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In A Fortnight

By Joseph E. Lin

THE SFDA ADOPTS TRANSPARENCY MEASURES AMIDST MASSIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE

In response to public outrage over last year's revelation that Xinfu, an antibiotic manufactured by an Anhui province pharmaceutical company, had caused the deaths of at least ten patients, China's State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA) began an anti-corruption campaign on January 26. As part of this campaign, the SFDA launched an initiative this week aimed at increasing the agency's transparency and accountability to the public. In order to facilitate greater transparency and public oversight, beginning in the latter half of the year, the SFDA will regularly convene press conferences. At the press conference on Monday, SFDA chief Shao Mingli stated in uncharacteristically strong language that the public had a "right to know" about food and drug safety (Xinhua, April 2). The following day, the SFDA ordered all of its officials and their immediate family members to surrender the 3.5 million shares that they held in pharmaceutical firms. SFDA officials also relinquished an additional \$325,000 in gifts and cash that they had received from pharmaceutical firms (Xinhua, April 3). The new anti-corruption measures include rules that prohibit SFDA officials and their families from taking part in banquets and recreational activities sponsored by pharmaceuticals. In addition, the SFDA's departments have also been ordered to divest themselves of the twenty-two pharmaceutical companies that are currently run by the SFDA itself.

This unprecedented initiative is largely the result of recent criticism by Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference members, who accused the SFDA of

an “over-concentration of power and the lack of public supervision” (Xinhua, April 2). For the past year, the SFDA has been the subject of ongoing investigations of graft by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, China’s anti-corruption watchdog. Three of the SFDA’s former officials have been sacked, two of whom have already been sentenced on charges of graft and corruption. The third official, former SFDA director Zheng Xiaoyu, was recently expelled from the Chinese Communist Party and is currently under investigation for failing to properly supervise the drug market and for accepting bribes in return for drug approvals. Zheng, who has since been the subject of public ridicule and animosity, was most recently subjected to an unsuccessful attempt by the Shenyang Feilong Pharmaceutical Company to use his name as a trademark for rat poisons and pesticides (*People’s Daily*, March 9).

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China and Africa: A New Scramble?

By Mauro De Lorenzo

While the question of China’s growing role in Africa has attracted wide attention over the past year, the intensity of the debate has not always been proportional to the actual extent of China’s role on the continent. China’s footprint in Africa is indeed expanding, as is that of the United States, Europe, India and many other countries that are looking to Africa as a trade and investment partner. Since 2001, every industrialized country has markedly increased its trade with Africa, principally with oil and gas purchases. As more and more African conflicts find resolution and as African governments continue to improve their regulatory environment, this growth of foreign—including Chinese—activities is a predictable consequence.

What distinguishes China’s involvement in Africa from that of other nations is that it is accompanied by a clear government policy in support of African commercial ventures, abundant financing and tax benefits for Chinese firms operating abroad and robust diplomacy toward the region [1]. State-owned Chinese companies can depend on the Ministry of Commerce, which manages most Chinese aid programs, to add sweeteners to bids for African government contracts or assets. A \$5 billion oil-backed concessional loan was a prominent feature of the massive energy deals struck in Angola in 2005-2006, for example.

With the announcement of a \$5 billion investment fund for Africa at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in November 2006, we can expect more deals that combine aid and investment.

Meanwhile, thanks to the pageantry associated with the Beijing Summit in November 2006 and the numerous extended visits paid to Africa by President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, the high visibility of China’s new profile in Africa has served as a target for Western concerns about the consequences of China’s economic and military rise, and of its true intentions in regions where it previously had few interests and little influence. And while China proclaims benign intentions—“mutual benefit” and “win-win cooperation” are the catchphrases—it may not fully appreciate the possible consequences of its methods of delivering aid upon African politics.

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND AID

There are three main components to China’s economic engagement in Africa that are not always distinguished: trade, investment and aid. First, Chinese trade with Africa increased from \$11 billion to \$40 billion between 2000 and 2005, becoming Africa’s third largest trading partner [2]. Most of the increase comes from oil imports from Sudan, where China’s companies have been active since 1995, and Angola, where they made major energy investments in 2003-4. It is, however, important to consider these figures together with Africa’s increased trade with Europe and North America. It has also grown, though less slowly, and continues to constitute the destination for the majority of Africa’s exports. An important difference, however, is that the increase in Chinese trade with Africa is driven by “complementarities” between the two economies, whereas increased trade with North America and Europe has resulted from preferential trade arrangements, such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Second, Chinese investment in Africa is increasing, but still represents a small fraction of China’s total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock. The stock of Chinese FDI in Africa in 2005 was \$1.6 billion, which represented only 3 percent of China’s total FDI. Most Chinese investment was directed to Asia (53 percent) and Latin America (37 percent). The period 2003-2005 saw massive increases of Chinese FDI outflows to all parts of the world, not just to Africa [3].

Third, Chinese aid is now set to increase dramatically as well, and it is here that we can expect to see the most profound challenges to Africa’s relationships with the rest of the world. China has had aid programs in Africa since the 1960s, but with the exception of the rail line between

Tanzania and Zambia and a number of stadiums around the continent, the impact left by Chinese aid was not great. World Bank chief Paul Wolfowitz has called China to account for lending to countries that have recently benefited from the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) loan forgiveness program. The value of Chinese aid in Africa is set to overtake World Bank assistance in 2007 with \$8.1 billion on offer compared with only \$2.3 billion from the Bank (Bloomberg.com, November 3, 2006).

