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PREVIEW POLICY REPORT FOR THE 2018 FOCAC SUMMIT

As the Belt and Road Initiative takes centerstage, experts point to increased Sino-African collaboration

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| Foreword |

ERIK SOLHEIM

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China's engagement in Africa will be one of the defining moves of the 21st century. We see a new level of cooperation opening up new trade routes, unlocking development potential, and transforming economies and the global political landscape.

It's also critical that this development unfolds in such a way that people and the planet can continue to exist in harmony, so that Africa's rich environment, biodiversity and natural capital is preserved for generations to come.

In this report, officials, scholars and business leaders reflect on multiple aspects of Sino-Africa cooperation, against the backdrop of the turbulent changes and huge challenges unfolding around the globe. Topics such as international relations, infrastructure, poverty alleviation, environmental protection and people-to-people exchanges are addressed.

This opportunity to reflect on a multitude of crucial issues is offered by the China Watch Institute, the think tank powered by China Daily, and comes ahead of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, or FOCAC.

This is the second such preview report, after the Sino-EU summit report, produced in collaboration with Belgium-based College of Europe in July ahead of the Beijing-Brussels summit. And more works are on the horizon – ahead of the G20 and on the outlook for next year.

What is clear is that as the world is transformed, we must take time to reflect, examine and analyze. The detailed and thought-provoking content here is an opportunity to help us do just that. It is my hope that debate and discussion – particularly on environmental issues connected to China's relations with Africa – will continue to be invigorated.

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How China has made a mark in Africa

Beijing adopts an approach of mutual interest, respect and equality without interfering in the affairs of others

By ***ESSAM ABDEL-AZIZ SHARAF***, former prime minister of Egypt

In his 1996 speech entitled "Toward a New Historical Step for Sino-African Friendship" at the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity, then Chinese president Jiang Zemin put forward a five-point proposal on developing a long-term and stable relationship between China and Africa for the 21st century. The key components of the proposal were sincere friendship, treating each other on an equal footing, solidarity and cooperation, common development and a future-oriented relationship.

China has faithfully implemented this proposal in Africa. China's aid is not tied to political conditions, nor does it force Africans to do something they do not want, and it does not make empty promises. As we learned from John-Paul Sartre: "We are not what we say, but what we do." Therefore, the reason for Sino-African convergence is that what China does.

What matters most to us is, how has China reached Africa? How has China, with all geographic factors separating it from Africa, managed to achieve all this success and made its presence in the continent a remarkable phenomenon?

To answer this fundamental question, we need to understand the foundations of the relationship between China and Africa. I say that this is due to soft diplomacy, because it is not based on armed force but on culture, political values and economic and diplomatic relations, according to Harvard professor Joseph Samuel Nye, in his book *The Rise of China's Soft Power*. The idea of "soft change" adopted by China in Africa after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, is a very effective way of bringing about benefit for Africa and China; and on the fact that it was never an occupying power in Africa. China also does not interfere in the internal affairs of African countries, which increases the respect of African leaders and elites toward China.

There is no doubt that this rational human development policy has led to China's economic, political, military and cultural influence on our continent and around the world.

What China has achieved is represented by dynamic and active mechanisms. Trade between China and Africa increased more than 200-fold from $765 million in 1978 to $170 billion in 2017. In the first five months of 2018, China-Africa trade increased 17.7 percent year-on-year to about $82 billion. About 3,100 Chinese companies have invested in Africa on projects in transportation, energy, telecommunications, industrial zones, agricultural technology centers, water supply, schools and hospitals.

The establishment of infrastructure has become one of the priorities of China-Africa cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, covering areas such as railways, highways, ports and power generation.

In 2015, China announced 10 cooperation plans between China and Africa to help the continent accelerate industrialization and agricultural modernization. A $10 billion China-Africa Fund for Industrial Cooperation has also been set up to support projects such as economic zones and industrial zones.

Let us also see what Africa can offer China to demonstrate the need for each other. The African continent is made up of 54 countries, which represent the world's largest promising market with a population of more than 1.2 billion people, an area of 30 million square kilometers (20 percent of the world's land mass). The continent needs to build everything, so major global economic powers, including China, see it as a land of great potential. Markets on other continents are no longer able to stimulate the world economy because their investment and consumption are near saturation. The African continent, which is growing at an annual rate of 5.8 percent, has about 124 billion barrels of oil reserves, which account for about 12 percent of the world's reserves. Its natural gas reserves account for about 10 percent of the world's total reserves, with about 500 trillion cubic meters of natural gas reserves. Africa also has other natural and primary resources, producing about 90 percent of the world's platinum, 40 percent of diamonds, 30 percent of uranium, 27 percent of cobalt, and 9 percent of the iron ore; and 50 percent of gold reserves.

Agriculture is one of the most important economic activities in Africa, thanks to the diversity of the climate and the abundance of rivers. Two thirds of its people are engaged in agriculture. It is one of the largest sources of agricultural products such as coffee, cotton and cocoa. Africa also has many forests, which produce large quantities of timber, this in addition to the massive fish stocks.

China has adopted an approach of mutual interest, respect and equality without interfering in the affairs of others. China has built 3,300 kilometers of roads, 30 hospitals, 50 schools and 100 power plants in more than 40 African countries, sending business people and doctors. It has also sent about 1,600 doctors to rural areas.

In October 2000, China initiated the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) to promote trade and investment relations in the public and private sectors, which put China-Africa economic relations on the fast track.

In 2012, the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC in Beijing endorsed a plan of action for 2013-15, whereby African countries receive concessional loans from China for $20 billion to develop agricultural and industrial infrastructure for self-development and sustainable development. The number of Chinese companies or their branches is estimated at more than 2,000 (700 in 2005), and they are active in agriculture, mining, construction and reconstruction, trade and investment, processing of resource products, manufacturing and commercial logistics. China has trained 30,000 Africans and provides 18,000 scholarships for African students; China bases its vision on the grounds that "cultural communication" is a guaranteed alternative to see the true face of China's ancient civilization, not as an economic power that comes to drain the resources of the continent.

The conclusion is that the 21st century has seen the rise of new powers on the world stage and the decline of other traditional powers; and signs of "alternative globalization" that challenges Western influence and limits its power. In this context, China is emerging as a non-Western country that is rapidly advancing on the world stage, introducing alternative policies and practices, especially in development models. In the broader context, "alternative globalization" can be described as a set of values that establishes an alternative to existing practices, institutions, policies and resources. In this regard, we can note that since the founding of New China, Beijing's role at the global level has become increasingly important, driven by economic growth, industrial and technological development, and the mobilization of political, economic and cultural instruments for international recognition as a major force to serve the concept of "alternative globalization".

China's relationship with Africa has evolved over the course of more than 60 years to become more profound and powerful, turning into a distinct partnership that reflects China's growing influence in Africa, and provides a possible alternative to the influence of Western power structures and culture in Africa. China's flexible use of multilateral foreign policy tools – as I always repeat – from the use of political tools to the economy and culture has helped to cement the Chinese footprint in Africa. ◆

Why Beijing must export 'ecological civilization'

By ***ERIK SOLHEIM***, under-secretary-general of the United Nations and executive director of the UN Environment

Decision to ban the sale of ivory deserves huge praise, and is a beginning to the endeavor of protecting our planet

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Veteran poachers have killed so many elephants that they can often imitate the screams the animals make when speared. They can tell you how other elephants howl in distress when they see one of their own felled. Calves have been known to circle the disfigured body of their mother for days in mourning, even until their own death.

