

CHINA AND EUROPE IN AFRICA: COMPETITION OR COOPERATION?

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the development strategies of the European Union and China towards Africa. European development aid has always been accompanied by political and economic conditions such as adopting neoliberalist policies, democracy and regime modification. As for China, its development policies have not been conditional because it adopts the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and a win-win strategy. The paper points to a great disparity between the Chinese and European development strategies. China represents the South-South development model, and the European Union provides the North-South development model. The development experience in Africa indicates the progress of the Chinese model and its attraction to the African governments and peoples.

Keywords: Development policies, Africa, Cooperation, Competition, China, European Union

INTRODUCTION

Europe has a long history with African countries and the European Union (the EU) remains very active in African affairs. However, China has recently vigorously entered into some African countries and promoted itself as a strategic partner for Africa through infrastructure projects and permanent assistance to the peoples and governments. Africa has strategic importance for China and Europe for geographical expansion and economic development as it possesses abundant natural resources. Unlike Europe and the United States, China has been lenient with African governments and undertook development projects with low prices, partnership of which has created an atmosphere of satisfaction amongst the peoples and governments of African nations. The West has focused on fighting terrorism in Africa and has not presented development projects and infrastructure to the extent the Chinese companies have. Perhaps China has succeeded in developing partnerships with Africans through soft power which is an all-time Chinese strategy. The Chinese development model in Africa has turned into a hot topic, attracting the attention of political, economic and social scholars. The Africans are aware of the great difference between the Chinese and Western models. Europe is not evil in Africa, but China is seen to be very soft, thus winning the support and sympathy of peoples and governments.

The EU and China each have different strategies and means in Africa to achieve the goals set. These two models are not the same despite the many similarities. The European model has some advantages for African society, just as the Chinese model does, but the priority for both remains their national interests. China is active in some African

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states, while Europe in others. Some governments prefer the Western model, therefore it is not appropriate to say that the Chinese model is suitable for all African governments. However, the constant is that the Chinese model in Africa differs from the European model, otherwise the cooperation is self-evident. This research is unique in that it provides an unbiased analysis of the Chinese and European development strategies in Africa. Africa is a continent rich in resources and has many opportunities, so the opinions of political and economic scholars are divided between supporters and opponents of Chinese-Western cooperation in Africa. This study is based on a documentary research method, through access to historical and governmental documents and reports (Webb, 1984, pp. 113-130).

The author has relied on Chinese and European sources to highlight the strategy in Africa, as well as to ensure impartiality so that the conclusion is sound and reliable. The author has also used certain laws to interpret some legal dilemmas. In addition, the author has also relied on secondary sources which no doubt increases the robustness of the research. Most secondary sources include articles, statistics, reports, and research (Henn et al., 2006, pp. 96-116). Secondary sources are considered effective in this study as it was impractical to be in Africa in person to conduct field work. Some of the ideas presented are not available in the official sources, so secondary sources were used to highlight them. Through secondary sources, the author was able to express different opinions and stress the clear difference between the Chinese and European strategies in Africa. Most of the secondary sources are biased and have a specific purpose. Most importantly, the author was able to analyse the various data and come up with a new conclusion. Secondary data analysis was useful in this study to provide a comparative analysis of two different strategies in the same region.

In October 2003, the Chinese government issued the first political paper on the EU, aiming to deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership for mutual benefit. As a rising power, China is unlikely to enter into conflict with Europe or the West in Africa or any other regions. However, the arms race being waged by China and the establishment of a Chinese military base in Djibouti indicate that the option of confrontation remains on the table. In April 2014, China issued another policy paper in which it touched on the idea of multi-polarisation, economic globalisation, the growing power of developing countries, and international interdependence through advanced technology and international security instability (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). The EU and China have made major contributions to human progress in the current era. In its foreign policy, China relies on a win-win strategy, mutual benefit, and other attractive approaches for governments and peoples. This Chinese strategy has strengthened its presence in Africa and made significant contributions to international development. Some studies indicate that China will have a promising role in Africa, unlike the EU. Some Africans point positively to China, while they see Europe as a colonial and dominant power. Some scholars raise the issue of democracy in Africa, and they consider that democracy is represented by the EU. If it is replaced by China, democracy will be threatened. Various historical, political and economic factors make the Chinese way different from the European in implementing the development strategy in Africa.

