

China replies U.S. on Nigeria, other African countries debts

See Page 2



From L-R: Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria, Dr. Zhou Pingjian, Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi and Nigerian Foreign Minister, Geoffrey Onyeama

Nigeria seeks Chinese bank's support for infrastructure funding

Page 5

As Africa/China's Beijing Summit Draws Near

Pages 8&9

China replies U.S. on Nigeria, other African countries debts

China hopes that other countries will do more good for Africa's development and treat China-Africa cooperation in a fair and objective manner, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mr. Geng Shuang has said.

Mr. Geng Shuang was responding to U.S. accusation that low interest loans from China and other countries have driven some sub-Saharan African countries deeper into debt.

"Such remarks are totally out of line with the truth," Geng told a news conference in Beijing, China's Capital.

"The debt of some African countries is the result of long-term accumulation instead of a recent appearance.

"China is not the main creditor of African countries," he said.

In the initial stage of industrialisation, any country needs financing support.

The spokesman said it is hard for Africa to realise industrialisation and modernisation without financial guarantees.

Mr. Geng said China's financing support to Africa is mainly in infrastructure and production areas.

"Chinese companies have built a lot of highways, railways, ports, airports and communication facilities, greatly improving Africa's economic development environment and helping Africa attract foreign investment."

The Chinese government has also encouraged and supported its companies to increase direct investment in Africa and explore new cooperative modes of investment such as public-private partnership, he said.

He said China insists that large-scale infrastructure and industrial development in Africa go hand in hand, and that attention be paid to both the economic and social benefits of projects and increasing African countries' ability for independent and sustainable development.

"We have done our best to avoid increasing Africa's debt burden," he said.

The spokesman said China is ready to work together with the international community to support Africa in its pursuit of peace, stability and development.

Recently sacked U.S. Secretary

of State, Rex Tillerson's recent remarks about China's role in Africa are untrue and the attempt to smear China is quite self-embarrassing, the Chinese ambassador to South Africa, Mr. Lin Songtian has added.

The U.S. top diplomat "has obviously chosen the wrong place, wrong topic against the wrong target. That is why Africans have stepped up to tell His Excellency that his words about China are wrong and not true. Sorry to say this is quite self-embarrassing," said Lin Songtian at a press briefing on the same day as Tillerson wrapped up his first official visit to Africa.

During his tour of five African countries, Tillerson said the African countries should be careful while dealing with China and not forfeit their sovereignty or create a debt crisis.

In response, the Chinese ambassador said that China and its enterprises have invested over 100 billion U.S. dollars on the continent, built over 6,500 km of railway, 6,000 km of highways, over 200 schools and 80 sports stadiums.

China have created jobs, transferred skills and technology and changed the lives of the African people, he added.

Tillerson probably landed on the ports built with Chinese financing, used roads built with Chinese assistance and made the remarks in the stadium built jointly by Chinese and Africans, Lin said.

"What they really want is to keep Africa as it was, poor and divided, to be always controlled by others. What they worry about is Africa's realization of economic independence with China's support. What they worry about is a strong Africa that can no longer be ordered around politically," the Chinese ambassador said.

Regarding Africa's debt problems, Lin said that China has funded many infrastructure projects on the continent. "American friends are worried about Africa's debt crisis on the lips. But they have no willingness to issue loans to support Africa's development, or to encourage their investors to (invest in) Africa."

Despite Tillerson's bizarre allegation, Lin also said the Chinese government has made earnest efforts

to rid corruption domestically and contribute to the global fight against the scourge.

Adding his weight to the outrage that trailed the U.S remark of China-Africa cooperation, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that the United States does not have authority to criticize the relationship that China has with African countries.

Lavrov, who was visiting Zimbabwe, said Tillerson's words were inappropriate, state news agency New Ziana reported.

"I did not know that Rex Tillerson was a specialist in China-Africa ties. But I do not think it is entirely appropriate if he indeed said that," said Lavrov.

"We never meddle within the domestic affairs of any other country, even though we hear allegations to the contrary on a daily basis from Washington and other Western countries," Lavrov said.

Zimbabwean Foreign Affairs Minister Sibusiso Moyo weighed in saying the remarks by the United States were misplaced.

"Africa has its own self determination in terms of charting its own course, in terms of economic co-operation with any member of nations in the international arena," he said.

China has stepped up economic cooperation with Zimbabwe and is funding investment projects across different sectors of the Zimbabwean economy.

The deals include financing for the expansion of the Hwange Power Station, the construction of a new parliament building and a pharmaceutical warehouse, the expansion of a national fiber optic broadband project and the provision of wildlife monitoring equipment.

China has promised sincerity, real results, friendship and good faith to Africa and "work together for a community with a shared future for humanity," as Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has put it.

"African brothers and sisters are welcome to get on board China's fast train of development," Wang told a press conference on the sidelines of the annual session of the National People's Congress. Changes in the world will not break China-Africa friendship.

China is Africa's industrial accelerator

Since the turn of the century, China has become Africa's major economic partner with bilateral economic relations rising by 16.8 percent year-on-year to \$38.8 billion in the first quarter of 2015.

China's commercial transactions with Africa have surpassed the continent's economic relations with France, the United Kingdom and the United States put together.

As trade relations between China and Africa have expanded rapidly, investment relations have also flourished, with around 10,000 Chinese companies investing in different sectors of Africa's economy, from agriculture to industrial and manufacturing, construction to infrastructure.

Investment in the continent by Chinese companies is said to have amounted to \$3.2 billion in 2016. This was noted recently by the Guinean minister of transportation, who said, "Chinese companies are involved in revitalizing Guinea's rail infrastructure." The aim is to boost both passenger and mineral transportation from Mali to the port of Conakry in Guinea.

Economic ties between China and the African continent are not just a recent occurrence. In fact, such relations go as far back as the 1950s.

It was at the April 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia, designed to promote economic and cultural relations between Asia and Africa, that China and the African states adopted the five principles for peace. These were mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual nonaggression; noninterference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence. Following the adoption of these principles, the Tanzania-Zambia railway line became the biggest Chinese transportation and infrastructure project on the continent in the 1970s, and China committed itself to projects all over Africa.

Another point to emphasize is that, given its abundance of natural resources, it is only natural that Africa exports a considerable share of its oil and mineral commodities and mostly imports goods that require a largely unskilled or semi-skilled workforce.

At the same time, China's economic expansion has resulted in a network of trade, aid and investment links with the African continent. Chinese



The Huajian factory outside Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

companies are drilling for oil in Angola, Gabon and Sudan; building railroads in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya; building and financing infrastructure and hydroelectric projects in Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea; developing the tourism industry in Sierra Leone; and servicing mobile phone networks in Kenya and Nigeria.

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Chinese companies are building vital infrastructure, including dams, ports and roads, and helping to refurbish government offices and other buildings.

With regard to Africa's industrial sector, the continent is linked to China through the Asian country's importance in determining the global prices of the raw materials with which Africa is significantly blessed.