Behind the savagery visited on these magnificent, highly sensitive and intelligent creatures lies greed and a desire for shiny objects – sometimes rooted in trends, and sometimes tradition. It began with the early white settlers, with ivory becoming one of the great prizes of the colonial era. In recent years, however, demand has skyrocketed to match the rise in global consumer wealth, and poaching has reached an industrial scale.

Over the past decade, poachers have slaughtered more than 100,000 African elephants for their ivory – more than one quarter of the population. Many of the tusks ended up in China and other parts of Asia, where they were turned into trinkets and marketed as status symbols.

Elephants are not the only victims. The illegal trade has generated enormous profits that feed corruption and financial criminal cartels, stoking instability around the world.

That is why China's decision to ban the sale of ivory nationally, to come in line with the international ban that has been in place since 1989, deserves huge praise. The government ban will shut down the legal trade in ivory, and establish a new narrative for China's worldview: as a leader for environmental action.

Surveys in China's three largest cities found that 95 percent of people supported the ban because they believed it would protect African elephants. Only a few years ago, similar surveys found that average people did not even realize that you have to kill an elephant to obtain ivory – as the word for ivory in Chinese means tooth – many people thought it was gathered without harm.

That the ban has such widespread support is a major victory. The fight to end the slaughter, however, is far from over. While the ban sends a strong message that ivory products are now taboo, the legal trade is only a very small part of the problem.

The bigger battle lies in tackling the far larger illegal trade. Reducing demand will be a key weapon in this fight but changing minds takes years of hard work – time that the world's dwindling population of elephants may not have. It is essential that we also come down hard on the supply chain. This means tackling the booming internet trade, strengthening law enforcement, smashing the criminal cartels running smuggling operations and disrupting the tax havens where they stash their money. Much of this will require improved security cooperation between China and countries in Africa where the slaughter, and initial trafficking, takes place.

China's influence in Africa is growing, and with the Belt and Road Initiative, it is certain to grow further. There are more than 1 million Chinese expats living in Africa. Chinese firms have a strong foothold in most of its 54 countries. China's reputation on the continent is also broadly positive. In attitude surveys, 70 percent of Africans say they view the country positively.

Better intelligence sharing with African countries could seriously disrupt the smuggling rackets and break the cartels. China could also strengthen anti-poaching teams – the embattled first line of defense against poachers – and support institutions that tackle corruption, including police and customs officials at African ports. Africa also needs expertise in eco-tourism and alternative livelihood programs that undermine the financial incentives for poaching.

Chinese businesses can also get involved. I was in South Africa recently for the African Ranger Awards Ceremony, where Jack Ma, the co-founder of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba, pledged his support for wildlife conservation. He said rangers should not only be given monetary support, but also the resources and technology they need to carry out their dangerous work. That's a great example of the positive role Chinese businesses can play.

Such steps could well see China go down in history as the savior of the African elephant and other precious species – something that would be an incredible legacy.

At home, China has made a series of giant strides toward addressing some of the country's toughest environmental challenges. It has installed the largest air-quality monitoring systems in the world to combat the smog that shrouds its cities. It is designing better, more energy-efficient cities and investing in cleaner forms of transport. It has pumped tens of billions of dollars into renewable energy – more than any other country, proving strong economic growth does not require high emissions. The transformation is incredible, and one that other countries need to emulate if the world is to reduce resource use while continuing to lift people from poverty.

These advances are part of China's ambitious vision to build what it calls an "ecological civilization" – an ambition that harks back to its ancient philosophy of harmony with nature. The modern-day plan is to create a resource-efficient, environmentally-friendly society that recognizes the environment for what it is: the bedrock of our economies and our way of life, and therefore fundamental to our survival.

By sharing its phenomenal development journey, China can help Africa leapfrog the rest of the world. That means helping African nations steer a more considered course to industrialization. China, after all, has suffered more from pollution than most nations, and has done more to tackle it. More broadly, it means showing that the old ways of development accompanied by environmental destruction can be broken.

Early human history often follows a sad pattern. Humans arrive in new lands and learn how to hunt the local wildlife for food. Large, plodding megafauna – America's mastodons and giant beavers, Australia's two-ton wombats and marsupial lions – tend to disappear first. The African elephant, which has roamed the earth for 60 million years, has so far bucked this trend.

Whether history repeats itself and humans wipe out yet another of the world's big beasts will depend greatly on how well ecological civilization is married to its development. ◆

China and Africa on new silk roads

By ***DAVID GOSSET***, special advisor to China Watch Institute, founder of the Europe-China Forum and the New Silk Road Initiative

Africa has embraced the Belt and Road Initiative as the most ambitious development project of our time

The notion of multipolarity captures the realities of the 21st century international dynamics. While the US operates to preserve its global supremacy, China and the relations it has built with the non-Western regions of the world have become increasingly significant.

In 2017, total trade between the second-largest economy in the world and the African continent was $170 billion. It is on path to surpass the more traditional economic exchanges between the European Union and Africa. As it is often the case with China, it is the speed of the change, not the change itself, which is the most remarkable.

Since 2005, China's foreign direct investment in 293 African projects has reached $66.4 billion, creating more than 130,000 jobs, according to Ernst and Young's Attractiveness Program published in May 2017.

A community of 20,000 African traders is active in the province of Guangdong, and more than 1 million overseas Chinese form a solid bridge between the two regions. In South Africa alone, more than 500,000 overseas Chinese contribute to the economy, while there are sizeable Chinese communities in Madagascar, Ethiopia, Angola and Nigeria.

More than 2,400 Chinese troops are active in seven United Nations peacekeeping missions across the African continent. The Chinese People's Liberation Army Support Base in Djibouti formally opened on August 1, 2017.

Thanks to more than 50,000 African students who have chosen Chinese universities to study, mutual understanding and appreciation between China and Africa have reached unprecedented levels.

With a mechanism like the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, or FOCAC, governments can plan the future of a relationship which will certainly further develop.

Contrary to what is generally assumed, relations between China and Africa did not start in the years following China's reform and opening-up.

During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the navigator Zheng He (1371-1433) sailed and reached the African continent. On what is known as the Zheng He's Navigation Map, or the Mao Kun Map, East Africa is represented.

Following the Afro-Asian Conference of Bandung in 1955, the People's Republic of China deepened its relations with the continent. From December 1963 to February 1964, Premier Zhou Enlai (1898-1976) visited 10 African countries: Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia.

It was a moment marked by the fight against imperialism and colonialism. But with an instrument like the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, the spirit of the Bandung Conference is still alive.

With the establishment of official relations between the People's Republic of China and South Africa in 1998 (during the apartheid regime, Pretoria had a strong connection with Taiwan province), the economic dimension of Sino-African relations became increasingly important.

In the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative that President Xi Jinping launched five years ago, relations between China and Africa have reached unprecedented heights, and they have to be interpreted in broader geopolitical terms.