The Chinese “aid” now on offer is intimately tied to its commercial expansion and often comes in the form of credits from the Chinese Export-Import Bank. The Beijing Summit also announced a token expansion of more purely humanitarian aid programs, such as the dispatching of 300 “young volunteers” to Africa and the pledge of establishing 100 rural schools in the continent before 2009. Beijing sees aid-giving as a way of generating positive sentiment toward China, and seems unaware of the consequences it can have on governance and economic performance, particularly when channeled through weak and undemocratic national governments. To the extent that Western donors have begun to learn some of the lessons from the poor performance of their previous aid programs, increased Chinese aid-giving could be a setback for sound economic policy-making and democratic accountability in Africa.

A VIEW FROM THE GREAT LAKES OF AFRICA

With no energy resources, Rwanda and Burundi are not high priorities for China, but they are strategically situated next to the resource-rich Democratic Republic of Congo, where China has growing interests. Discussions are underway to start a Confucius Institute at the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology in 2007, and Rwanda would like to entice Chinese companies doing business in the sub-region to locate their headquarters in Kigali [4]. However, though China’s engagement in both countries is on the increase, it has hardly reached the tsunami-like proportions that breathless media reports about China re-colonizing Africa would suggest.

In Rwanda, there has actually been little new Chinese investment since 2004. The Rwanda Investment and Export Promotion Agency (RIEPA) has issued no incentive-qualification certificates to Chinese companies over the past year. Most of the Chinese companies active in Rwanda are in the construction sector and have been working there since the 1970s or 1980s, such as the China National Road and Bridge Company, which has won significant contracts from the Rwandan government. New entrants include telecommunications companies Zhongxing and Huawei, with which the U.S.-Rwandan telephone company, Terracom, recently signed a deal to upgrade its

network technology. The number of Chinese restaurants has expanded by 50 percent, from two to three.

Many of the Chinese actors on the ground are small-scale, private entrepreneurs or traders [5]. The owner of the new Chinese restaurant in Kigali first came to the country in 1996—to open a medical clinic; Chinese medicine has been extremely popular in East Africa since at least the 1980s. This tallies with UNCTAD’s finding that most Chinese investments in Africa are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—and thus only indirectly motivated by the high-level Chinese “go abroad” policy and its attendant incentives. Chinese firms are present in the Rwandan market, but they are not particularly central and hardly dominant. There are also none of the complaints about Chinese traders that are commonly heard in Zambia or South Africa. Chinese diplomats lament how “conservative” and “short-sighted” their compatriots are: very few end up investing despite promises of embassy support in bidding for contracts.

Rwanda was the first African country to open a permanent trade office in China. It is based in Shenzhen, and staffed by two Rwandans, one of whom has lived in China for 12 years and speaks Mandarin fluently. It assists Rwandan importers who visit Hong Kong and the factories of Guangdong in search of electronics and textiles that sell well in Rwanda and the sub-region. The office has had less success in enticing Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Rwanda, though a mobile-phone assembly facility for the local market is being planned in Rwanda by a Chinese-Rwandan joint venture. The office found that its most urgent task in China was much more basic: reassuring Chinese businesspeople that Rwandans did not live in trees, that Chinese visitors would not be hacked to death in a flare-up of the genocide, and that there is food to eat. A poster showing a bare-chested Rwandan traditional dancer was removed from the office because it was giving visitors the wrong impression about how most Rwandans dress.

The views of senior Rwandan officials toward China are positive and welcoming, but do not rise to adulation. They had a good experience at the Beijing Summit, but are waiting to see how China’s promises of increased cooperation will be translated into action. While they are concerned that Rwandans might be taken advantage of by Chinese firms and prefer Chinese investment over aid, Rwanda is allowing China to build the new headquarters for its foreign ministry. The rest of China’s aid program in Rwanda—some small health and agriculture programs and the management of a government-owned cement plant—is not significant enough that it would give the government significant “leverage” with the World Bank or bilateral donors. Even with the increased commitments

announced in Beijing, there is little chance that China will soon rival the hundreds of millions of dollars a year that Rwanda receives from U.S. and European sources. A Chinese diplomat stated privately that there were no plans to respond to one of the Rwandan government's top infrastructure priorities—a railway to Tanzania and the coast—because it would be “uneconomical.” China is financing the equally uneconomical Benguela railway rehabilitation in Angola, a major oil supplier.

In neighboring Burundi, where a gleaming new Chinese embassy was recently completed by a company brought in from China, an embassy official expressed his disappointment that the company had decided to return to China rather than establish a permanent presence in the region; the company saw high risks and few returns. Tianshi Health Products, however, proudly flies the Chinese flag over their new office in Bujumbura. In line with paragraph 4.4 of China's January 2006 Africa Policy which declared that “it is necessary to increase intelligence exchange,” some members of the Burundian intelligence service have undergone training in China, according to a foreign human rights researcher who saw photographs of the training in the offices of the Burundian security service. At the official opening of parliament in February 2007, Burundi's only admiral proudly wore a pin he had received during an exchange visit to China. Whether such military and intelligence cooperation is as practical as it is ceremonial is difficult to ascertain.