How so? Rapid growth in China has boosted global demand for oil and minerals, given that it consumes about 20 percent of global aluminum and copper resources, 30 percent of steel and coal, about half of globally traded iron ore, and is the second-largest consumer of oil after the United States, importing a quarter to one-fifth of its oil from Africa.

As a result of China's rising demand for natural resources, oil prices peaked at almost \$150 per barrel in mid-2008, and copper prices more than tripled during 2002-08. This rise in prices has greatly increased the revenues of Africa's oil and minerals exporters, and attracted large inflows of capital into resource-rich but also undeveloped regions.

For instance, in countries like Zambia, major infrastructure investments are linked to China's strategic interest in copper supplies. Direct

investment in the Zambian resources sector by Chinese investors has further boosted the economy by creating more employment opportunities, raised the profits of companies in the resource sector, increased skill and technology transfers and increased opportunities in related industries.

It has also led to the creation of the Multi Facility Economic Zone, which is located in Zambia's mining area of Chambishi, Kalulushi, with the objective of driving industrial and economic development in the manufacturing sector for the purpose of enhancing both domestic and export-oriented business.

Furthermore, China's imports of African crude oil have increased exponentially, reaching more than 25 percent of total Chinese oil imports. The major beneficiaries of accelerated Chinese energy demands have been Angola, Nigeria, Egypt, Niger and Sudan.

Angola, which is currently Africa's second-largest oil producer after Nigeria, is China's primary supplier on the continent.

After years of civil conflicts, the Angolans have welcomed China's oil investment.

In exchange for concessions and oil contracts, the Chinese are providing financial incentives. A \$2 billion line of credit (1.5 percent interest over 17 years) by the Export-Import Bank of China has helped finance vital infrastructure development projects as a means of post-conflict reconstruction. Also in Angola, Chinese workers are constructing office buildings, housing developments of up to 5,000 units, sections of railway infrastructure damaged and

neglected during decades of civil war, hospitals, schools and hundreds of kilometers of roads.

Sudan accounts for only about 5 percent of China's oil imports. Nevertheless, Beijing operates its largest overseas oil projects there, including a \$700 million refinery. A total of 10,000 Chinese workers have been deployed to build a 1,500-kilometer pipeline linking the Heglig oilfield in Kordofan province to the port of Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

In return, this has provided Khartoum with a transit corridor to the shipping lanes of the Middle East and made Sudan one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa.

However, it should be emphasized that there are two sides to every story. Chinese imports to Africa have challenged the textile sectors in a number of African economies, such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mauritius and South Africa.

I will sum up by arguing that China's trade and investment ties with Africa are imperative to both parties given that, for Africa, Beijing is a key trading partner and investor that supplies the continent with cheap consumer goods, purchases its natural resources and helps with the financing and construction of infrastructure projects.

For Beijing, the African continent is a growing source of raw materials, of which crude oil, iron ore and copper are the most important and have helped fuel China's rapid infrastructure development.

The writer is a research assistant at the Institute for Global Dialogue of the University of South Africa.

China's "one country, two systems" principle sets good example: Sudanese experts

The remarkable success of China's "one country, two systems" principle has set a good example for other countries to solve problems, Sudanese experts said.

"Since the application of the principle in Hong Kong and then Macao, the experience has ... helped in creating political and economic stability in the two (regions)," Hassan al-Saouri, a political science professor at Al Neelain University and chairman of the Sudanese Society for Political Science, has said.

"Hong Kong has achieved great success in preserving its economic position thanks to the principle. Such flexible self-rule has contributed to maintaining a stable relationship between the Chinese central government and the Hong Kong administration," he said.

The principle can also be applied to Taiwan, he



Chinese President, Xi Jinping

said, adding that it was a more logical and viable choice than others.

Balla Ali Omer, a Sudanese media writer and China expert, agreed, saying the practical implementation of the "one country, two systems" principle has contributed to

the economic and development al renaissance in Hong Kong and enhanced the special administrative region's political stability.

"This principle can be applied in Taiwan," he said, pointing out that politicians in

Taiwan need to take on "their historical responsibilities" and that foreign interventions only complicate the matter further.

Omer said this unique Chinese method can help resolve many issues in different parts of the world.

Chinese investment to boost Kenya's real estate sector: official

Chinese investments are boosting Kenya's real estate sector through technology transfer, a real estate firm has said.

Ben Woodhams, Managing Director at Knight Frank Kenya, told reporters in Nairobi that Chinese contractors have been able to deliver high quality buildings in less time as compared to the local construction industry.

"What we are seeing is new forms of technology from China in terms of building efficiency in the form and type of construction which are spilling

over to the rest of the market players," Woodhams said during the release of The Wealth Report 2018.

He said that Chinese contractors have introduced healthy competition in the real estate. "This has had a positive impact on the economy by lowering the cost of houses for the consumers," he added.

Woodham said that Kenya is a real estate hub in Africa alongside Lagos in Nigeria and South Africa's Johannesburg.

He noted that through Chinese building technology, Kenya will be able to enhance the status of

its real estate even further.

The official said that the primary impact of Chinese in Kenya has been in massive government infrastructure projects such as roads and railway.

He said that in the private sector their activities have been concentrated in residential apartments.

"Now we are seeing them move onto the commercial real estate sector and especially in constructing big mixed-use schemes consisting of retail shops, office space and hotels," he added.

1st Egyptian-Chinese fiber optic cable factory inaugurated in Cairo

The first Egyptian-Chinese fiber optic cable factory was inaugurated in northeastern Cairo Governorate

Located in the industrial Badr city, the factory was managed by HitekNofal Hengtong Optix, the first Egyptian-Chinese joint venture specialized in manufacturing fiber optic cables and accessories.

Featuring the state-of-the-art technologies, the 33,000-square-meter fully-automated plant aims to meet the Egyptian market's demand for fiber optic cables in 2018, said Randa Tawfiq, HitekNofal marketing manager.

"Fiber optic cables market has obviously grown in the past few years in Egypt in light of the government and the private sector plans to improve the communication infrastructure," said Mohamed Nofal, CEO of HitekNOFAL Solutions.

International researches have estimated that the volume of the fiber optic market will grow up to 9 billion U.S. dollars by 2023, which means there will be huge opportunities for foreign investors in Egypt, Nofal said.

The project, with investment of 30 million dollars, plans to export the product to the African markets by

the middle of 2019 with the increase of the factory productive capacity, Tawfiq said.

"We are planning for doubling our production in the coming two years," Tawfiq added, stressing that the main objective of the factory is to manufacture the "core," which is the most difficult part in the process of making the fiber optic that requires a highly-advanced technology.

"We noticed that, over the past few years, the multimode technology that allows simultaneous propagation of multiple modes of light, which enhances the transfer rate of audio and video applications, has dominated the global markets," said Hengtong Executive President Qian Jianlin.