While the ancient Silk Road that Ferdinand von Richthofen (1833-1905) described connected Europe and China, or more specifically the Roman Empire and the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), the 21st-century silk roads connect 1.4 billion Chinese with 1.2 billion Africans.

Taken as a geopolitical reality, "the Road" dimension of the Belt and Road Initiative is the realization of the significance of the Indian Ocean. In 2030, the population of Africa, India and China will make up half of the world's population.

It is in this context that the notion of an Indo-Pacific region has to be understood. By linking the Pacific and the Indian oceans in its global strategy, US President Donald Trump articulates what can certainly be seen as an answer to the Belt and Road Initiative and, by doing so, defines a renewed role in the Indian Ocean.

As US Secretary of Defense James Mattis explained at the Shangri-La Dialogue on June 2, 2018: "So, make no mistake, America is in the Indo-Pacific to stay. This is our priority theater."

Despite the regrettable US mistrust of the Belt and Road Initiative, Africa has embraced it with 20 countries already involved in what is the most ambitious international development project of our time.

In contrast, Beijing has been accommodating to the US' interests in the region and possible involvement with the Belt and Road Initiative, by saying that the Pacific Ocean is big enough for both China and the United States. But Beijing cannot accept an American hegemonic approach in the region.

Thabo Mbeki, president of South Africa from 1999 to 2008, famously articulated the notion of an African renaissance in a speech at the United

Nations University. However, better coordination and cooperation mechanisms between China, the African Union and the European Union, have to be established.

An annual summit bringing together the leaders of China and those of the African Union and the European Union would be in the interest of the three parties.

The only long-term solution to the migratory pressure that is dangerously fueling populism across the European Union is the stability and the prosperity of the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

A "China-India plus one" structure is in a preliminary phase so Beijing and New Delhi can work to coordinate their approach to Africa.

While some are tempted by the dangerous return to unilateralism, the synergies among China, India, Africa and the European Union are a concrete advancement toward the realization of "a community with a shared future for mankind". ◆

China leads the world in cooperation with Africa

Many developed economies, following Beijing's lead, have reformulated their policies to enhance their attractiveness

By ***ZENG AIPING***, associate research fellow and deputy director of the Department for Developing Countries Studies, China Institute of International Studies

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, or FOCAC, has been a success since the first meeting was held 18 years ago and provided the two sides an effective mechanism and platform for practical collaboration and collective consultation. Through FOCAC, China has established a new relationship with Africa, reshaping international cooperation paradigms and rules.

The great achievements of Sino-African cooperation have attracted attention all around world. China has not only enhanced Africa's international status, but also changed the cooperation mechanisms of other countries in Africa. Many developing countries have strengthened their cooperation with Africa. For example, India, Brazil, Turkey and Iran have adopted similar paths, including aid, investment and financing, trade and infrastructure. Many developed economies like the US, Europe and Japan have reformulated their policies to enhance their attractiveness to Africa.

Developed countries have also gradually adjusted their policies on Africa. Yet China is different from Western countries in policies and approaches to Africa. China's assistance is tangible, and transforming Africa, such as infrastructure. In contrast, the Western approach is more like diplomacy of values and ideologies. China's assistance, such as Chinese peacekeeping forces and stable policies based on equality, has won trust from African countries.

Developed economies such as the US, Europe and Japan are also interested in some of China's policies in Africa. In particular, US academic circles have conducted in-depth studies on China's role in Africa. As for Chinese investment in Africa and other economic aspects, the West declared that China aims to control Africa's economic lifeline through debts and increase Africa's economic dependence on China.

In fact, China attaches great importance to Africa's ability to repay debts. Mortgages will be granted only when industrial parks, built with Chinese investment, are proved to be operating in an efficient and diversified way. This shows that China is not trying to control Africa, and both sides respect each other on an equal basis.

FOCAC has contributed new ideas for international policies on Africa. China has demonstrated its respect and sincerity by setting up a new type of partnership. China's assistance to Africa is indelible, hailed by mainstream African public opinion. China-Africa cooperation is a South-South cooperation which achieves win-win results, and also take action to correct patterns of inequality. From the very beginning, China has made sure that African voices are fully reflected in FOCAC, which has a pragmatic mechanism to ensure implementation of plans and indeed meets the needs of Africa. Compared with previous gatherings such as Franco-African Summit, Africa-Europe Summit and US-African Leaders Summit, investments in

Africa and the summits have not shown the equality offered by China. Because China has no colonial history and has never acted superior to others, China gives Africa more choice than the West does.

With frequent reciprocal visits between Chinese and African leaders, China's willingness to invest in Africa without differential treatment can be seen, and China truly respects African nations' sovereignty.

In the past two years, China has made great contributions in terms of infrastructure, such as the Mombasa-Nairobi railway in Kenya, the Djibouti railway, the first light rail in Ethiopia and the modern railway project in Nigeria. China's timely investment can help Africa reinvigorate economy, create jobs, cultivate local human resources, and make up for African countries' deficits.

China has offered special loans for Africa's development, such as the China-Africa Fund for Industrial Cooperation, set up in 2015. China's assistance to Africa will boost Africa's development and lead the world's cooperation mechanism to Africa, while helping Africa to enhance its international status. ◆

A partner in progress

Strategically situated Morocco can bring expertise and experience to ensure the success of the Belt and Road Initiative

By ***MOHAMMED TAWFIK MOULINE***, director general of the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies in Morocco

Relations between China and Morocco are centuries old. From 1342 to 1344, Ibn Battouta, a Moroccan traveler, was the first to introduce China to the Western and Arab worlds.

Nowadays, the cooperation between the two countries is rich, diversified and fruitful. Since diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1958, Moroccan-Chinese friendship has continued to strengthen, fostered by mutual understanding, common commitments and the desire for a win-win partnership extending to all areas.

On the political level, cooperation between Morocco and China is marked by a convergence of points of view at both bilateral and multilateral levels, for instance, with regard to the issue of territorial integrity.

On global issues, the two countries have in common their commitment to the crucial challenges facing humanity and their involvement in cross-cutting issues such as peacekeeping, migration, climate change, among others. Over the past few years, Morocco has distinguished itself in the fight against the effects of climate change. Besides organizing COP22 in Marrakesh, Morocco hosted the first African Summit of Action and launched the Triple A initiative, aimed at adapting African agriculture to the challenge of climate change. At the same time, the kingdom has implemented an ambitious renewable energy program. China, for its part, has initiated several successful initiatives that have enabled it to durably reduce its carbon dioxide emissions. Both countries also have a clear willingness to share their experiences with partner countries. This is true of Morocco in Africa and of China with developing countries.

Morocco has attracted major Chinese companies (BAW, BYD, Haite Group, ZTE, Citic Dicastal ...) thanks to its political stability and its economic attractiveness. These firms accompany the transformation of the Moroccan economy toward growth sectors where China has accumulated significant experience, in particular the automotive, aeronautics and digitalization sectors.

China is Morocco's third largest trading partner with an overall trade volume of $4 billion with an annual average growth of 18.2 percent between 2001 and 2016.