It has been difficult to obtain some documents and figures which may be an essential part of the study. In addition, China and the EU have no unified interpretation of major issues such as development, human rights, neutrality and mutual benefit. The EU often focuses on human rights as a way to compete with China, and China often focuses on non-interference policy given Europe's colonial history. Official documents issued by governments and state-affiliated institutions may contain many hidden facts and ideas. Thus, one may not get the information directly from the documents which in most cases contain indirect messages and hidden information. This article will look at China's and the EU's development strategies in Africa.

DEVELOPMENT AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Development strategy includes political and economic goals, and often targets developing countries. This study will look at China's and the EU's development policies which target the African continent. Development policy is a soft power tool often used to build alliances with certain countries. The EU provides assistance to support and empower poor or southern countries, while China assists Africa in accordance with the principle of South-South cooperation. Western organisations such as the EU, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank follow good governance with third world countries such as Africa to set political and economic conditions that accompany reforms. The EU considers the economic problem in Africa as rooted in mismanagement and governance, thus, to overcome this, the system of government must be addressed, and not merely through providing financial support. Europe seeks to bring its political ideas into the system of government in Africa through the path of political and economic reforms (Savigny et al., 2011, pp. 214-215).

Development policies towards poor countries aim to support economic and social development in these countries and through the granting of long-term soft loans. International humanitarian aid includes military assistance to combat terrorism and support for the national army, keeping peace in those areas and linking them to the development process, allowing the use of nuclear energy as a condition of peaceful use in accordance with international rules and under international supervision, and cultural support through programs and activities (OECD, 2010). China is not a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nor the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), as member states of these organisations are required to abide by certain political and economic conditions stipulated relating to elections and human rights, among others. Thus, China implements its development policies without referring to these organisations. Development policies towards developing countries such as Africa enhance the social situation. The assistance of states should not be accompanied by conditions, but rather, the intention is a common destiny and has nothing to do with economic exchange.

Europe's aid to Africa or north to south could be a tool of foreign policy or a means to promote development. Some refer to this policy as representing the new system of economic and social inequality, or the relationship between the strong and the weak. Others

consider that permanent assistance makes systems and states almost completely dependent on aid from some countries which negatively affects their societies. Consequently, these countries turn into a tool for donor powers through indirect political, economic and social conditions. For some, nothing is free in international relations, so assistance from rich countries will inevitably have impacts on recipient countries. Partnership, development policy and aid have become successful ways to increase influence in some countries, especially the poor. The EU will not provide their assistance for free - of course there is an unspoken agenda with regard to the recipient countries.

Development cooperation is not limited to North-South cooperation, but also South-South cooperation. This applies to China's development policy towards Africa. For example, it may be through long-term loans with low interest rates. Cooperation may be economic, but it can also be educational, social, technical, and in other forms. North-South cooperation is derived from a long history with western colonialism, and the division between an advanced and rich North and a poor South. Thus, South-South cooperation will be different from North-South cooperation. For example, China has proposed a win-win strategy in its relations with international partners (Mawdsley, 2011). For example, the former Prime Minister of Botswana considered that the colonial countries still treat Africans as subordinates, while China presented a different model in its relations with Africa based on equality (Paulo et al., 2010, p. 539). China regards the international system as unfair and does not interfere in internal affairs when providing assistance. China focuses on South-South cooperation as long as African countries are basic supporters of China, and it calls for peaceful civilisational communication (Mawdsley, 2011). So, the North-South development strategy differs from the South-South strategy. Although Africa is the recipient, China does not follow the same strategy of Europe.

