

“China-Africa friendship unbreakable” - foreign minister Wang Yi

See Page 2



Nigerian and Chinese performers at the event to mark China's New Year or Spring festival in Abuja early this month.

**Agreement signed to study
Asia-Africa power grid plan**

Page 10

**BRI creates new drivers for common
development between China, Nigeria -
Chinese ambassador**

Page 4

“China-Africa friendship unbreakable” - foreign minister Wang Yi

China-Africa friendship is unbreakable and the one-China principle has been consolidated and strengthened in Africa, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters at the end of his four-nation Africa trip recently.

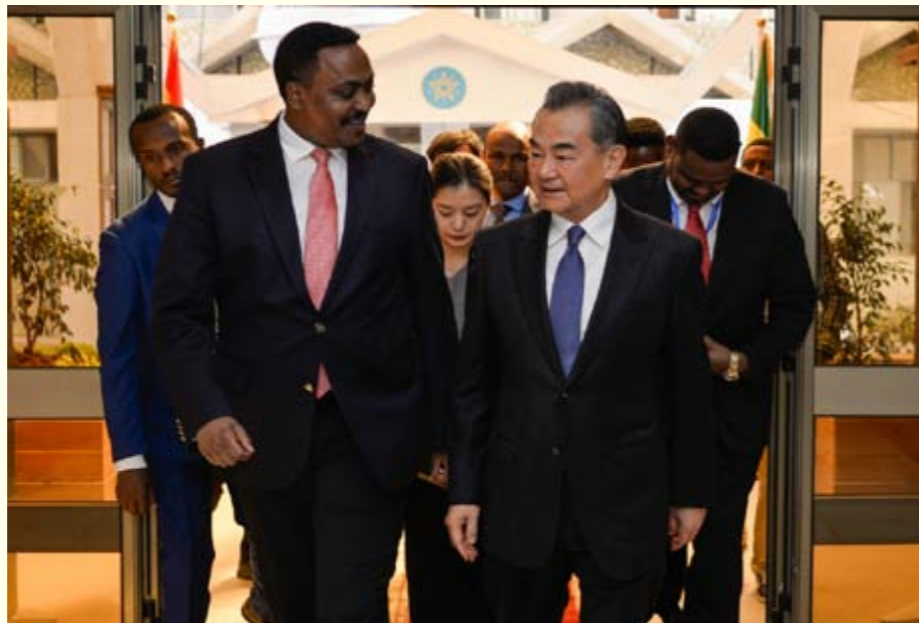
Wang's trip to Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Senegal on Jan. 2-6 continued a 29-year tradition of making Africa the first international visit of the year by the Chinese foreign minister.

In the face of some deliberate attempts to discredit China-Africa cooperation, African governments and people have stood up to dispel the rumors and firmly adhered to a friendly policy towards China, which manifested the unbreakable friendship between the two sides, Wang said.

He added that the leaders of the four African countries appreciated China's cooperation with Africa and thanked China for its support for the development of African countries and the improvement of people's livelihood.

Speaking about rising unilateralism, Wang said African countries have great expectations for China's role in defending multilateralism. The four countries are willing to strengthen coordination with China, jointly defend their rules of multilateralism and promote the democratization of international relations, he added.

A large number of China's key projects



Foreign Minister, Wang Yi accompanied by Ethiopian Foreign Minister Workneh Gebeyehu during an official visit to Ethiopia last month.

in Africa have brought tangible benefits to local people. With the alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative with African Union's "2063 Agenda," as well as the development strategies of all countries, the Belt and Road Initiative is expected to launch cooperation with a higher quality and higher level on the African continent, Wang said.

Among the four countries that Wang visited, Burkina Faso and Gambia resumed diplomatic ties with China in 2018 and 2016, respectively.

The leaders of the two countries said the resumption of diplomatic ties with China is an independent choice and a correct decision that has been supported by the people and is in line with their national interests, Wang said.

The two countries will continue to unswervingly pursue the one-China principle, and adherence to the principle has become a political consensus that all parties have followed on the African continent, Wang added.

...as China firmly opposes mercenary activities in Africa

China firmly opposes mercenary activities in Africa, and will always support African nations' pursuit of peace and prosperity, said Chinese Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ma Zhaoxu in New York.

Mercenary activities are a threat to peace and stability in African countries, and China calls for greater international efforts to address the problem, said Ma as Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative at a UN Security Council meeting on mercenary activities in Africa.

He said these activities interfere with the internal affairs of the developing countries, and infringe on their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, adding that China stands firmly against such activities.

The Chinese representative urged the international community to support African countries in accelerating their development, reducing poverty, eliminating the root causes for conflict and turmoil, and stepping

up socio-economic development in African countries.

Ma also pledged China's continued support for Africa to achieve peace, stability and development, and expressed the hope for China and Africa to jointly build a closer community with a shared future.

Also, at the meeting, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that the international body stands ready to continue to support governments in tackling mercenary activities.

"The United Nations stands ready to continue to support governments in tackling mercenary activities, including through deepening our dialogue with relevant regional organizations and national institutions," said the UN chief.

Noting that the nature of mercenary activities has evolved over the years, Guterres said that "they are exploiting and feeding off other ills such as transnational organized crime, terrorism and violent

extremism."

The UN General Assembly adopted the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries in 1989.

The UN chief told the Council that only 35 states are parties to the convention and called on "those states that remain outside the Convention to accede to or ratify it without delay."

Meeting was called by Equatorial Guinea, which holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council in February.

Shortly before the meeting, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, the president of Equatorial Guinea, spoke highly of the bilateral relations between his country and China during his meeting with Ma.

Obiang also said he attaches importance to Equatorial Guinea's relations with China, adding that he is willing to further promote cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

China-funded mega dam in Zambia set to uplift people's living standards

Various development projects in Zambia have benefited from funding by China, a result of the long-lasting bilateral ties between the two countries.

One such project is the construction of a dam in Zambia's Masaiti district on the Copperbelt Province funded by China whose construction works are progressing well.

The construction works of the 450 million U.S. dollars Kafulafuta Dam was commissioned in October last year by President Edgar Lungu.

The multi-purpose dam will hold about 125 million cubic meters of water and benefit about 1 million people in four districts on the Copperbelt, namely, Mpongwe, Luanshya, Ndola, Masaiti and other areas.

Masaiti is located in the southeastern part of the Copperbelt. The district lies on a total area of 5,383 square kilometers and has a population of 107,221.

It is surrounded by six other districts and also shares a border with neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The people in the district have welcomed the project, saying it will go a long way in easing water problems.

Jane Kalesha, a 56-year-old resident, feels that the project has come at a right time and will immensely benefit the community.

She says the project will help farmers in the district to grow enough crops not only for consumption but for export into DRC.

C h i e f t a i n e s s



China-funded mega dam in Zambia set to uplift people's living standards

Malembeka, one of the traditional leaders in the district, is also elated by the development.

"Uplifting the living standards of people is important in national development, the dam will bring about immense development in my Chiefdom," she says.

She is optimistic that smallscale farmers will benefit massively through irrigation system.

The district whose main economic stay is farming has a total of 18,733 smallscale farmers.

The traditional leaders further hailed the bilateral relationship between Zambia and China, which she said are bearing fruits.

"China is a best friend of Zambia since time in memorial," she said.