Tourism also has great potential for cooperation. The removal in 2016 of entry visas for Chinese citizens has boosted trade and doubled the number of Chinese tourists visiting Morocco between 2016 and 2017.

Consecrating this rapprochement, Morocco and China concluded, during His Majesty the King's visit in 2016, a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation in sectors with high job creation potential and, in particular, the economic, financial, industrial, cultural, tourism, energy and infrastructure sectors.

A new milestone in bilateral relations between the kingdom and China and in triangular relations between China-Morocco-Africa and China-Morocco-Europe was Morocco's endorsement at the end of 2017 to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative. Indeed, the Kingdom of Morocco has shown its willingness to actively participate in the construction of this great project and to make use of its many assets so that this project, which is consistent with the "win-win" approach advocated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, can contribute to the development of the African continent.

Africa could play key roles in the new Silk Road:

Geographically: Africa is an inevitable part of the logistic network of the Belt and Road, being at the crossroads between Asia and Europe, the Indian and the Atlantic oceans, the Red and the Mediterranean seas.

Economically: Africa's need for infrastructures, such as good roads, railways, dams and schools, matches with the priorities settled by the creators of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Culturally: Africa is an ideal partner in promoting cultural diversity and civilizational dialogue.

In particular, with its diversifying economy, modern infrastructure (Tanger Med Port, airports, highways, high-speed train) and the wealth and quality of its partnerships with Europe and the United States, Morocco as a regional hub could play an active role in the deployment of the new Silk Road. Furthermore, thanks to their extensive experience in African markets, Moroccan companies are partners of choice for Chinese companies wishing to expand on the African continent. In addition, the reputation of the Kingdom of Morocco, its cultural and spiritual influence and its thousand-year-old ties with the peoples of Africa are an undeniable asset and offer important prospects for this great project.

To sum up, relying on Morocco's dedication for African prosperity and for the future of humankind, the new Silk Road could be a historical opportunity for Africa to achieve autonomous, sustainable and rapid development. The Kingdom of Morocco has a potential role by ensuring the

Silk Road project matches with African autonomous development goals and principles as well as with the African Union 2063 agenda. ◆

Technology transfer is solution for food security in Africa

China's programs have produced many successful cases, but they should be disseminated to wider areas

By ***TANG LIXIA***, professor of College of Humanities and Development Studies / China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture, China Agricultural University

After attaining independence, many African countries shifted the focus of development to agriculture, and some countries began to vigorously promote agricultural development. Agricultural production in Africa increased significantly in the 1960s, with average annual growth rate of 2.7 percent. With the development of grain crop production, Africa's self-sufficiency rate reached 96 percent during 1962-64, and 83 percent during 1972-74.

However, due to severe drought in the mid-1970s, agricultural growth slowed significantly and Africa's food self-sufficiency rate declined to 60-70 percent in the 1980s and 50 percent in the 1990s.

Moreover, food imports increased year by year, with grain imports increasing by 8.4 percent annually during 1970-80. In the 1980s, Africa's annual grain import was 20.4 million tons, which cost foreign exchange of about $5 billion.

From the 1980s to the 1990s, despite the fluctuation in grain imports, Africa's food consumption remained dependent on imports. In this period, 45 percent of wheat and 80 percent of rice were imported. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) statistics, from 2014 to 2016, about 30 percent of people in sub-Saharan Africa were affected by severe food insecurity, which was highest in the world.

Ever since it first provided 10,000 tons of food aid to Guinea in 1959, China has continuously endeavored to help strengthen food security in Africa. From the 1960s to early 1980s, China supported the construction of 87 agricultural and water conservancy projects. During this period, almost half of China's foreign agricultural aid projects were in Africa, including agricultural technology experiment stations, extension stations and farms.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, due to reforms in China's national development strategy and foreign assistance, China's agricultural aid to Africa focused on the sustainable transformation of previous aid projects.

Since 2000, agriculture has remained one of the priorities of China's policy in Africa. Under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation mechanism, China has adopted different modalities to promote agricultural development. To date, China has established 23 agricultural technology demonstration centers to showcase its agricultural production system.

According to the white paper China's Foreign Aid (2010-2012) more than 1,000 Chinese agricultural experts were dispatched to Africa, and nearly 7,000 agricultural officials and technicians from Africa were invited to China to join approximately 300 research and training programs. Additionally, over 400 Chinese teachers traveled to Ethiopia to train local teachers to empower agricultural vocational and technical education.

China has also worked with other donors like the UK, the US and Germany, multilateral organizations like FAO, World Food Programme and World Bank, and private philanthropic organizations like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to explore trilateral cooperation to promote agricultural development. Under the China-FAO South-South Cooperation framework, China has sent about 300 agricultural experts and technicians to work in 10 African countries and invited about 500 agricultural officials and technicians to China.

Chinese aid programs cover a wide range of sectors, including management of crop cultivation, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries; national policy-making on rural development and food security, and agricultural cooperation among developing countries; and agricultural value chain issues, such as technology dissemination and the processing, storage, marketing and distribution of agricultural products.

Technology is the most applicable element

The common core feature of these diverse programs is technology. In the mid-late 20th century, China hoped to transfer to Africa its basic agricultural production technology system based on cooperative and collective agricultural production and the "Eight-Point Charter for Agriculture" through the construction of big farms and experimental stations.

More recently, while mentioning China's agricultural cooperation with Africa, a number of policy documents emphasize the importance of technology and make clear that the focus of China's agricultural aid to Africa is technical cooperation.

China's policy documents on foreign aid to Africa, for example, clearly proposes to "strengthen cooperation in land development, farming and breeding technology, food security, agricultural machinery and agricultural product processing, strengthen agricultural technology cooperation, actively hold trainings of practical agricultural technology, and implement experimental and demonstration projects of agricultural technology in Africa". An increasing number of cases in Africa have proven that Chinese agricultural technology, especially labor-intensive and low-cost technology, can be adapted to agricultural production conditions in Africa.

In Butaleja district of Uganda, Chinese experts in the 1970s introduced seedling and transplanting technology of paddy rice, and this district later became the main rice production region of Uganda, with local farmers still using the technology. In Peapea village in the Morogoro area of Tanzania, local farmers adopted labor-intensive technology recommended by Chinese experts on maize production and increased their harvest by up to three times.

In Ethiopia, Uganda, Liberia, Mali, Malawi and other host countries for China-FAO South-South Cooperation programs, agricultural officials, technicians and local small-holder farmers appreciate that Chinese experts have brought practical and easy-to-use technologies. A simple and inexpensive maize sheller machine invented by Chinese agricultural experts is very popular in several countries.

A technocratic rationality has therefore become entrenched in Chinese aid to African countries. It prioritizes productivity improvement and economic development through technological solutions. Chinese solutions for food security in Africa are rooted in China's development experience. The evolution of these solutions can be seen in China's domestic development transition – such as the peer-to-peer parallel sharing promoted by Professor Li Xiaoyun from China Agriculture University, one of the leading experts on China-Africa agricultural cooperation.

China's food security solutions in Africa have produced many successful cases, but these are often difficult to be disseminated to wider areas and formulated into autonomous development initiatives.

