Transformation of China’s Policy towards Africa

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With China’s rapid economic development, there have been cries of “China threat” or “yellow peril”. Among various worries of China’s peaceful growth, one is expressive: China’s expansion in Africa. The concern started in 2004 in academia, when two important articles were published. One is negative. “In fact, by massively investing not only in African oil but also in African public works, telecoms, agriculture, and other sectors, China is trying to buy the hearts and minds of African leaders as part of a broader push to win allies in the developing world and boost its soft power abroad.” 1 The other is more positive, “China is engaging Africa in a long-term strategic partnership for international leadership, markets, energy and space.”2 “China’s African Policy Paper” published in January 2006 may be considered an active diplomatic maneuver and caused further international attention.

This paper is intended to analyze the change of China’s policy towards Africa. In contrast to most analysts’ claim that China’s policy was changed in recent years owing to its thirsty for oil and other natural resources in Africa, the author argues that the change of African policy is closely linked with the transformation of China’s grand strategy. Since the early 1980s, China’s foreign policy, more specifically, its African policy, has been decided by its strategy of development, thus undergone triple transformation: a switch from ideological emphasis to ideological neutrality, from unitary form to multiple channels in bilateral exchange, and from single aid to win-win strategy in the field of cooperation.

China’s Rise: Interpretations and Understanding

From 1949 to the early 1980s, China’s foreign policy was more or less circumscribed by international situation. The 12th Party Congress in 1982 made the strategic transformation and the emphasis was shifted to economic development, followed by a new foreign policy of independence and peace. China’s understanding of the current theme has changed from “war and revolution” to “peace and development”. The interaction between diplomacy and economy was reversed, e.g., the notion that economy should serve diplomacy was changed to that of diplomacy serving economy.3 This transformation has brought a rapid growth of Chinese economy. Within this context, there are different interpretations of China’s rise, which can be divided into two categories, negative and positive.

Negative view is reflected by two theories: collapse and threat. Gordon Chang predicted that China would collapse owing to various negative impacts caused by the entry into WTO, such as economic crisis, political riots and social disorder. Therefore its collapse would be inevitable.4 Minxin Pei drew a gloomy picture of China’s reform which stalled with problems such as corruption, declining state power and credibility, as well as increasing inequality.5 The theory of “China threat” is much more familiar – China’s rise is postured as a threat to the world, especially to the U.S.6 The positive view is expressed by the theory of gradualism and that of optimism. Friedman points out that although there are problems and difficulties in China’s reform, yet the reformers are doing the right thing. “They would continue the reform process. They would put the anxieties of foreign investors and traders at rest. They would continue and deepen the policies which made China’s economic rise possible.” “The goal surely is not to block China’s rise……All will
suffer if those forces opposing China’s peaceful development win out.” Gilley’s optimistic view about China’s reform suggests that the transition will be successful and the democratic government will consolidate itself, which is positive for both China’s stability and world peace. Nigerian historian Femi recognizes that “China's rapid economic transformation holds special lessons for those of us in Africa. Whilst the Chinese opted for an indigenous solution to their economic backwardness.” China's rapid economic transformation holds special lessons for those of us in Africa.” “China's economic performance is nothing short of a miracle. It shows what a people with confidence, determination and vision can achieve.” With different interpretations, we can hardly say yes or no, since the situation is still unclear and China has not risen yet.

However, we can look at China-African relations within this discourse. Through the analysis of three transformations in China’s African policy, the author wants to express this idea: in international area, fight or conflict is not the single means to achieve success, the international relation is not the zero-sum game, win-win strategy does work.

Ideology: From emphasis to Neutrality

As above-mentioned, China’s strategic transformation brought about the change of its foreign policy. More specifically, two factors caused this transformation: the judgment of the international situation (peace and development become the major themes) and the transformation of China’s strategic thinking (emphasis is shifted to internal economy). Regarding to China’s African policy, the first change lays in attitude towards ideology, e.g. from a posture of forming an alliance in international politics to strengthening exchange and dialogue on the basis of seeking common ground while reserving differences. Although this change mainly finds its expression in the contact between parties, it is also reflected in other fields.

After the founding of the PRC, China first adopted the one-sided policy of pro-USSR and anti-U.S. (the 1950s), then the policy of double-attack of anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism (1960s), and later the policy of alliance with U.S. while opposition to USSR (1970s). The focus of China’s policy towards Africa was that China should stand at the frontier of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism. This stand is in fact a choice from the unfavorable international situation. The hostile policy of the western countries forced China to seek more diplomatic room in order to survive as a sovereign state.