Though not representative of the continent as a whole, China's engagement in Rwanda and Burundi has not dramatically increased over the past three years. Yet, neither is the engagement of China in oil-producing states like Angola and Sudan representative of the rest of the continent. The China-Africa question is not spontaneously discussed, and is not often in the media. With the exception of some importers, the countries' political and economic elites continue to be oriented primarily to the United States, Europe and South Africa [6]

A VIEW FROM BEIJING

Foreign delegations visiting Beijing to discuss China-Africa relations tend to interact primarily with a community of Africanists and aid specialists based at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations and other government-affiliated think tanks [6]. They tend to portray China as a selfless friend of African countries and make frequent reference to China's Cold War aid programs and support for African liberation movements. These scholars tend to believe that aid really can buy friendship and goodwill abroad, and also that China needs to systematize its aid apparatus if it is to

be able to deliver upon the large commitments made at the Beijing Summit. There is little awareness that aid can have negative economic and political effects in the countries that receive it. There do not seem to be any mechanisms in place to monitor the effectiveness of Chinese aid, even at the most basic level of ensuring that the money is not stolen.

In discussions with U.S. delegations, the focus is often a competition to show which side is more genuinely concerned with Africa's well-being. To the frustration of African interlocutors, the discussion is rarely focused on what Africa should do to take advantage of the new opportunities that China's expanded commitment to Africa offers. To China's experts, criticism of the country's intentions and investments in Africa seems like part of a strategy by Western countries to “thwart China's development,” as one scholar put it. One rumor in circulation in PLA circles suggests that U.S. intelligence agencies are planning to foment local unrest toward Chinese ventures in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world.

In off-the-record discussions, two senior Chinese scholars conceded that China should indeed “do something” when faced with genocide in Africa—though they seemed to be referring to private exchanges with African leaders rather than public denunciation or military action. China's intransigent position on Sudan seems to derive not only from China's traditional adherence to a doctrine of “non-interference in internal affairs of sovereign states,” but also from a desire to thwart U.S. foreign policy, and less from any specific concern about the security of Chinese energy investments in Sudan: Sudan needs China more than China needs it. One of China's undisclosed requirements for agreeing to pressure the Sudanese government to accept the deployment of a robust UN peacekeeping force may be that Hu Jintao, rather than George W. Bush, takes the credit. As one Chinese blogger exulted during President Hu's trip to Africa in February 2007: “Our brother Hu thawed the Darfur crisis with his cordial smile! The United Nations peacekeeping force is going to station in Darfur with his cordial smile! Bush failed, brother Hu succeeded with a smile! Sino-Africa friendship is true friendship!” [7].

Mauro De Lorenzo is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. He conducted research in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and DR Congo for a number of years between 1998 and 2004, and revisited Kigali and Bujumbura in February 2007. He recently attended the second Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue in Beijing, a joint effort of the Brenthurst Foundation, the Council on Foreign Relations and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

NOTES

1. See the “Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009)”, the key document emanating from the Beijing Summit in November 2006. It recapitulates and expands the Chinese government white paper on policy towards Africa issued in January 2006.
2. UNCTAD/UNDP, *Asian Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Towards a New Era of Cooperation among Developing Nations*, New York, March 2007, p. 56.
3. UNCTAD/UNDP, *Asian Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Towards a New Era of Cooperation among Developing Countries*, New York, March 2007.
4. See http://www.hanban.edu.cn/en_hanban/content.php?id=2439.
5. Based upon this author’s observations during his several visits to the Great Lakes region.
6. For a good indication of Rwanda’s priorities, see this article about President Kagame’s address to the Starbucks board of directors in March 2007 and his expanding relations with American CEOs: http://money.cnn.com/2007/03/28/news/companies/pluggedin_Gunther_Rwanda.fortune/?postversion=2007032910.
7. Referenced at the blog of China-Africa watcher Jennifer Brea: http://jenbrea.typepad.com/africabeat/2007/02/who_is_visiting.html

China’s Darfur Policy

By Yitzhak Shichor

As the atrocities in the Darfur region of Sudan continue, Beijing has become the subject of much international criticism for its failure to utilize its leverage over Khartoum to halt the violence and persuade President Omar al-Bashir to permit UN peacekeepers to enter into the region. In her testimony before U.S. lawmakers, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice singled out China as she called for increased pressure on Khartoum to accept a UN peacekeeping force to settle the bloody conflict (AP, February 17). The UN’s special envoy to Sudan, Jan Pronk, has likewise stated that “if there is any country which could play an important role [in convincing the Sudanese government], it is China. China never put a lot of pressure [on Sudan]” (AFP, January 16). Beijing has also been accused of protecting President al-Bashir—and Chinese oil interests in Sudan—by “repeatedly us[ing] its UN Security Council veto power to block further sanctions on the regime” (AFP, February 2). A Council on Foreign Relations January 2006 report said that China has additionally been a major supplier of weapons to Sudan, a claim elaborated upon by the June 2006 Amnesty International report,

titled “China: Sustaining Conflict and Human Right Abuses—The Flow of Arms Accelerates.” The report revealed that an unknown number of Chinese aircraft and helicopters were supplied to Sudan in the 1990s, and at least 222 military trucks have been sighted in 2005 [1]. To characterize Beijing’s reluctance in taking more aggressive measures to intervene in the Darfur region as solely because of oil, however, would be a gross simplification of China’s interests and motivations.

OIL, TRADE AND ARMS?