The Chinese government's mobilization capacity, the history of agricultural technology, the technology promotion systems facilitated by considerable government subsidies, and a complete industrial system for agricultural investment, are all important prerequisites for promoting new agricultural technology in China – which are, to some extent, missing in African countries. ◆

Enriched financial facilities

By ***HAN HONGMEI***,
chairperson of the
China-Africa Fund for
Industrial Cooperation

New opportunities will arise from Belt and Road Initiative for promoting industrial development in Africa

The destinies of China and Africa have long been bound together, with closely interwoven common interests and successful cooperation. The long and vigorous friendship between China and Africa is set to have new implications. Since the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013, economic and financial cooperation between the both sides has achieved historic success.

China and Africa, by following the principles of honesty, sincerity and mutual benefit, have been focusing on promoting industrial cooperation, and financial and trade investment. The two sides are wrestling with two bottlenecks – outdated infrastructure and lack of talent, and are driving financial cooperation to a new level.

Apart from the terms of "EPC+F" (engineering, procurement and construction plus financing), financing facilities between China and Africa have been enriched in recent years. With more equity investment, more financial support has been provided to African countries without adding extra burden.

In 2015 after the Johannesburg Summit, China set up the China-Africa Fund for Industrial Cooperation, or CAFIC, with equity investment as the major instrument, supplemented by financial instruments including bonds, convertible debt and loans. The fund, being market-oriented, specialized and international, provides support to key sectors like manufacturing, hi-tech, agriculture, energy/mining, infrastructure and financial partnership, enabling hundreds of China-Africa projects to be implemented.

China has been the largest trade partner, the largest investor and also the largest infrastructure financing provider to Africa. In 2017 trade between the two sides reached $170 billion; the registered stock of non-financial direct investment by China was over $40 billion, and over 10,000 Chinese companies are doing business in the continent, involved in infrastructure construction projects such as the Mombasa-Nairobi railway, the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway and the hydroelectric plant in Soubre, which bring benefits to locals. More than 300,000 employment opportunities have been created, and more than two thirds of Chinese businesses provide skill training to local employees.

The vulnerability of emerging economies is usually associated with debt. Depending on external debt for development will easily lead to debt and currency crises, affecting macro stability and investor confidence. As early as 2016, to reduce budgetary dependence on external debt up to 72 percent, the African Union introduced a program, Alternative Source of Funds (ASF), and decided to impose a 0.2 percent import levy into the pool of funds for critical projects, which will generate long-term source of funding up to $1.4 billion annually. Besides, supporting export-oriented industries and attracting FDI are also an excellent means to tackle debt woes. It could bring about the development of an export-oriented economy for more foreign exchange earnings, introduce advanced technology, management experience, and raise economic growth.

Investment projects in Africa often carry numerous risks and uncertainties. Some countries suffer from political turmoil, exchange rate misalignment, stringent foreign exchange controls, soaring inflation, slumping economic growth and limited exit options. Due to the deteriorating investment climate, numerous mature investment projects are stalling. Therefore, certain recommendations are listed below targeting the identified risks.

First, to manage and avoid several risks, we suggest management and decision-making mechanisms be lucid, concise, and reliable, with canonical examination at every step.

Second, we also recommend the due diligence on countries, companies, and specific projects, since we believe that they are the keys to succeed in risk management.

Third, when it comes to the asset allocation and investment management, we should use quantitative analysis to target project returns as well as risks. By deploying these qualitative and quantitative measures, we believe that we are well-equipped to successfully foresee and target risks.

The Chinese people are working hard on the great rejuvenation of China, and the African continent is also committed to making the African Dream come true as depicted in Agenda 2063. Committed to China-Africa industrial cooperation, CAFIC, with our primary function in equity investment, will continue to support the industrialization of African countries and cross-border use of the renminbi, focusing on financing Chinese companies' investment and trade in Africa, with optimal resource allocation and risk management. ◆

Aid to Africa should focus on nurturing markets

Rising protectionism around the world leaves African countries facing the risk of being marginalized again

By ***SONG WEI***, associate researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Ministry of Commerce

During President Xi Jinping's visit to Senegal, Rwanda, South Africa and Mauritius in July, the African countries showed enthusiasm for the Belt and Road Initiative which is expected to increase trade beneficial to both sides. In light of this, China's future projects of trade with Africa should focus more on building market capacities.

China and Africa have been collaborating closely for decades. As the world's second largest economy, China has made great efforts to raise African countries' ability of trade negotiating. It allocated $400,000 a year to set up a "Chinese project" affiliated with World Trade Organization between 2011 and 2014, a key action to help African countries to access the WTO. Since 2015, this figure has risen to $500,000 annually.

In addition, Chinese government has also implemented a number of measures to improve the business environment in Africa. First and foremost is the construction of economic and trade cooperation zones. To increase regional economic integration, African countries have actively promoted regional integration as well as the development of trade logistics to beef up their bargaining power in international trade. Such efforts include creating the African Continental Free Trade Area in 2018.

Six economic and trade cooperation zones have been established in Africa, mainly by large-scale Chinese state-owned enterprises. These enterprises, that have first-hand experience of communicating with the host countries in the process of supporting aid projects, have played a leading role in the whole process, including preliminary reports and evaluation in the early stages of investment, consultations with host governments, signing agreements and attracting investment.

To speed up the development of the zones, the governments of China and African host countries have agreed to simplify the evaluation and approval procedures for enterprises. Currently, six economic and trade cooperation zones have been confirmed by the Chinese government, including the Mauritius-Jinfei Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone, the Zambia-China Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone and the Nigeria-Guangdong Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone.

With regards to boosting exports of products from developing countries, China in 2005 accorded zero tariff treatment on 190 goods from 25 least developed countries, or LDCs, in Africa, and then continuously expanded the list in the following years. By the end of 2012, nearly 5,000 commodities exported by the LDCs to China were enjoying the preferential treatment. Since 2008, China was the largest export market for the LDCs for five consecutive years, absorbing about 23 percent of their exports.

Improving telecommunication facilities is also a focus of China-Africa cooperation. The optical fiber networks supported by the Chinese government have expanded the coverage of communication networks. Apart from reducing communication costs and promoting e-commerce, these networks have brought convenience to people and added new impetus to economic and social development. For example, in Kenya, information technology has become the fastest growing industry in recent years.

Aspects need improvement

Unfortunately, misunderstanding does exist between China and Africa countries, and poses some challenges. For example, not a few African governments have the impression that cooperation zones are an extension of investment in the real estate industry, so they are not keen to implement the original commitment of one-stop services and other preferential policies. It ultimately results in low attractiveness, slow investment and high vacancy rate in the cooperation zones.

For Chinese investors, it is hard to recover the cost because of the large-scale infrastructure investment in early stages. For example, the construction cost of supporting facilities in Lusaka Park is two to three times that of China. Simply by relying on rents of factory buildings and the utility charges paid by enterprises in the zones, it is impossible to meet the requirements of the China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission for preserving and even increasing the value of the zone.

According to the bilateral cooperation agreements, it is the responsibility of the host government to construct supporting infrastructure outside the zone. However, due to delays, infrastructure constraints have become a bottleneck in the zones' development.