Owing to the insistence of the linkage between foreign policy and ideology, China’s diplomacy with African countries got into dilemma. In the 1960s, CCP had contact only with communist parties of South Africa and Reunion. Later, thanks to the conflict between CCP and Communist Party of Soviet Union, CCP stopped the friendly relations with the two parties. In 1967-69, CCP also discontinued its relations with African Party for Independent of Guinea and Cape Verde owing to the same reason. Parti Congolais du Travail wanted to establish party relations in order to strengthen cooperation, CCP refused it for it not being a communist party! Mocambique Liberation Front kept contact with CCP for a long time, and its leader proposed to establish relations between two parties, CCP also declined the offer due to ideological reason. Later, MLF invited CCP to attend its Third Congress but not successful. Two parties did not develop a normal relation until 1981. In the late 1970s, CCP only kept relations with Ethiopian People’s Party and few communist groups. In July 1977, after Chairman Hua Guofeng met with Mocambique delegation, he asked the International Department, Central Committee CCP, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to study the issue of contact with African parties. In November, two
ministries requested instruction regarding the issue of some nationalist parties in black Africa demanding the establishment of relations with CCP. On 20 December, the Political Bureau of CCP approved the request and decided to begin its work with African parties. International Department of CCP began to receive delegations of African parties in 1978. This is a breakthrough in the CCP’s history of foreign relations, which greatly improved the development of China-African relations. It is called “breakthrough” because the move signaled the liberation of party relations from the bondage of ideology.

Since then, the CCP’s relation with African parties has developed rapidly. The 12th Congress of CCP in 1982 defined its new principle of party relations, e.g., “independent, equal, respect each other and non-interference of internal affairs,” and proposed to establish contact with more progressive parties and organizations. China’s contacts with parties of developing countries have greatly increased since then. From 1978 to 1990, parties of the sub-Saharan countries sent more than 230 delegations to China, including 134 leaders such as party chairmen, general secretaries and members of political bureaus. At the same time, CCP sent out 56 delegations to visit ruling parties of 39 sub-Sahara countries. Up to 2002, CCP established relations with more than 60 political parties in more than 40 sub-Saharan countries, more than 30 were ruling parties. In 2005, 24 African parties sent their delegations to China, while 19 CCP delegations visited Africa. During the visits, both sides discussed a wide range of topics, such as politics, economy, culture, military, etc. CCP has hoped to serve its strategic purpose of economic construction and peaceful rise through different channels. China and Africa have also increased the exchange between their congresses and parliaments.

The African parties and regimes are quite different from each other. Yet, CCP no longer used ideology as a standard. By greatly strengthening its contact with African parties, CCP’s relation with others is characterized in three aspects. First, the principle of contact is no longer ideological. CCP keeps cooperation not only with socialist parties, but also other parties with different ideology. Secondly, the partnership of contact is not confined to ruling parties, but also non-ruling parties. Thirdly, the content of contact is not limited in party politics, but extended to economic-commercial cooperation and cultural exchange.

Table 1  CCP and African Parties’ Visits  (2002-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2002-2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Parties’ visits to China</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCP’s visits to Africa</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: People’s Daily, Observer and the related networks.

Thanks to the transition, the political relation between China and Africa has been deepening. High level visits have been frequent, especially since the 1990s. Vice Premier Zhu Rongji paid his first visit to Africa in 1995, which kicked off the new “African boom” in China. President Jiang visited Africa four times and put forward in 1996 five suggestions for the strengthening of China-African relations. President Hu Jintao also visited Africa four times, and pointed out in 2004 that China and Africa should help each other economically and support each other in international and regional affairs. The opening up of political relations has greatly increased China-African cooperation, which also became an important component in China’s African
policy. It is noticed by foreign scholar that China does not request any political demands in its relations with Africa except one principle: no political relations with Taiwan.24

**Bilateral Exchange: From Unitary Form to Multiple Channels**

The second change of China’s African policy is a switch from the emphasis on political contact to exchange through multiple channels and on different levels.