Since ancient times, Africa has suffered from famines, epidemics, wars and crises. During the period of the European Mandate over some African countries, the situation did not improve, and this led to doubts over the feasibility of the European strategy in Africa. Walter Rodney, in his book "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa", links African societal backwardness to European colonialism. Rodney points out that the external factor exacerbated the African crises rather than eliminating them. In contrast, the European economy recovered and strengthened the European colonial hegemony. In his view, the abolition of dependency on the unjust international system led by the West is a basic condition for the progress of the South. The European-African relationship in the colonial period is an expression of unequal development. Europe was getting richer and developing, while Africa was getting poorer, and the crisis worsened. The South owned wealth and natural resources, while the West manufactured products. This relationship has not changed much in the twenty-first century (Rodney, 2012). At the end of the 1970s, this theory was criticised because underdeveloped Africa could not advance without Western assistance. From the beginning of the twenty-first century, it seemed that some African countries were moving towards partnership with China, which is a southern country and does not have a colonial background.

China is expanding rapidly in the world through economic partnerships, and in 2013 Chinese President Xi Jinping launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which links

China with the world's most important economies, including the African economy. Africa has become a magnet for Chinese investors. China needs natural resources, new markets and a foothold. China's investment of billions of dollars in Africa and the huge economic projects and advanced infrastructure carried out by Chinese companies may give strength to the African economy to become an emerging economy. China has great interests in establishing strategic partnership with Africa due to economic, security and political reasons. China's strategy in Africa differs from the European strategy. Most African leaders are grateful for the partnership with China and some of the African NGOs are promoting the expansion of partnerships with China (Alden, 2007). There can be no ideas about cooperation or competition between China and Europe in Africa, as each partner aims to achieve its interests on the African continent. The Chinese may cooperate with the Europeans if necessary, as this is not excluded (Johnson et al., 1981). Competition will not bring benefits to Africans but will instead have devastating effects on African society. Despite the contradictory interests, cooperation in many cases removes the dispute and creates space for peace and peaceful communication according to a unified strategy. The development goals of the EU and China are similar in Africa, but the manner of implementation may differ.

EUROPEAN UNION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The Cold War and the world wars exhausted Europe and made it lose power significantly, pushing these countries to create a European political and economic union. European policy towards Africa differs from the colonial era in that the Europeans now turn to development policies. European cooperation dates back to 1950 when Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the Federal Republic of Germany signed the Coal and Steel Treaty, and in 1957 the European Economic Community (EEC) was created (Mold, 2007, pp. 11-13). The 1957 Rome Treaty paved the way for exchange of goods and people. During the Treaty of Rome negotiations, a greater margin of freedom was granted to African countries and European colonies, especially African countries that were under French rule. This treaty also resulted in the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF) and an agreement was reached on European joint financing of the colonies (Van Reisen, 2007, pp. 34-36).

The weakness of European countries after the Second World War and their withdrawal from some African countries had left the United States to benefit from Africa's natural resources, and thereafter, China became the most important partner in Africa. Perhaps the primary goal of the United States in Africa was to benefit from the abundant natural resources, and later the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD – the World Bank) was established to finance projects through the Marshall Plan. After the European hegemony diminished, the United States quickly spread to the world, replacing the European colonial powers (Van Reisen, 2007, p. 31). The United States was different from European colonial powers in that it used new concepts such as spreading democracy, cooperation, development, and human rights. In 1969, the Arusha Agreement was signed, establishing a partnership between Europe and African countries which were formerly under British colonial rule (Mold, 2007, p. 18).

In the 1970s, Europe first published its development policy toward Africa and indicated a desire for greater development cooperation with African states. European countries are bound by the Rome Agreement in their cooperation with Africa, and there has also been great European interest towards the Mediterranean countries to secure access to Arab oil. In July 1974, European-Arab talks were held to boost ties (Holland, 1995, pp. 34-38). The membership of the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark to the European Community had an impact on the development policy that followed. Some considered the Commonwealth established in 1931 to be a compromise between British colonial domination and unconditional development policy. This European development policy has established a new world with some development and human rights (Van Reisen, 2007, pp. 39-40). In 1975, the Lomé Convention was signed between Europe and 46 developing countries for cooperation in specific fields (Adebajo et al., 2012, pp. 32-33). In 1979, the European Parliament announced more development policies, and the European Development Fund (EDF) requested for more financing aid.