Sino-African trade relations are not very balanced in trade structure. In 2015, China's trade with South Africa, Angola, Nigeria and Egypt accounted for 52.3 percent of the total. On the other hand, despite China twice declaring that goods from African LDCs exported to China would enjoy zero tariff treatment, imports from Africa mainly constitute commodities.

Comprehensive economic system have not yet been established in most African countries, leaving the level of development of different industries extremely uneven, and transportation and communication infrastructure poor, which have restricted their trade capacity. Therefore, China's assistance in helping build African markets can start from the following aspects.

First, planning for overseas economic and trade zones. In general, Chinese overseas economic and trade zones are dominated by Chinese enterprises that are responsible for the construction of infrastructure and zone management. Host governments, that are responsible for the supporting infrastructure, often fail to make sure that the zones can function properly and effectively.

For resolving this issue, using China's foreign assistance to support the overall planning of the zones, the Chinese government should coordinate with the host countries and urge them to implement the cooperation agreements.

Second, international capacity cooperation. A variety of products produced by the LDCs have been enjoying zero tariffs in the Chinese market, but their exports remain limited because of poor quality as well as not meeting Chinese standards. Chinese companies can use preferential loans to build a batch of projects in African countries, relying on the training of local labor force to help them improve their industrial production capacity and expand the scale of trade.

African enterprises could produce, process and assemble products meeting the Chinese Industrial Standards, making these products eligible to enter the Chinese market. We can also promote mutual recognition of production standards. If we establish a permanent mechanism on "standardization" with African countries, regular training and exchanges with African companies in accordance with Chinese production standards will become a reality. ◆

An epitome of robust Sino-African economic relations

Economic relations highlight growing ties between Angola and China

By ***FRANCISCO MIGUEL PAULO***, researcher and auxiliary professor at the Catholic University of Angola

Angola is a country that is in the southern part of the African continent, sharing borders, to the north with the Democratic Republic of Congo, to the east with the Republic of Zambia and to the south with Namibia. The country gained independence from Portugal on Nov 11, 1975, after 500 years of colonial rule.

After independence, unfortunately, the country plunged into a civil war that caused most of economic activity to stop. The only sectors that did not stop producing were diamonds and petroleum, because they were the ones that sustained the financing of the war between the two movements.

In 2002 the country finally reached peace with the end of the civil war that had lasted 27 years, which made it possible to re-launch economic activity. But it was necessary to rebuild the economic and social infrastructure (including roads, bridges, hospitals, railways, airports, ports and dams), which were destroyed during the period of the armed conflict.

Such reconstruction required an enormous amount of financial resources, which the country did not have at the time. The government contacted the Paris Club to finance the reconstruction, but the contacts did not work. It was then that they turned to China that readily, and without any prerequisites agreed to finance the national reconstruction project.

With the support of China, Angola has been able to rebuild much of the infrastructure from roads, bridges, railways, airports, hospitals, schools, housing projects, etc. From 2002 to 2017, the Angolan government has spent about $112 billion on the reconstruction and construction of various infrastructure throughout the country.

Other countries, such as Portugal and Brazil, have also been providing credit lines to finance some infrastructure construction projects in the country. But China is by far the largest creditor in terms of funding for national reconstruction.

The reconstruction of the main economic and social infrastructures in Angola and in most of African countries are being done by Chinese companies with loans from China. The Chinese companies create temporary employment in the construction sector in the areas where the works are performed. One thing that is criticized by the locals is the quality of the work, because some buildings and roads that are being constructed do not last long. But people know that the main responsibility to ensure the good quality of the work is the owner of the project that, in most of cases, is the government.

Since 2007, China has been Angola's main trading partner with respect to exports. Before this year, the United States (with an average of 40 percent) led the set of countries where Angolan oil was sold most. In 2016 out of $25.5 billion of total oil exports, 54 percent of Angola's oil exports went to China and only 5 percent to the US and 3 percent to Portugal. In 2017, out of $31 billion of total oil exports, Angola exported 62 percent of its oil to China, 3 percent to the US and 4 percent to South Africa, according to data from the Central Bank of Angola.

Regarding imports, the main economic partner is, of course, due to historical ties, Portugal, accounting for 14 percent of total Angolan imports in 2016. China ranks second with 13 percent of the total value of imports of goods. In 2016 the total imports of the country was about $25 billion and in 2017 $28 billion.

Angola's trade with China has a greater potential to increase with this year's signing of the visa facilitation agreement on ordinary passports between the two countries. Thus economic agents of both countries can travel for business, tourism, education, health, etc. without the lengthy process of obtaining visas.

Angola needs support to diversify its economy and exports taking into account that more than 95 percent of Angola exports is oil and about 3 percent diamonds. This requires more direct foreign investment for the non-oil sector and sufficient non-oil production not only to meet domestic demand but also to be exported. The most exported non-oil products are wood, coffee (which in the colonial period was the largest export product, now weighs less than 0.5 percent of total exports), marble, granite, fish, cement and beverages. As Angola's main foreign creditor, Chinese investors are welcome to invest in the non-oil sector in the country. In the years to come the non-oil sector is projected to grow more than the oil sector. ◆

Chinese lessons for Africa in infrastructure building

Governments must play a leading role in planning and financing, since the market economy is underdeveloped

By ***YAO GUIMEI***, senior research fellow with the Institute of West-Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

There is a saying in China that if you want to be rich, you need to build a road and a bridge. China's experience not only confirms it, but also shows that infrastructure is extremely important for poverty alleviation. After 40 years of reform and opening-up, infrastructure construction has yielded remarkable results. Since infrastructure is a public good, it is closely related to the improvement of the production and living conditions of poor areas or populations.

The infrastructure construction has greatly modernized Chinese society. First, strengthening the construction of water conservancy facilities helps prevent floods, resist natural disasters and promote agricultural development.

Second, the rapid expansion of transportation and communication networks has significantly stimulated the rural economy. China is well on its way to build power grids, highways and 4G Internet connecting all rural regions. The transportation and communication systems in place can spatially establish a connection with the external markets, which promotes trade, reduces transaction costs and provides a solid basis for rural economic development.

Third, transportation infrastructure and economic growth have strong characteristics of spatial agglomeration. Convenient transport facilities can bring farmers together in remote areas and significantly improve their quality of life.

Key factors and some experience

Africa has broad prospects for infrastructure development and financing; and learning from China is well worth it.

Governments must play a leading role. The African market economy is underdeveloped and it is difficult to improve infrastructure by relying solely on market mechanisms. In China, the government has included domestic infrastructure construction in each five-year plan in line with the requirements of national economic development. The plans have distinct characteristics in different historical stages of economic development. Infrastructure is listed as one of the priorities, along with the development of agriculture and township enterprises.

The African Union has placed infrastructure high on the agenda. It has unveiled the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) for continent-wide transportation, electricity, cross-border water management and information networks as the top priority in the development plan of 2012-2020. It is of great importance for African countries to strengthen implementation capacity to effectively coordinate their plans with PIDA.

Debt risks should not be ignored. Infrastructure is a double-edged sword which can be either conducive to the rapid development of the economy, or in some instances, become a heavy burden on governments. Moreover, it would also result in a waste of resources if infrastructure were not fully used, which would in turn hinder economic development. Both China and Africa have lessons to learn in this regard. Therefore, African countries need to carefully reflect on how to manage the scale and speed of infrastructure construction.

