

## China commended for its development engagement in Africa

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*Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari, Minister of Abuja, Muhammad Musa Bello and other senior government officials amidst fanfare commissioned on the 12th of July, Abuja light rail, first of its kind in West Africa. Built by China construction giant, CCECC, with funding support from Chinese Export Import Bank.*

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## China commended for its development engagement in Africa

Samuel Onyenobia, from the African Union (AU) Bureau of the Chairperson, was among the many AU officials, African diplomats and scholars, who visited the Adama Industrial Park at the start of this month, in Adama town 80 km southeast of Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa.

The Adama Industrial Park is one of many different parks carried out by the Chinese in the East African country. It has been developed with a total investment of 148 million U.S. dollars for industries of textile and manufacturing of spare parts of small-type machineries.

The event was organized by the Chinese Mission to AU, whereby participants have the opportunity to visit Ethio-Djibouti rail project and industrial park in Adama town.

While visiting the Park, Onyenobia told reporters that "Africa rising" is in fact very true because of projects like these (rail and industrial parks) being carried out in Africa.

He stated that the Chinese have been increasing their presence in Africa cooperating with the continent on pressing issues such as infrastructure development.

"They (the Chinese) are going around Africa helping us to achieve the development, provide the basic needs that the Africa people need, which is connectivity among different locations. We see that it will boost trade, intra-Africa trade; it will boost businesses across the continent, and bring about integration on the continent," said Onyenobia.

In addition to industrial parks, the Chinese have been engaged in different mega projects such as highways, railways and airport construction and development in Africa.

In the development of transport infrastructure, the Chinese have carried out mega projects including the Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit, and the Ethio-Djibouti standard gauge rail.

"These projects have helped Ethiopia to be more competitive in terms of attracting investment into the region and into Africa as a whole," the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Friday in its report on the Ethiopia-China relations.

"China has helped provide financing for a series of major projects in Ethiopia, helping to bridge the infrastructure gap in the country," said the ministry.

Nigerian-born-Levi Uche Madueke, Head of AU Strategic Partnership, was among the visitors to the Ethio-Djibouti railway project and the industrial park in Adama.

Madueke told reporters that many mega projects carried out by the Chinese with provision of financial resource are products of the Sino-African partnership, which is now being facilitated by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

He expressed hope that such projects as the railway and industrial parks in Ethiopia would be replicated in other parts of Africa to drive the realization of overall development, industrialization, and integration of the continent.

"This is actually product of China-Africa cooperation, within the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the aim is actually to bring meaning to the people of Africa, and also engaging things that we benefit, the counterpart which is China as well," said



F-R: Professors Liu Huan, Zhu Weijiu and Li Wu of the Counsellor's office of China's State Council during a working visit to the Centre for China Studies (CCS), Abuja, recently.

Madueke.

China will host the coming summit of FOCAC in Beijing in September, under the theme "The Belt and Road Initiative and Africa's Development."

Also attending the event, Rossette Nyirinkindi Kataungye, AU Advisor on Regional Integration, said FOCAC is a good platform to engage the two sides on ways of further cementing the partnership.

"FOCAC is a very good way for us to articulate what we expect from the relationship between China and Africa, and for our leadership to engage with China, the African leadership to make sure that we are working together in terms of cementing this good relationship," said Kataungye.

Recalling that a standard gauge rail has also been done in other parts of East Africa, Kataungye has hailed China's engagement and commitment to development in Africa.

"China has demonstrated that it is a very good partner for Africa in terms of development, even the socio-cultural ties. They understand our aspirations; they have demonstrated that they can stand by us to achieve our aspirations, and especially on infrastructure," she said.

The officials from the African Union (AU) and African diplomats further hailed the Chinese-built Ethio-Djibouti railway as a project that helps Africa realize its aspirations of development and integration.

The Chinese Mission to AU in addition to the visit at Adama Industrial park organized a train trip event, with officials of the pan-African bloc as well as African and other international diplomats on board of the Ethiopia-Djibouti standard gauge railway that links the two East African nations.

The trip enabled the participants to witness projects carried out through Sino-Africa cooperation as well as the cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative, according to Kuang Weilin, Head of Chinese Mission to AU.

"The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit in Beijing will be held very soon, and the theme of the summit will be the Belt and Road Initiative and Africa's Development. That is why we organize this trip so that we can have the opportunity to take a look at the railway, to see the early harvest of the Belt and Road Initiative," he said.

The Chinese-built 756 km electrified

rail project connecting landlocked Ethiopia to Djibouti, was contracted by two Chinese companies, namely the China Rail Engineering Corporation and the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation.

Rossette Nyirinkindi Kataungye, AU Advisor on Regional Integration, said the railway project is a demonstration carried out with China's commitment to supporting Africa in realizing the continent's aspirations for development and integration.

"It is a really wonderful project that shows that Africa is integrating, when you have country like Djibouti, which has the coastline and a port that we can use; this is a way of having shared resources, shared vision. It is an excellent project," noted the Advisor.

Katungye said China has proved that it is a "very good" partner for Africa's development as well as cultural ties.

"They (the Chinese) have demonstrated that they can stand by us to achieve our aspirations; and especially on infrastructure, this is a very good example of that very good cooperation," she said.

"Many countries in Africa have embarked on similar programs; for instance in East Africa, the standard gauge railway, again with cooperating with Exim Bank (China)," she added.

Levi Uche Madueke, Head of AU Strategic Partnership, said the Ethio-Djibouti railway project is the product of Sino-Africa cooperation, which aims at mutual benefits.

"What we are witnessing today is a very good thing; it makes us happy, because we are beginning to realize our vision which is about African development and integration," said Madueke.

"This railway project is a part of the cooperation program that we have, coming into reality; because linking Ethiopian people to Djibouti, is going to facilitate a lot of things, it is going to boost development process; it is going to boost issues related to trade; even people to people exchange... It is very good thing that we are experiencing today," he said.

"This is actually very good example to other African countries; this is part of integration program; and we believe that it will be replicated in other regions," he added.

## Buhari commissions Abuja Light Rail, thank China for investment in economy

President Muhammadu Buhari has commissioned the first Abuja Light Rail system in demonstration of the commitment to address dearth of critical infrastructure.

Buhari said at the commissioning that the projects was the ideals of the Change Agenda of the government to ensure prudence in the management of public resources, value for money considering the huge investments in this project.

He said that transportation was the livewire of any city and expressed optimism that a modern rail service would boost the economy and greatly enhance social life.

"I am aware that what we have on ground today are coaches meant to provide skeletal services as we await the main set of the rolling stock for full operations."

He said he had been briefed on the signing of the memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and agreements for the procurements of the main rolling stock.

He assured Nigerians of Federal Government's continued support for all the negotiations towards the realization of the Abuja Light Rail system.

"Today, what we have in the Federal Capital Territory is another evidence that we are a government that delivers on its promises."

"I have observed keenly other milestones that this Administration has achieved, especially in the areas of education, public utilities and infrastructure development."

President Buhari commended the efforts Federal Capital Territory (FCT) as well as the support and patience of the residents to made

the project a reality.

President Buhari unveils the plaque at the commissioning of the Abuja Light Rail

"I am thankful to the Government and people of China for their investment in the Nigerian economy. I commend the CCECC Limited – the Contracting Firm, for the quality of work and timely delivery of this project."

"Let me place on record the Nigerian government's appreciation to the Government of China and the EXIM Bank of China for their support on this and many other projects currently

was packaged in six lots planned for phased development, based on preferential demand and available financial resources.