In 1976, some non-European countries became beneficiaries of development aid (Holland, 1995, pp. 35-39). This led to some scholars calling it the period of the European transition to a cooperation strategy. European industrialised countries rely mainly on natural resources from developing countries, so they have to follow a strategy of cooperation rather than domination. Europe has established cooperation agreements with the Mediterranean, African, Asian and American countries, so it has strengthened its cooperative relations with many regions, not just Africa (Van Reisen, 2007, pp. 43-44). The oil crisis in 1979 and the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980 negatively affected the international economy, which led to Europe creating new partnerships. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the new international transformations that followed, the EU was formally established in 1992 under the Treaty of Maastricht. This established more European cooperation and integration according to a unified vision and policies; based on financial, political, development and defense cooperation.

The 1992 Maastricht Treaty was aimed primarily at promoting social development, assisting the poorest countries, and integrating them into the international economy. The EU expanded and this was accompanied by a fair development policy towards European countries, which led to the creation of the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (Söderbaum et al., 2010). The increase in member states and the establishment of the European Monetary Union had increased the pressure on the EU, which led to the separation of development policy from development programs. Europe Aid organisations have played a role in implementing Europe's development policies. In 2002 the Development Council work was terminated, and with the arrival of Manues Barosa to the European Commission, new measures were taken, Europe's Aid was suspended and all cases were subordinate to the Directorate General for External Relations. The EU External Action Service which was managed by the European Commission and Development Council, was also created (Mold, 2007, pp. 53-56).

CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Unlike the historical European-African relations mentioned earlier, there has been no significant Chinese-African relations as a comparison throughout history. Some historical references mentioned that during the Ming dynasty, Admiral Zheng He visited East Africa between 1418 and 1433. It was the period of Chinese arrival in the African continent. During that visit, the Chinese got to know African culture and exchanged gifts. In the 1950s, a system of aid and cooperation based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries was established (Brautigam, 2009, pp. 23-25). Some consider China's unconditional aid in recent times as a tool to achieve foreign policy goals. The success of the revolution led by Mao Zedong led to the founding of a new and stronger Chinese system. Initially, assistance was provided to North Korea; in 1954, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai put forward the five Chinese principles of coexistence, namely - respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence (Men et al., 2011, pp. 248-250). This peaceful Chinese policy has created many international partners and alliances. The Five Principles of Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai were later adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement in Indonesia.

China was a supporter of liberation movements in Africa after the Second World War which contributed to the broad China-Africa cooperation. During his visits to several African countries between December 1963 and February 1964, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai issued the Chinese eight principles of foreign aid which were based on the five principles of coexistence that were previously announced. China provided loans to African countries, either without interest or with low interest. China also undertook many development projects on the African continent. This important and smooth cooperation has made Africans prefer dealing with Chinese partners. China is also a developing country unlike Europe and the United States, which has made cooperation without hegemony (Brautigam, 2009, pp. 31-33). African countries have been supportive of China to restore the permanent seat on the UN Security Council instead of Taiwan, and this has increased Chinese aid to African countries. In 1971, the People's Republic of China regained its seat on the Security Council, and African diplomatic support had an important role in international affairs. Most African countries recognise "One China" in line with Chinese political belief (Chaturvedi et al., 2012, p. 137). China has built roads, bridges, hospitals, power plants and other projects on the African continent. China's stated aim has been to strengthen the economies of these countries and make them self-reliant (Brautigam, 2009, pp. 33-35). By 1978, about 74 countries were receiving Chinese aid. During the 1980s, China began to implement market policy and moved to an economy that was more dependent on industry (Chaturvedi et al., 2012, pp. 2012, 138, 139).

