their completion is a vital step in post-conflict reconstruction, and conflict prevention. Chinese policy makers could begin to make preparations so that Chinese peacekeepers have the training and capacity to play a larger role in DDR operations in post-conflict countries.

■ **Support peacebuilding initiatives.** China's provision of basic socio-economic infrastructure as part of its peacekeeping operations is commendable. These activities could now be integrated into wider peacebuilding initiatives in line with China's FOCAC pledge to support countries in their post-conflict reconstruction processes. The Chinese policy community needs to continue to examine how China can play a larger role in peacebuilding efforts while policy makers should begin to engage with other states and organisations to find areas that China can best contribute to. China's FOCAC commitment to strengthen co-operation with other countries in the UN Peacebuilding Commission is a promising first step.

■ **Hold dialogue on peacebuilding.** Clearly there are differences of opinion as to what peacebuilding should entail. African, Chinese and Western policy communities need to enter into dialogue as to explore the opportunities and obstacles for closer policy alignment. Such dialogues should be used to inform policy makers to help find areas where international actors can co-operate more closely or, at the very least, identify areas where Western states and China may be able to compliment one another.

Economic engagement

■ **Hold African governments to account for the management of natural resources.** Effective governance and management of natural resources holds the key to avoiding conflicts associated with them. As such, concerned African leaders and civil society need to scrutinise their government's management of resources and the role of external actors in their extraction and sale. African policy makers and civil society must ensure that their engagement with China in this regard is beneficial for peace and longer term development.

■ **Examine the links between natural resource extraction and conflict.** Chinese policy makers should more openly recognise that Chinese energy and resource interests have become enmeshed in local and national level conflicts and that, because of this, China has an impact on these conflicts. Furthermore, Chinese scholars could research more closely the nature and implications of this relationship. Beijing needs to comply with international frameworks for regulating trade in resources in countries which suffer from resource-related conflict, and could develop its own regulations for Chinese companies operating abroad. Policy makers also may consider whether

Beijing's control over Chinese energy companies is sufficient to ensure that China's long-term interests, and those of African countries, are safeguarded.

■ **Support regional and international initiatives that promote better natural resource governance.** One way in which foreign partners can support better governance in Africa's resource-rich states is through lending financial and political support to regional initiatives that promote it, for example ECOWAS's Conflict Prevention Framework and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Given that these agreements have been made by African leaders, greater support would be in line with China's principle of south-south co-operation. Chinese participation in international initiatives such as the Kimberly Process, which seeks to prevent the trade in conflict diamonds, the Equator Principles, which cover the social and environment effects of financial investment, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which sets standards for transparency in oil, gas and mining sectors, should be encouraged by both African and Western actors.

■ **Dialogue on natural resources and conflict.** Policy communities from Africa, the West, China and other emerging economies must come together to discuss how the management of natural resources and the role of the global market for them can be better harnessed.

■ **Take a holistic approach to development, peace and security.** The fact that China intends to play a larger role in post-conflict countries, including with providing infrastructure development, is a very positive development in terms of its deepening engagement on African security. African states and regional institutions, as well as traditional Western actors involved in peacebuilding should seek to encourage this. However, Chinese policy makers and scholars should better recognise that support for economic development cannot be presented as an alternative to support for peace and security.

■ **Do no harm.** China should place the principles of conflict sensitivity at the core of the development assistance it provides to its partners, be they small aid projects or national scale infrastructure projects. At an absolute minimum, it is important to ensure that economic investments do not harm conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. This requires careful analysis of the context and the likely impact of Chinese investments. Where necessary, this may also require the careful development of mitigating actions to avoid fuelling conflict dynamics. In order to conduct analyses of local contexts and develop risk mitigation tools, China could involve local communities in the process.