Protecting the environment, animals, and cultural relics is another important point. China had placed too much emphasis on speed and economic efficiency in building infrastructure. To a certain extent, some social issues were neglected, including environmental protection, resulting in problems such as environmental damage and lack of regional characteristics in each region. These lessons are worth learning for African countries.

Introducing market mechanisms in public goods supply promotes development. To address the shortage of funds in infrastructure construction, Chinese government charges fees for the use of public goods to cover construction and operation costs, and promote rational and effective allocation of resources. For example, toll gates have been set up at large bridges, tunnels and ferries to collect fees from vehicles and the income is used to repay loans, thus gradually shaping the model of "construction by loans, repayment by charging fees".

Last but not least, there needs to be a diverse investment entities and broad financing channels for infrastructure construction. Infrastructure construction has gradually evolved into a diversified investment model based on finance, credit, capital markets, trust markets and foreign investment. In infrastructure construction investment and financing, China, which initially relied upon financing support from the World Bank, has gradually introduced diversified investment and financing models such as BOT (build-operate-transfer), BT (build-transfer), asset securitization and PPP (public-private-partnership). These approaches have played an active role in the key infrastructure projects. ◆

China will continue to back Confucius Institutes in Africa

There has been no criticism about Chinese-language organizations in Africa, unlike in the US

By ***KENNETH KING***, emeritus professor of the University of Edinburgh

According to the Chinese Language Council, or Hanban, there are currently some 54 Confucius Institutes in Africa – the same number as there are countries in the African continent. Most of these CIs are based in universities or colleges. There is a smaller number of Confucius Classrooms in the continent according to Hanban – 27 in total. The latter mostly operate at the secondary-school level but also in a variety of other language-promotion institutions. At the 2015 FOCAC Summit in Johannesburg, the agreed Framework for Action underlined that "The Chinese side … will support more African countries in their efforts to establish Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms".

What can be said about the spread of Confucius Institutes in Africa since the first opened in the University of Nairobi in 2005? And what can be concluded about the patterns of the spread in Africa of these two institutions, the CIs and the CCs, compared to their spread in North America, Europe, Asia and Oceania?

The fact that there are around 50 Confucius Institutes in Africa does not mean that there is one CI for each African country. Far from it. Only some 33 African countries have CIs, but the total comes to about 50 since countries such as South Africa have five, and Kenya four. In other words, about 20 countries in the continent don't yet have a Confucius Institute.

What about Confucius Classrooms? Again, according to Hanban data, there are some 27 Confucius Classrooms in Africa, but they are to be found in only 15 countries. Again, the distribution is uneven, since Ethiopia and South Africa have five each, and Egypt has three. So only three countries account for half the CCs in the continent. Thus, the great majority of African countries don't have Confucius Classrooms.

How does the pattern of the spread of CIs and CCs differ in Africa from other regions of the world? There are some very remarkable differences.

To start with the US, there are twice as many CIs in the country (110) than in the whole of Africa (54). Equally surprising, there are almost five times as many Confucius Classrooms in the US (501) as there are CIs. Similar contrasts between CC and CI numbers can be seen for Canada: 12 to 35; UK: 29 to 148; and Australia: 14 to 67.

Why is it apparently more attractive for schools in the US, the UK, Canada, and Australia to encourage the teaching of Chinese through Confucius Classrooms, and to gain a Chinese partner school in the process, than it is in Africa? It is almost certainly not an issue of finance for the support of Chinese teaching in the CC as the Chinese authorities make it very attractive to develop a Confucius Classroom. But finance may be an issue when it comes to parents contributing to the costs of their children's visits to the partner schools in China. What other reasons may there be for schools in Africa not taking advantage of this partnership opportunity?

There have been few, if any, criticisms or controversies about the presence of CIs and CCs in Africa. By contrast, there have been a small number of vocal criticisms of CIs in the US, notably in relation to the closure of the CI in the University of Chicago, and to a lesser extent in Canada and Europe.

What is particularly intriguing about the US criticism of the CIs for infringing on academic freedom and promoting Chinese propaganda in the US is that so little of this attaches to the Confucius Classrooms. And yet there are some 500 CCs in the US. If the CCs were actually being used for propaganda purposes, there would have been an outcry. There would be more concern at the secondary-school level than at university, as pupils of secondary-school age might be thought more impressionable. Yet there is no sign of such a reaction in relation to the 27 Confucius Classrooms in Africa, and the situation is not very different in the US or Europe.

One of the greatest attractions of the CI and CC programs is the chance to visit China for a short period – often to the partner school or university for two weeks. But equally or more important for the sustainability of both programs is the determination of Hanban to offer opportunities to study the teaching of Chinese as a second language in China. It is of course extraordinary that in 2017, there were some 3,500 teachers of Chinese sent from China worldwide, and over 6,000 volunteers who would normally be sent from China to support the teaching of Chinese in CIs and CCs. But arguably more critical than these Chinese teachers and volunteers is the rapid creation of a cadre of local teachers of Chinese, whether in Africa, North America or Europe. This is proceeding apace, and is being encouraged by the offer of a whole series of CI fellowships to study in China.

Implications for 2018 FOCAC Summit

As each FOCAC approaches, commentators have always wondered: Will it really be possible for China to keep increasing the number of long- and short-term scholarships and training awards for Africa? It has always done so.

Today, when so many nations have turned their foreign and trade policies toward "my country first", it will be a particular challenge for China to maintain its strong commitment, not least when there are all the demands of the Belt and Road Initiative. However, China has not been just a fair weather friend for Africa. So my money would still be on China continuing to encourage both Confucius Institutes as well as Confucius Classrooms, and on continuing to encourage more scholars and trainees to learn from and with China. ◆

Digital revolution can invigorate cultural market

Mobile internet has emerged as an effective tool to unlock potential of cultural cooperation

By ***TIAN NING***, founder, chairman and CEO of Zhejiang Panshi Information & Technology Co Ltd

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In July, Chinese President Xi Jinping paid official visits to four African countries, harvesting the fruits of not only the trade relationship but also cultural exchanges. The people of China and African countries have never been closer. China and African countries have long had cultural festivals and civil exchanges, both officially and unofficially. For example, Spring Festival celebrations enjoy great popularity in many African countries.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, over 100 people-to-people exchange events have been held, and more than 200 cooperation projects executed. And the upgraded mobile internet technology has set the scene for a new stage.

In this process, Chinese enterprises have made tremendous contributions to boost Sino-African economic and cultural exchanges, especially the mobile internet has emerged as an effective tool to strengthen channels of communication. Companies in telecommunication technology added cultural and entertainment dimensions as well as hi-tech to the industries, providing new scope for cultural collaboration.

Although Africa has nearly 345 million internet users and the internet penetration rate has reached 27.7 percent, the development of digital entertainment in the continent still lags way behind China because of low spending on research and development, and lack of innovation. For example, the most-used function of smart phones in South Africa is still "communication", in stark contrast to the variety of entertainment apps on Chinese digital devices. Therefore, the emergence of the digital entertainment industry will add vitality to the African economy, and is also conducive to the preservation and spread of traditional African culture.