Sino-African relations are joined by an era of struggle for liberation from colonialism in recent history. China has always been a supporter of African people, and Africa was the first to recognise the People's Republic of China. The great economic development achieved by China recently has directly reflected on the African economy. China has turned into a major economic partner for some African countries. There are more than one million Chinese workers in Africa, and China has sent high-ranking diplomatic

missions to promote Sino-African relationship. China's interest in partnership with Africa goes beyond economic cooperation to include China's security and diplomatic strategies applied in Africa. China supported the liberation movements in Africa, and Chinese companies had the lion's share in infrastructure projects. Currently, Chinese companies are spreading to Africa, and Sino-African relations are continuously developing (Shinn and Eisenman, 2012).

For the sake of South-South cooperation, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang paid a four-week visit to African countries in 1982. During his visit to Tanzania, he announced the four principles of China's economic relations, namely, equality and mutual benefit, diversity, demand for practical results and progress. Economic cooperation falls in line with Chinese development policies towards other countries (Chaturvedi et al., 2012, pp. 140-142). In addition to the Chinese government's commitment to provide grants, aid and vocational training, in 1984, the Chinese leadership formulated a directive action plan for overseas projects. Thus, the Chinese linked development aid to investment policies. China has committed to provide some aid through international organisations such as the United Nations and the International Red Cross (Harris, 2014, pp. 46-51). China's open economic policies and its accession to the World Bank have strengthened the China-Africa economic partnership. China treated Africa as a land of opportunity and resources. China has used its development policies toward Africa to win the support of the African people and governments and it has succeeded (Brautigam, 2009, pp. 67-70). In the year 2000 the China-Africa Cooperation Forum was established, and China devoted economic policies to achieve economic growth in Africa (Wouters, 2012, pp. 109-110).

In 1994, three policy banks were established: the China Development Bank, the China Import and Export Bank and the China Agricultural Development Bank, and a greater margin was given to the individual economic initiative. China's open economic policies have led to more growth and cross-border partnerships (Brautigam, 2009, p. 79). The Chinese Foreign Ministry provides information to the Chinese leadership on the state of affairs of African countries and the amount of aid that should be allocated to each country. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce also has a role in setting foreign aid policies vis-à-vis African countries.

CHINA-EU PARTNERSHIP

Europe and China have historical ties that go back to the Silk Road days. The EU is a key partner of China in the 21st century, and many European countries are partners in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013. Consequently, the nature of political systems cannot be combined with economic relations and cultural exchanges. China is an inevitable economic partner of the EU despite some political differences between them. David Shambaugh – a scholar in Sino-European relations, has extensively discussed this bilateral relationship that may be the most important for the twenty-first century and which may bring about many changes to the current international system (Shambaugh, 2004). The Sino-European partnership is complex, covering scientific research, medicine, advanced manufacturing technologies,

cultural exchanges, as well as tremendous economic exchanges. However, many studies indicate that this bilateral relationship is not perfect. There is no total consensus, and every time Europe would accuse China of violating human rights and other issues (Shambaugh, 2007).

Some economists rule out any deep disagreement between the EU and China. The economic interests make it imperative for the two sides to maintain permanent contact and strengthen the relationship, or at least maintain a normal one. The establishment of official relations between the People's Republic of China and the EU dated back to 1975. However, the EU only issued its first policy paper on China in 1995, and the two sides pledged then to strengthen the relationship and intensify exchanges (Communication from the Commission, 1995). Contemporary history does not indicate deep differences between the two parties, except in rare circumstances, for example when the Europeans imposed sanctions against China during the 1989 Tiananmen incident. In 1996 the EU introduced a "New Strategy of the EU on China" at a time when the policies adopted by the US towards China were strict during Bill Clinton's first term of. In 1998 the EU put forward the idea of "a comprehensive partnership with China" in a new policy paper (Communication from the Commission, 1998). The EU has also been supportive of China's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Therefore, despite the differences between the two sides, the relationship with China was a priority for the EU.