Bruce Zhu, a business manager with the China National Complete Engineering Corporation, the Chinese firm

constructing the dam, said about 23 percent of works have so far been done, adding that everything was on schedule.

"We are on schedule and we expect to complete the works by 2020," he says.

In remarks delivered when Copperbelt Province Minister Japhen Mwakalombe and other senior government officials inspected the construction works recently, the official said over 1,600 jobs have been created during the construction of the dam.

Zhu further dispelled reports that the firm was subcontracting other foreign firms instead of empowering local firms.

"We have come up with a contractor data base where we are picking contractors for various jobs," he added.

According to Zhu, four local firms have been subcontracted to work at the project.

On his part, the Zambian minister expressed satisfaction over the progress so far in the construction of the dam, adding that the government was committed to supporting Chinese firms working on various projects as it was meant to uplift the living standards of people.

Mwakalombe says a lot of people will benefit from the project once completed.

The Kafulafuta water supply system project involves the construction of a dam and other infrastructures for the supply of water to some districts of the province.

It also includes the construction of two pump stations, raw water pipelines to four treatment plants as well as the extension of the pipe network to unserved areas and repairing of old leaking pipes.

BRI creates new drivers for common development between China, Nigeria: Chinese ambassador

China and Nigeria have gained new drivers for common development as Africa's largest economy formally joined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2018, said Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria Zhou Pingjian recently. Speaking at the Spring Festival reception for the media in Abuja, Zhou said bilateral cooperation will enjoy broad prospects under the BRI, which will further the already close bilateral economic relations.

China customs data show that China-Nigeria trade volume hit 15.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2018, up 10.8 percent year-on-year, with Nigeria remaining as China's third largest trade partner in Africa.

China will actively promote international cooperation through BRI to achieve policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people

connectivity, the ambassador said.

Zhou said China and Nigeria scored fruitful and prominent achievements in

infrastructure in the past year.

He listed the commissioning of Abuja Light Railway, which is the first operating light railway in West Africa, and two new airport terminals.

Ongoing projects include a large hydropower plant, a rail line and a deep seaport.

"China-Nigeria relations are now at their best in history,"



Ambassador Zhou Pingjian speaks at a media reception organized by the Embassy of PRC to mark their Spring Festival, in Abuja.

he said, noting that the BRI would elevate the strategic partnership between the two countries to a new level.

Nigeria joined the BRI together with 27 other African

countries at the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in September, increasing the number of BRI's African member countries to 37.

Demand for Zambian honey rises in China

The demand for Zambian honey in foreign markets such as China is on the rise, the country's investment agency has said.

Perry Mapani, Director-General of the Zambia Development Agency (ZDA), said the number of Chinese importers looking for honey from Zambia is on the rise.

In a statement released by the investment agency, the official said that the increased demand has forced the agency, working with the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry and the International Trade Center to embark on programs aimed at growing the sector and creating efficiency in the production and supply of honey.

"As an agency, we are working in line with the Seventh National Development Plan to diversify the economy. The honey sub-sector is among the other priority areas which have been pointed out by government to drive the diversification agenda," he said.

The agency, he said, was also working with other sector players such as the financing institutions to provide finance for the entrepreneurs in the honey sector in order to boost their capacity both for the local and international market.

According to him, the opportunities for bee-keeping and agriculture in general in Zambia are immense due to the favorable climatic conditions.



Mr. Perry Mapani, Perry Mapani, Director-General of the Zambia Development Agency

Last October, Zambia officially launched the export of honey to China.

The export of organic honey followed the signing of an export protocol by Zambia and China on the sidelines of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Summit. Currently, Zambia's annual honey production is about 2,500 tonnes and the southern African nation exports 1,000 tonnes to the European and African markets, leaving a surplus of 1,500 tonnes.

Chinese, Ugandan universities agree to establish geoscience, petroleum institute

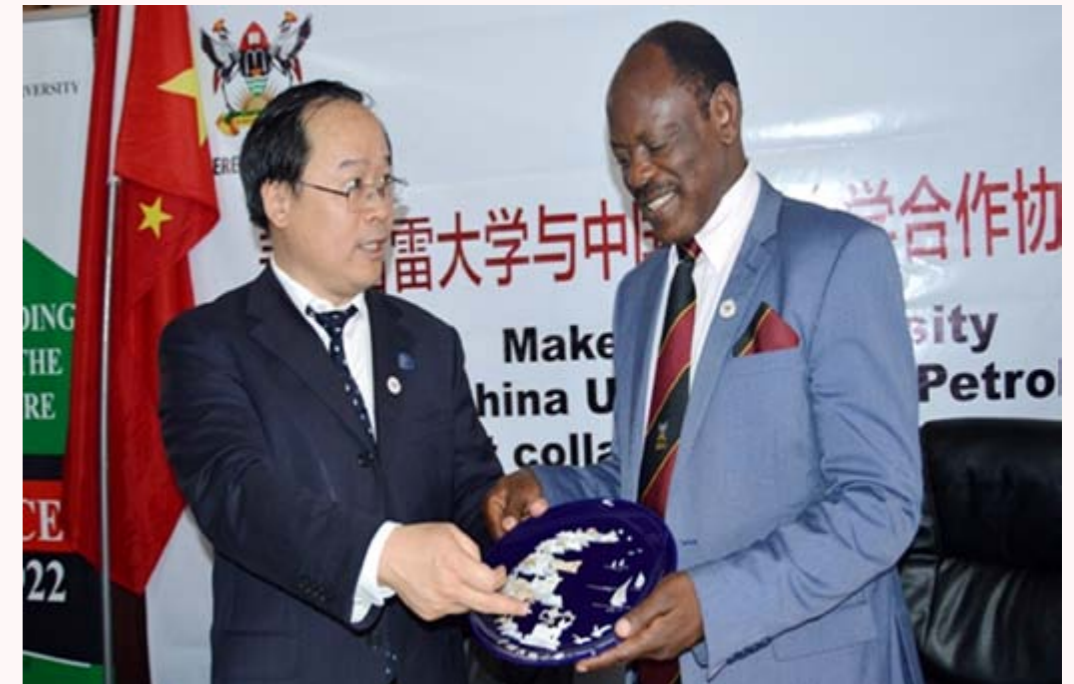
China University of Petroleum and Uganda's Makerere University have signed an agreement to establish a geoscience and petroleum institute to build capacity in the country's nascent oil and gas sector.

Ritah Namisango, Makerere University spokesperson, told the media that the agreement was signed recently.

The agreement paves way for further discussion on the establishment of the institute at Makerere University, according to Namisango.

"The institute of petroleum and gas, once established at Makerere University, will be the first of its kind in Uganda. The overall issue is to ensure we build the required human resource capacity in the areas of petroleum, oil and gas," she said.

She said experts from China University of Petroleum will closely work with their counterparts at Makerere University College of Natural Sciences and that of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology to develop



UPC Vice President-Prof. Jun Yao (L) explains the inscriptions on a souvenir shortly after handing it over to Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe (R) after the Agreement signing ceremony, 7th January 2019, Makerere University, Kampala Uganda.

joint appropriate academic programs and conducting research.

"When the team from China comes on board they will work with experts at Makerere University to ensure they conduct joint research, academic programs and develop capacity in the

petroleum, oil and gas sector," said Namisango.