During the period of 1949-1978, China’s African policy was concentrated on three aspects, to support African people in national independence, to unite African countries in the struggle against colonialism, imperialism and hegemony, to help African countries in economic construction. In political field, China tried its best to assist African independent movement. Besides its support in moral basis, it also offered military assistance, such as training of military and political personnel.25 After its independence, China began to seek Africa as allies in its fight against imperialism and hegemonism.26 As for the support in economic field, because of the strive of the ideology and morality to fight with super powers and for the happiness of the oppressed people all over the world, China’s assistance was going on under a great economic pressure from internal. China-African economic relation comprised bilateral trade and economic aid. The total sum of bilateral trade in 1977 only reached $720 million.27 In the period of 1956-1977, China provided $2.476 billion to 36 African countries as economic aid, about 58% of China’s total foreign aid ($4.276 billion).28 During the 1970s, although Soviet Union was the biggest arms-trader in Africa, its economic aid to Africa was lagged far behind China. China’s aid totaled 1.8 billion, doubled Soviet Union’s aid.29

The end of the Cultural Revolution witnessed a short period of decline in China-African relations. First, the aid to Africa decreased. Table 2 indicates that China’s aid to Africa during 1976-1980 totaled 94 million. The most part of this aid should be for the year 1976-1978.30 Secondly, the trade declined, which is reflected in Table 3. The trade volume decreased after 1980 (1982 is an exception), and picked up until 1986. Thirdly, Chinese medical teams and doctors also decreased. Table 4 indicates that China did not send doctors to Africa in 1979 and 1980, the doctors as well as the medical states in Africa were the least in the period of 1978-1983.

**Table 2  China’s AidCommitments to Developing Countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(In millions of U.S. dollars)</th>
<th>Annual Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3 China-Africa Trade Statistics (1980-1987)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Export (In 10,000 U.S. dollars)</th>
<th>Total Import (In 10,000 U.S. dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>113,103</td>
<td>74,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>109,749</td>
<td>79,809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>119,099</td>
<td>97,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>92,074</td>
<td>67,576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4 China’s Aid-Medical Teams and Doctors in Africa (1963-1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Year</th>
<th>Countries with Chinese Medical Teams</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Doctors in 1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963-67</td>
<td>阿爾及利亞、坦桑尼亞、索馬裏、剛果</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-72</td>
<td>馬裏、坦桑尼亞、茅利塔尼亞、幾內亞、蘇丹、赤道幾內亞</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-77</td>
<td>塞拉利昂、突尼斯、薩伊、多哥、塞內加爾、馬達加斯加、摩洛哥、尼日爾、聖多美及普林西比島、上沃爾特、幾內亞（比紹）、加蓬、岡比亞</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-83*</td>
<td>貝寧、剛比亞、中非、博茨瓦納、吉布提、莫三比克、盧旺達、烏幹達、利比亞</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The period is short, but by no means less important. The decline was due to several possible reasons. First, the assistance to Africa was carried under the condition that China’s economy was in a very difficult situation. With the end of the Cultural Revolution, all fields were short of funding. Secondly, China’s economy needed funding and technology. With the relaxation of the relations with the west, the Chinese government’s attention was naturally turned towards the connection with developed countries. Thirdly, the relation with Albania and Vietnam, two major Chinese aid-receiving countries, was deteriorated, which suggested the limitation of foreign aid. Of course, the change of the leadership in China more or less affected the continuity of foreign aid policy. Obviously, a new thinking was needed for a better relation between China and Africa.

Three months after the 12th Party Congress, the first diplomatic maneuver was Premier Zhao’s visit to Africa. Before the visit, he declared that the visit showed China’s focus on Africa as well as developing countries, it was for mutual understanding and friendship, thus to strengthen the unity and cooperation. During his visit, he issued four principles regarding China-African economic cooperation (平等互利，講求實效，形式多樣，共同發展). It is fair to say that the four principles were supplement and development of Zhou Enlai’s eight principles, which was put forward 18 years ago. While eight principles were concerned with the assistance to Africa, four principles were for economic-technological cooperation. Two policies were put forward in different conditions for different purposes. The major content of the former was to restrain China and Chinese aid personnel. Yet the latter stressed bilateral cooperation and common development,
a skillful adaptation to the strategic plan internally and new international situation. The new policy was noticed by international community.35

The 1990s was a period of consolidation.36 In order to make African diplomats know China better, the Chinese government also frequently invites diplomats of developing countries to visit China either for symposium or for exchange of ideas or experience of development. “Understanding China Symposium” was first designed specifically for African young diplomats, and it started from 1996. It was gradually transformed into a window for the diplomats to understand the past and present of China. The organizer, China Foreign Affairs University, ran the symposium 9 years (1996-2004) continuously and the participants were from more than 130 countries and 9 international organization. 161 African young diplomats at 9 symposia are from all African countries which have diplomatic relations with China, and 10 African regional organizations also participated. The symposium includes classes on Chinese history, culture, arts, etc. as the first part, and then a tour to both rich and poor regions.