Some paragraphs related to China were mentioned in the "EU 2001 Official Document". The EU proposed deepening China's involvement in the international community, and Europe would provide adequate support to China in the policy of opening up and establishing international partnerships (Communication from the Commission, 2001). Country Strategy Paper on China for 2002 stipulated the desire of the EU to provide support to China in internal reforms, for example in terms of trade legislation, and the EU to provide environmental assistance to China in the framework of sustainable development, and called upon China to make human rights a priority (Country Strategy Paper, 2002). The EU recognised the strategic partnership with China in its 2003 policy paper (Commission of the European Communities, 2003) which referred to the EU's desire to expand cooperation with China in combating terrorism and partnerships in the international economy. In 2003, China published its first policy paper vis-à-vis the EU, indicating the historical ties between China and Europe, and China's desire to strengthen this partnership (China's EU Policy Paper, 2003). Since then, the policies followed have been in continuous harmony, despite some flaws.

Some European politicians point out that the EU has had a special relationship with China in the last decade as bilateral relations have developed by leaps and bounds. There may not be a comprehensive European-Chinese harmony, but many issues have been agreed upon in the bilateral relationship. The first and last goal of both parties is to achieve economic profits, regardless of the nature of the Chinese political system, or the fact that China is a huge economic partner of the EU. Europe may not agree on policy with China, but it will not abandon this great economic partnership. The EU invests in China, and in turn, China also invests in many European companies. Some reports indicate the potential tremendous growth in the Sino-European economic partnership in the coming years,

especially with the implementation of the BRI and the huge Chinese expansion in many strategic areas for Europe such as Africa.

China shares many ideas with the EU, which include combating terrorism, economic partnership, climate concerns, and others (Grant et al., 2008). Some countries frame China in black or white, but most European countries frame China in gray, so there are no feelings of hostility towards the rise of China or absolute friendship (Crossick, 2006). However, the Europeans have some negative statements against the Chinese regime, particularly on human rights, Tibet, and other issues. The tension in Sino-French relations in 2008 indicates that Sino-European relations are fragile, especially after the French government granted honorary French citizenship to the Dalai Lama and Chinese political activist Hu Jia, which the Chinese Foreign Ministry considered a provocation to the feelings of the Chinese (Chua, 2008). In May 2004 and during a lecture in Brussels, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao explained that the strategic partnership between China and the EU should be free from the restrictions caused by differences in political or social systems, and thus it should be equal, mutually beneficial and win-win, with the relationship based on mutual respect and mutual trust (Grant et al., 2008).

SINO-EU VISION FOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN AFRICA

China and Europe have a development history in Africa and strategies that are not identical. China has succeeded in a short time in establishing partnerships with most African countries as most of the European aid is politically and economically conditioned, while China is more lenient in its cooperative policies (Ling, 2010, p. 6). For the most part, Western donors put conditions on the recipient, such as human rights, economic and political reforms, and others.

European development policies resulted in the 2007 Lisbon Conference, which framed European policies toward Africa. European development policies are always in the process of being modified in line with political and economic changes in some African countries. The declared goals of the EU towards Africa are democratic governance, human rights reforms and sustainable economic development, among others. The protocols and agreements are in permanent amendment to achieve the objectives of the Euro-African partnership (Wu, 2012, pp. 107-109). The development strategies in Africa differ between China and Europe.

The China-Africa Cooperation Forum has become the official policy instrument for regulating political relations and exchanges, and China has not interfered in internal affairs or imposed any political conditions (Wu, 2012, pp. 109-111). While the EU focuses on political reforms through democracy, human rights practices and fair elections (Mold, 2007, pp. 176-185), China offers a different model for South-South cooperation. Chinese special envoy for Africa, Liu Guijin, considers that China does not impose political conditions on African countries; it is not China's role to change country policies. China deals with African countries according to the aforementioned five principles of China's foreign policy. Thus, China does not interfere in African internal affairs and does not use

force in the event of conflicts of interests. Westerners criticise this unconditional Chinese policy. For example, Chairperson Chris Smith of the US Congress House Subcommittee on African Region considers China to support dictatorships and undermine democracy in Africa and its only goal is natural resources (Srinivasan, 2008, p. 57). However, Western donors and the World Bank have supported some dictatorships in Africa previously, refuting the theory that China is the only one supporting dictatorships.