Last year, Sunmaker, a Chinese company, opened up an oil training institute in the capital Kampala to equip locals with knowledge and skills in the oil and gas sector.

Uganda projects to start commercial production of oil

by 2021, when the crude oil pipeline and the refinery will be in place.

Government figures show that the country has so far discovered 6.5 billion barrels of oil, of which about 1.5 billion barrels are commercially viable.

Huawei accredits Kenyan university as ICT academy center

Chinese telecom firm Huawei has accredited Kenya's Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) as an Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Academy Center.

Speaking at the ceremony, Stephen Mbugua, Vice Chancellor of CUEA welcomed the partnership and expressed his hopes that it would help enrich the training of computer science students.

"CUEA was chosen for this partnership due to its strengths in being located

in a serene environment, excellent facilities and related resources," Mbugua said.

With the memorandum of understanding (MoU), the university is now certified and authorized by Huawei to deliver official technical and certification training to its students using the Huawei authorized training curriculum and tools.

Mbugua noted that the partnership with the Chinese firm will go a long way in building ICT talent in Kenya and Africa at large.

Su Shuqi, the manager

in charge of training and certification at Huawei noted that the training would greatly help to bridge the gap between academia and industry.

In September 2018, the university achieved the status of a "Huawei Authorized Information and Network Academy" (HAINA).

This means the university is certified and authorized by Huawei to deliver official technical and certification training to its students using the Huawei authorized training curriculum and tools.

Mbugua noted that at the moment, some of the lecturers in science department of the university are already trained by Huawei to offer the curricula.

According to CUEA some of its ICT lecturers are on their way to attaining the "Huawei Certified Academy Instructor" (HCAI) status.

This means an individual who has been certified by Huawei as an instructor remains in good standing, and is currently sponsored by a Huawei Authorized Information and Network Academy.

Chinese investments boost employment opportunities in Africa: IFC official

Chinese investments are boosting employment opportunities in Africa, an official from a member of the World Bank group has said.

Manuel Moses, Kenya country manager at International Finance Corporation (IFC), which focused on the private sector in developing countries, told the media in Nairobi that Chinese investors are playing a positive role in the manufacturing, construction and power sectors.

"The Chinese private sector is very dynamic because they don't see the risk that other people see in Africa because they take a long view of Africa," Moses said during the launch of the Seventh Edition of the Africa CEO Forum.

The event was jointly organized by Kenya Private Sector Alliance, IFC and the Rwanda Development Board.

Moses said IFC is also keen to facilitate any group of foreign investors who see opportunities in Africa.

He said that given the level of

development of both China and Africa the two regions are natural partners who can complement each other.

Moses noted that China is taking its rightful place in Africa by making investments that boost the continent's productive capacity.

IFC is currently working with Chinese firms across in the east African region. In Rwanda, IFC is partnering with Chinese firms to develop an affordable housing project for some 10,000 households.



Manuel Moses, IFC Kenya and South Sudan Country Manager making a statement on IFC's activities in a meetings at the Delta Center in Nairobi, Kenya

In Tanzania, the IFC is also building a hotel and building complex in the country's largest city Dar es Salaam.

Moses urged Chinese firms to bring their advanced technology to Africa.

More than 1,400 Sierra Leoneans receive training in China in 2018: envoy

More than 1,400 Sierra Leoneans received training in various disciplines in China in 2018, Chinese ambassador to Sierra Leone said recently.

Among them, 1,300 people from all walks of life acquired the opportunities through Chinese government sponsorship, while 100 students studied in China through Chinese government scholarship program, Wu Peng told a Spring Festival activity organized by the Confucius Institute at Fourah Bay College in the country's capital Freetown.

"In October 2018, 18 college students from the University of Sierra Leone (USL) were awarded with Chinese Ambassador scholarship. This scholarship is an annual program for outstanding performances in studies as well as their knowledge in China and China-Sierra Leone bilateral relationship," he added.

He pledged continued close cooperation between the governments of the two countries in the field of human capacity building.

"Sierra Leone and China have long history of diplomatic

relationship, and we have benefited so much especially in the areas of education, infrastructural development, technical support, investment and trade," said Winston Webber, deputy registrar of USL's College of Medicine and Allied Health Science, on behalf of USL's vice chancellor and principal.

He Mingqing, Director of the Confucius Institute at USL, said in the past six years the Confucius Institute has set up courses at different levels, including Chinese major at the undergraduate levels of the university and Chinese credit courses.

He said that the Confucius Institute has established 14 teaching sites, covering pre-school, elementary school, secondary school, vocational and university levels, with students coming not just from schools, but communities and

enterprises as well. He said the number of registered students of the Confucius Institute reached 5,000 in 2018.

The institute has organized innovative cultural events, such as international conferences, academic seminars and medical lectures, the director said, adding that they have

also set up a Taichi garden as a landmark symbol for martial arts and Taichi at the institute.

The institute organized a well-received job fair for the first time last year for domestic and international enterprises in Sierra Leone, providing 3,500 positions to USL graduates, he said.



Some beneficiaries of the training pose for group picture at a Chinese airport in China.

President Buhari rejoices with President Xi Jinping on Chinese lunar new year

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has congratulated his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping on the celebration of the Chinese Lunar New Year.

In a letter personally signed by him, President Buhari said, "All over the world, the advent of a new year is a period of celebrations with friends, family and well-wishers and, on this note I wish the Chinese people warm celebrations."

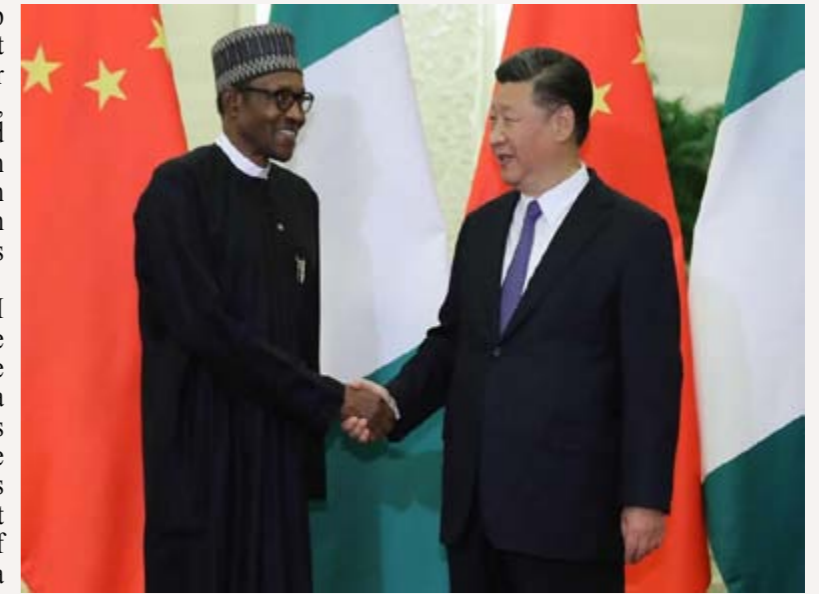
The Nigerian leader also expressed his delight at the growth and global influence of the People's Republic of China under the leadership of the ruling party.

"I am particularly delighted that this year coincides with the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China as well as the 70th anniversary

of the able leadership of the Communist Party of China. Under the rule of the party, China has witnessed phenomenal growth and development with a vast improvement in the quality of life of its citizens.