"We seek to make Egypt a main hub for expanding our exports to the African market which is the fastest-growing market in the field of fiber optic at the international level," Qian said.

He added the factory, which can produce 8,000 km fiber optic cables



annually, is to double its production by the end of 2018.

Meanwhile, Egyptian Minister of Communications and Information Technology Yasser al-Qady praised the importance of the factory for the North African country that is moving toward a digital society.

Egypt has been building 16 new cities, with the total size four times of the capital Cairo. The fiber optic cables will be essential for building the communication infrastructure in these cities, the minister added.

He said that the factory will be a center for exporting fiber optic cables and eventually technology and communication services to Africa and the Middle East.

Nigeria seeks Chinese bank's support for infrastructure funding

Nigeria's Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun, met with a delegation from the China Development Bank to discuss areas where the lender could be of assistance to the country.

The meeting, which was held at the headquarters of the finance ministry, was attended by the Permanent Secretary at the ministry, Mahmoud Dutse, and top officials of the China Development Bank led by its Vice Chairman/President, Zheng Zhijie.

Zhijie explained that the meeting was a follow up to the visit of President

Muhammadu Buhari to China in April 2016, where an understanding was reached to deepen the level of bilateral relationship between both countries.

He said since then, the level of trade relationship between China and Nigeria had been on the increase, adding that the visit of the bank's officials was part of measures to deepen the relationship.

Adeosun, while addressing the bank officials, said the Federal Government was working hard to reposition the economy by addressing the infrastructure gap.

She described the bank as an important partner to galvanise the needed funds for Nigeria in key sectors of the economy such as power, rail and roads.

The minister said with a huge balance sheet size, the China Development Bank had the needed funding to finance any project.

She stated, "China Development Bank is a very important bank with a large balance sheet and a track record in funding major projects and we are very excited to have you here. We are repositioning the Nigerian economy and we are opening up opportunities

in a number of areas such as power, infrastructure, agriculture and exports.

"We want to grow the economy and create jobs for our people, and of course, that means capital. We have a very good relationship with China and we have very strong commitment from China at the highest level of your support.

"What we hope we will be doing are the specifics of how to get the China Development Bank to actively close some of the transactions that you are looking at and we are interested in partnering with you."

China-Kenya intensify political cooperation through capacity building programs

Kenya's ruling Jubilee Party is pushing ahead with efforts to learn and replicate the successes of the Communist Party of China, according to the ruling Jubilee party's secretary-general.

Raphael Tuju made the comment when the Chinese ambassador to Kenya, Liu Xianfa, paid a courtesy call at the party's headquarters in Nairobi.

"We have learned that service to the people is the foundation of a successful political party," said Tuju who was recently appointed a cabinet secretary. "Kenya needs a stable and visionary party that would successfully translate the president's vision into reality to benefit millions of Kenyans."

President Uhuru Kenyatta was re-elected for his second term late last year on the platform of strengthening food security, access to affordable housing, improving the manufacturing sector and increasing access to affordable healthcare for all.

Tuju noted that the country is facing difficult times such as high unemployment among youths, food insecurity caused by prolonged drought and high poverty rates. China has faced similar challenges and overcome them and gone ahead to successfully uplift millions of people from poverty within three decades, Tuju said. "These are the achievements Kenya wants to realize too," he said.

"We are keen to learn how the CPC has realized this fete. Jubilee is strengthening political ties with China at a time the Asian giant is planning to improve the lives of 46 million people, who are still below the poverty line, by the year 2020.



Left, Raphael Tuju, the Jubilee Party's secretary-general, speaks during a courtesy visit on Tuesday by Chinese Ambassador Liu Xianfa to the party's headquarters. Next to him is David Murathe, the vice-chairman of the party.

Moreover, we want to build our capacity in running party operations," said Tuju.

Liu said the CPC is keen on strengthening relations with the Jubilee party and Kenya. "We are committed to implementing capacity building programs as agreed by the two countries during talks between President Kenyatta and Wang Xiaohui, the executive vice-minister of the publicity department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee three weeks ago.

Liu noted that the exchange program aims to build Jubilee's capacity to at-

tract a strong support base especially from the youth and to make progress to benefit people. The envoy added that the programs between the two parties have been successful, and he said that he was confident that more local party officials will visit China to build their knowledge about the country.

During his visit, Wang announced that China will provide 20 scholarships to the Jubilee party. Local officials will get an opportunity to receive training on democracy and party management.

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People-to-People exchanges drive China-South Africa ties

China-South Africa bilateral relations are in a steady trajectory courtesy of the people-to-people exchange mechanism launched barely a year ago between the two countries.

In a speech during a one-day forum in Johannesburg, South Africa, Manelisi Genge, the chief director of East Asia and Oceania at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in South Africa, said the mechanism has increased opportunities for stronger engagements between non-state actors such as the academia and researchers of the two countries.

"The mechanism, signed last year, has provided an opportunity to exchange ideas, adopt the best practices in deepening relationship in the search for bettering the future of our people," said the ambassador. "Whatever we do must have a positive impact to our people."

He added that such efforts between the two partners are geared towards meeting these expectations and giving impetus to bridging cultural barriers. "Culture and education are the best avenues," he said.

Dr Genge noted that the Chinese government offers SA around 50 scholarships annually that extensively caters for students' welfare while in this program. "Admittedly we do not exhaustively fill this quota and it will be prudent for more education actors to make concerted efforts to boost the number of South Africans accessing these opportunities," he



Ambassador Dr Manelisi Genge, the chief director of East Asia and Oceania at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in South Africa.

said.

He believed that that these opportunities are avenues to expand knowledge exchange between the two peoples, and strengthen political and economic relationship.

He hoped other African countries can borrow the good practices derived from this engagement and customize according to national priorities to deepen bilateral relationships with China.

The forum, held at the University of Witwatersrand, brought together scholars, policy maker and the business community in recognition of 20 years of China-South Africa engagements.

On his part, Erwin Pon, the Chairman of Chinese Association

of Gauteng, said conscious and deliberate efforts by China and SA have deepened understanding between the two people.

"However, there is still room for deeper engagements and discussions to expand cultural exchanges," he said.

Last year in April, South Africa became one of six countries to launch the people-to-people exchange mechanism with China. The others are United States of America, Russia, the UK, France, Indonesia and the EU.

The two countries hope that the mechanism will deepen engagements in the areas of culture, education, communications, health, science, technology, sports, tourism, women and youth.

Upcoming forum good opportunity to strengthen China-Africa cooperation: Burundian president

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is a very good opportunity to deepen cooperation and relations between China and Africa, Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza has said.

Nkurunziza told Chinese media in an interview that he is very grateful for inviting Burundi to participate in this year's FOCAC summit to be held in Beijing.

Burundi is very willing to take part in this important event, he said.

Nkurunziza said since the founding of FOCAC, China has been providing great support for Africa to help promote the development of the region through the forum, from which Burundi has benefited a lot.