To be certain, China has significant energy interests in the country. Sudan’s oil reserve estimates of 1.6 trillion barrels are considerable, and China has invested heavily in the country’s oil infrastructure. In addition to constructing numerous pipelines and refineries, the state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation is the majority owner (40 percent) of the Greater Nile Petroleum Oil Company, the largest oil company operating in Sudan [2]. China has also invested some \$2 billion into the country’s Merowe hydropower dam, which is expected to provide for all of Sudan’s energy needs when it opens in 2008. According to Western sources, in January, Sudan ranked as China’s fifth largest oil supplier with a share of 6.5 percent of China’s oil imports (Dow Jones Newswire, February 28). Yet, Sudan’s reserves, ranked 33rd in the world, are hardly as impressive as Saudi Arabia’s 262.7 trillion barrels, ranked 1st, or Angola’s 25 trillion barrels, ranked 13th. Moreover, Sudan’s oil production has been slower than expected, reaching only 365,000 barrels per day (bpd) in 2006, well below the 500,000 bpd target (*Sudan Tribune*, March 7). It seems unlikely, therefore, that China’s oil interests in Sudan are the sole consideration behind its actions or lack thereof.

Likewise, while China’s economic relations with Sudan are substantial, their share in China’s overall foreign economic relations should not be overstated. In 2005, China’s trade with Sudan increased by 55 percent year-on-year (imports by 53 percent and exports by 58.5 percent), yet its share in China’s total foreign trade remained between 0.2 and 0.3 percent. In Africa, China’s trade with Angola and South Africa were more substantial. In 2004, Sudan ranked 4th on China’s FDI destinations list with \$146.7 million (or 2.7 percent of the total). Yet in 2005, Sudan’s ranking declined to 8th with \$91.13 million (or 0.7 percent of the total). Of the Chinese accumulated FDI at the end of 2005, Sudan’s share was 0.6 percent [3]. This by no means is an attempt to minimize China’s economic involvement in Sudan; the value of China’s contracted projects in Sudan in 2005 (\$1.33 billion) was 83 percent more than in 2004 (\$725.65 million). It does mean, however, that in relative terms, Sudan is far from being a critical trading partner of

China, and therefore economic concerns are at best only a partial explanation of why Beijing protects Sudan.

On the military front, China has maintained stable relations with Sudan over the years, and as Chinese Defense Minister Cao Guangchuan asserted in his public statements, China's military, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), attaches great importance to developing relations with the Sudanese army and are ready to promote cooperation between the two sides in various fields (Xinhua, March 31, 2006). Nevertheless, following the implementation of the UN Security Council arms embargo in December 2005, Chinese arms sales to Sudan are likely to have been halted altogether. What should also be noted is that Sino-Sudanese military relations are far less extensive than Khartoum's relations with other governments, notably Russia. In fact, Chinese analysts, attempting to deflect recent international criticism away from China, argue that the cause behind the escalation of the Darfur conflict to what is now almost a civil war, is due in large to the influx of modern weapons from other countries during previous regimes [4].

BEIJING'S RESPONSE TO POTENTIAL INTERVENTION

Beijing is undoubtedly interested in encouraging peace and stability in Sudan in order to create a more receptive environment for its burgeoning economic activities, but its approach differs from its Western counterparts. Following its long-standing policy of non-interference, Beijing prefers that internal conflicts be settled by the parties directly concerned (the government and its adversaries). As Beijing stated, "[R]esolving the Darfur issue should be realized through dialogue and peace talks" (Zhongguo Tongxun She, February 3). If such a domestic attempt were to fail (or, if an agreement was reached but still needed to be implemented), Beijing would then prefer that a regional organization take charge of the process. Only if the regional approach were to fail would Beijing reluctantly agree to an intervention by the United Nations, at which point it would have no choice but to become involved as well.

Reflecting its preferences, China's active involvement in Sudan's peace settlement began only after the Sudanese government and the former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 9, 2005, thereby ending 21 years of civil war in southern Sudan. On March 24, 2005, a unanimously adopted UN Security Council resolution authorized the dispatch of peacekeeping forces to the region. The Chinese were quick to comply and in May 2005, sent their first group of peacekeepers to Sudan. A more organized Chinese detachment was deployed in May 2006, and in January 2007, it was replaced by 435 PLA transportation, engineer and medical troops (Xinhua, January 18). Stationed in

southern Sudan, however, these contingents are isolated from Darfur, where the conflict continues.

The stalemate in Darfur has in fact resulted in China's support for the intervention of African Union peacekeeping forces, as well as the efforts of the Arab League. When visiting Sudan in early February 2007, Chinese President Hu Jintao said that "the African Union and the United Nations should play constructive roles in a peacekeeping mission in Darfur" (Xinhua, February 2). Yet for Beijing, the situation in Darfur is fundamentally different from the one in southern Sudan. Whereas the CPA was accepted by the government as well as by the rebels—thereby paving the ground for UN peacekeeping operations—the Darfur Peace Agreement that Khartoum signed on May 5, 2006 with a main rebel faction has been rejected by other rebel groups and, consequently, has been turned down by Khartoum as well. This has been a critical factor influencing China's voting behavior at the UN Security Council.

Beijing welcomed the May 16, 2006, agreement to hand over the Darfur peacekeeping mission from the African Union (the African Union Mission in Sudan, whose 7,000 troops had been unable to stop the Darfur atrocities and whose mandate was due to expire on September 30, 2006) to the UN Security Council by January 2007. While the Chinese delegate voted for this resolution—adopted unanimously—the delegate still expressed his country's reservations, stating: "If the United Nations is to deploy a peacekeeping operation in Darfur, the agreement and cooperation of the Sudanese Government must be obtained. That is a basic principle and precondition for the deployment of all peacekeeping operations" (Resolution 1679).