Up to now, China-African relations have been developing in all fields. China has signed the bilateral agreement of promotion and protection of investment with 26 African countries, trade agreements and cultural agreements with more than 40 African countries. China-African multilateral cooperation system is gradually emerging, and the forms of cooperation become multifactoral.37 From 1992 on, Chinese foreign minister would first pay a visit to Africa every year. Now, China has established diplomatic consultative system with foreign ministries of 28 African countries. The exchange covers various fields, such as economy and trade, culture and education, medical and sanitation,38 military fields,39 and civil content. Educational exchange and economic cooperation are developing fastest.

**Educational exchange** Since the late 1980s, China has tried various means to help Africans to build up their own educational system with qualified professionals. Different seminars, training course or symposium are concentrated on three fields, management capability, engineering skill and school administration. The Chinese government has arranged various symposia for different purposes in order to train African professionals or for the Chinese to exchange ideas or experiences with African colleagues. This measure was highly appraised by African governments.40 The Ministry of Education has supported Chinese local universities to run different courses for African teachers, engineers and professionals.

Zhejiang Normal University has held several seminars for university presidents from Africa.41 Center for African Vocational Education Studies was set up in Tianjin University of Technology and Education, with a purpose to train mid-range engineering professionals from Africa in answer to the call of “China-Africa Cooperation-Addis Ababa Action Plan”. It has trained more than 200 students from Africa, and sent out 84 teachers to facilitate vocational education in African countries.42 Sponsored by the Ministry of Education, the university held a “Principals’ Seminar on Asian African Vocational Education”, November 17-December 7, 2005.43 There are other symposia such as agricultural or Chinese medicine as well. In 2005, the School of Government, Peking University, ran three symposia for African diplomats, for English, French and Arabic speaking countries respectively.

China-African exchange had taken different forms, on different levels and in different fields, mainly including visits from both sides, students to study in other side with a emphasis towards graduates, Chinese teachers to Africa (238 teachers in more than 30 African countries), training of personnel, set-up of various labs in African countries.44 In 2005, Ministry of Education entrusted
11 universities to run 12 seminars and training courses, including management of high education, long-distance education and vocational technical education. Participants were from 41 countries, including administrators, scholars and technicians, most of them African. In November 2005, the first “China-African Minister of Education Forum” was held in Beijing, State Councilor Chen declared four promises regarding the educational assistance, cooperation and exchange.

In March 2006, Ministry of Education, together with Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held the Fourth Seminar on the Exchange of Experience on the Training of Educational Personnel from Developing Countries. More than 70 participants from different universities exchanged their ideas and experience. In October 2006, the Zhejiang Normal University held the first China-African University President Forum, with a focus on “capacity building of higher education institutions in developing countries”, “reform on management system in higher education institutions” and “international cooperation and partnership”.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

In the field of economic cooperation, there are new characteristics as well. First, the state-run companies, private entrepreneurs and three types of funded enterprises (中外合资，中外合作和外商独资) all take an active part in African market. Private enterprises are developing very fast and there is a tendency for them to catch up with the state-run companies. Secondly, trade commodities show a great complementarity for both Africa and China. Thirdly, the economic cooperation is not only in trade, other areas such as investment, contract business, labor service, consultant service, all show a rapid progress. Up to the end of 2005, Chinese enterprises have invested $1.25 billion in Africa, covering trade and business, natural resources, transportation, agriculture, etc. Chinese contracted construction projects are greatly increasing. Fourth, the government has tried to provide various services to encourage business in Africa, such as set-up of 11 centers for promotion of investment and business, regularization of bilateral economic and trade committees with African countries, timely announcement of business opportunities and trade regulations and related news in Africa, etc.

In summary, there are five changes regarding economic cooperation. The unitary state-managed trade has changed to state and private trade together, the unitary form to multiple form of cooperation on multi-level, trade volume greatly increased, Chinese favorable balance to African surplus, aid typed cooperation to win-win cooperation. It was noticed “Gone are the days when co-operation between China and Africa was concentrated mainly on state-to-state co-operation, political support in international affairs and economic assistance.”