In 2018, Chinese President Xi Jinping outlined the Chinese non-intervention strategy towards Africa, or the “five-no’s” approach at the Forum for Africa China Cooperation (FOCAC) Conference in Beijing. Consequently, the Chinese administration laid the outlines of China-Africa cooperation. Partnerships with Africa are usually profitable because Africa is rich in natural resources. Each of China, European countries, or any other foreign partner will find many investment opportunities and make money in Africa. Therefore, Africa was a fertile environment for the huge and many Chinese investments. There may be asymmetric investment in partnerships between China and Africa due to conditions that may sometimes be in favor of Chinese investors or unreasonable interest rates. The replacement of the regime in an African country may be a binding condition before concluding the contract with European states whereby economics and politics are not to be separated. They are seen to be complementary. Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), which Europe has been following since the 1980s, is a model for Euro-African dealings and represents the economic conditions imposed by the Europeans on African partners. Europe often imposes many binding conditions, which has made some Africans preferring to partner with China (Bodomo 2019, pp. 115-129).

China supports pluralism and development for all and works according to the theory of non-interference in internal affairs. The Chinese government supports Africa and also provides aid through international organisations and has built a headquarters for the African Union. However, in many African countries, Chinese support goes to a group of officials, not directly to the people, which indicates a fundamental problem that the Chinese government must reconsider. For example, despite Western criticism of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, China has continued to support his government through arms deals and economic and political support. China has carried out oil exploration in Sudan, built railways and development projects (Srinivasan, 2008, 57). China has received a lot of criticism for supporting the Sudanese regime which violates human rights. China had pressed the Sudanese government to find a solution and in 2006 a peace agreement was reached, which is considered a success of Chinese diplomacy in making international peace (Srinivasan, 2008, pp. 65-70). China participates in the United Nations peacekeeping force in Sudan and has always been contributing to peace in Africa. In the Sudanese case, even though China interfered in internal political affairs, it was a positive intervention for peacemaking. A point to note, although the West was against the Sudanese regime, the EU acted against the principles of democracy and partnered with Sudan for economic benefit (Srinivasan, 2008, p. 63).

According to the stated policies, Europe seeks to promote democracy in Africa and China to enhance economic exchanges. From the 1980s, the EU linked its economic support to Africa with political conditions that must be applied and implement economic

policies compatible with the EU such as adopting neoliberalist policy and economic reforms (European Commission, 2007, p. 17). Trade exchanges are subject to the authority of the EU - for example the importation of African agricultural products which may affect European agricultural products (Carmody, 2011, pp. 139-150). Most of the Chinese partnerships with Africa are not conditional, but upon signing any agreement the terms must be approved, which are indirect conditions. Mostly, Chinese companies implement projects without cooperating with local partners. China operates according to the principle of mutual benefit and win-win strategy, contrary to the European strategies applied in Africa (Ling, 2010, p. 7).

The Sino-EU-African relationship is getting more and more complicated with time. The rapidly rising Chinese economy needs a partnership with Africa, and the European economy needs a partnership with Africa to maintain its international ranking. In 2006, Sino-African relations developed with the launch of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). Chinese President Hu Jintao affirmed China's determination to strengthen relations with Africa in terms of political communication, economic cooperation, cultural exchange, joint work to serve global development and cooperation in international affairs. The Chinese government provides permanent assistance as part of the Chinese strategy towards Africa. Many partnership agreements have been signed between China and Africa in the past ten years.

On the other hand, the features of the European-African relationship are changing from Europe being the most important partner for Africa in the last century. In 2005, the EU reformulated its strategy towards Africa after major international transformations that affected European interests in Africa. The EU is concerned about China's great expansion in Africa. Europe is seeking to abolish the old rules of partnership that prevailed during colonial times and is looking to work according to modern rules which commensurate with the new international state of affairs. China is building its partnership with Africa based on policy of non-interference in the latter's internal affairs and separating economic partnership from political cooperation, which reduces the chances of the EU in directing criticism of the Chinese strategy in Africa (Sixth Shanghai Workshop on Global Governance, 2008).