He said the upcoming FOCAC summit is a good opportunity for

Burundi and China to deepen the bilateral cooperation based on mutual trust and mutual benefits, and a great chance for other African countries to expand their cooperation with China.

FOCAC was formally established in 2000 under the joint initiative of China and Africa with the purpose of further strengthening friendly cooperation between China and African countries.

As Africa/China's Beijing Summit Draws Near

By Zhou Pingjian

The Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit is coming, fairly soon.

As President Mahammadu Buhari recently said in his felicitation message to President Xi Jinping on the occasion of the Chinese lunar new year, "I am looking forward to China hosting the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation summit in Beijing in September this year, and have every reason to believe that the Year of Dog will bring us more success stories and mutual benefits for China-Africa cooperation."

The Chinese Government is working hard to ensure the success of the Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, according to Premier Li Keqiang while delivering the government work report to the ongoing first session of China's 13th National People's Congress on March 5.

This year marks the 18th anniversary of FOCAC. The past 18 years have seen fruitful progress in China-Africa practical cooperation across the board. Two-way trade and China's total non-financial investment in Africa in 2017 were 17 times and around 100 times that of 2000 respectively, which shows China's contribution to Africa's economic development has risen significantly. FOCAC has become a pacesetter in China-Africa cooperation, a champion for greater international attention to and input in Africa, and the largest and most effective South-South cooperation platform in the world.

The FOCAC Johannesburg Summit held in December 2015 was a great success, and it is now China's turn to hold a new FOCAC. China decides to upgrade the forum to a summit in response to the positive and urgent wishes of the African members of FOCAC. President Xi Jinping and President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, the FOCAC co-chair, will jointly invite all the leaders of the forum members to attend the summit. Building on the success of Johannesburg Summit, we are willing to strengthen communication and consultation



Dr. Zhou Pingjian is Ambassador of China to Nigeria

with our African friends to elevate the FOCAC Beijing Summit to a new level. We hope to, through the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" between China and Africa, inject fresh and strong impetus into China-Africa mutually beneficial cooperation and elevate it to a new level.

China-Africa cooperation has always been open and transparent. China welcomes the concerted efforts made by the international community to support Africa in achieving peace, stability and development. Some allegations by some people in the international community however, are biased and not fact-based, and we frankly don't agree. Take the concessionary loan provided by China to African countries. Has it increased the debt burden of countries concerned? Are there any political considerations behind it? The answers are definitely negative, contrary to the claim. That kind of claim, I should say, is full of groundless words with an attempt out of ulterior motives.

In recent years China has indeed increased its financing support to African countries including Nigeria, with China-Africa cooperation having been increasingly expanded and deepened. However, as Chinese

foreign minister Wang Yi made it very clear during his visit to Africa early this year, it needs to be stressed that China has always adhered to the following principles in this process:

First, the response made to the development demand of Africa itself. Any country has huge capital demand at the initial stage of economic take-off and industrialization and Africa is of no exception. Based on the wishes put forward by the African countries, China provides financing support within its due capacity and offers timely assistance to the economic and social development of the African countries, which has been unanimously recognized and welcomed by all countries.

Second, never attach any political conditions. Like African countries, China had a painful experience of having its economy under the control of the foreign countries and then suffering unfair treatment and even being exploited and oppressed. Therefore, China will never do what the western countries have done or impose its will on others no matter in assistance or cooperation, but will always respect and work together with Africa, considering both righteousness and benefit with the former as the top priority.

Third, stick to the principle of

mutual benefit and win-win results. The nature of China-Africa cooperation is South-South cooperation, one of whose major characteristics is equal treatment, mutual benefit and win-win results. Only by doing in this way can sustainable and long-term cooperation be achieved and common development of both sides realized. To this end, the financing support provided by China to Africa must undergo serious feasibility studies and market-oriented arguments to ensure that each cooperation project can achieve the desired economic and social effects.

The current debt owned by some African countries was accumulated over a long period of time instead of occurring in recent years. China is not a main creditor of African countries. The solution to debt issues is to achieve diversified economic development by taking the path of sustainable development. China firmly supports this solution. China's financing support to Africa is

mainly invested in infrastructure construction and the productive field. The Chinese companies have built a large number of infrastructure projects such as highways, railways, ports, airports and communications facilities in Africa, which greatly improved the environment for Africa's economic development, added to its appeal to foreign investment and enhanced its capability to achieve self-driven development. In addition to loans, the Chinese government is more inclined to encourage and guide Chinese enterprises to increase their direct investment in Africa and has offered support in this regard, and actively explores new investment cooperation model such as the Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

China always attaches high importance to Africa's debt sustainability. We are committed to intensive development. The large infrastructure projects are planned and moved forward along with promoting Africa's industrial development. While pursuing the economic and social benefits of the relevant projects, we have also laid

emphasis on enhancing African countries' capability for independent and sustainable development so as to avoid adding to African countries' debt burden.

There is a saying in China that "Only your feet can tell whether your shoes are suitable or not". Africa has the best say on China's cooperation with Africa. There is another saying in China that "Justice naturally inhabits man's heart". African people will have their own judgment and naturally come to the fair conclusion that who helps Africa sincerely and who is the most reliable partner of Africa. We hope that relevant countries can contribute more to Africa's development and view China-Africa cooperation in a fair and objective way.

As the FOCAC Beijing Summit draws near, we believe we will surely be able to open up broader prospects for China-Africa comprehensive strategic partnership irrespective of detractors and distractions, as long as we adhere to the principle of shared growth through consultation and collaboration.



File photo: Chinese President, Xi Jinping addressing delegates at the opening of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (Focac) Summit held in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2015.

Tanzania says impressed with progress on construction of China-funded library

The government of Tanzania has said it was satisfied with progress made on the construction of a China-funded library in the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM).

Minister for Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training Joyce Ndalichako said construction of the state-of-the-art library at the campus has completed 90 percent and the remaining 10 percent will be completed by June this year.

"The facility has met the required academic standards and we hope it will help students to broaden the scope of learning and research," the minister said during an inspection tour of the construction site.

The 40-million-U.S.-dollar library complex comprises two major structures,

one a library and the other housing Confucius Institute, which has been teaching Chinese language and culture at the university.

"The construction of the library is also part of strengthening the bilateral cooperation between the two countries that has existed for many years now," Ndalichako said.

The minister said the library will also provide access for Tanzanian students to learn Chinese language, as China is one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

William Anangisye, vice-chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, said the library will play a major role in research undertakings and dissemination of knowledge through teaching programs and

academic services.

"The library is a critical and strategic area in achieving this function. The completion of this library will facilitate the realization of the university's dream of becoming a world-class university," he said.

Wang Ke, Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, said the library will help elevate students' performance.

"As part of strengthening the cooperation, the Chinese government is happy to see Tanzania is developing in all spheres, and my government is eager to continue supporting Tanzania's social development," Wang said.

Tanzanian President John Magufuli laid the foundation stone for the construction of the library in June 2016.