Field of Cooperation: from Single Aid to Win-win Strategy

After the adjustment of China’s African policy, emphasis is put on cooperation, bilateralism and win-win pattern, followed by the change of China’s aid pattern, from the unitary aid given gratis to multiple forms, such as government deducted interest loan on favorable terms, aid combined with co-investment, and aid gratis. It is natural that China’s African policy has its own strategic aim, yet one of the starting points is to help African countries get rid of poverty and consolidation of independence. The practice of China-African cooperation clearly indicates this basic standard. The transformation of China-African cooperation is expressed in the form of aid, the exchange of development experience and win-win pattern of economic interest.

In the period from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, Africa was experiencing a process of marginalization, expressed in two aspects, the decrease of investment and increase of debt. Take
Britain as an example. In 1980-1990, although Africa was undergoing structure adjustment under the western pressure, yet 43 out of 139 British companies withdrew from Africa. Japan also held a pessimistic view about Africa. Japanese companies in Kenya dropped from 15 to 2 in the 1980s. Another issue is debt. The debt of the sub-Saharan Africa was $6 billion in 1970, the figure grew to $84.3 billion in 1980. Again, the importance of the strategic position of Africa greatly decreased owing to the end of the cold war and the dismemberment of Soviet Union, which fastened the process of its marginalization. African debt reached $200.4 billion in 1993, increased to $210.7 billion in 1994, equal to 82.8% of its GNP in that year, as well as 254.5% of its export earnings. According to World Bank Report of 1995, the debt/export ratio of 28 African countries was over 200:1 at the end of 1994.

**Change of Aid Form** In the African Development Tokyo International Conference held in October 1993, African countries suggested that to increase foreign investment on the basis of development of production was more effective than the traditional aid. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, China was undergoing a reform of foreign trade and aid. China’s assistance gratis had a great return from African friends: China was carried into the United Nations by their African black friends. Yet, the fact shows aid gratis can hardly change the reality of poverty. Hu Yaobang pointed out in 1982, “As for the economic assistance, the method of total present is disadvantageous to both sides, judging from historical experience.” Therefore, China began to probe the reform in pattern of foreign trade and aid.

The reform of foreign trade started in 1987 and went well; then China began to try other forms of foreign aid. In 1987, Aniye (?) Sugar Plant assisted by China in Togo was badly managed owing to the shortage of technicians and the experience of management. After signing a contract, Chinese experts took over the management and it was run effectively. There was a remarkable increase of enterprise benefit, which was praised by the Togo government. This practice gradually spread to other China-aided enterprises as a combination of foreign aid and joint-investment cooperation, which began to put into experiment in 1992. The same thing happened in Mali. In 1991, the Mali government declared to privatize the Segu Textile Plant, a Chinese-aid project. After negotiation, the Mali government decided to transfer 80% shares to a Chinese company under the condition that the company should take the responsibility to pay the debt while both Mali and Chinese governments should provide favorable terms to this joint-investment company. Since then the company was running smoothly, with a value of 7.6 billion African francs in 1996. The Chinese-aided projects also showed China’s concerns to the weak group, such as the elderly, children and women.

After three years’ experiment, the government deducted interest loan on favorable terms was put into practice in late 1995. Vice Premier Zhu and Vice Premier Li visited 13 African countries during the year to explain China’s new policy regarding foreign aid. After one year, China signed frame agreements of favorable loan with 16 African countries. The new form of aid was gradually accepted by African countries. China-African Cooperation Forum held in 2000 started a new stage of bilateral friendly relations. In the follow-up actions, China carried out what it had promised to exempt the debt, help the development of African human resources, promote Chinese enterprises to invest in Africa. Therefore, the unitary aid gratis gradually changed to multiple forms of the government deducted interest loan on favorable terms, foreign-aid with cooperation and joint-investment, and aid gratis, etc.

**Exchange of the experience of development** To hold different seminars is a way to
help African countries in terms of training various professionals. For example, the Seminar on Economic Reform and Development Strategies was held in October 14-21, 2003, participants were 22 officials from different economic or financial units of 16 African countries, together with 7 officials of African Development Bank. The Chinese officials from different ministries gave presentations on various topics, covering major financial and economic fields, as an introduction of China’s lessons and experience of the on-going reform.