Based on this agreement, on August 31, 2006, the UN Security Council approved the deployment of up to 17,300 troops (and up to 3,300 civilian policemen) to Darfur and "invited the consent of the Sudanese Government [...] for that deployment." Although Wang Guangya, China's representative, supported the deployment, he insisted that the "consent of the Sudanese Government" should have been obtained before the vote and should have been clearly included in the resolution. Since both amendments were rejected, China abstained during the vote (Resolution 1706; Xinhua, August 31, 2006). Sudan categorically opposed the UN peacekeeping force deployment in Darfur as "entirely unacceptable." As it stands, the resolution may be interpreted as allowing UN troops to move into Darfur even without Sudan's consent if it is needed to halt the atrocities in the area (AFP, September 1, 2006). Fully aware of this humanitarian crisis, Beijing offered assistance valued at 40 million yuan (\$5.1 million) to improve the living conditions and the overall situation in Darfur as well

as a 100 million yuan interest-free loan (\$12.8 million) to the Sudanese government (AFP, February 2).

COMPLEX CONSIDERATIONS FOR INVOLVEMENT

Beijing's response toward the situation in Darfur reflects not only its pragmatic interests, but also its fundamental and ideological concerns. Beijing is certainly worried that the U.S.-led efforts to stop human rights abuses in Sudan (and elsewhere) could at some point be directed at China itself. In addition, China is likely to be troubled with the implications that intervention would present for its own sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity—ideals that are highly valued by Beijing. During his most recent trip to Sudan in February, President Hu Jintao introduced four principles for handling the Darfur issue. As evidence of Beijing's concerns, the first principle that Hu underlined stated: "Respect Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Resolution of the Darfur issue will definitely benefit the process of reconciliation among ethnic groups throughout Sudan, benefit safeguarding of national unity in Sudan, and benefit regional peace and stability" (Xinhua, February 2). Wen Xian, a senior *People's Daily* editor, elaborated that "any program or schemes for the settlement of the Darfur issue, if not favorable to the maintenance of Sudan's national unity, is bound to complicate the problem" (*People's Daily*, February 7). To be sure, precedents that erode the territorial integrity of sovereign states by the United Nations are unacceptable to Beijing. For instance, in a hypothetical case of a conflict in Tibet or Xinjiang, China would never permit UN peacekeeping forces onto its territory. Instead, Beijing would quickly and forcefully resolve the situation. Implicitly, this is precisely what they had expected from Khartoum: the restoration of stability at all costs.

It is Sudan's evident inability to do so—combined with the international pressure and the threats to China's economic interests—that have forced Beijing to convince Khartoum to accept the UN peacekeeping contingent in Darfur. From the very beginning, Beijing has cautioned that external intervention would only complicate the Darfur issue. As an editorial in the *People's Daily* warned, "The situation has worsened since some Western countries are eager to 'internationalize' what had been a pure [sic] internal affair of Sudan [...] The Darfur issue wouldn't have escalated so fast, we should say, without intervention from external powers driven by their own interests" (*People's Daily*, May 12, 2006). Denying that any U.S. pressure has been exerted on Beijing to persuade Sudan to accept the UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, Beijing itself—though not terribly enthusiastic about the situation—ultimately favors an early settlement along these lines. Already, Chinese energy interests have been threatened, and in late

November, two rebel groups attacked a Chinese oil facility located between south Darfur and west Kordofan (*Sudan Tribune*, March 4).

China's special envoy to Sudan attempted to hint cautiously and delicately just before Hu Jintao's visit: "We hope that the Sudanese side could pay attention to the international community's concern" (Zhongguo Tongxun She, January 17). In its reports about Hu's meeting with al-Bashir, Xinhua mentioned that the talks had been "frank," "candid" and "sincere"—Chinese euphemisms that reflect disagreements. Reportedly, Hu Jintao "has advised" al-Bashir that an efficient peacekeeping force, is required to restore peace in Darfur (*The Star* [South Africa], February 13). Still, Beijing will by no means use threats, let alone approve of sanctions, to force Sudan to accept UN peacekeeping forces in Darfur and has stated that "exerting pressure or imposing sanctions will only further complicate the issue" (Xinhua, January 24).

China is walking a tightrope on its policy toward Sudan. On the one hand, Beijing is undoubtedly cognizant of the repercussions that the ongoing atrocities have upon its stated interests. Not only does the conflict affect China's ability to expand its economic and energy interests in the country, but it also damages China's reputation as a "responsible stakeholder," an image that it is laboring to establish. On the other hand, however, China is also equally supportive of Sudan's sovereign right to settle its internal affairs or agree to international intervention. China is hardly likely to surrender its foreign policy pillar of non-intervention and surely does not want to become associated with the West, least of all with the United States. Consequently, Beijing has opted for the middle road, juggling its relations with all parties according to a "doctrine of the mean."

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NOTES

1. See Amnesty International's report, "China: Sustaining Conflict and Human Rights Abuses," available online at: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA170302006>.
2. See <http://www.gnpoc.com/ASP/mission.asp?glink=GL001&plink=PL001>.
3. National Bureau of Statistics, *China Statistical Yearbook 2006*.
4. Jiang Hengkun and Liu Hongwu, "Zhongzu rentong haishi ziyuan zhenduo: Sudan Daerfuer diqu chongtu

genyuan tanxi” [*Racial Identity or Resource Competition: An Investigation into the Origins of Sudan’s Darfur Conflict*], Xiya Feizhou [West Asia and Africa], No. 5 (2005), p. 11-12.