■ **Examine the role that land and water play in conflict.** African civil society and leaders need to carefully assess and actively act upon the impact that Chinese commercial accumulation of land might have on those communities who depend on land but who usually have little political voice. At the same time, Chinese policy makers and scholars need to better understand the potential ramifications for China's entry into the ongoing large-scale sale of agricultural land in Africa. China could also support the peaceful management of water resources through not only carefully considering its water-related infrastructure support, but by also lending its financial and diplomatic support to regional water management initiatives that have been implemented by the AU.

The IV FOCAC Meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 8–9 November 2009: The Eight Pledges

1. China proposes to establish a China-Africa partnership in addressing climate change. China would enhance co-operation on satellite weather monitoring, development and utilization of new energy sources, prevention and control of desertification and urban environmental protection. China has decided to build 100 clean energy projects for Africa covering solar power, bio-gas and small hydro-power.

2. China will enhance co-operation with Africa in science and technology. China proposes to launch a China-Africa science and technology partnership, under which China would carry out 100 joint demonstration projects with Africa on scientific and technological research and receive 100 African postdoctoral fellows to conduct scientific research in China.

3. China will help Africa build up financing capacity. China would provide 10 billion U.S. dollars in concessional loans to African countries, and support Chinese financial institutions in setting up a special loan of 1 billion dollars for small- and medium-sized African businesses. For the heavily indebted countries and least developed countries in Africa having diplomatic relations with China, China would cancel their debts associated with interest-free government loans due to mature by the end of 2009.

4. China will further open up its market to African products. China would phase in zero-tariff treatment to 95 percent of the products from the least developed African countries having diplomatic relations with China, starting with 60 percent of the products within 2010.

5. China will further enhance co-operation with Africa in agriculture. China would increase the number of its agricultural technology demonstration centres in Africa to 20, send 50 agricultural technology teams to Africa and train 2,000 agricultural technology personnel for Africa, in order to help boost the continent's food security.

6. China will deepen co-operation in medical care and health. China would provide medical equipment and anti-malaria materials worth 500 million Yuan (73.2 million U.S. dollars) to the 30 hospitals and 30 malaria prevention and treatment centres built by China and train 3,000 doctors and nurses for Africa.

7. China will enhance co-operation in human resources development and education. China would build 50 schools and train 1,500 school principals and teachers for African countries. By 2012, China would increase the number of Chinese government scholarships to Africa to 5,500, and would also train 20,000 professionals for Africa over the next three years.

8. China will expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges. China proposes to launch a China-Africa joint research and exchange program to increase exchanges and co-operation, share development experience, and provide intellectual support for formulating better co-operation policies by the two sides.

FOCAC Peace and Security Agreements

Addis Ababa FOCAC Action Plan (2004–2006): Peace and Security Agreements

2.2 Peace and Security

2.2.1 We note with satisfaction the deepening of co-operation between the Two Sides in resolving regional conflicts and other problems in Africa. We appreciate China's participation in peacekeeping operations in Africa and express the hope that in order to make this operation fulfil the mandate early, China should consider intensifying participation. In this context also and in order to strengthen the capacity of African States to undertake Peace Keeping operations, China should give consideration to support Africa in the areas of logistics.

2.2.2 We are resolved to step up co-operation and work together to support an even greater role of the United Nations, the African Union and other sub-regional African organizations in preventing, mediating and resolving conflicts in Africa. We will continue to pay attention to the issue of African refugees and displaced persons. China will continue its active participation in the peacekeeping operations and de-mining process in Africa and provide, within the limits of its capabilities, financial and material assistance as well as relevant training to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. In order to strengthen the capacity of African States to undertake peacekeeping operations, we look forward to the strengthening of China's co-operation with African States and Sub-regional organizations in the areas of logistics.

2.3 Non-Traditional Security Issues

2.3.1 We realize that non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, small arms trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal migration, transnational economic crimes, infectious diseases and natural disasters have become new variables affecting international and regional security, posing new challenges to international and regional peace and stability.

2.3.2 We further agree that non-traditional security issues, given their complexity and profound background, must be addressed with an integrated approach of political, economic, legal, scientific and technological means and through extensive and effective international co-operation.