He added that the Abuja Rail Mass Transit System was planned to integrate with the National Rail Network when eventually completed.

"The Abuja rail is divided into Six (6) Lots and with total length of 290km. The lots are:

"Lot 1: From Nnamdi Azikwe Expressway through the Transportation Centre (Metro Station) via Gwagwato Kubwa;

"Lot 2: From Gwagwawia

concluded an infrastructure soft loan agreement with Exim Bank of China for the supply of the remaining coaches, including their maintenance for three years at a cost of 194 million dollars.

He said the bank would fund the project up to 157 million dollars or 85 per cent of the total cost, while FCTA would bring in a counterpart fund of 37 million dollars (15 percent).

Bello said FCTA had since commenced work on phase II of the Abuja Rail Mass Transit Project.

He said the phase II would cover a distance of 32.54km from Nnamdi Azikwe Expressway at Garki Area via the Transportation Centre to Gwagwato and from Bazango Station to Kubwa.

He said the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in 2017 approved the project for construction by CCECC at a cost of 1.3 billion dollars.

"We hope that the minister of Finance would consider putting this key project in the next borrowing plans, the minister of Budget and National

Planning would agree to it, the National Assembly would approve it and that China – Exim Bank would fund it as a mark of goodwill for the cordial relationship between our two countries," he said.

The president was taken on a guided tour of the Abuja Rail Mass Transit and Abuja new International Terminal at Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.

The Minister of State, Aviation, Mr Hadi Sirika, and Bello led the tour at Idu Rail Station and Abuja airport.

The Abuja Rail Mass Transit is the first mass transit project in Nigeria as well as in West Africa.



President Muhammadu Buhari, MD CCECC Mr. Jack Li and other top government officials taking a ride at newly commissioned Abuja light-rail

being executed in the country.

"This gesture further cements the already existing cordial relations and developmental partnership between Nigeria and the People's Republic of China."

Earlier, the Minister of FCT, Mallam Musa Bello, revealed that the Abuja Rail Mass Transit System was an integral part of the FCT Transportation Master Plan.

He said the plan was designed primarily to transport large numbers of people and goods from satellite towns into the Metropolitan Public Transport system and the different Phases of the Federal Capital City.

He said the Abuja rail system

Transportation Centre (Metro Station) to Nyanya/Karu;

"Lot 3: From Transportation Centre via Idu Industrial Zone to Nnamdi Azikwe International Airport;

"Lot 4: From Kuje Satellite town to Karshi Satellite town with the remaining legs of the Transitway line 2;

"Lot 5: From Kubwa via Bwari to Suleja and Lot 6: From Airport via Kuje and Gwagwalada to Dobi," he explained.

The minister said the implementation of the project had been divided into phases, with phase I inaugurated by the president.

He said FCTA had

## Nigeria to emulate China's heavy investment in science, technology: minister

Nigeria will follow China's transformation model by investing heavily in new technologies to accelerate development, Minister of Science and Technology Ogbonnaya Onu has said.

"China adopted technology to feed its billion population, create wealth and open their economy to the world," the minister told reporters in Lagos, Nigeria's economic hub.

He spoke at a media gathering to unveil an order signed by Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari on Feb. 5 to promote the application of science and technology toward achieving the nation's development goals across all sectors.

The order is meant to promote patriotism as potent tool for a new social engineering of the country like that of China, Onu told reporters, noting that it would redirect the economy from being unsustainable, resource-based to being sustainable, knowledge- and innovation-driven.

Technology is a catalyst to economic growth and could solve societal problems, the minister said, adding that economies such as China have grown to become what they



Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu

are today through investing in technology.

"Over 30 years ago, most Chinese companies were not in Nigeria as we have them now. It was after they looked inward to attain the level where they are now that they decided to export their skills to the rest of the

world, especially Africa," Onu added.

Nigeria would add value by using science, technology and innovation to convert its abundant resources to product and services needed at home, the minister said.

Frank Jacobs, president of

the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), described the order as a laudable initiative that would promote patronage of made-in-Nigeria products.

Jacobs said manufacturers were hopeful of effective implementation of the order to achieve the desired results.

## Sudanese analysts believe ministerial meeting would strengthen China-Arab ties

The eighth ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF), which in Beijing, will strengthen the progressive ties between China and Arab States, Sudanese analysts have said.

"Since its establishment in 2004, the CASCF acquires a great importance, and the ministerial meeting will further strengthen the relations between the Arab world and China," said Khalid Dirar, a professor of political sciences at al-Rasid Center for Strategic Studies in Khartoum.

"The CASCF has constituted a great leap in

the China-Arab ties and contributed to putting the historical relations between the two sides within an institutional framework with potentiality for continuation and development," he said.

He explained that, thanks to the CASCF, the size of the trade exchange between China and the Arab countries jumped from 36.4 billion U.S. Dollars in 2004 to 191 billion dollars in 2017.

Dirar further pointed out that China is now considered the second biggest trade partner for the Arab countries, noting that "the two sides maintain strong will to press ahead with increasing trade exchange."

Meanwhile, Abdul-Raziq Ziyada, a Sudanese political analyst, stressed the importance of the China-Arab cooperation within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative.

The initiative, proposed by China in 2013, refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which aim at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes of the Silk Road.

He added that the Arab states need to implement the Belt and Road Initiative in order to release their potential energies and benefit

from the huge investments provided by the initiative.

"China adopts principles such as respect of sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of countries. China also maintains primary stances towards the Palestinian cause. All these constitute factors of attraction that help in enhancing the bonds between China and the Arab states," said Ziyada.

The CASCF meeting conducted comprehensive and in-depth discussions on areas, such as consolidating the traditional friendship between China and Arab countries, and advancing the Belt and Road Initiative.

## Libyan FM stresses importance of China-Arab cooperation forum

Libya's UN-backed Foreign Minister Mohammed Sayala has stressed the importance of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF) which has been held in Beijing for all participating countries.

The Belt and Road Initiative was discussed during the forum, and it will be in the interest of China and Arab states, Sayala said.

The initiative, proposed by China in 2013, refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which aim at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes of the Silk Road.

The initiative will be an opportunity to develop cooperation in industry, agriculture, infrastructure, economy and joint investment, and will benefit

all countries, he said.

In 2004, China and the Arab League, whose 22 members have all established diplomatic relations with China, formally launched the forum.

"The bilateral relations between Libya and China are solid and good. We are trying to speed up the return of the Chinese companies that were operating in Libya and activate the agreements between the two countries," he said.

Most foreign companies left Libya due to security



Mohammed Sayala

deterioration following the overthrow of former leader Gaddafi's regime in 2011, when most development projects of electricity, water and housing were suspended.

Despite such problems, Chinese telecommunication

companies remained in Libya and continued to operate despite the obstacles they face, making them the only foreign companies operating in the country in time of political division and economic decline.

## Ethiopia inaugurates Chinese-built electricity transmission line

Ethiopia has inaugurated a 458-km 230-Kilo Volts (KV) electricity transmission line that will transport electricity from Alamata in the north to Legetafo in central Ethiopia near the capital city Addis Ababa.

The transmission line was built jointly by two Chinese firms, including Sichuan Electric Power Transmission and Transformation Construction Limited (SPTTC) and Jiangsu ETERN company Limited.

Speaking to the media, Li Xiaodong, Project Manager of SPTTC, said the project will help Ethiopian consumers receive reliable power supply.

"The transmission line financed by the World Bank started in November 2017 and was completed in eight months with safety, efficiency and quality", Li said.