Public Diplomacy in Sino-Egyptian Relations

By Chris Zambelis

China’s pursuit of stable sources of energy and access to burgeoning consumer markets largely dictates its diplomacy in resource-rich Africa and the Middle East. An oft overlooked objective of this strategy, however, is Beijing’s aim of enhancing its position as a rising global power, which would require the ability to project influence outside of its immediate regional periphery. To this end, China is busy cultivating multifaceted relationships with regional powers throughout Africa and the Middle East—beyond the energy and business sectors—to include cooperation in the political and security spheres, as well as science and cultural exchanges. Shoring up regional support for the “One China” principle also tops Beijing’s agenda.

Beijing is also fashioning itself as an alternative source of economic development aid, a role traditionally dominated by the United States, Europe and Western-led institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These Western-dictated aid structures have led to deep-seated resentment among regional governments and populations. In contrast, as a developing country untainted by the colonial legacy of its Western counterparts in the region, Beijing is able to portray itself as a champion of the developing world. To date, this approach has reaped great dividends for China on many fronts.

In this context, Egypt figures prominently into China’s strategic calculus. Egypt is an influential Arab, Muslim and Middle Eastern power that in many respects represents the political and cultural center of gravity of the Arab world. Likewise, it is an African power that is keen on reestablishing the regional influence it once enjoyed on the continent, most notably when President Gamal Abdel Nasser was on the forefront of supporting the national liberation movements that resisted colonialism in Africa in the 1950s and 60s. Egypt is also determined to emerge as the leader of Arabs, Muslims and Africans in the international arena. For example, Cairo’s pursuit of a permanent seat on a reformed United Nations Security Council (UNSC) alongside the five permanent members—a goal supported

by Beijing—is often framed as an effort to marshal Arab, Muslim and African interests.

Despite growing tensions and popular opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the region, Egypt remains a staunch ally of the United States and is firmly entrenched in the U.S.-led regional security architecture. At the same time, Cairo resents what it sees as U.S. interference in its internal affairs regarding issues such as the slow pace of political reform and its human rights record. Egypt is also frustrated by what it considers to be the unwillingness of the United States to engage in a genuine Middle East peace process, a key source of resentment among Egyptians and the rest of the region amidst the ongoing violence and instability in Iraq. In contrast, China is widely regarded as an advocate for the Palestinian national cause. In this regard, Egypt sees China as a potential partner that can help enhance its leverage vis-à-vis the United States. Cairo believes that Beijing could someday play a constructive role in Middle East diplomacy, a calculation based largely on its potential to act as a check on U.S. power in the region. Egypt is also counting on Chinese support for reviving its peaceful nuclear program that was suspended in 1986 (*Al-Ahram Weekly*, November 9-15, 2006).

Sino-Egyptian relations are firmly rooted in the confluence of tangible mutual interests that encompass economics, geopolitics and security. Nevertheless, it is worth examining the nature of the rhetoric both sides use to characterize their rapidly expanding ties and better understand the trajectory of the Sino-Egyptian relationship. Doing so would provide insight into the power of effective public diplomacy. After all, like all forms of public diplomacy, Sino-Egyptian discourse is calculated to achieve specific objectives and to present a carefully calibrated image for international and domestic consumption.

Among other things, China and Egypt see themselves as the proud heirs of great civilizations. As a result, they believe that they occupy a privileged place in the world based on their respective ancient heritages. Sino-Egyptian public diplomacy is imbued with this kind of reinforcing rhetoric, in addition to populist themes that emphasize “South-South” cooperation and solidarity. Moreover, discourse highlighting themes such as mutual respect, equality and a shared sense of pride resonates strongly in Africa and the Middle East, especially in societies that continue to be shaped by patron-client relationships with former colonial and Western powers. In contrast, despite its aspirations of global power, China is keen on portraying its inevitable rise as a benign phenomenon and one that is symbolic of the potential harbored by developing countries. This presents China as a positive example worth following for countries like Egypt.

BROTHERLY TIES THAT BIND

The rhetoric used to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-Egyptian relations in May 2006 is typical of Chinese public diplomacy in Egypt. During a June 2006 press conference in Cairo, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao stated: “China and Egypt both have great civilizations...and are both creators of human glory and progress and defender [sic] of mankind’s cultural heritage, and we both pursue lofty values and ideals,” (*People’s Daily*, June 19, 2006). He added that China “feels indebted” to the Egyptians, the first nation in Africa to recognize the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1956. He quoted a Chinese proverb in a sign of heartfelt appreciation: “We should never forget the benefits we are offered or forget the favor received.” Premier Jiabao went on to remind his Egyptian audience that “the hat of neo-colonialism simply doesn’t fit China,” a response meant to refute reports of Chinese human rights abuses in the African business sector (*Xinhua*, October 5, 2006).

There are signs that Beijing’s calculated rhetoric towards Egypt resonates beyond the official state level and is reaching ordinary Chinese. Zhang Boyin, a retired professor at Beijing University described his first trip to Egypt in 2006 as a “dream come true.” He went on to proudly repeat Mao Zedong’s adage regarding the significance of Africa to China: “it is our African brothers who carried us into the United Nations,” (*Xinhua*, October 5, 2006). China is tapping this momentum by expanding Sino-Egyptian contacts on the popular level. For example, Beijing is encouraging outbound Chinese tourism to Egypt, as well as to Africa more generally. China is also rapidly expanding cultural contacts to include educational exchanges in Egypt and elsewhere in Africa to include the promotion of the Chinese language and culture through the establishment of local “Confucius Institutes” (*Xinhua*, October 5, 2006).