Tunisia open to Chinese investment: senior official

"Tunisia is open to Chinese investment," said Mabrouk Korchid, Tunisian Minister of State Domains and Land Affairs, in an interview.

"The visit of Chinese businessmen delegation to Tunisia was a good opportunity to exchange views on Chinese development and investment potentials on Tunisian territory," said Mabrouk.

"Chinese people have built mega-projects benefiting all over the world, more precisely on our African continent," he insisted.

Mabrouk said "after about a year, the project of Tunisia Diplomatic Academy will finally see the day with a pure Chinese funding of about 200 million yuan (about 31.8 million dollars)."

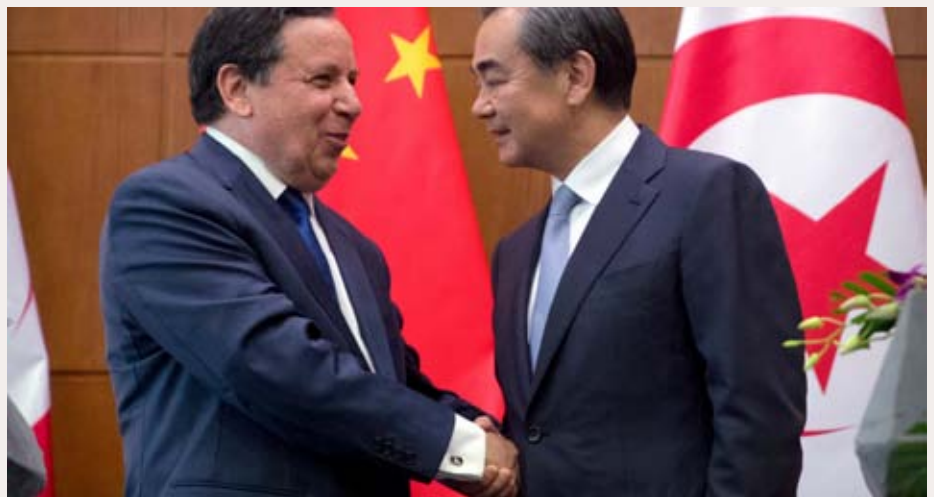
"We are very aware of the importance of such a project since, on the one hand, it will further strengthen the partnership between Tunisia and China. On the other hand, it will contribute to the training of future African diplomats, which will consolidate the position of Tunisia and its regional influence," said Mabrouk.

According to Mabrouk, the southeast and southwest areas in Tunisia are the priority areas for regional development and foreign investment.

"For example, the province of Medenine in southeast Tunisia enjoys a wide coastline, an airport and a seaport with strong potentials for foreign investments," said Mabrouk.

"Other provinces in central, northwest or east coast Tunisia also present as fertile areas for a partnership investment, especially in agriculture, industry including phosphates, mining and energy products," he continued.

"We still have shortcomings in the field of the Tunisian land registry, which continue to be an issue for foreign investors," confessed the Tunisian minister, adding that "cadastre was added to the provisions of bilateral agreement between Tunisia and China, to solve the land problems in Tunisia."



File photo: Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi and his Tunisia's counterpart, Khemaies Jhinaoui in warmed handshake

... expects chances to boost employment

The North African country sees significant potential for cooperation with China to ease the alarming unemployment a Tunisia senior official said in a recent interview with reporters.

Tunisia will learn from China to boost employment, especially for the young people, Faouzi Abderrahmane, the minister of Vocational Training and Employment, told reporters.

According to Faouzi, the Tunisian unemployment rate has reached as high as 15.3 percent, an equivalent of 628,000.

"The cooperation between Tunisia and China could obviously develop in the fields of entrepreneurship, sciences, technology and trade," the minister noted.

In fact, the Tunisian authorities have established technical cooperation with foreign states, in order to open the horizons of young people beyond borders.

The data shows that the total number of Tunisians working abroad amounted

to 17,701 by the end of 2017.

In addition, the Tunisian government have introduced specific program, such as the "Active Employment Policies" which serve about 80,000 beneficiaries annually, to redress the supply-demand relationship in the employment sector.

Nevertheless, Tunisian young people keep grumbling about the social situation and the slow economic recovery despite various employment programs initiated by the government.

"Chinese leaders have a sensitivity toward its African policy. Regarding Tunisia, China will make adequate plans for the interests and needs of both countries, with strategic visibility on this bilateral collaboration," Faouzi noted.

The state budget for 2018 allocated to the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment is about 700 million dinars (287 million U.S. dollars), the majority of which will be injected into projects creating job opportunities.

Xi congratulates Ramaphosa on election, calls for closer China-S. Africa ties

Chinese President Xi Jinping has extended congratulations to Cyril Ramaphosa on the latter's election as South African president.

In his congratulatory message, Xi called Ramaphosa an old friend of the Chinese people who has made important contributions to the development of bilateral relations.

"I attach great importance to developing the China-South Africa relationship," Xi said, adding that he stands ready to work with Ramaphosa to lift their countries' comprehensive strategic partnership to higher levels.

The Chinese leader also suggested that the two sides support each other in hosting later this year the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and the Johannesburg Summit of the emerging-market bloc of BRICS, which also groups Brazil, Russia and India.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of China-South Africa diplomatic relations. The two countries upgraded their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2010.

Ramaphosa took office as

the fifth president of South Africa, replacing Jacob Zuma, resignation last month.



Cyril Ramaphosa, the new South African President

Kenya travel agents eye China business trips to boost revenues

Kenya's travel agents are increasingly turning to outbound business trips to China in a bid to boost their revenues, officials have said.

Mohammed Wanyoike, Chairman of the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), told reporters in Nairobi, that travel agents are developing tour packages for the business community who are seeking to procure goods from China.

"Business trips to China are now a significant part of our industry revenues as

China becomes an attractive destination for traders seeking to purchase manufactured products at affordable costs," he said.

Wanyoike said that most of the traders head to Guangzhou which is a commercial city located in Southern China.

He said that Guangzhou is popular destination because it is home to many factories that produce goods with high demand in Kenya.

The KATA chairman said that Kenya's booming real estate sector has increased demand

for imports for construction material.

"We are also seeing more building professionals going to China for short terms courses in order to gain the latest technology in the construction sector," he added.

Wanyoike said that in order to further enhance their revenues they will embark on sensitization campaign to increase awareness of China as a tourism destination.

"We want more Kenyans to visit and explore Chinese rich cultural heritage," he said.

Libya seeks China's help for economic revival and political settlement

The Chinese charge d'affaires to Libya has met with Libyan head of High Council of State to discuss the Libyan crisis.

Charge d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy to Libya Wang Qimin is on a working trip to Tripoli, the first of a senior Chinese official since the Chinese embassy left Libya in 2014 due to armed conflict.

Wang said the meeting was on the "political situation of the country and the importance of commitment to the UN-proposed action plan to resolve the Libyan crisis by amending the political

agreement, the only framework Beijing supports to unify the Libyan state institutions."