"This project built at a bid price of 20 million U.S. dollars will benefit local people," he further said.

Girma Zeleke, Transmission,

Substation, Rehabilitation and Upgrading Project Manager of Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) on his part, said the 230 KV electricity transmission line built by the two Chinese firms is a first of its kind as it will work alongside another nearby 230 KV transmission line, helping end sporadic power cuts in Addis Ababa and other major cities.

Ephrem Desalegn, Assistant Manager of Sichuan Electric Power Transmission and Transformation Construction Limited, said he's seen a steady increase in salary and job promotion, ever since he was first employed by the company five years ago.

"When I entered the company, I was first hired as a foreman, since then I have been able to learn job skills and learn to speak Chinese language", said Desalegn.

"I have learned how to work with diligence and hard work, with quality and efficiency from my five years' work experience with my Chinese superiors", he said.

## Chinese firm aims to build "artificial hair hub" in Liberia

Liberian president George Weah has welcomed a visiting Chinese business delegation whose aim is to set up an artificial hair factory in the west African country.

A statement from the Liberian president's office confirmed that Weah met with the Chinese business team.

The delegation, from central China's Henan Ruimei artificial hair production firm, said it intends to use Liberia as a hub for artificial hair production in Africa.

The establishment of its factory in Liberia will create jobs for 3,000 to 5,000 local people within

three years, according to the Chinese firm.

To start with, about 500 initial employees, mostly young women under 25, will be needed as initial workforce when production commences, the firm said.

The firm also said it will train 20 or more young Liberian women in China ahead of its operation in Liberia.

Weah commended the Chinese delegation for expressing interest to invest in the country.

He further thanked the delegation for the opportunity given to young Liberians to travel to China for skills acquisition in artificial hair production.

## Belt and Road Initiative drives Africa's integration, economic growth

African officials and scholars have hailed the role of China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative in fostering connectivity, thereby accelerating integration and economic diversification on the African continent.

This came at a seminar co-organized by the Chinese Embassy in Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Foreign Relations Strategic Studies Institute in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa, with participation of government officials, diplomats and scholars, among others.

The seminar was organized to share ideas on the initiative as well as on the upcoming Beijing summit of the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) to be held in September.

Speaking at the opening of the seminar, Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia, Tan Jian, reiterated that the Belt and Road Initiative is a platform to promote global cooperation and common development based on win-win results.

With focus on connectivity in five areas including policy, infrastructure, trade, financing, and peoples, China seeks to align the initiative with the UN's sustainable development goals and the AU's Agenda 2063 which is a blueprint for Africa's development and prosperity, said the ambassador.

Launched in 2013, the Belt and Road

Initiative refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which seek to serve as a platform for international cooperation, and create new drivers for shared development to benefit more countries and peoples globally.

"We are working closely with Ethiopia in advancing the Belt and Road Initiative. Ethiopia is a very important partner in this regard. We have been doing a lot of projects here in Ethiopia -- infrastructure, policy dialogue, trade, financing and people-to-people exchanges. We want to draw ideas from think-tanks, businesses and the government," the ambassador said.

In his opening remarks, Afework Kassu, Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, said the Belt and Road Initiative is an advantage for African countries for infrastructure development and economic growth.

He reiterated that the initiative would bring about economic cooperation, regional integration, as well as sustainable and speedy economic growth for Africa through infrastructure connectivity.

The State Minister has also underlined that African governments need to give utmost priority particularly to transport infrastructure in an effort to overcome barriers to structural economic

transformation of the continent.

"It is also hoped that this initiative will open new way for Africa's economy, which is undergoing robust economic growth to integrate with the global economy," said Afework.

In his presentation on the relevance of the initiative to the African Union's Agenda 2063, James Wakiaga, Economic Advisor at the UN Development Program (UNDP), noted that the Belt and Road Initiative is vital to address the infrastructure deficit in Africa, thereby accelerate structural transformation on the continent.

"The Belt and Road Initiative is very important particularly in terms of closing the infrastructure gap. Africa's infrastructure gap is quite huge, like 95 billion dollars annually. So, we need to look for the different sources of financing to Africa's infrastructure to be able to accelerate structural transformation and diversification," he said.

As one of the six panelists, Professor Kassahun Berhanu of the Addis Ababa University Political Science Department, noted that the initiative is envisioned towards increased understanding, enhanced recognition of multiculturalism and diversity, and peaceful collaboration for achieving mutually rewarding goals and objectives.

## Zambian information minister hails China assistance

Zambia's information minister has said the southern African nation was happy with the support the Chinese government has continued to render to its development programs and projects.

Dora Siliya, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, said the support in sectors such as infrastructure development, health and the economy in general was a clear indication of the warm bilateral relations that have existed between the two countries for a long time.

The Zambian minister, who is in Beijing for the 4th Forum on China-Africa Media Cooperation, was speaking when she called on the Minister of State Administration of Radio and Television, Nie Chenxi, according to a statement released by her ministry.

According to her, China has remained one of Zambia's reliable development partners and expressed happiness that the support has been extended to the media industry.

She cited China's support to Zambia's digital migration project as one of the many examples of support to the media industry, adding that the support to the media resonated with the government's desire to ensure that many citizens have access to information which was a prerequisite for sustainable national development.

The Zambian minister called on the Chinese government to consider supporting the country's state broadcaster and its official news agency with equipment and human resource to enable the two institutions to meet the demands that will come with digital migration.



Zambian information Minister, Siliya Dora

She said the two institutions were key strategic public institutions on which citizens depend for information critical to national development.

"We will need your support in terms of training for our staff to bring them to speed with the new digital environment they are going into. They will also

require support in terms of equipment and transport. We will appreciate if this support is given," she said.

On his part, the Chinese official said his government will endeavor to find areas of cooperation with Zambia to further cement the already existing cordial relations.

## Morocco, China vow to promote strategic partnership

Morocco and China have pledged to promote their strategic partnership through enhancing mutual exchanges and cooperation in various fields.

The two sides made the pledge at a meeting held between Moroccan Prime Minister Saadeddine El Othmani, also secretary general of the Justice and Development Party, and You Quan, head of the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

You Quan, also a member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, hailed the healthy and steady development of the Sino-Moroccan relationship in the past 60 years since the establishment of the diplomatic ties in 1958.

He said that China is willing to work together with Morocco to implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state to solidify mutual political trust, deepen mutually beneficiary cooperation and jointly push forward the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, which was proposed in 2013 by China.

These efforts will be made under the guidance of the proposal put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping to build a community with a shared future for mankind, and the principles of China's Africa policy featuring sincerity, practical results, affinity and good faith, the Chinese official said.

He added that the CPC is willing to enhance the exchanges and cooperation with the Justice and Development Party to elevate the Sino-Moroccan strategic partnership to a higher level.

For his part, Othmani said that the visit to China in 2016 by Moroccan King Mohammed VI ushered in a new era of the development of the Sino-Moroccan relationship.

Morocco congratulates the Chinese people on the great achievements gained in national development under the CPC leadership, Othmani said, adding that



Moroccan Prime Minister and secretary-general of Morocco's Justice and Development Party Saadeddine El Othmani (R) meets with You Quan, a member of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee Secretariat and head of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee in Rabat, Morocco

Rabat is willing to actively participate in the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative so to achieve common development with China.

He added that the Justice and Development Party treasures its friendship with the CPC, and is willing to increase mutual exchanges and learn from each other so as to constantly enrich the content of the Sino-Moroccan strategic partnership.

Similarly, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Nasser Bourita in Beijing.