"Your Excellency, I am happy to associate with you and the ruling party as China positively impacts on the global stage from which Africa has continued to benefit under the auspices of the Forum on China - Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

"I am particularly pleased with the continuing improvement in the bilateral



Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Sept. 5, 2018

cooperation between China and Nigeria even as I look forward to the full implementation of the

outcomes of the 2018 Beijing FOCAC Summit," the President said.

Kenya to conduct road shows in China to boost investments inflows

Kenya plans to conduct roadshows in China to boost investment inflows into the country, officials have said.

Moses Ikiara, managing director at the Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), told the media in Nairobi that a team of public and private sector officials will visit three provinces in China in

March.

"The aim is to woo Chinese investors to set up operations in Kenya in the manufacturing sectors, especially in the textile, construction, agribusiness and leather industries," Ikiara said.

Ikiara said 40 Chinese companies have expressed interest in investing in Kenya as a result of the

country's participation in the China International Import Expo that took place in November 2018.

"We are now doing a following-up to ensure that the Chinese investors commence operations in Kenya as soon as possible," he said.

China is among the top 10 sources of foreign direct investment in Kenya, Ikiara

said. "Looking at the pace of new Chinese projects, we expect China to become one of the leading investors in Kenya in the next five years," he said.

According to the managing director, Kenya is banking on new investments to expand local production and cut reliance on imports.

Standard Bank eyes products to help deepen Namibia-China trade ties

Standard Bank Namibia has announced plans to introduce a number of products and facilities that would help deepen trade ties between Chinese and Namibian businesses.

The bank's Corporate and Investment Banking Chinese Relationship Manager Annelie Cloete said the bank's relationship with Chinese businesses has come a long way since the inception of the Association of Chinese Enterprises in Namibia in 2016.

The Standard Bank Group is 20 percent owned by China's biggest bank, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), by assets. Through this strategic partnership, the bank is increasingly exploring opportunities to expand cooperation into new areas of business.

"We want to use this bond to help our Chinese business community in Namibia not only to network, but also to transact

and do business in a more seamless manner," Cloete said.

"In retail banking, we are working together to introduce new solutions to facilitate personal remittances between Namibia and China," she added.

"This will enable online person-to-person and business-to-business direct international payments and will be managed by dedicated specialist teams, improving convenience and reducing costs for our customers,"

she said. Cloete said Standard Bank has already developed products for Namibian companies doing business with China, including hedging facilities in both U.S. dollar and Chinese yuan currencies, Customer Foreign Currency accounts for the appropriate currencies, electronic foreign exchange trading platform (e-Market), individual salary payments in yuan or U.S. dollar and letters of credit.

Why China inspires Africa

By Dr Mehari Taddele Maru

Contrary to what the West believes, Africans do not see themselves as victims of Chinese economic exploitation.

At the September 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing, African Union Chairperson and Rwandan President Paul Kagame applauded the Chinese aid and investment strategy in Africa as a source of “deep transformation”. Kagame argued that the cooperation between China and Africa is based on mutual respect and is for the benefit of both partners. This sentiment is perhaps shared by most African heads of states and governments if their attendance of the summit is anything to go by.

However, despite the African leadership’s embrace of China as a valued partner, the view that Beijing is a “predatory” actor in Africa, attempting to recolonise the continent is also ubiquitous in foreign policy circles, media narratives and academia.

Africa sees China differently than the West. The China-Africa relationship is currently being interpreted through two diametrically opposed perceptions.

The first of the two is a Sino-phobic one, mostly adopted in the West. For instance, in a recent policy briefing at the Heritage Foundation, US National Security Adviser John Bolton criticised China’s actions in Africa and claimed the continent has fallen victim to Beijing’s new colonialism. “China uses bribes, opaque agreements, and the strategic use of debt to hold states in Africa captive to Beijing’s wishes and demands,” Bolton said.

“Such predatory actions are sub-components of broader Chinese strategic initiatives, including ‘One Belt, One Road’ – a plan to develop a series of trade routes leading to and from China with the ultimate goal of advancing Chinese global dominance.”

Just like the US, other western governments, such as the UK and France, also see China’s engagement in Africa as a cause for concern. For them, China is a spoiler of peace in oil-rich countries such as South Sudan and Sudan, and a supporter of despots in African countries, such as Gabon. Moreover, they perceive China as a resource and energy-hungry giant, an exploiter of corrupt and incompetent governments, a trade opportunist, and a massive polluter of the African environment.

The second and opposing perception of

the partnership between Beijing and Africa is a pro-China one. This view is adopted mostly in Africa.

According to the proponents of this narrative, China is a saviour – a trustworthy ally of Africa. They view China, a country that does not have a history of colonial aspirations in Africa, as a partner which could provide much-needed funding without any strings attached. They also believe Beijing understands and respects Africa’s priorities.

Moreover, China has a reputation among African countries for being an actor that respects other cultures and states. This view is widely held by many African heads of state.

Much of the academic literature on the China-Africa partnership unjustifiably perpetuates the Sino-phobic narrative. The media also wrongly portrays China as a predatory actor in Africa. For instance, while it is widely reported that China invests more in the extractive industry than in other sectors, the fact that the extractive industry amounts only to one-third of the total Chinese investment in Africa is barely mentioned.

The other two-thirds of China’s investment in Africa is in infrastructure, construction, electricity production, manufacturing and finance. In fact, compared with the US and other developed countries, China’s share in extractive investments in Africa, in the form of mining, for example, is lower.

Africa is not a victim of Chinese ‘colonisation’

The Sino-phobic narrative championed by the West portrays African nations as passive collaborators, as mere victims of a second “colonisation” wave. However, this is not the case.

Africans are well aware of the shortcomings of Chinese assistance and business in Africa – from an imbalance in trade to hefty debt, from poor quality goods to corrupt practices.

responsibility for some of these shortcomings, but also acknowledge that the weaknesses of African regulatory and enforcement mechanisms, as well as self-serving governments, are the main culprits. They know that Chinese companies, like many others, exploit the weaknesses of African states for their advantage. They believe it is their own governments, and not China that need to make

Why Africa loves China

The debt trap is not an inevitable outcome of loans: As President Kagame said, the outcome “depends on us Africans”. The key factor that determines the success of Chinese loans to Africa is whether or not African governments use such loans for productive capital investment. For these investments to succeed, African governments need to be accountable

to the people of Africa. This is not the responsibility of China or any other non-African country, for that matter; rather it is Africans who are responsible to ensure accountability.

There are some obvious reasons that make China a preferred partner for Africa. For Africans, China has four major attractions: Unconditional soft loans and access to capital; quick delivery of services and cheap goods; funding of peacekeeping; and an alternative development model.

First, China’s unconditional cooperation has allowed African governments to enjoy access to finance, expertise and development

aid. In 2016, the trade between China and Africa reached \$128bn, a drastic surge from \$1bn in 1980.

At FOCAC in Beijing this year, China offered \$60bn for development financing until 2021. While the financial crises in the US and EU limited their investments in Africa, China committed to investing more in the continent.

Chinese soft loans have enabled many

African governments to avoid pressure from global governance institutions such as IMF and World Bank to meet Western norms of accountability and conditionality related to political and economic reforms, such as the infamous structural adjustment that does not always serve the interest of Africans.