Egyptian public diplomacy in China mirrors its counterpart’s emphasis on the “special” nature of Sino-Egyptian ties. In a statement just prior to his November 2006 visit to Beijing to attend the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stated: “For me, visiting China is like going home. Egypt sees China more as a brother than as an ordinary friendly nation.” In a show of appreciation for Beijing’s growing engagement in Africa in recent years, Mubarak added: “The development of Africa-China friendship should be credited to the fact that Africa-China relations are based on equality, mutual respect and reciprocity,” (*Xinhua*, October 31, 2006). In this regard, both China and Egypt are quick to highlight what they label as the revival of “South-South” cooperation, a subtle message meant for U.S. and Western audiences (*Al-Abram Weekly*, November 9-15, 2006).

Ordinary Egyptians generally harbor positive opinions towards the Chinese. For the most part, Egyptians see China as a potential check on U.S. power in the region, a sentiment stemming from deep-seated opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. However, there is evidence that China is attracting popular support and admiration among Egyptians for other reasons. For example, the recent inaugurations of the region’s first Confucius Institute, in partnership with Cairo University, and a joint Egyptian-Chinese University are drawing interest among a wide cross-section of Egyptians. Speaking about the Confucius Institute, American University of Cairo Economics Professor Adel Bashai remarked: “we have a lot to learn from the Chinese...the biggest benefit is to know the culture and religion...to know how they got to where they got.” The number of Egyptians studying the Chinese language is also growing rapidly. Chinese is now taught at a number of major universities across Egypt, including al-Azhar, one of the world’s leading centers of Islamic scholarship” (*Daily Star* [Egypt], December 28, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Sino-Egyptian relations are poised to develop further in the coming years and effective public diplomacy will play a critical role in sustaining these ties. Beijing will continue to see Cairo as a strategic gateway toward expanded ties with the Arab world and Africa. Likewise, Egypt will look to China as a means of gaining leverage in its increasingly precarious position vis-à-vis its primary ally, the United States. Egypt will also try to harness China’s momentum in assuming a greater leadership role in an attempt to represent Arabs, Muslims and Africans on the global stage. However, despite their mutual emphasis on furthering “South-South” cooperation and enhancing “brotherly ties,” there are limits to this relationship. Beijing and Cairo are not prepared or willing to jeopardize friendly and constructive relations with the United States in the foreseeable future in the hopes of cementing closer relations that threaten to directly undermine Washington’s stake in the region. Indeed, despite the rhetoric, the expansion of Sino-Egyptian ties is driven as much by the intent of ensuring friendly relations with the United States as it is bolstering the existing Sino-Egyptian bond.

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China's Arms Sales to Africa: Beijing's Reputation at Risk

By Ian Taylor

China's involvement in Africa has attracted increasing criticism from Western and African observers. Particular concern is voiced over China's willingness to support the continent's authoritarian regimes—many of which have heinous human rights and governance records—with a no-strings-attached attitude. Compounding these issues have been China's arms sales to the continent based on what can only be regarded as irresponsible principles that undermine Beijing's claims that it is qualitatively different from Africa's previous Western colonizers and exploiters. Consequently, China's track record in its arms sales to the continent may be regarded as damaging to the continent's long-term security, as well as the human security of the average African. A number of case studies demonstrate that very often, where a despotic regime stands on one side, facing down its own people, China will invariably be found standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the autocrats.

It has been apparent for some time that Beijing hopes to turn the country's arms industry into a top arms exporter by 2020. Concerned that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was becoming far too influential in the Chinese economy, in 1998, President Jiang Zemin declared that all businesses were being officially de-linked from the PLA. These were accompanied by the defense industry reforms in 1999, when China divided its top five defense corporations (space, aviation, shipbuilding, conventional arms and nuclear) into ten separate enterprises. Prior to the reforms and the divestment of the PLA's business operations, China's military industrial enterprises carried out a "contract responsibility system"—enterprises paid the state both taxes and a segment of their profits. Profits that remained from the production of civilian goods were either reinvested and/or were transferred to the budgets of the military management. With the PLA forced to withdraw from openly operating civilian businesses, however, the search for profits has largely been concentrated in increased arms sales since then. While most major Chinese weapons manufactures are no longer owned by the PLA, but rather by one of the civilian ministries, the remuneration from arms sales continue to return to the Chinese state. In fact, China ostensibly controls all exports of conventional military items, including small arms, in accordance with its Regulations on Control of Military Product Exports [1].

CHINA'S BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

The most notorious example of Beijing's indiscriminate arms sales has been the arms and security equipment that

China has sold to Robert Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe, ensuring that Harare is able to maintain its control over the populace. A \$240 million deal between China and Zimbabwe is the most obvious example of this. Harare's defense minister told parliamentarians in June 2004 that the deal included 12 jet fighters and 100 military vehicles [2]. Such purchases are required to replace existing Zimbabwean vehicles and aircraft that are no longer operational due to the Western sanctions that have prevented imports of spare parts and maintenance equipment. The order was kept covert until it was exposed by the state procurement board, which had previously been in charge of Zimbabwe's \$136 million defense budget.