Wang said this year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic ties, and relations between the two countries have become increasingly mature.

Since the establishment of the strategic partnership between China and Morocco in 2016, bilateral cooperation in various fields has been developing at an accelerated pace with remarkable results and constant highlights, Wang said.

As the partnership moves toward the next phase, Wang suggested that both sides should deepen economic and

trade investment cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative framework, closely communicate at various levels and in multiple fields, jointly hold the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF), prepare for the Beijing summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) scheduled to be held in September, pushing bilateral ties to a new level.

President Xi Jinping announced at the opening ceremony of the eighth ministerial meeting of the CASCF Tuesday that China and Arab countries have agreed to establish a future-oriented strategic partnership of comprehensive cooperation and common development, said Bourita, who is in Beijing to attend the meeting, stressing that Morocco fully supports this.

Morocco is ready to deepen cooperation with China in the construction in association with the Belt and Road Initiative and strengthen coordination under the mechanisms of the CASCF and FOCAC, Bourita said.

He said Morocco supports China in achieving complete national reunification and supports its efforts to safeguard its core interests, including maritime rights protection.

# China-Africa relations over the course of reform and opening-up

By Chen Xiaodong

China-Africa relations over the course of reform and opening-up. This forum is held at an opportune time in this 40th anniversary year of China's reform and opening-up, a year that will also see Chinese and African leaders gather together for the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) this coming September. The theme of this year's forum - China-Africa Relations over the Course of Reform and Opening-up - is highly relevant as China and Africa have a shared desire to explore development paths independently and to build a closer community for a shared future. I hope you will engage in free, open and in-depth discussions and contribute ideas on the FOCAC Beijing Summit and the development of China-Africa relations.

President Xi Jinping noted at the Boao Forum for Asia last April that "over the last four decades, the Chinese people have embraced the world with open arms and made active contributions to global affairs". Let me say that the last 40 years has not only seen China achieving common progress with the rest of the world, but also witnessed China and Africa forging ahead side by side, shoulder to shoulder.

Over the past four decades, the political relations between China and Africa have grown from strength to strength on the basis of strong strategic trust. Enjoying a long history of profound friendship, China and Africa have lent each other a helping hand whenever needed and worked steadily to elevate our relationship. At the FOCAC Johannesburg Summit in 2015, we announced a comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership between China and Africa. To date, China has established strategic partnerships or comprehensive strategic partnerships with 24 African countries. Blessed by the guidance of our leaders, China-Africa partnership is operating at a high level, evidenced by closer strategic communication and coordination, stronger mutual understanding and support, and greater experience sharing on governance and development.

Over the past four decades, our economic cooperation has achieved phenomenal growth on the strength of

interwoven interests. Trade between us has grown more than 200-fold, jumping to 170 billion US dollars from merely 765 million US dollars 40 years ago. For many years, China has been Africa's biggest trading partner. The last 40 years has also seen Chinese investment in Africa grow from scratch to a cumulative stock of 110 billion US dollars. What is more, three encouraging shifts are taking place in our economic cooperation: from government-driven to market-driven, from trade in goods to also include manufacturing cooperation, and from engineering contracts to capital investment and operations. These shifts will add wings to Africa's sustainable development.

Over the past four decades, our people-to-people ties have expanded, always generating fresh impetus to China-Africa friendship. Currently, nearly two million visits are made between the two sides every year. There are 133 pairs of sister provinces or cities between China and African countries. China has opened more than 80 Confucius institutes or classrooms in 41 African countries, and 27 African countries have stationed journalists in China. In last year alone, the two sides held more than 100 exchange events and implemented over 200 projects promoting friendship between our peoples.

Over the past four decades, our close cooperation in international and regional affairs has been instrumental to upholding our common interests. At the UN Security Council, for example, China has often spoken in defense of African positions. China's constructive role in promoting international and regional security and stability has been welcomed and applauded by African countries. China firmly supports African countries in addressing African issues by themselves and, in this context, has actively participated in peace and security affairs in Africa. With over 2,000 of its peacekeepers in five UN operations, China sends more peacekeepers than any other permanent member of the Security Council.

A few weeks ago, a conference on work relating to foreign affairs was held in Beijing, which established "Xi Jinping thought on diplomacy" as a

fundamental principle and a guide to action for China's distinctive major-country diplomacy in the new era. You may recall that when visiting Africa in 2013, President Xi proposed "sincerity, real results, affinity and good faith" as the guideline for China-Africa relations, and offered to pursue the greater good and shared interests in relation to Africa. His proposal, built on China's decades-long approach to Africa, has produced far-reaching impact on the development of China's relations with Africa and the developing world.

China and Africa have walked an extraordinary path in developing our relations and cooperation, and our peoples have benefited greatly from it.



Chen Xiaodong, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaks at the Seventh Meeting of the China-Africa Think Tanks Forum

What we have accomplished together is for the whole world to see. Yet a minority of Westerners, blinded by their "pride and prejudice", choose not to see it. Being long used to patronizing us and pointing fingers at us, they often disparage our cooperation and recently whipped up the so-called "debt trap" by accusing China of "mir[ing] nations in debt ... and undercut[ing] their sovereignty". Maybe there is more than a hint of "sour grapes" here?

The fact is, China-Africa cooperation, path-breaking in many respects, is based on solid principles.

It has been universally welcomed and supported by the African countries. As I see it, the following three things set China-Africa cooperation apart:

First, China's cooperation with Africa comes with no political strings attached. China respects the will and needs of African countries. We cooperate as equals. Neither party dictates to, or lectures, or exports models to the other. There are no political strings attached - this is the hallmark of China's cooperation with Africa, one that distinguishes it from that pursued by some Western countries.

Second, China's cooperation with Africa is a boost to local economic and social development. The debt problem

Africa.

Third, China's cooperation with Africa is economically viable and win-win in nature. China understands the importance of debt sustainability and is helping Africa to improve its investment environment. As Chinese financing is provided in a responsible manner, the associated risks are generally under control. China encourages its companies to make more direct investment to Africa and explore new models such as public-private partnership (PPP). It must be said that China empathizes with Africa's situation and tries to help Africa contain debt risks and relieve the pressure of repayment.

Facts speak louder than words and fair-minded people can tell right from wrong. The benefits of China-Africa cooperation are abundantly clear. No one will ever buy the irresponsible slanders made by a handful of countries. Many African governments and individuals have come forward to say so. China sincerely hopes that those countries will do more for Africa's development, rather than judging others.

With the FOCAC Beijing Summit expected in September, this is going to be a big year for China-Africa relations. Both sides are determined to capitalize on the momentum generated by the summit to chart the future path. Discussions under the theme of "China and Africa: Toward an Even Stronger Community with a Shared Future Through Win-Win Cooperation" will surely propel China-Africa relations and cooperation forward in sync with our times.

The Beijing Summit will reinvigorate our joint effort to build a community with a shared future for mankind. As you may know, the overarching vision of China's diplomacy is to build a new model of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind. China and Africa have shared weal and woe together and see our future as interwoven. This is why we must champion and act on this vision. At the summit, the two sides will work for an even stronger China-Africa community for a shared future by laying out a master plan, seeking the guidance of our leaders, building consensus and coordinating our actions.