2.3.3 We are determined to intensify dialogue on the way forward for our co-ordination and joint action in respect of new non-traditional security issues.

2.4 Terrorism

2.4.1 We agree that terrorism is a threat to peace and security of all countries and therefore must be fought through close and effective co-operation. China supports Africa's efforts to prevent and combat terrorism, including its adoption of a counter-terrorism convention and the establishment of a centre of studies and research on terrorism in Algiers.

2.4.2 We agree to further strengthen our co-operation in combating terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations and at other international fora.

Beijing FOCAC Action Plan (2007–2009): Peace and Security Agreements

4.7 The two sides called for increased international co-operation in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. China supports Africa's efforts in realizing the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa on a voluntary basis. China pledged to continue to support and take part in the humanitarian de-mining operations in Africa and the effort to combat illicit trade in small arms and

light weapons. It will provide financial and material assistance and related training for African countries within its capacity.

4.8 Recognizing the new challenge to global peace and security posed by non-traditional security issues such as natural disasters, refugees and displaced persons, illegal migration, transnational crimes, drug smuggling and communicable diseases, the two sides, guided by a new security concept with mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and co-ordination at its core, agreed to strengthen exchanges and co-operation in the non-traditional security field.

4.9 The two sides vigorously pushed the international community to focus its attention on regional conflicts in Africa and take effective steps to help defuse these conflicts. The two sides will work to safeguard the fundamental interests of Africa in the UN Security Council. China will enhance co-operation with Africa in the prevention, management and resolution of regional conflicts.

Sharm el-Sheikh FOCAC Action Plan (2010–2012): Peace and Security Agreements

2.6 Co-operation in the Fields of Peace and Security

2.6.1 The Chinese Government will continue to support the United Nations Security Council in playing a constructive role in solving conflicts in Africa and continue to support and participate in UN peacekeeping missions there. It will strengthen co-operation with countries concerned in the UN Peace Building Commission and support countries in their post-war reconstruction processes.

2.6.2 The Chinese Government appreciates the concept and practice of "Solving African Problems by Africans". It will continue to support the efforts of the AU, other regional organizations and countries concerned to solve regional conflicts, and will intensify co-operation with African countries in peacekeeping theory research, peacekeeping training and exchanges and in supporting the building of peacekeeping capacity in Africa.

2.6.3 The African side expressed appreciation of the appointment of the Special Representative for African Affairs by the Chinese Government, as well as China's efforts to enhance communication and dialogue with African countries in peace and security affairs and its active participation in efforts to resolve issues of instability and insecurity in Africa.

2.6.4 The African side welcomed China's counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia in line with the spirit of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which the two sides believed are conducive to security of the shipping routes in the waters concerned and peace and security in the region.

China's 2006 African Policy – Peace and Security

(1) Military co-operation

China will promote high-level military exchanges between the two sides and actively carry out military-related technological exchanges and co-operation. It will continue to help train African military personnel and support defence and army building of African countries for their own security.

(2) Conflict settlement and peacekeeping operations

China supports the positive efforts by the AU and other African regional organizations and African countries concerned to settle regional conflicts and will provide assistance within our own capacity. 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.

(3) Judicial and police co-operation

China is prepared to promote exchange and co-operation between Chinese and African judicial and law enforcement departments. The two sides may learn from each other in legal system building and judicial reform so as to be better able to prevent, investigate and crack down on crimes. China will work together with African countries to combat transnational organized crimes and corruption, and intensify co-operation on matters concerning judicial assistance, extradition and repatriation sof criminal suspects.

China will co-operate closely with immigration departments of African countries in tackling the problem of illegal migration, improve exchange of immigration control information and set up an unimpeded and efficient channel for intelligence and information exchange.

(4) Non-traditional security areas

In order to enhance the ability of both sides to address non-traditional security threats, it is necessary to increase intelligence exchange, explore more effective ways and means for closer co-operation in combating terrorism, small arms smuggling, drug trafficking, transnational economic crimes, etc.

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