Second, China has aided African governments to meet their people’s rapidly growing demands for services and infrastructure more quickly. Many people in Africa are now used to quick delivery of services – such as transportation, education, health and telecommunication – by Chinese companies. This has created, and will continue to create, more appetite for Chinese business in Africa.

Third, China is now also engaged in peace and security projects in Africa. Chinese troops participate in eight UN peacekeeping missions of which five are in Africa. Moreover, China is the second largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping missions and it also contributed funding to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the IGAD South Sudan mediation.

Fourth, China’s history of fast and successful economic growth is a model from which many lessons could be learned in Africa. China’s capacity to ensure policy sovereignty remains relevant, and highly attractive to African leaders and scholars. According to the World Bank, in about 40 years, China has lifted about 800 million people out of poverty through its untraditional path of development. Notably, it has achieved many of the Millennium Development Goals.

Africans should take a page from China’s playbook on development and sovereignty. They can keep their home in order and also make the best out of the competition between great powers and regional players whether they are from the West, Far East or the Middle East.

As things stand, China is already winning the hearts and the minds of Africans. The West will have to either change tact or forever play catch up.

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect African Daily Voice’s editorial stance.

Dr Mehari Taddele Maru is a scholar of peace and security, law and governance, and human rights and migration issues.



Chinese President Xi Jinping stands with African leaders during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing on Sept. 3.

Africans also know that many Chinese investors lack considerations of sustainability and that some business dealings are in some instances incompatible with the national interests of African countries. Furthermore, Africans recognise that Chinese businesses rarely fight corrupt practices and seek to avoid accountability.

Africans expect China to take some

sure Africa is not exploited.

As a result, Africans see the Western criticisms of the China-Africa cooperation with serious reservations. At the FOCAC meeting in September, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa summarised the African position by saying that Africa “refutes the view that a new colonialism is taking hold in Africa as our detractors would have us believe.”

Agreement signed to study Asia-Africa power grid plan

A China-led organization will help promote a project to connect some power grids between Asia and Africa, and plan to complete the feasibility study this year.

Global Energy Interconnection Development Cooperation Organization, initiated by China, the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity of Ethiopia, and the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority

signed an agreement over the weekend to jointly work on the Ethiopia-Gulf Interconnection project.

According to the agreement, the three parties will conduct research on the necessity, economy, business model and possible transmission route.

They will establish a joint working group to complete the project's pre-feasibility study within 12 months. Ethiopia is rich in hydropower resources,

most of which remain untapped.

According to GEIDCO, through grid interconnection, clean hydropower from Ethiopia can be transmitted to the Gulf countries, which can help turn resource advantages in Africa into economic advantages.

In addition, the project also can help to meet the demand for electricity during the summer peak season of power consumption in the Gulf

region, cut down the electricity tariff and save energy costs.

The move was a major part of the global energy interconnection. As a combination of smart grid, ultra high voltage grid and clean energy, GEI represents a modern energy system that is dominated by clean energy, centered on electricity and featured with a high level of connectivity, co-development and sharing.

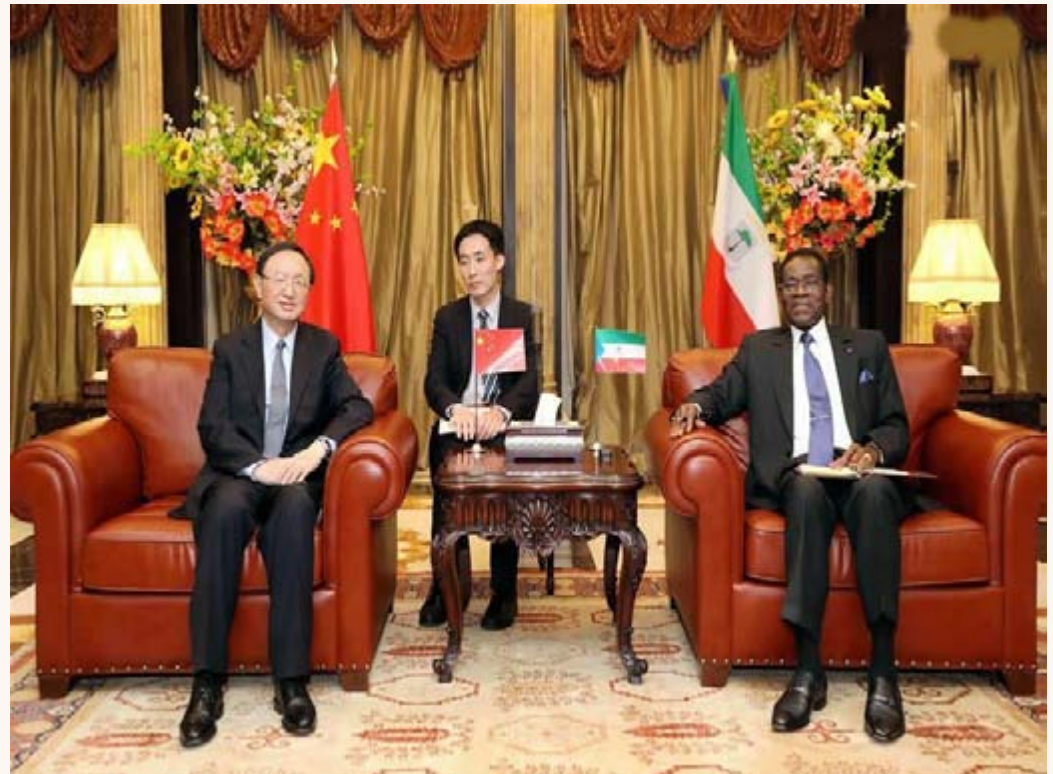
China, Equatorial Guinea pledge to strengthen cooperation

President of Equatorial Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo HAVE met with visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative Yang Jiechi with both sides pledging to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

Yang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, said bilateral friendship has a long history and has become increasingly solid with the passage of time.

The two countries' presidents had a fruitful meeting during the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and reached important consensus on bilateral relations, said Yang, adding that his visit is aimed at deepening communication with Equatorial Guinea to implement the consensus and results of the summit.

Noting that China will follow the principles of sincerity, real results, affinity and good faith, as well as the approach of upholding justice and pursuing shared interests put forward by Xi, Yang said China is willing to work with Equatorial Guinea to deepen exchanges of governance



Yang Jiechi (L), Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative, and a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, meets with President of Equatorial Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, last month

experience and continue to support each other on issues concerning their core interests.

In efforts to construct the Belt and Road and implement the eight major initiatives proposed at the Beijing summit, China will strengthen pragmatic cooperation with Equatorial Guinea, support its economic diversification and bring benefits

to its people, so as to elevate the two countries' comprehensive cooperative partnership to a higher level, said Yang.

For his part, Obiang described China as an important cooperation partner, saying his country appreciated the fact that China has for long provided vigorous support and assistance for Equatorial Guinea.

Obiang said Equatorial Guinea welcomes more Chinese companies to invest in the country, which is willing to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with China.

Equatorial Guinea will continue to promote communication and coordination with China on international and regional affairs, Obiang added.

China, Cameroon agree to boost cooperation

Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative Yang Jiechi and Cameroonian President Paul Biya have agreed to further boost bilateral cooperation.