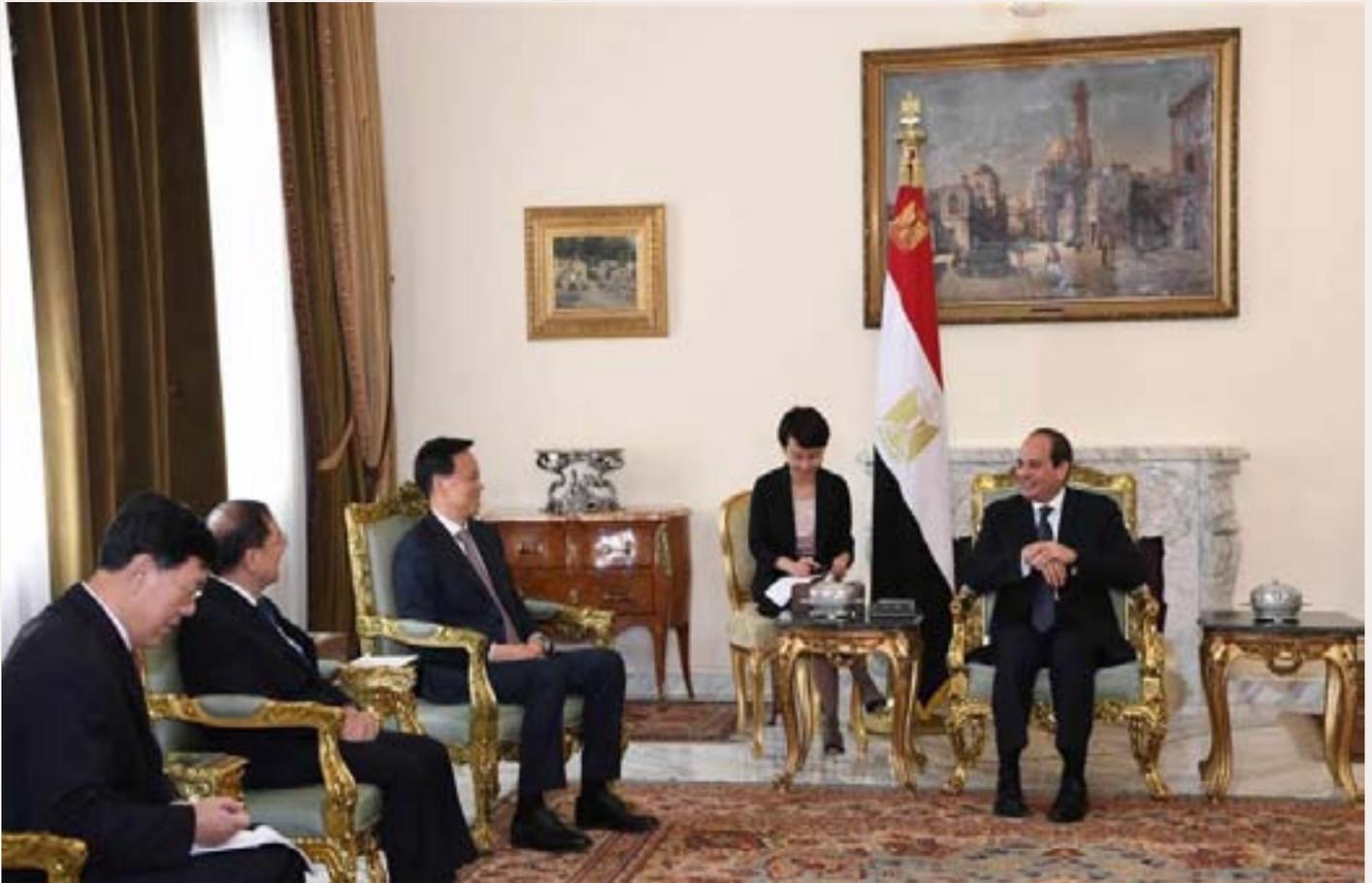
The Beijing Summit will also catalyze our joint effort to advance the Belt and Road Initiative. The summit provides an excellent opportunity to align this initiative with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Agenda 2063 and the development plans of African countries. The summit will bring together Chinese capital, technology, equipment and talent and Africa's natural resources, demographic dividends and market potential. New measures of cooperation are expected, measures that will deliver more win-win results to both sides.

We are pleased to note that preparation for the summit is well on track. African leaders have responded enthusiastically to our invitation, and many have confirmed their participation. They look forward to discussing plans for China-Africa cooperation. We have no doubt that, with the close collaboration of the two sides, the Beijing Summit will go down in history as another milestone in China-Africa relations.

Think-tank cooperation is part and parcel of China-Africa cooperation. In recent years, we have done meaningful things in this area and held a series of high-quality exchanges, including this forum. These activities have fostered a positive atmosphere, in both academia and society, for stronger China-Africa relations. On the other hand, the scale and effectiveness of our think-tank cooperation still fall short of the needs generated by the fast-growing China-Africa relations and fail to do justice to the role of China-Africa cooperation in driving international cooperation with Africa. In a fast-changing world, the contest for greater say in international affairs has become more intense. China and Africa must grapple with a more complex media and public opinion environment. Together, we must figure out ways to deepen and add more substance to our think-tank cooperation. This is crucial if we are to provide more intellectual support for China-Africa relations, have our deserved say in the world, and spread the story of our cooperation.

**Mr. Chen Xiaodong is the Assistant Foreign minister of P.R. China and delivered these remarks at 7th China-Africa Think Tank Forum in Beijing.**

## Egypt's Sisi eyes deepening cooperation with China during FOCAC Summit



*President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi (1st R) meets with Chen Min'er (3rd R), a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Secretary of the CPC Chongqing Municipal Committee, in Cairo, Egypt, June 27*

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi has said that he is looking forward to a visit to Beijing in September to deepen the mutually beneficial cooperation between Egypt and China.

Sisi made the remarks at a meeting with Chen Min'er, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and secretary of the CPC Chongqing Municipal Committee.

Chen conveyed Chinese President Xi Jinping's congratulation to Sisi on his reelection as Egyptian president.

He also hailed the historic

friendship between the two countries. "Under the auspices of both presidents, the deepening comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries has delivered fruitful outcomes in various domains in recent years," he said.

Chen welcomed Sisi to attend the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Summit to be held in Beijing in September.

He highlighted that China is willing to work with Egypt to implement the important consensus reached by both countries' leaders, combine each other's developing strategies, push forward pragmatic cooperation

within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, and achieve common development.

"China values Egypt's influence, and is willing to boost coordination and cooperation with Egypt on international and regional issues," Chen said.

For his part, Sisi asked Chen to convey his sincere greetings to President Xi, adding that he is looking forward to attending the FOCAC Summit in Beijing.

Sisi said he admires the great achievements made by the Chinese people under the leadership of the CPC and highly values Egypt's comprehensive strategic partnership with China.

"Egypt is keen on furthering the mutually beneficial cooperation with China," Sisi said, adding that he welcomes Chinese companies to invest in Egypt and participate in the country's development.

Sisi introduced to Chen Egypt's perspectives on relevant global and regional issues, expressing Egypt's willingness to boost cooperation with China to safeguard the interests of developing countries.

Chen also met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry and leaders of major Egyptian parties during his two-day visit that ended late last month.

## China helps Sierra Leone build center for disease prevention, control

The Chinese People's Liberation Army has assisted Sierra Leone in building a center for tropical infectious disease prevention and control, a spokesperson of the Ministry of

National Defense has said.

The center is the first that China's military has built in Africa. The construction of the center will be finished soon and the handover ceremony

will be held in early July, said spokesperson Wu Qian.

China will conduct medical cooperation with Sierra Leone based on the center, Wu said.

China will continue to help

African countries enhance their disease prevention and control systems and capabilities, and will provide them with more goods of public health security, Wu added.