"Our meeting also covered China's role in development and improvement of the Libyan economy," Wang added, saying that they also mentioned "the contribution of Chinese companies in reconstruction and infrastructure development after the appropriate security conditions are available to encourage the return of the companies to complete suspended projects to Libya."

Swehli praised China's support

for the political agreement as a single reference to the management of the political process in Libya, stressing the openness of the council on all parties and to move towards reconciliation and stability, the council's media office said in a statement.

"Swehli pointed to the council's interest in enhancing the economy and resuming suspended projects amid remarkable security improvement, expressing Libya's desire to cooperate with China as a major economic power," the statement added.

Chinese firm to set up smartphone factory in Uganda

The Government of Uganda has endorsed a Chinese firm, Xinlan Group in establishing a smartphones factory in Uganda.

Bemanya Twebaze, the chief executive officer Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) has said. A delegation from Xinlan Group is expected in Uganda next month to officially ink the 10 million U.S. dollars deal.

The development comes a few weeks after President Museveni directed managers of Uganda Telecom Ltd (UTL), a government telecommunication company to expeditiously finalize talks and ensure that a smart phone factory is quickly established in Uganda.

The plan to establish a cell phone factory in Uganda was hatched in July, 2017 when a government delegation that visited China asked Chinese authorities to give Uganda a comprehensive cyber-security solution, including technical capacity to monitor and curb increasing social media misuse.

"Once the project kicks off, a total of 5,000 Ugandans are expected to get jobs and the project will also help enhance access to internet in the

country," Twebaze said.

The Chinese company is expected to use local minerals such as coltan to manufacture

the telephones.

Xinlan is the overseas investment arm of the Amoi Group.

...As China reaffirms commitment to comprehensive political settlement of Libya's division

Chinese Charge D'affaires Wang Qimin has reaffirmed China's commitment to a comprehensive political settlement of the division in Libya.

Wang made his remarks at a press conference following a meeting with Libyan Foreign Minister Mohamed Sayala in the capital Tripoli.

He highlighted the importance of the upcoming Libyan elections to complete the transitional phase in the war-torn country.

He added that the Libyan people should be allowed to shape their future, as they're capable of solving the current difficulties and crisis.

"I have discussed with the foreign minister the bilateral relations and close cooperation between Libya and China, especially as our relationship is 40 years old and has developed very well over the past few years," the Chinese diplomat said.

He also expressed the hope that the situation in Libya would improve, so that the Chinese embassy can return to Tripoli, and the related Chinese companies

can complete their projects in Libya which have been suspended since 2011.

"We will follow the situation in Libya closely. When the time is right, the embassy will return to its permanent headquarters," Wang said, when asked about the date of the return of the Chinese embassy to Libya.

For his part, Sayala announced that he had accepted the invitation to attend the Chinese-Arab foreign ministers meeting in Beijing in July.

He said that Prime Minister Fayed Serraj had also accepted the invitation to attend the China-Africa summit to be held in Beijing in September.

Wang is the first senior Chinese official who has visited Libya since the Chinese embassy left the country in 2014 due to the armed conflict.

On Monday, he met with Abdurrahman Swehli, head of the Libyan Higher Council of State, in Tripoli to discuss the latest political developments in Libya as well as future cooperation between the two countries.

Equatorial Guinea president hails cooperation with China

Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo met in the capital Malabo the Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister Chang Wanquan, who arrived for a two-day visit.

Obiang hailed the steady development of the traditional friendship between the two countries since the establishment of their diplomatic relations.

He stressed that there has been fruitful bilateral cooperation in the political, economic and cultural fields, and that in international and regional affairs, the two countries have worked closely together, putting forward mutual

support.

According to the president, Equatorial Guinea attaches significant importance to the traditional friendship between the two countries, and is ready to strengthen political, economic and security cooperation with China in order to deepen their comprehensive cooperative partnership.

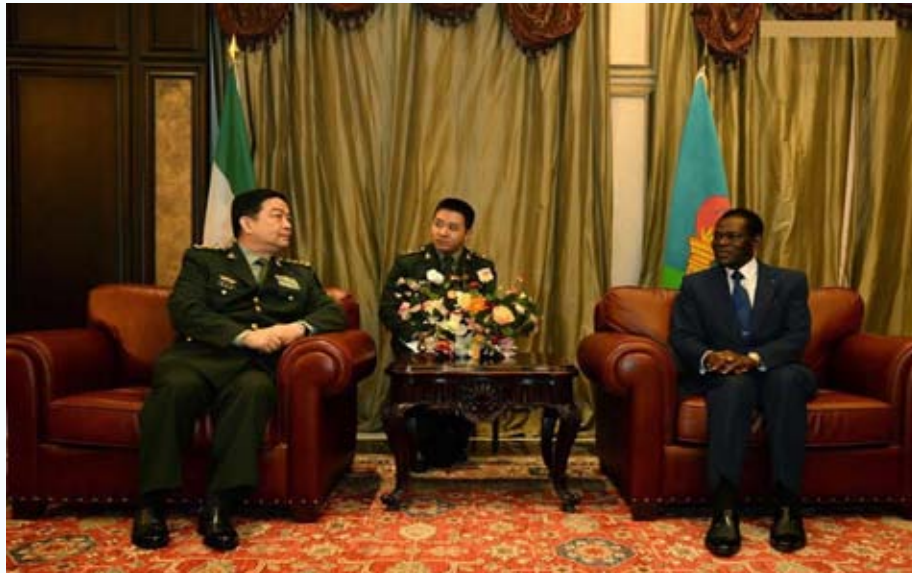
For his part, Chang said the friendship between the two countries has been steadily consolidating since the establishment of diplomatic relations 48 years ago.

Chang recalled that in 2015 Obiang and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping jointly established a comprehensive

cooperative partnership of mutual trust and win-win cooperation, providing a roadmap for the development of bilateral relations.

Chang said he was pleased with the strengthening of the pragmatic cooperation between the two armies over the years, and reaffirmed that China is willing to strengthen the friendly and pragmatic cooperation and work together to maintain peace and security in the region.

Equatorial Guinean Vice President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue attended the meeting. Chang then met with Equatorial Guinea Defense minister Leandro Bacale Ncogo Ayingono.



Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (1st R) meets with the Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister Chang Wanquan

Rwanda Television introduces Chinese food on TV program

Rwanda Television (RTV), the national TV station of Rwanda, has shot a TV program to introduce Chinese food to Rwandan people.

The Chinese food is scheduled to be the next episode of RTV's food program Foodtube.

The shooting took place at the Chinese embassy in Kigali, Rwanda's capital city.

Chinese Ambassador to Rwanda Rao Hongwei introduced the significance of Chinese cuisine, the culture of Chinese cuisine and

explained the reasons why Chinese cuisine are prominent all over the world.