The mechanisms for EU's cooperation with Africa may be more complicated than those adopted by China because it is linked to common European policies and a unified budget whereby international goals should be achieved. As for China, it is a developing country and dealings with African countries are smoother as it does not place many restrictions on its development policies. Africans are attracted to cooperation with China because it does not interfere in their internal affairs and aims to achieve a win-win outcome. China often collects natural resources instead of money, as African countries are rich in resources. For example, China rebuilt a large part of Angola after the end of the war in exchange for oil. An agreement was signed to commit 70% of the projects in Angola to Chinese companies. The Angolan Telecommunications Company also signed an agreement with the Chinese company ZTE to provide it with modern equipment and technology. However, Angola has not cut ties with the EU and is a member of OPEC.

China aims to boost the African economy which leads to societal development and the reduction of unemployment, poverty and illiteracy. African countries will not do away with partnership with the EU, but the strict political and economic conditions imposed may increase the trend towards partnership with China. Perhaps raising and developing the economy may bring democracy and better living conditions to Africans - which favor the Chinese option. The EU should not dilute its projects because of political and economic conditions. Indeed, it should be more cooperative with the Africans so that Chinese influence does not expand.

CONCLUSION

The EU and China have different development strategies towards Africa. Europe has an ancient presence in Africa, unlike China. Sino-African cooperation has strengthened after African countries supported the People's Republic of China in regaining its seat at the UN Security Council. The EU imposes political and economic conditions for providing aid to Africans, while China does not interfere in internal affairs and aims to achieve a win-win situation. Political data indicates that African governments are heading towards partnership with China as an alternative to Europe or as a first partner. The African experiences with Europe and China have made African governments and peoples feel the difference. China has a different strategy from Europe. However, both the EU and China aim, through their development strategies, to boost the African economy and make peace. For better living conditions and a stronger African society, the EU and China should work together to achieve development in Africa.

FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

The Chinese presence in Africa has an influence on the great powers' strategies towards Africa. China has become a major competitor to the West, specifically the EU in the last decade in Africa. With Europe's colonial history in Africa in the last century, the former needs to reconsider its strategy towards Africa. The European strategy towards Africa in the last decade has become limited to economic relations without going deep into security and political cooperation.

Some European critics point out that China is exploiting Africa in its partnerships, while many international critics have pointed to the era of colonialism and Europe's exploitation of Africa, a continent rich in natural resources. Consequently, China and the EU each has economic and geostrategic interests in entering into partnership with Africa, but their means and strategies in achieving their goals differ.

The Chinese strategy seems to be more attractive to African governments by not setting complex conditions and not interfering with the internal affairs of African countries, unlike the EU which often ties its economic partnerships and aid to harsh and binding terms. Consequently, China appears to be more successful in Africa and is rapidly advancing its participatory policy with many African governments, which threatens the

interests of the West in Africa. Africa has turned into a hot topic in the Sino-European talks. The Europeans cannot overlook the great Chinese role in Africa. European and Chinese strategies converge in Africa in terms of good governance, poverty reduction, fighting terrorism and other non-contentious issues. Some Chinese and European specialists suggest extending the Sino-European dialogue to include Africans, as a tripartite dialogue might achieve the interests of Africa faster than a bilateral dialogue.

China is investing massively in Africa and operating according to the “win-win” model referred to by Chinese President Xi Jinping. Therefore, Africa is gaining a lot from its cooperation with China. Africa has always suffered from famine, poverty, epidemics, and a low standard of living under Western colonialism. The internal African situation is improved through partnerships with China. China undertakes infrastructure projects and establishes educational and hospital institutions and other social care centres. China also establishes factories that contribute to the development of the African economy. The Chinese strategy does not aim to serve the interest of one party at the expense of the other.

For a better future for Africa, China and the EU should partner in Africa. Chinese President Xi Jinping often refers to the concept of “participation” in managing international affairs and China's unwillingness to uniquely rule the world. Europeans are open to dialogues and cooperation with the Chinese. Europe is a key partner of China in the Belt and Road Initiative. This seems viable as Europe has not followed the “Trump administration” policy of economic warfare against China.

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