## China to upgrade Uganda's polytechnic critical to road, railway construction

China and Uganda have signed an agreement in which the Asian country will finance the upgrade of a polytechnic in the eastern part of the country that is critical to road and railway construction.

Matia Kasaija, minister of finance, planning and economic development who signed on behalf of the Ugandan government said the 155,000 U.S. dollar project will construct buildings which include classes, workshops and laboratories at Lubongi in Tororo district.

He said the project is critical in building domestic capacity to build roads and railways in the east Africa country.

He said once the capacity is built, Uganda will not have to entirely depend on foreign companies to carry out infrastructure development.

The minister said Uganda is currently undertaking a lot of road construction work using foreign companies. He noted that the country will soon start the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway.

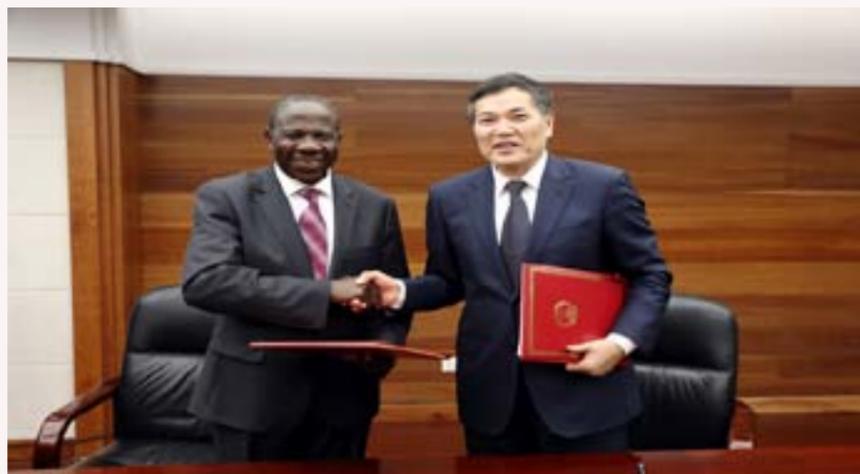
Zheng Zhuqiang, Chinese ambassador to Uganda who signed on behalf of China said the project will improve Uganda's capacity building and provide the necessary talent pool for the country's infrastructure sector.

Bageya Waiswa, the permanent secretary of ministry of works and transport said the polytechnic is currently used to train soldiers who will be part of the technical team during the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway.

He said once the upgrade is finished, civilians will be admitted for training, forming a bulk of technicians that the country can rely on in the road and railway construction.

Similarly, the two countries signed an agreement in which China will finance the modernization of the customs department.

Matia Kasaija, minister of finance, planning and economic development who signed on behalf of the Ugandan government said the 15 million U.S. dollar project will help boost the country's revenue collection.



Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, Qian Keming and Uganda's Minister of finance, planning and economic development, Matia Kasaija in a warmed handshake

"This project will lead to scientific methods of increasing revenue collection, trade facilitation and border controls," Kasaija said.

"Collection of revenue is a big challenge in order to be able to meet our budget needs, so this is what we call a good shot in the arm, very timely indeed to improve our tax collection," he said.

Kasaija said China will provide non-intrusive scanners, modernized customs risk management, supervision and communication system, capacity building, customs service and enforcement support, among others.

He said after implementation of the project, it will be harder to smuggle in goods at the country's border control areas.

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## ...provides 500,000 USD to help with refugee resettlement in Uganda

China has donated 500,000 U.S. dollars in contributing to Uganda's efforts in raising funds to support refugees in the east African nation.

Zheng Zhuqiang, Chinese ambassador to Uganda, while meeting Matia Kasaija, Uganda's finance minister, said the money will be used by Uganda in resettling of thousands of refugees in the country.

Kasaija said the Chinese donation comes at a critical time as the over 1.4 million refugees in the country are in dire need of humanitarian relief.

"I want to assure you that this money will be used to help those areas where the refugees are now residing because the communities are terribly inconvenienced," he said.

"We need new roads, schools, markets. We need to help the refugees also produce food for themselves and that they do not depend on the state," he said.

Relief agencies argue that the growing refugee population is imposing unbearable pressures on state and host communities with far reaching political, economic, social and

developmental impacts.

A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees report showed that the refugee population in Uganda increased by 44 percent in 2017 compared to the previous year.

Uganda hosts refugees from South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Somalia, and Rwanda, among others.

## China's top legislator calls for enhanced parliamentary exchanges with South Africa



Li Zhanshu

China's top legislator Li Zhanshu has met with Cedric Frolick, house chairperson of the National Assembly of South Africa, in Beijing, calling for closer exchanges between

legislative bodies.

Li said China's African policy of sincerity, affinity and good faith is evident in China-Africa cooperation and the friendship between China and Africa

## How China is combating wildlife trafficking in Africa

China has upped the ante in the fight against the illegal trade of wildlife, putting in place various measures to tackle the issue, the Chinese ambassador to South Africa has said at a conference.

Speaking at the Africa - China Wildlife Conservation Conference at Wits university, ambassador Lin Songtian said that China has implemented stringent measures in recent years, demonstrating its commitment to curbing wildlife trafficking.

He used China's introduction of a ban on ivory trade as an example.

"As we all know, ivory carving is an important intangible cultural heritage cherished in China. But to show the firm determination and resolve of the Chinese government on wildlife protection, we have decided to

put a comprehensive ban on all ivory products trade including those that are illegally sourced," he said.

China's ivory ban, effective on Jan. 1 this year, resulted in the closure of hundreds of factories and other shops which sold ivory across China, and won applause from many conservation groups and individuals.

"The Chinese citizens and companies are strictly banned from ivory trade and elephant poaching. Chinese citizens are strictly prohibited from smuggling ivory and ivory products. If government workers were found to be involved, they will not only be punished by law, but also be expelled from office. It is fair to say that the Chinese government has adopted the world's toughest stance of zero tolerance on wildlife

protection," he said.

He also said that the involvement of Chinese nationals in the illegal poaching of rhino horns and ivory "undermined the image of China" and urged African countries to be harsh when dealing with wildlife criminals.

Zhou Jinfeng, secretary general of China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation, said that while a concerted effort was being made to protect endangered species, illegal trafficking was still widespread.

"Poaching is still terrible, we have confiscated many pangolins, we want to save more. We work with different embassies in China," he added.

The conference was co-organized by the Africa-China Reporting Project based at Wits and some NGOs.

has borne new fruit.

"Many African countries appreciate China's development achievements and experience," Li said, adding China is willing to enhance its exchange of governance experience with African countries including South Africa, to realize common development.

Li said China-South Africa ties are an example of friendly cooperation among developing countries and emerging economies.

He called on the two countries to take the opportunity of the 20th anniversary of establishment of the diplomatic ties between the two countries to arrange for the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in July, and the Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing in September.

Li urged both sides to promote the Belt and Road Initiative and enhance exchange and cooperation between legislative bodies.

Frolick said China is a sincere friend of African countries and South Africa expects to enhance cooperation with China within FOCAC and BRICS, aiming to boost overall development of relations.

## Chinese firm to construct road linking Kenya to South Sudan

Kenya's North Rift region is set for transformation as a Chinese firm has won the tender to construct the first tarmac road that extends to South Sudan.

China National Aero-Technology International Engineering Corporation has been contracted to undertake the construction of the 60km road in a region referred to as Kenya's bread-basket.