Tao Yukun, the chef of the Chinese embassy, cooked various dishes of Chinese cuisine for the program, including Ginger Chicken, Lamb and Mashed Potatoes, Pickled Kale and Mushroom, Spicy Beef Shreds, Crispy Drumsticks, Chinese Stroganoff, among others. Tao also shared his cooking methods and experience with RTV.

The food program

has been introduced for many purposes, including helping people to know exactly about diets and providing tips for people in terms of eating, said Kennedy Munyangayo, the head of RTV.

RTV's audience requested for watching Chinese food on the program, said Munyangayo. There are Chinese restaurants everywhere in Kigali and people want the program to help them cook pure Chinese food at home, he said.

China, Mauritius agree to cement parliamentary exchanges

China's top legislator Zhang Dejiang held talks with Santi Bai Hanoomanjee, speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius, with both sides agreeing to boost parliamentary exchanges and signing a MOU.

Zhang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), said bilateral ties have seen healthy and smooth development. China and Mauritius have strengthened their political trust, had fruitful cooperation in various fields and coordinated in regional and international affairs.

Zhang called on both sides to make full use of the forum on China-Africa cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative to benefit the two peoples.

The MOU on cooperation between China's NPC and the National Assembly of Mauritius will play an important role in their exchanges, Zhang said.

Zhang expressed his hope that both sides will share experience in governance, support each other in their core interests, and consolidate the political foundation of the two countries.

Zhang also called for more policy and legal support for pragmatic cooperation, and more people-to-people exchanges in areas like culture, education, and tourism.

Hanoomanjee reaffirmed that Mauritius will always adhere to the one-China policy.

She said the National Assembly of Mauritius attaches importance to its ties with China's NPC, and is willing to work with the Chinese side to promote cooperation in economy and trade, culture, tourism, clean energy, and infrastructure.

Nigerian state, Chinese firm partners on cassava production

Nigeria's southeast Cross River Basin Development Authority (RBDA) is collaborating with a Chinese firm, Ruyi Holdings Group, on large-scale cassava production.

The partnership would also include the construction of a hydro-electric power plant for the catchment area, Bassey Nkposong, Managing Director of the Authority, said in a statement.

He said the partnership, which was in liaison with local farmers, youths and community entrepreneurs, was expected to engage more than 1,000 farming families in the area.

Nkposong, while welcoming the investors to the state, pledged the willingness of the Authority to accommodate more investors who were willing to exploit the vast agricultural resources of the area.

The Chinese team leader Wang Wei said that the agricultural resources of the catchment area needed to be harnessed for large-scale food production.

Wang said the company would also explore the possibility of harnessing the power generation potential of the Ijegu Yala Dam, with a view to providing electricity for the catchment area.

Chinese embassy to donate sports equipment to 50 Sudanese schools

The Chinese embassy in Khartoum said it has signed a deal with a charity foundation to donate sports equipment to 50 schools in Khartoum State.

The deal was signed with the Sanad Charity Foundation, a non-governmental organisation, the embassy said.

Addressing the signing ceremony, Samia Mohamed Osman, director general of the Sanad Charity Foundation, reiterated her foundation's commitment to supporting schools, rehabilitating classrooms and providing them with seats.

She commended the partnership between her foundation and the Chinese embassy in Khartoum, saying "this partnership has been standing for five years in the fields of winter clothes, solar power project and other various health equipment projects."

The Chinese embassy has been working with the foundation in providing aid to local schools, including



Chinese Ambassador to Sudan Li Lianhe (L) signed an agreement in Khartoum, (R), director general of Sanad Charity Foundation to donate sports equipment to 50 Sudanese schools.

school bags, seats and now sports equipment, as the sports is no less important than the academic activities, Osman said.

Chinese Ambassador to Sudan Li Lianhe, for his part, praised the historical ties

between China and Sudan as well as the deeply-rooted friendship between the two peoples in various fields.

He reiterated China's keenness to enhance its ties with Sudan in a manner that benefits the two countries,

noting that China is working to support education in Sudan.

The Chinese envoy noted that the embassy has implemented more than 10 donation projects over the past years to support schools, teachers and students in Sudan.

Chinese-built hospital expected to provide quality healthcare to Rwandan people

Chinese firm China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) has formally kicked off the construction of a district hospital in Rwanda's capital city Kigali.

Speaking at the event shortly after laying the foundation stone, Rwandan health minister Diane Gashumba said the hospital will provide faster access to healthcare, closer to home, for people in Nyarugenge district.

"For any country to achieve inclusive economic and social growth, the health of its people is crucial," she said. "This hospital will provide quality healthcare to all Rwandan citizens."

The Nyarugenge district hospital project, jointly financed by the

governments of Rwanda and Belgium, is expected to build a 120-bed multi-specialty hospital with a cost of around 7 million U.S. dollars. The hospital will be constructed on a surface area of two hectares.

Upon completion, it will have emergency services, administration rooms, a laboratory and an outpatient department, maternity ward, hospitalization ward and two operating theaters. It will also have a utility block comprising a mortuary, a laundry and a workshop.

According to the Nyarugenge district government, the second phase of the hospital is also planned, which will extend the capacity of the hospital to 300 beds.

... explore means to bolster infrastructure cooperation

Morocco and China have discussed the means to bolster bilateral cooperation in the area of infrastructure.

The Moroccan Minister of Equipment, Transportation, Logistics and Water Abdelkader Amara and visiting Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce Qian Keming

reviewed the current bilateral ventures in infrastructure development, exploring prospects of future bilateral partnership in this field.

Amara commended the level of cooperation between Morocco and China, stressing that the establishment of strategic partnership between Rabat and

Beijing in 2016 consolidated bilateral cooperation.

This partnership has opened a new era in the Sino-Moroccan cooperation, offering growing opportunities of cooperation between Moroccan and Chinese companies.

Qian praised the good relations between the two countries, adding that bilateral cooperation resulted in the implementation of important investment projects in several areas, including infrastructure.

He said that the meeting represented a precious opportunity to identify new avenues of cooperation in this field, adding that the talks discussed the project of the

development of the port of the northern Moroccan city of Kenitra and Morocco's future high-speed railway between the southern cities of Marrakech and Agadir.

He also called for stronger joint ventures between Chinese and Moroccan firms to boost investments for infrastructure projects.

Qian is heading a Chinese delegation in a working visit to Morocco.

He chaired along with Moulay Hafid Elalamy, the Moroccan minister of industry, investment, trade and digital economy, the sixth session of the Morocco-China Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation.



Dr. Liu of the Commercial section of the Chinese embassy in a group with scholars of Centre for China Studies, who participated in Round-table dialogue on China/Africa cooperation.



A section of the Round-table dialogue at the commercial section of the embassy.



Director, China Cultural Centre/ Culture Counsellor Section of the Embassy, Mr. Li Xuda paid a working visit to the Centre for China, CCS in Abuja.



From L-R: Mr. Xu Rui; director CCS, Mr. Charles Onunaiju; Mrs. Linda Jia, deputy director CCC; Mr. Li Xuda, Director CCC in Nigeria; Professor Joseph Golwa and Hassan Abbas.