Program of Sino-African Seminar on Economic Reform and Development Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy and experience of economic reform and development in China</td>
<td>Li Ruogu</td>
<td>Deputy Governor of People's Bank of China (PBC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A new phase of China’s opening-up with its accession to WTO</td>
<td>Liao Xiaoji</td>
<td>Vice Minister of Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of foreign exchange regime reform in China</td>
<td>Hu Xiaolian</td>
<td>Deputy Administrator, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange</td>
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<td>China’s financial development and monetary policy</td>
<td>Mu Huaipeng</td>
<td>Deputy Director-General of the Monetary Policy Department, PBC</td>
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<td>Strategic objectives for the development in China</td>
<td>Cao Yushu</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary-General, the State Commission for Development of Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural development and poverty alleviation experience in China</td>
<td>Zhang Bao Wen</td>
<td>Vice Minister of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is an example the kind of seminars organized by the Chinese government for African participants. The topics show that China wants to make African friends understand what China has done and is doing, what lessons and experience they could draw from China. In order to give them a comprehensive picture of China today, the seminar organized not only a tour of both the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, but also a field visit to some poverty alleviation projects and Pudong Economic Development Zone.66

**Bilateralism of Economic Interests**

When China carries trade with African countries, it usually considers the interests of African countries, in order to realize a win-win situation. In the 2nd China-African Cooperation Forum-Ministerial Conference, China declared the exemption of tariff of goods exported to China from 25 least developed countries in Africa. According to the statistics from China custom service, the value of the goods of zero tariff totaled $340 million in the period of January-November 2005, increasing 96% compared with the same period, and 60% more than the growth rate of Chinese goods imported from Africa at the same time. This indicates a positive role of the policy towards the promotion of African export to China and the development of China-African trade as a whole.67 In April 2005, about 12.4 thousand African businessmen took part in the 97th Guangzhou Trade Fair, volume of business transaction reached $1.7 billion. In January to September 2005, the volume of trade with China reached more than 100 million in 30 African countries, more than $1 billion in 9 countries.68

China-African trade in 2000 had two important characters. One is that the volume of total trade passed $10 billion ($10.598 billion); the other is that China’s import from Africa passed its export to Africa ($5.043 billion: $5.555 billion), indicating African trade with China was
fastening. In the year of 2004, China-African trade reached about $30 billion, China’s import from Africa was again more than its export to the continent ($15.6 billion : $13.8 billion). In 2005, the trade was still increasing, with a total of $39.74 billion. The import was more than the export for the third time within recent few years. With the increase of trade, the components of the export goods were getting better suited to Africa, and the level was raised. Machines, electronics and goods of high-new tech grew rapidly, totaled more than half of China’s exports to Africa. Since China emphasizes the combination of tech-aid and economic-aid, this structure would definitely be beneficial to African development in terms of technology, also provides a stage of exchange in learning development experience and making the development strategy. This is surely a win-win situation.

The situation in Africa indicates both challenges as well as Chinese harmonious philosophy of win-win strategy in the context of globalization. China’s involvement in Africa is facing five contradictions or challenges: contradiction between China’s (Chinese enterprises’) interests and African (African enterprises’) interests, contradiction between China’s national interests and Chinese enterprises’ interests, contradiction between China’s interests and the big powers’ vested interests, contradiction between China’s need for natural resources and African sustainable development, and finally temporary interests and long-term interests. There are possible ways to settle these problems. First, to consider the partners’ interests in order to sustain the bilateral or multilateral initiative of the cooperation, to combine China’s interests and others’ interests in order to ensure the equality of the cooperation, to coordinate short-term interests and long-term interests in order to guarantee the vitality of the cooperation, to strengthen the partners’ capacity of self-development in order to ensure the sustainability of the cooperation. This approach might be regarded as unrealistic or wishful thinking, but human beings have to work together to solve our problems. Wars and fights have been proved a self-destruction. Only by finding a good and applicable way can China become a reasonable and responsible nation.