Ferdinand Wanyonyi, a lawmaker in Kwanza Constituency in Trans Nzoia County, on Tuesday hailed the 20 million U.S. dollars project funded by the national government, saying it will transform

the lives of local farmers.

The Kitale-Namanjalala-Keriget-Chepchoina road, that is intended to link Kenya with South Sudan, is expected to be launched by Deputy President William Ruto next month.

Kwanza constituency has no tarmacked road and residents use donkeys to transport produce from farms to markets.

Wanyonyi said the project is a major boast to farming activities arguing that dilapidated road infrastructure has in the past denied residents the opportunity to market their produce and earn better returns.

## Zimbabwe, China sign 1-bln-USD MoU for setting up steel plant

Zimbabwe and China have signed a 1-billion-U.S.-dollar Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing a steel plant that can produce up to 2 million tonnes of steel per annum.

The MoU is among several deals signed at the start of a four-day Zimbabwe-China Business Forum that is being attended by a high-powered Chinese delegation from Zhejiang Province.

The delegation is being led by Che Jun, secretary of Zhejiang Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Che said the delegation was in Zimbabwe to scout for business and investment opportunities to help Zimbabwe industrialize its economy.

The Zhejiang

delegation's trip to Zimbabwe follows President Emmerson Mnangagwa's visit to China in April, during which several other investment and cooperation agreements were signed between the two countries, which elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation.

Che said Zhejiang was keen to inject investment in Zimbabwe to enable it to meaningfully participate in the Belt and Road Initiative.

A wealthy coastal province of China, Zhejiang's trade with Zimbabwe stood at 160 million U.S. dollars in 2017, accounting for 12 percent of China's total trade with Zimbabwe.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development Munesu Munodawafa told Xinhua that the deal

includes establishment of a 600-megawatt thermal power station to supply power to the steel plant that will be based in the Midland Province of Zimbabwe.

He said feasibility studies for the project will start on July 1 followed by a roll-out plan.

The project is being spearheaded by a subsidiary of Chinese firm Tsingshan in Zimbabwe, Afrochine, which is already into ferrochrome production.

"We anticipate that when it's fully operational, this project will create up to 3,000 permanent jobs and produce up to 2 million tonnes of steel per year over the life of the project which we have put at about 25 years," said Munodawafa.

"Tsingshan is one of the top five producers of stainless steel in the world. We believe we have chosen

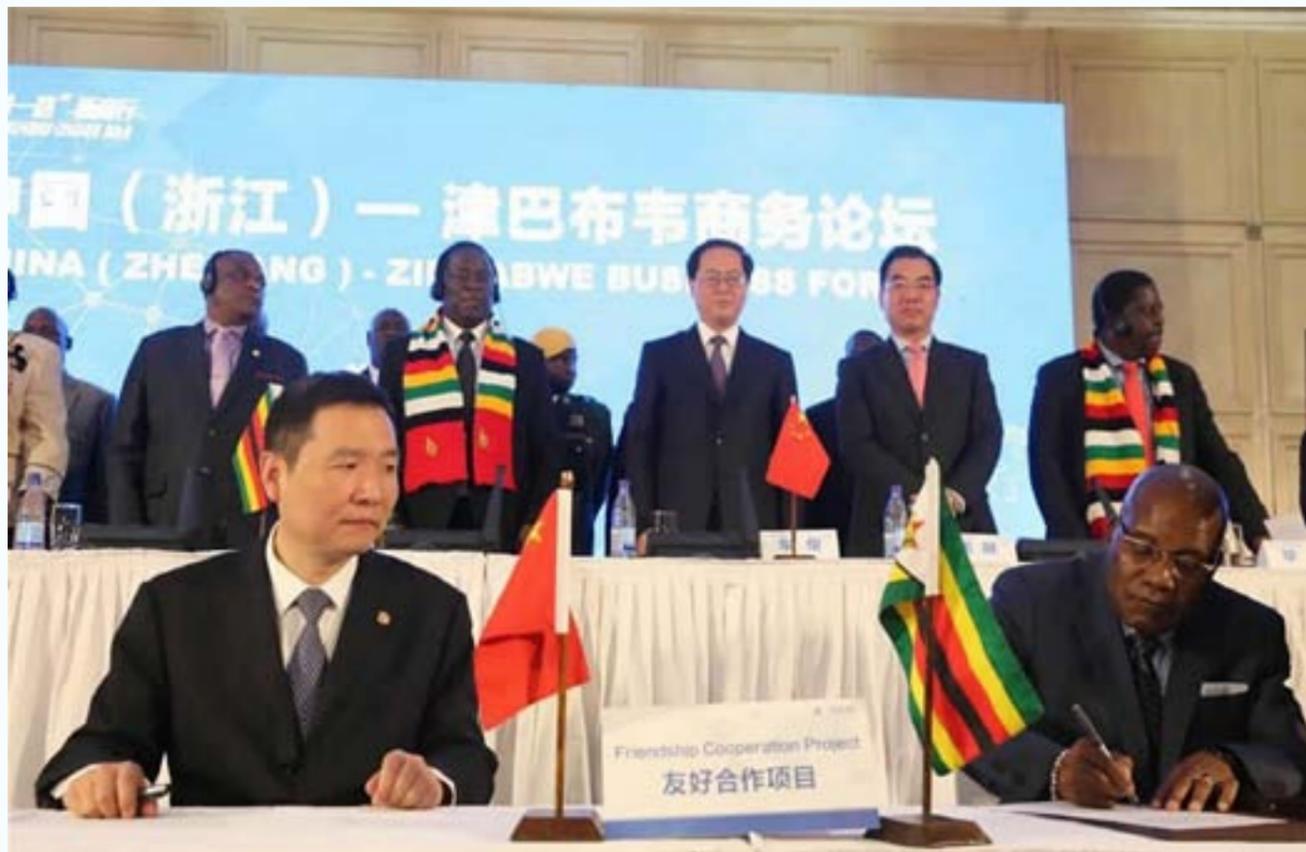
the best and we believe we will get the best out of them," he said.

Opening the forum, Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa urged investors from the two countries to take advantage of the elevation of ties between the two countries.

He also invited more Chinese firms to exploit Zimbabwe's vast investment opportunities.

"We look forward to massive investment by Chinese companies that will see Zimbabwe fulfilling its vision of becoming a middle-income economy by 2030," he said.

He also invited Chinese financial institutions to establish in Zimbabwe and offer affordable financial solutions to the country as it pushes with its economic revival agenda after years of international isolation.



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa and secretary of Zhejiang Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Che Jun, witnessed the signing between the two countries in Harare, Zimbabwe

## South Sudan, China sign media development pact

China and South Sudan have signed a technical cooperation agreement for the modernization of state broadcasters in the East African nation.

The agreement for upgrading and modernization of broadcast studios at the state-owned radio and television was signed by senior officials from the country's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and officials from the Chinese Embassy in South Sudan.

Justin Allier De Mayen, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, said the China-aided project estimated to cost about 15 million U.S. dollars will enable the construction of two state-of-the-art broadcast studios and also offer capacity building for South Sudanese journalists

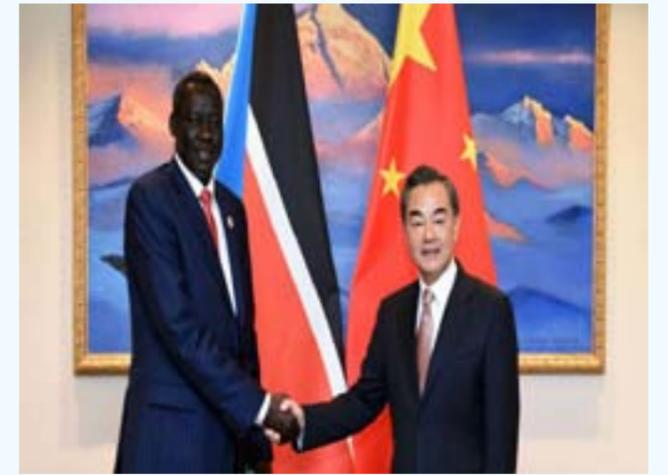
through media exchanges.