China-Africa policy changing outcome

China's foreign policy rests on expanding relations with developing nations, including those in Africa with which it aims to further lift its integral cooperation. China frequently points out that it is the world's largest developing nation and Africa is the location of the world's largest number of developing nations, and China sees its future as intertwined with the world's developing nations.

That is why bolstering solidarity and cooperation with African nations has always been the cornerstone of China's foreign policy. It is willing to join hands with African nations in translating friendship into cooperation and development momentum, in order to achieve win-win outcomes and common prosperity and development. Over the past two decades China has significantly stepped up its efforts in Africa, and this has continued under President Xi Jinping's leadership.

China's policy toward Africa has shown several new trends that illustrate China's evolving priorities and strategies on the continent. These have had significant implications for the future of Africa and Sino-African relations.

Most strikingly, China under Xi has greatly and assertively enhanced its direct involvement in Africa's security affairs. Two months into Xi's leadership, China unprecedentedly sent 170 combat troops from the People's Liberation Army to the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali. Compared with China's past tradition of sending only noncombat staff such as engineers and medical personnel, this was the first time China sent "combat troops" to a foreign country under a United Nations mandate. China's choosing Africa to dispatch combat troops for the first time suggests its enhanced commitment to and rising interest and direct role in maintaining peace and security in Africa.

China's role in Africa is now becoming that of a long-term strategic partner. Djibouti is a prime example. China has not been known for establishing military bases in Africa or even beyond its immediate sphere of influence. This has been changing in recent years following China's decision to build a logistics base in Djibouti on the Horn of Africa. China will be able to use the base to improve the way it manages its peacekeeping operations and humanitarian efforts in Africa, as well as its regional maritime operations.

China also committed itself to the United Nations' new peacekeeping capability readiness system and allocated

\$1 billion (849 million euros; 749 million) over 10 years to the United Nations' peace deployment fund. In addition, China also pledged \$100 million for the African Union's standby peacekeeping force.

China has continued its naval escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and enhanced security cooperation with Djibouti throughout the process. China has sent 16 fleets and escorted more than 5,300 ships and vessels in the area. Chinese missions have been carried out under a clear United Nations mandate. However, through these missions, China has been developing naval cooperation with Djibouti on such matters as local logistical supplies and emergency assistance. Djibouti has provided more stable and long-term security cooperation with China in this regard.

In 2013, China's special envoy for African affairs, Ambassador Zhong Jianhua, made more than 10 visits to Africa to coordinate positions and mediate the South Sudan issue. Also, in Ethiopia, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi traveled to Addis Ababa to meet with rebel and government delegations. He openly urged "immediate cessation of hostilities and violence" and publicly called for international powers to back the Ethiopian-led mediation efforts.

China's involvement is also reflected in its rising financial and military contributions to the African Union to bolster its security role in Africa. In 2013, China provided \$1 million in assistance to the AU to support its mediation and coordination efforts in the Mali conflict.

China has become conscious that insecurity and instability in Africa can influence its economic interests. For that reason, China has also offered \$60 million in free assistance to the AU to build and maintain its arms - both its regular army crisis response and United Nations peacekeeping in Africa. This is another move that will increase China-Africa security cooperation.

China's rising involvement in Africa's security affairs is motivated by multiple considerations. Most important, the instability and conflicts in Africa have increasingly become a direct challenge to China's economic presence in Africa. Equally crucial is China's desire to build leadership role and image in the international community, and peace and security issues in Africa are a perfect platform for such a goal.

Africa and China are pursuing win-win common development by aligning their development strategies and translating their economic

complementarity into a driving force for their common growth. China is ready to share its development experience with Africa and carry out projects to improve transnational and transregional interconnectivity in Africa, in order to make a greater contribution to the African integration process.

China is also specifically seeking to upgrade counterterrorism cooperation with Africa, given Africa's struggle with militants including Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabab in Somalia and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in northwestern Africa. China's goal is to build up African capabilities so that African nations - as well as organizations like the African Union - can ensure their own stability. China believes that through working directly and closely with regional organizations and African governments, it can diversify and strengthen its friendship base in Africa.

China has expanded its financing to Africa. In a little more than a year, China has issued more than \$10 billion in loans to African countries, half of the promised \$20 billion to be dispersed from 2013 to 2015. One striking feature of these loans lies in China's new priority in financing infrastructure and the agricultural and manufacturing industries in Africa, a strategy that shifts away from its traditional heavy investment in Africa's extractive industries. Senior Chinese officials now say the country's investment in Africa's energy sector makes up only 20 percent of its total investment in the continent. African governments are particularly eager for financing in infrastructure, which can promote trade as well as attract investment.

China wants to expand integral cooperation with Africa through the 10 programs based on a \$60 billion financing plan agreed upon at the 2015 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Summit in South Africa. China and African countries signed a total of 245 cooperation agreements worth \$50 billion. The launch of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railroad, the advance of the railway linking Mombasa and Nairobi, Kenya, and the development of industrial parks and special economic zones were among the early achievements in 2016 of the agreements put into effect following the 2015 summit. The new railway connecting Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Djibouti will cut the journey time to about eight hours; this is a game-changer for the two countries.

China's initiative to build and improve infrastructure such as roads, railways and telecommunications

systems has been a boon for Africa's manufacturing sector. The projects have also freed up domestic resources for other critical needs such as healthcare and education, and have aided everyone doing business in Africa.

China is strengthening its cooperation with African countries by building their manufacturing industries. In the case of Ethiopia, the country has tried to become the center for manufacturing in Africa, based on Chinese investment. This would serve to upgrade China's own position in the global supply chain and transfer its declining industries to Africa, which is eager for industrialization.

The unanimous decision at the 2015 summit, where President Xi promised more cooperation between China and Africa in education and training, confirms China and Africa's awareness of the importance of knowledge sharing in boosting development. In the past, China has given a lot of concessional loans to African nations, but now it wants African people to have the capacity to create wealth for themselves. That is why training that comes in the form of knowledge-sharing is now at the heart of China-Africa cooperation.

In a separate strategy to improve China's image in Africa, the Xi administration has significantly enhanced China's public diplomacy efforts on the ground. Senior Chinese diplomats are now engaging African media to explain China's positions. Under the China-Africa People to People Friendship Action plan, Chinese embassies across Africa are seeking collaboration with African nongovernmental organizations and have implemented dozens of projects.

Some examples include technical training programs in Botswana; material assistance in central Africa with the Central African Republic Renaissance Foundation; donations to local elementary schools in Uganda; vocational training for local unemployed youth in Cape Verde; and women's health programs in Benin.

Although these projects are primarily led and implemented by governments, they serve to diversify China's aid models in Africa and promote exchanges and cooperation with civil society. They have won some loud praise from the local populations. In recent years, China, under Xi's leadership, has demonstrated major new and diversified policy momentum on the continent. African nations await more.