Since then, rumors that Beijing has sold water cannons and cell phone bugging equipment to Harare's internal security personnel have emerged. In addition, Mugabe's government is reportedly pursuing legislation (the Interception of Communications Bill) to monitor internet use, with Zimbabwe obtaining China's infamous expertise and technology to monitor the internet. It should be noted that in 2006, Mugabe told an audience that "We want to remind those who might harbor any plans of turning against the government: be warned, we have armed men and women who can pull the trigger...The defense forces have benefited from the government's Look East policy through which they have not only acquired new equipment, but also learned new military strategies" (*Business Day* [Johannesburg] August 16, 2006). As Mugabe's regime comes under increasing pressure from the opposition movement, Chinese arms and equipment are likely to be seen with greater frequency on the streets of Zimbabwe.

Elsewhere, China has come under the scrutiny of human rights groups over its arms sales to other African countries suffering from ongoing conflict. Amnesty International said in its June 2006 report that China's relations with Sudan have adversely affected the human rights situation in the country. Arms deliveries from China to Sudan have included ammunition, tanks, helicopters and fighter aircraft and many of these weapons have been used by Khartoum and pro-state militias to commit massive atrocities in both southern Sudan and Darfur. Chinese-supplied aircraft have been used to launch bombing raids on villages, conduct reconnaissance prior to attacks and ferry ground troops [3]. Amnesty also reported that in 1996, Beijing supplied Z-6 troop-carrying helicopters, while in 2001, a Chinese company repaired Sudan's Mi-8 helicopters. Chinese military trucks, used in attacks on villages, have also been spotted in Sudan. In fact, the UN Panel of Experts investigating arms embargo violations in Sudan documented that Dong Feng military trucks were stored at the Port of Sudan and similar vehicles were observed in Darfur at a Sudanese air force base [4].

It has also been reported that Chinese weapons have been traded in exchange for Liberian timber, in contravention of the then-UN arms embargo on Liberia. Such sales helped shore up warlord Charles Taylor until his ignominious flight into exile in August 2003. Nigeria has likewise turned to China for military supplies to protect its oil fields after Washington was tardy in its response to the decreasing security situation in the Niger Delta (*Financial Times*, February 27, 2006). The Nigerian government was disappointed by Washington's reluctance to provide more support; Nigeria had requested 200 boats to guard the Delta. Washington, although offering military technical assistance and training, has so far provided only four old coastal patrol boats. The United States' reluctance is explained by its anxiety over the corruption within Nigeria's security forces and the widespread human rights violations committed by the Nigerian military. Nigerian security forces have been responsible for "politically motivated killings; the use of lethal force against suspected criminals and hostage-seizing militants in the Niger Delta; beatings and even torture of suspects, detainees, and convicts; and extortion of civilians," as well as "child labor and prostitution, and human trafficking" (AllAfrica.com, March 12).

CHINA'S ARMS POLICY

Beijing proposes three guiding principles in its international arms transfer policy. First, the exports should boost the legitimate self-defense needs of any recipient. Second, the sales should not damage regional and/or international peace and stability. And third, China should not interfere in the domestic affairs of recipient countries. The inherent problem with such a policy, however, is that in Africa, it is often difficult to determine who or what constitutes a legitimate government. In many African countries, power is fundamentally dependent upon "capturing" the state—or at least being linked favorably to those within the state. Therefore, in many places where China conducts arms sales, Beijing is often dealing with governments that are little more than glorified kleptocracies and quasi-states whose principal aim is ensuring the survival and enrichment of the elite. For instance, while Mugabe's government may indeed be officially recognized at the United Nations, can Chinese policymakers state that the self-defense needs of an oppressive government, such as the one found in Harare, are indeed legitimate? And as Zimbabwe's denouement continues, are Chinese arms sales to the country not damaging to the regional stability of southern Africa? Finally, in places such as Zimbabwe or Sudan, is it credible for Beijing to claim that humanitarian abuses and gross violations of human rights are simply domestic affairs that cannot and should not be commented upon?

THE BOTTOM LINE

To be certain, China is hardly the only arms exporting country guilty of weapons sales to repressive African countries. Arms exports from China pale in significance to those of the United States, and are even less than those of Russia, France or Britain. Indeed, under Tony Blair, British arms sales to Africa have quadrupled and many exports have involved the selling of arms to authoritarian states on the continent with poor human rights records. Yet, elements of the civil society in many of these Western countries have actively engaged their governments in order to influence policies and arms export regulations toward such countries. Such groups are non-existent in China and consequently, there is little pressure upon Beijing to adopt more responsible policies regarding its arms sales abroad. Compounding this challenge is the fact that China has refused to sign any multilateral agreements governing arms sales, and Beijing's policies remain arguably ambiguous, stymieing effective regulation and control of its arms exports. That China does not publish information about its arms exports—and last submitted data to the UN Register on Conventional Arms covering its exports in 1996—makes China's arms sales activities highly opaque and all the more suspicious. Nevertheless, China's desire to be recognized as a responsible stakeholder in the international arena and one that is qualitatively distinct from the former colonial powers has made it increasingly sensitive to external criticism and pressure. These aspirations provide the international community with an opportunity to influence China's behavior regarding arms sales and shape Beijing's ever-maturing policy toward Africa.

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NOTES

1. A copy of the "Regulations on Control of Military Product Exports" is available online at: <http://cns.miis.edu/research/china/chiexp/regmpe.htm>.
2. "Zimbabwe: Editor Discusses State's Purchase of Fighter Jets from China," Johannesburg Radio 702 (English) June 10, 2004.
3. See Amnesty International's report, "China: Sustaining Conflict and Human Rights Abuses," available online at: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA170302006>.
4. *Ibid.*