(This is a revised version of “On Transformation of China’s African Policy”, West Asia and Africa, Issue 8, 2006, forthcoming)

Notes:
3. 曲星：《中國外交 50 年》，南京：江蘇人民出版社，2000 年，第 440-441 頁。
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33 《人民日報》, 1983 年 1 月 15 日。
34 根據平等互利的原則，不將援助看作是單方面的給予，認為援助是相互的；捐助時絕不附帶任何條件；提供的無息或低息貸款需要時可延長期限，以減少受援國的負擔；捐助的目的是使受援國走上自力更生、經濟獨立發展的道路；捐助項目力求投資少、見效快，使受援國增加收入；提供自己生產的質量最好的設備和物資，按國際市場議價，不合規定規格和品質的保證退換；提供技術捐助時要保證受援國人員充分掌握這種技術；中國援助專家與受援國專家享受同等待遇，不許有任何特殊要求和享受。People’s Daily, January 18, 1964.
37 《人民日報》, 1983年1月15日。
38 根據平等互利的原則，不將援助看作是單方面的給予，認為援助是相互的；捐助時絕不附帶任何條件；提供的無息或低息貸款需要時可延長期限，以減少受援國的負擔；捐助的目的是使受援國走上自力更生、經濟獨立發展的道路；捐助項目力求投資少、見效快，使受援國增加收入；提供自己生產的質量最好的設備和物資，按國際市場議價，不合規定規格和品質的保證退換；提供技術捐助時要保證受援國人員充分掌握這種技術；中國援助專家與受援國專家享受同等待遇，不許有任何特殊要求和享受。People’s Daily, January 18, 1964.
39 參見周建青:《中國與非洲國家的教育交流與合作》，《西亞非洲》，2004年第 3 期，第 23 頁。
作穩步發展 —2005 年中非經貿合作情況及 2006 年展望》，《西亞非洲》2006 年第 1 期，第 16 頁。

49 2004 年，中國出口非洲商品前四位分別是機電 (41%)、紡織品 (18%)、服裝 (11%)和高新技術產品 (8%)；從非洲進口產品前四位元分別為原油 (64%)、鐵礦砂 (5%)、棉花 (4%)、鋼鐵製品、鑽石和原木 (各占 3%)。商務部西亞非洲司協調處：《2004 年中國與非洲國家的經濟貿易關係》，《中國商務年鑒·2005》，中國商務出版社，2005 年，第 182-183 頁。

50 中非經濟合作還表現在投資、承包業務等方面。2004 年底，經商務部核准和備案的中國在非洲的非金融類企業累計已達 715 家。商務部西亞非洲司協調處：《2004 年中國與非洲國家的經濟貿易關係》，《中國商務年鑒·2005》，中國商務出版社，2005 年，第 183 頁。

51 商務部西亞非洲司：《中非經濟合作穩步發展 —2005 年中非經貿合作情況及 2006 年展望》，《中國商務年鑒·2005》，中國商務出版社，2005 年，第 15-18 頁。

52 周建青：《中非經濟合作協調處》2006 年 1 月 26 日，摘自中國商務部網站。中國公司承包業務增長，建築勞務輸出增多。2004 年，中國公司承包合同 2721 項，金額達 6 億美元，非洲的市場份額達 14%。《中國商務年鑒·2005》，中國商務出版社，2005 年，第 166 頁。


56 張熾鑫：《貫徹援外新方針,開拓援外新局面》，《中國對外經濟貿易年鑒,1994/95》，中國社會出版社，1994 年，第 62 頁。

57 翁明：《臨行點將—”喬老爺”首次率團赴聯大》,符浩、李同成主編：《經天緯地 — 外交官在聯合國》,中國華僑出版社,1995 年,第 9 頁。

58 中共中央文獻研究室編:《三中全會以來重要文獻選編》(下)，人民出版社，1982 年，第 1127-1128 頁。

59 吳儀：《中國外貿體制改革的成效和方向》，《國際貿易》，1991 年第 12 期。

60 嚴益:《1989 年我國的對外援助工作》，《中國對外經濟貿易年鑒,1990》,中國財經出版社,1990 年,第 55 頁。

61 中共中央文獻研究室編:《三中全會以來重要文獻選編》(下)，人民出版社，1982 年，第 1127-1128 頁。


63 《中國對外經濟貿易年鑒·2001》,對外經貿出版社,2001 年,第 503 頁。

64 《中國對外經濟統計年鑑·2005》,中國統計出版社,2005 年,第 83 頁。
Premier Wen Jiabao recently pointed out three focuses during his visit to Africa. First, China will try every means to increase the imports from Africa. The secondly is to combine closely technological export and economic cooperation, with a special emphasis on strengthening the African capacity of self-development. The third is to try every means to help African countries train African technicians and management personnel. *People’s Daily*, June 19, 2006.

關於目前中非關係的特點，可參見李安山：《論“中國崛起”語境中的中非關係》，《世界經濟與政治》，2006年第11期（即將出版）。