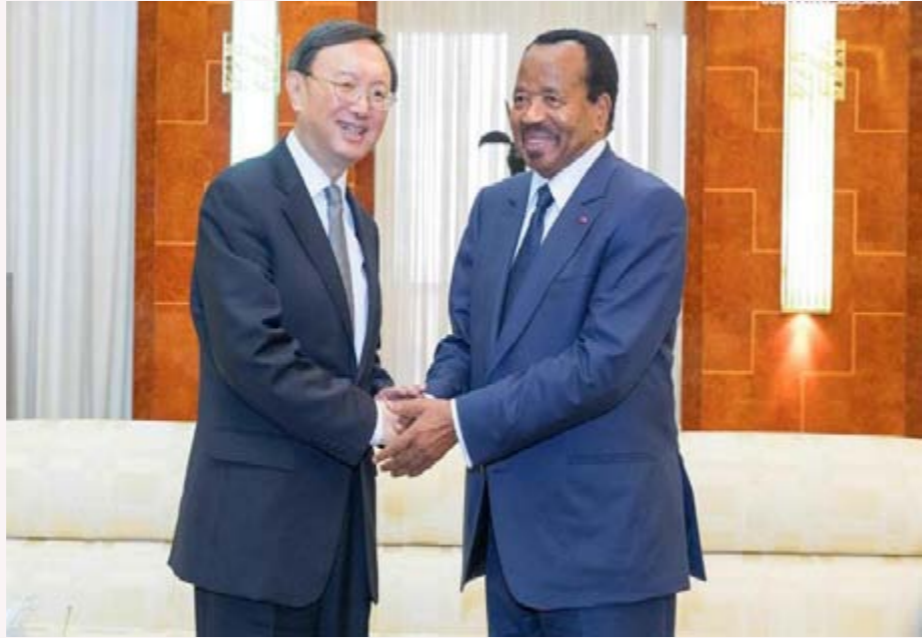
Yang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, said the China-Cameroon friendship has a long history and has withstood the test of time and international vicissitudes.

President Paul Biya paid a visit to China last year and attended the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), reaching important consensus with Xi, said Yang, adding that the bilateral relations has come to a new starting point in history with important opportunities for development.

Yang said the visit is aimed at strengthening communication with Cameroon and boosting the implementation of the consensus reached by the two presidents and the outcome of the summit, so as to elevate the friendly cooperation to a higher level.

Yang called on both sides to broaden friendly exchanges at all levels, jointly push forward the Belt and Road construction, deepen pragmatic cooperation in various fields, and promote people-to-people exchanges.

China will help Cameroon develop its economy and improve people's livelihood, continue mutual support on issues concerning each other's core



Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative Yang Jiechi, left, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, meets with Cameroonian President Paul Biya in Yaounde, Cameroon, last month.

interests and major concerns, and promote communication and collaboration on international and regional issues, said Yang.

For his part, Biya said Cameroon attaches great importance to the ties with China, appreciates its support and assistance, and hopes that China will make greater achievements in its development.

Biya said that Cameroon highly appreciates the Belt and Road Initiative, and supports the cooperation under the

framework of the FOCAC.

Cameroon is ready to work with China to implement the results of the Beijing Summit, and advance the bilateral relations to a new stage, said Biya.

The country is willing to communicate and coordinate with China more closely in multilateral affairs, Biya added.

During the visit, Yang also met with Cameroonian Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute and Foreign Minister Lejeune Mbella Mbella.

Africa Union Commission chief congratulates China on successful landing of Chang'e-4 lunar probe

The chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, has congratulated China on the successful landing of the Chang'e-4 lunar probe on the far side of the moon.

The chairperson of the bloc of 55 member states made the remarks during his meeting with Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the AU headquarters in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa.

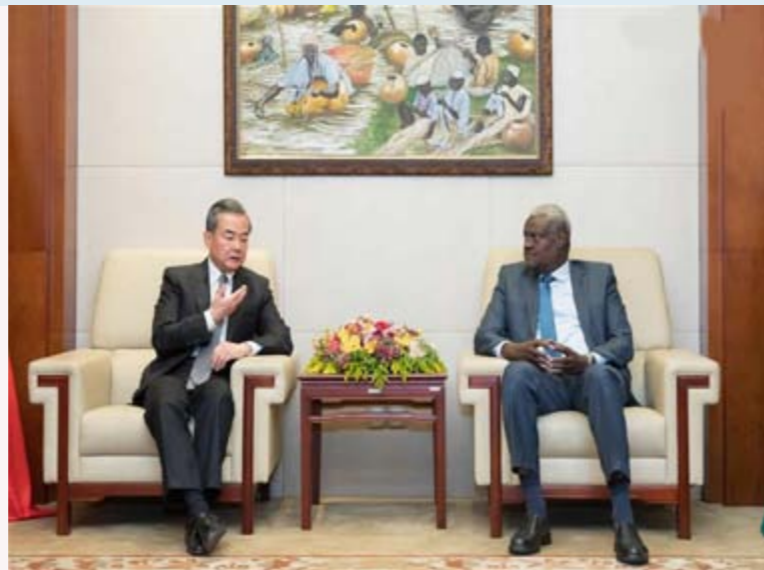
"I would like to express my warm congratulations on the successful landing of the Chinese Chang'e-4 lunar probe on the far side of the moon

yesterday," the Chairperson said.

"For humans, the moon is out of reach, but with its super-scientific capabilities, China has successfully achieved this landing event, making history," he added.

Reiterating that Africa, a friend of China, is happy about the successful event that China has already made, Faki expressed the hope that African countries would strengthen cooperation with China in science and technological innovation.

The Chang'e-4 lunar probe was launched on Dec. 8, 2018, comprising a lander and a rover, landed on the far side of the moon on January 3rd 2019.



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi (L) holds talks with Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Jan. 4, 2019.

Ugandan parliament speaker urges schools to teach Chinese language

The speaker of the Ugandan Parliament Rebecca Kadaga has urged schools in the East African country to teach Chinese language and culture.

Kadaga, who was visiting St. Michael International School, said that Ugandans should strive to learn more than one foreign language.

She said that learning the Chinese language would open up opportunities for locals to work in Chinese companies and also do business in China.

"What is stopping Ugandans from getting jobs from other countries is language problem and that's the reason why I am encouraging Ugandans to learn more languages specifically the Chinese, because we have many Chinese investors in the country who will need

translators as they carry on their businesses in the country," she said.

"I am focusing on Chinese language because I know Chinese are here to offer our people jobs and people who know their language will be the first people to have those jobs and that's why even Uganda schools should also think of teaching students Chinese and other languages to increase their chances of getting jobs," Kadaga added.



A Chinese teacher teaches Ugandan secondary school teachers Chinese language in Kampala.

Starting this month, supposed to start teaching the Chinese language. Some private schools in the country have already started teaching Chinese. Secondary schools are

Chinese, Sudanese leaders exchange congratulations on 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Sudanese counterpart Omar al-Bashir have exchanged congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In his congratulatory message to the Sudanese president, Xi said Sudan is one of the first African countries to establish diplomatic relations with China.

Over the past 60 years, bilateral relations have been developing in a healthy and stable manner, and cooperation in various fields has yielded fruitful results. In 2015, the two countries established a strategic partnership, said Xi, adding that he is satisfied.