Mayen appreciated Beijing for its support to the development of the media sector in the conflict-torn nation, adding that the two countries will continue to strengthen relations for the welfare of their people.

"With this signature, we have stepped a milestone in our bilateral cooperation with the People's Republic of China that has been so generous with the people of South Sudan," Mayen said.

Mayen said the modern studios, if completed, would improve the quality of programs aired by the state broadcasters.

"This is something that we have been yearning for so long because our TV and radio have been lacking studios. Our people will be better served in the area of



Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi in handshake with South Sudan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Deng Alor Kuol

media and technology that will also lead to freedom of media," Mayen added.

Cai Senming, Economic and Commercial Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in South Sudan, said the project

to be undertaken by Chinese engineers would start soon.

He added that the grant is part of China's effort to help the world's youngest country attain stability and prosperity.

## Namibian President inaugurates Chinese-built regional police headquarters

Namibia's President, Hage Geingob, has officially inaugurated the Oshikoto Police Regional Headquarters and the Omuthiya Police Station situated in the north of the country.

The facilities were constructed and completed last year by construction firm, China Jiangxi International Namibia.

At the event, the president in a statement said the purpose of constructing these structures is to ensure that effective administration of law enforcement is available nationwide.

Although this was the first police facility to be inaugurated this year, he said more is to come, among them, the new construction of the Police National Headquarters in Windhoek, whose construction is nearing completion.

According to Geingob, the continued improvement of the police infrastructure is also geared towards ensuring that police forces have access to a decent and conducive working environment.

"Modern infrastructure plays a role in availing facilities that enhance job satisfaction, and this contributes to improved performance. By providing our police officers with new and improved infrastructure we are enabling them to be more efficient and effective in carrying out their duties," he added.



President Hage Geingob (centre) officially inaugurated the new regional headquarters of the Namibian Police Force

The president said the headquarters will aid in relieving the burden from other police facilities within the region, by providing accommodation and care for suspected offenders and perpetrators from this area.

In 2008 when Omuthiya was proclaimed the capital town of Oshikoto, the construction of the state-of-the-art headquarters was planned to ensure police services are made available in the new town.



Top scholars at Counsellor's office of the State Council of the P.R China in group photograph with scholars of the Centre for China Studies, (CCS) during a visit of the Chinese delegation recently to CCS, in Abuja.



Exchanges and dialogue between the delegation of the Counsellor's office of the China's State Council and research scholars of the Centre for China Studies (CCS), in Abuja.

# China-Nigeria relations have entered a new stage of rapid development

To begin with, this year marks the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up. Second, the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) will be held in early September. Last but not least, Nigeria is making steady progress in creating a more enabling business environment. The theme of this forum is highly relevant as China and Nigeria have a shared desire to deepen cooperation on production capacity and build a better future hand-in-hand.

Openness brings progress, while self-seclusion leaves one behind. As President Xi noted at the Boao Forum for Asia last April, "over the last four decades, the Chinese people have embraced the world with open arms and made active contributions to the world." Indeed, the Chinese people have brought enormous changes to the country with the unwavering commitment to reform and opening-up. China has grown into producer, the largest economy, the largest industrial producer, the largest trader of goods, and the holder of the largest foreign exchange reserves. From 1978 to 2017, China's GDP grew 9.5 percent on average annually. China's per capital GDP soared from USD 227 to USD 8813. More than 700 million people had been lifted out of poverty. In the last 40 years, China has attracted 522,700 investors from foreign countries and regions, with registered capitalization of USD 3.65 trillion. Inbound foreign direct investment has been playing a positive and significant role in China's economic development.

The last 40 years has not only seen China achievement common progress with the rest of the world, but also witnessed China and Africa forging ahead, side by side and shoulder to shoulder.

Trade between China and Africa has grown more than 200-fold, jumping to USD 170 billion from merely biggest trading partner for many years running. Chinese investment in Africa has grown from scratch to a commutative stock of

USD 110 billion.

People-to-people ties have expanded, always generating fresh impetus to China-Africa friendship. Currently two million visits are made between the two sides every year.

It is fair to say that China has benefited from Africa and the world in its development, and China has contributed to the development of Africa and the world. China will continue to pursue a mutually beneficial opening-up strategy, share its development opportunities with other countries and welcome

Development agenda, Agenda 2063 of the African Union and other developing strategies of African nations such as Nigeria's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) and push the China-Africa comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership to a new level.

Thanks to the concerted efforts of both sides, the cordial relations between China and Nigeria have achieved remarkable progress over the past forty-seven years. In April 2016, President Buhari paid a successful state visit to China. He was the first head of state from

Nigeria in production capacity, infrastructure development, agriculture, investment and other areas.

It is our belief that President Buhari's attendance at the upcoming FOCAC Beijing Summit will make important contribution to China-Africa cooperation and bring about new opportunities for the comprehensive development of China-Nigeria strategic partnership.

People-to-people exchanges lay the foundation for China-Nigeria friendship and cooperation. The Chinese side has been taking concrete measures to facilitate visa applications and improve consular service as the national drive of reform and opening-up requires. We appreciate that the Nigerian Government keeps making efforts to improve business environment and provide facilitation at the points of entry for Chinese citizens as well as all kinds of assistance during their stay in Nigeria. Nigeria's moving up 24 places in the latest World Bank ease of doing business index is commendable. It is our sincere hope that Nigeria side could keep up the good work in building the nest to attract the phoenixes and adopt further effective measures to enhance government services

and provide adequate security and facilitation to foreign nationals including Chinese. The Chinese government always asks Chinese enterprise and citizens in Nigeria to observe local laws and regulations, respect local culture and customs, live in amity with local people and make contributions to local economic and social development. With the joint efforts of both sides, I am confident that our mutually beneficial cooperation in all areas will yield more fruitful results.



Dr. Zhou Pingjian

them on board the train of China's development. China will not close its door to the world: we will only become more and more open.

China and Africa has always been a community with a shared future. The upcoming FOCAC Beijing Summit will be held under the theme of China-Africa: Toward an Even Stronger Community with a Shared Future through Win-Win Cooperation. China will work together with Africa to align the summit's theme with the plan of jointly building the Belt and Road, the United Nation 2030 Sustainable

Africa President Xi Jinping received in Beijing shortly after the FOCAC Johannesburg Summit.

President Xi and President Buhari reached consensus to deepen China-Nigeria cooperation across-the-board. Under the guidance of this important consensus, the China-Nigeria relations have entered a new stage of rapid development. As the largest developing countries in the world, China highly values its relations with Nigeria, the largest developing country in Africa.

China remains committed to stepping up cooperation with

Remark, delivered by Ambassador Zhou Pingjian at the 4th China-Nigeria Consular Forum in Abuja, Nigeria.

Suite 25,  
Silla Zeka Plaza,  
29 Adebayo Adedeji Crescent,  
Utako, FCT-Abuja, Nigeria.  
Tel: 092917906  
e-mail: contact@ccs-ng.org info@ccs-ng.org  
Web: www.ccs-ng.org



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