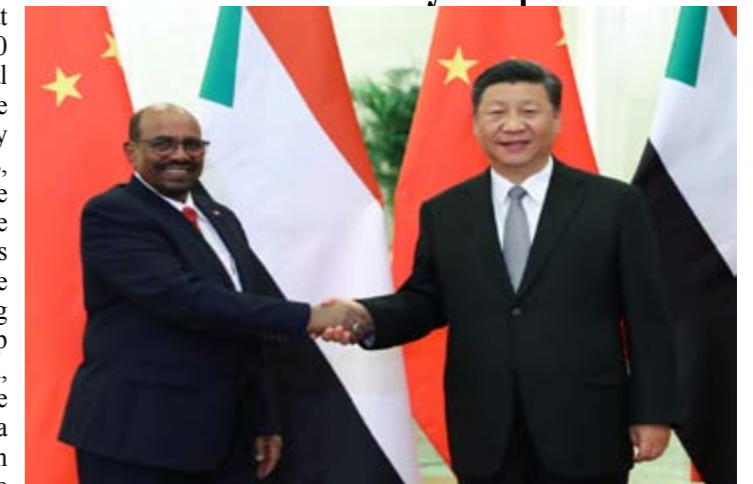
Xi said he attaches great importance to the development of China-Sudan relations and is willing to work together with the Sudanese president to take the opportunity of the 60th anniversary to deepen various cooperation within the framework of the joint construction of the Belt and Road and implement the outcome of the Beijing summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, so as to push forward the strategic partnership to continue achieving new and greater development.

In his congratulatory message to Xi, Omar al-Bashir said the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic ties is a major event of profound historical significance.

Noting that over the past 60 years, bilateral relations have developed steadily in various fields, the Sudanese president said the Sudanese side is willing to continue strengthening their friendship and cooperation, respond to the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, as well as actively participate in the Belt and Road construction, so as to push the strategic partnership to a higher level.

Also on Monday, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Prime Minister of Sudan Motazz Moussa exchanged congratulatory messages.

Li said in his congratulatory message that China attaches great importance to the development of bilateral relations and is willing to work together with the Sudanese government to take the 60th anniversary as a new starting point to expand and deepen



President Xi Jinping meets with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Sept 2, 2018.

mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields, and continuously enhance the well-being of the two peoples.

In his message to Li, Motazz said that the 60th anniversary is an important milestone in the history of bilateral relations.

The Sudanese side will work together with China to continue deepening mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries and promote the continuous development of their traditional friendship, so as to benefit the two peoples, said Motazz.

China lines up multi-billion dollar projects for Zimbabwe

China has lined-up several multi-sectoral billion dollar investment projects for Zimbabwe for this year, covering mining, manufacturing, steel and hospitality sectors, senior diplomats from both countries have said.

In a joint interview with Zimbabwe Independent, the acting Chinese ambassador to Zimbabwe, Zhao Baogang and Zimbabwe's ambassador to China Paul Chikawa said there was a boom in expressions of interest by top Chinese companies keen on investing in Zimbabwe.

However, the diplomats warned that the civil unrest, which rocked the country recently, in which the army and the police violently quelled protests over economic hardships across major cities leading to 12 deaths, could scare away some investors.

China, the single largest foreign direct investment source for Zimbabwe in nearly two decades, invested US\$3 billion in the country last year. The figure is smaller than what other African countries are attracting from Beijing. Zhao said the Chinese embassy would ensure that Zimbabwe this time enjoys a significant portion of the US\$60 billion which Chinese president Xi Jinping pledged to finance projects in Africa in the form of assistance, investment and loans at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (Focac) meeting in Beijing in September last year. Zimbabwe has been outdone by other African countries in terms of accessing the money.

"This is the year of action by the Chinese government and business here," Zhao said.

The diplomats revealed that several prospective Chinese investors have already been to Zimbabwe this year, while others visited the country and met with senior government officials and potential business partners in the country, while others are making offshore investment inquiries.

Chikawa said two Chinese companies from Sichuan Province in China have expressed interest in investing in lithium mining. "I am due to meet potential investors from Sichuan province. They are interested in lithium. But in our conversations, I have made it clear that we would rather have the whole value chains. So, I can confirm that my office has been approached in respect of this," he said.

Last year, Australia Stock Exchange-listed company Prospect Resources Plc, invested US\$165 million into mining lithium through its Arcadia Lithium project located 38 kilometres east of Harare.

The company's definitive feasibility study says the project has capacity to generate nearly US\$3 billion in export revenue.

Zhao said two more Chinese companies are planning to invest in mining the same mineral at Kamativi in Matabeleland North province. "Two companies are also coming and their teams are already in Zimbabwe to discuss some potential projects with Zimbabwe. They say some progress has been achieved. It is at Kamativi," Zhao said.

Lithium has gained global significance due to its expanding use in electric vehicle batteries. Lithium demand has also grown as industrialised nations lead the charge towards reduced carbon emissions while use of lithium-ion batteries for home electronics and medicinal drugs has also expanded.

Chikawa also said another Chinese company had expressed interest in investing in Zimbabwe's defunct steel industry, but declined to divulge its identity since negotiations are still in progress.

Last year, Chinese billionaire investor Zhang Li, worth US\$3.9 billion according to Forbes, came to Zimbabwe to pursue a deal to revive Ziscosteel. Zhang co-chairs real estate developer Guangzhou R&F which has property in 28 cities, mostly in China.

Shoemaker Huajian Group is also set to set up a US\$2 billion shoe factory in Zimbabwe which will be the second largest such plant after the one it established in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where it has been one of the most outstanding success stories for recent Chinese investment in Africa.

Both diplomats said the leather company recently despatched a "mid-level delegation" to Zimbabwe, where



President Emmerson Mnangagwa and acting Chinese ambassador to Zimbabwe exchange gift before a media, in Harare.

it is engaging government on the possibility of setting up factory.

"This company is from Guangdong Province in south China and it is in the light industrial manufacturing sector and is already established in Ethiopia. It set up shop for leather wear exports there in just three months. This is an investor who is excited. He wants to go the whole value chain from cattle to leather. In addition, he wants to do other projects like mining, manufacturing and tourism. As I speak to you, a mid-level delegation was in the country and they only left on January 13," Chikawa said.

"If this deal is going to go through, it is projected that it is going to create 15 000 jobs. This is part of a grand plan of this investor to expand his Ethiopian investment into about five other countries and Zimbabwe has been designated as the second destination outside Ethiopia," Chikawa added.

Zhao said Jinan Sinotruck Co. Ltd, a Chinese light truck maker, is keen to partner with struggling Mutare-based Quest Motors to produce light trucks in huge volumes. Quest Motors' capacity utilisation is currently below 5%. Zhao said more Chinese companies are exploring business interests in agriculture, especially the production of citrus fruits, and also in rail. He said another company recently set up a factory to manufacture furniture in Zimbabwe using local timber. Some of the furniture, he said, would be for export.

Another company recently bought land near the site of the new Zimbabwe parliament in Mt Hampden, just outside Harare, where it will construct a five-star hotel.

The new parliament being constructed under a US\$677 million grant from China Aid, a Chinese government-owned global development aid agency, is billed to herald a massive construction project for a completely new densified capital, which will serve at least 1.2 million people.

However, he said some investors were concerned by the violence which swept across the country last week.

"We sincerely hope that the government and the different political parties in the country can work together to resolve the issue and stabilise the country. If you go onto the streets and burn tyres and barricade the road, then you scare away the investors. You scare away the tourists. That has a huge damage to the economy.

Acrimony is never a compass towards where the country wants to go," Zhao said, also urging government to be consistent in policy-making.

"We hope that you continue to craft good policies to provide preferential treatment to investors. I can see that, sometimes, when investors make money here, then you close down those shops -- there is a problem. When you see that they might achieve profits, and then you change policies and conditions of cooperation, change the terms. That is very bad," he said.

Africa offers opportunities for fintech development

Digital financial inclusion could become a highlight in China-Africa collaboration, with great potential for social benefits and business success ready to be unleashed, experts said.

"Africa is extremely interested in China's practice of digital financial inclusion, or how China has leveraged digital technologies to make financial services accessible for previously underserved small businesses and individuals," said Bei Duoguang, president of the Chinese Academy of Financial Inclusion, or CAFI, which functions under the aegis of Renmin University of China.

"Different from the typical route of developing a financial system, Africa wants to skip the step of establishing a mature bank system but directly use digital finance to boost inclusive, sustainable growth," said Bei, citing his experience communicating with financial practitioners in Africa.

Making financial services more accessible for small businesses is important for Africa's industrialization, the key to economic development, according to

the 2017 annual report of the African Development Bank, the continent's premier development financial institution.

In the future, Bei continued, the Chinese government could encourage fintech companies' investment and development in Africa, as a way to better promote the Belt and Road Initiative and strengthen the ties between China and African countries.

Under the initiative, collaboration in the construction of railways, ports, complexes and other infrastructure has borne some fruit in recent years, helping to integrate and modernize the African continent.

"Pushing forward financial inclusion could complement infrastructure construction projects, as it focuses more on improving the quality of lives of less-advantaged groups," Bei said.

In general, the African continent has no developed banking systems, but boasts a notable development of mobile technologies, said Xing Zhen, deputy director of China-related programs for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The private

foundation is based in the United States and aims to enhance healthcare and reduce extreme poverty.

"In sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty alleviation is a focus, the foundation of digital financial inclusion has largely been laid. In countries such as Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, the number of residents with mobile payment accounts has far outnumbered those with traditional bank accounts," Xing added.

But, the continent still lacks capital, modern business models, technologies and talents to transfer this foundation into a vibrant digital financial services ecosystem that can benefit financially underserved individuals and small businesses, Xing said.

"That is where Chinese companies can get involved not only for the social benefits but for business success as well," Xing said.

Underpinned by well-developed online payment systems, China's fast-growing fintech sector has made financial services such as lending, insurance and wealth management more accessible and affordable. Moreover, Ant Financial and other fintech giants have introduced their

business models and technologies into neighboring Asian countries.

However, such investments, Xing said, have not extended into Africa, leaving great potential to be unleashed.

China is stepping up efforts to fulfill that potential. In May, a one-week learning trip aimed at helping Chinese digital finance practitioners better understand Africa will be held in Kenya, initiated by CAFI and sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The country's major fintech players plan to participate, such as JD Finance and Ant Financial. The trip will be part of CAFI's initiative to build a platform facilitating collaboration and investment of digital financial inclusion between China and Africa.

"The absence of Chinese players in Africa's digital financial industry is partly due to the lack of understanding of the related opportunities. We want to fill the gap by facilitating communication and fostering pioneer cooperation projects," Xing said.

China to support expansion of Ghana's medical university

China has pledged its support to help Ghana expand the University of Health and Allied Sciences located at Ho, 180 km northeast of the capital, Accra.

At a brief ceremony, Chinese Ambassador to Ghana Wang Shiting and Ghana's Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta signed a formal note on behalf of their respective country for the grant support.

Wang said the signing of the document was an indication that "the Chinese government will support the construction of the second phase of the project for the University of Health and Allied Sciences."

"This is a gift from the Chinese government and its people to the Ghanaian government and its people. It is also a milestone in the friendship between our two countries," he said.

The first phase of the project covering a land area of 10,386 square meters was also funded by the Chinese government. The

project which was handed over to the government of Ghana in September 2015 consisted of equipment for the school of basic and biomedical science, lecture halls, libraries, student housing facilities and senior staff residential area.

The second phase, to be situated on a land area of 29,200 square meters, will include a new administration building, College of Nursing and Midwifery, duty and equipment room, and other supporting facilities.

"We have reason to believe that after the project is completed the University of Health and Allied Sciences will become one of the most beautiful and modern universities in Ghana," Wang said.

The diplomat assured the Ghanaian government that the cooperation between the two countries in the area

of education would not end with this amount agreed upon for the project since China stands ready to share its experience with Ghana as education allies supporting the government is the key to any country's development of Ghana to promote sustainable growth and reduce poverty," the minister said.

On his part, Ofori-Atta lauded the Chinese government for surpassing the



The University of Health and Allied Sciences located at Ho will soon be expanded by the Chinese government.



Chinese ambassador to Nigeria, Dr. Zhou Pingjian (middle) with some Nigeria's government officials at the event of Chinese new year or spring festival in Abuja.



China launches biennial expo to boost reciprocal trade with Africa

A date has now been set for the first joint Sino-African trade expo. Between June 18 and 20, the China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo will kick off in Changsha, the capital of central China's Hunan province. Officials will sign bilateral agreements during the exhibition, engage in investment promotions, and establish a "new mechanism" for future economic cooperation.

The expo is part of a slew of promises made by president Xi Jinping during last September's Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing. During his speech to African leaders, Xi proposed eight initiatives aimed at pursuing a "win-win" strategy giving new impetus to economic, political, and security collaboration. Xi had

specifically pointed to the changing global dynamics, noting how the international order was changing and emerging nations were rising.

To solidify relations, Xi had said Beijing will launch an industrial promotion initiative aimed at encouraging Chinese companies to

Continental Free Trade Area, and give 100,000 scholarship and training opportunities to young Africans.

Xi also said Beijing will exempt least developed African states from paying exhibition fees at its annual high-level China International Import Expo.

After all, Chinese lending to the continent jumped tenfold in the last five years, a borrowing spree that many worry could push debt limits to unsustainable levels.

Beijing has, however, pushed against these sentiments, committing \$60 billion in 2018 to development

projects in Africa over the next three years. President Xi has also said saying China won't impose its will or interfere in African countries' internal affairs — a point praised by leaders like Tanzania's president John Magufuli.

Committing to a shared trade fair with a continent of 55 nations, 1.2 billion people, and a combined gross domestic product of \$2.5 trillion is a win for China, especially

in the face of US protectionism and global economic uncertainty. As Xi observed in FOCAC last September, "No one who keeps himself in isolation on a single island will have a future."

China's commitment to balancing the "win-win" strategy with Africa comes as it faces allegations from American officials and others of encouraging dependency and debt.



Senegalese pavilion staged at the first China International Import Expo in Shanghai, east China

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



Published monthly by Centre for China Studies

EDITORIAL/PRODUCTION TEAM:

Editor-in-Chief: Charles Onunaiju
Production/Secretary: Salawu Abdulrahman