Back in 2014, the robust momentum of the mobile internet took it to Africa, where the demand for the latest technology keeps growing. Since the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative, many hi-tech companies came to Africa, including RockyMobi. We conducted wide surveys in different countries and decided to embark on our African journey from South Africa. We have taken advantages of our bountiful resources – for example, we own the global copyright of most programs of China Global Television Network, broadcast in Africa via mobile video products.

One of the most distinct features of digitalized entertainment industry is unprecedented accessibility and scope for expansion. Almost all traditional entertainment content could be transformed to digital forms, which, popular among young people, open up new markets for traditional cultural products. Riding this trend, RockyMobi has covered about 20 percent of South African users with four major products – film and television, games, reading and tool applications, and set up more offices in Ethiopia, Morocco, Algeria, Nigeria, and Kenya.

Better telecommunications infrastructure brought opportunity for the digitalized entertainment industry. For example, the average network speed in South Africa has improved to 9.93 Mbps. But the room for development is still big. For instance, South Africa plans to increase its 4G/LTE coverage to 35-53 percent in 2019 while China's 4G coverage had already reached 40 percent in 2016. The cost of internet access in Africa can further be cut. If internet costs can be reduced, the number of mobile users will grow faster, which would in turn infuse vitality to its digital cultural industries. Take broadband access for example. South Africa currently has the highest broadband access rate at $7.6 per GB, followed by Kenya at $4.9, Nigeria at $3.1, Tanzania and Ghana at $2.3, and Egypt at $1.2 per GB. The key to the development of the digital entertainment industry is low cost and high speed mobile internet.

To sum up, the outlook for the digital entertainment culture industry in Africa will be promising if internet fees continue to fall and infrastructure continues to be upgraded, especially with the advent of the 5G era. The potential of cultural market will be unlocked, bringing more opportunity for cooperation and adding diversity for China and Africa. ◆

Joint security focus needed for development

Cooperation should be strengthened to create a benign environment for socioeconomic development

By ***MENG JIN***, assistant research fellow at the Institute of West-Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

China's engagement with Africa since the end of the Cold War has witnessed remarkable development and particularly since the launch of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2000. This is reflected not only by the sharp growth in trade, direct investment and development assistance, but also by appreciable rise in the number of Chinese companies and communities. Bilateral trade has soared from $10 billion in 2000 to $170 billion in 2017, and there are more than 2,500 Chinese companies in 53 countries and six regions today.

However, China-Africa collaboration is growing amid the backdrop of conflicts in the continent, which pose a potential and real threat. China has been one of the collateral victims of conflicts in Africa. In Libya, Chinese government intervention in 2011 helped 35,000 Chinese nationals to be extracted to safety but 50 projects were abandoned and Chinese enterprises suffered a substantial loss of estimated $18.8 billion.

The building and operation of industrial parks also raised concerns on security. China's commitment to the process of industrialization requires deeper interaction between Chinese companies/communities and local actors.

Meanwhile, conflicts in certain African countries have impeded the economic emergence of the continent, which explains increasing efforts by African countries and international and regional organizations to bolster security mechanisms. The strengthening of China-Africa cooperation in the security domain satisfies, on the one hand, the necessity for China to protect its investments, and on the other, the need for African countries to strengthen their own capacities and build an effective security system.

Chinese participation in peacekeeping forces constitutes a significant guarantees to African security. Until 2015, of the 26 United Nations peacekeeping operations in which China participated, 13 were in Africa, of which seven are ongoing and involve more than 2,000 Chinese blue helmets.

Since 2008, China has been the main contributor in the number of blue helmets and the second biggest financial contributor among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Not only has the number of Chinese blue helmets increased significantly, but some changes can also be perceived in terms of their deployment and positions. Staff earlier sent by China consisted mainly of military observers, policemen, doctors, engineers and technicians. But from 2013 to 2018, China sent about 400 soldiers to Mali within the framework of the MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali), who were partially intended to fight extremists. In 2014, China also deployed an infantry battalion of 700 UN peacekeeping forces in South Sudan. Equipped with light weapons for self-defense and armored cars, the battalion was tasked to protect civilians, humanitarian and UN staff, and conduct patrol and surveillance missions.

In addition, the Chinese UN peacekeeping forces are taking up more and more important posts. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the officer in charge of military observers is a Chinese who was appointed in 2007 by the UN Secretary-General, to command the Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

Institutionally, the peacekeeping operations office supervised by the Ministry of Defense was created in December 2001. It is in charge of coordination and management of Chinese participation in the missions and the operations of the United Nations. A training center for peacekeeping operations, situated in Huairou district in the suburbs of Beijing, was created in 2009. It is in charge of technical and linguistic training of the UN peacekeeping forces. The center also organizes seminars and conducts research on peacekeeping operations. Recognized by the United Nations as a base for international training in peacekeeping operations, it organizes, with the cooperation of the international UN peacekeeping force, the training of top commanders, instructors and military observers. China in 2015 also established the UN-China foundation for peace and development at a cost of $1 billion. As part of the standing army mechanism of the United Nations, China announced the training of 8,000 men and women in 2015.

The defense of mutual interests in the economic and political arena serves as principal focus for China and Africa. The pursuit of common development with African countries depends on the security context of Africa and on the extent of China-Africa cooperation. Interdependence among stakeholders defines the win-win characteristic of their cooperation and the stability of the continent is the essential backdrop. ◆

Industrialization – Why Africa can’t directly copy China’s experience

There are major differences between Beijing’s opening-up and circumstances most countries find themselves in now

By ***ZAHRA BAITIE***, China director of Development Reimagined

Africa is seeking to industrialize. From Addis Ababa to Dakar, Cape Town to Cairo, the impetus to manufacture is now a priority for much of the continent. As Akinwumi Adesina, president of the African Development Bank, put it: “The secret of the wealth of nations is clear: developed countries add value to everything they produce, while poor nations export raw materials. Africa must quit being at the bottom of the global value chains.”

This belief in the power of industrialization to drive development is now a mainstay of development agendas by African leaders who are faced with increasingly youthful and often jobless populations and higher accountability to their citizenry. It is also fueled by China’s economic shift. Rising labor costs in China, an aging population and political imperatives have led economists to argue that there is an impending relocation of millions of manufacturing jobs from

China to developing countries. African countries are thus positioning themselves as receptacles of these manufacturing jobs, and are returning to Special Economic Zones and Industrial Parks as one way to both achieve industrialization and attract Chinese investment. And they are increasingly asking us – Development Reimagined, and our partners such as China Africa Advisory and Made in Africa Initiative, for advice on what to do.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Chinese government announced an "opening-up strategy" and set up pilot SEZs. For China, a relatively poor country at the time, with limited financial resources, the clustering of industries together in the same location supporting industries (technical services, repair and maintenance, administrative and legal services, logistical services, packaging, etc.) was crucial and necessary, as it created economies of scale and efficiency. The SEZ acted as a concentrated platform /area for FDI and created jobs. But it was not sufficient. China's "soft infrastructure" – the government's role – was also crucial to this process. The Chinese view was that an enabling government was as important an element of success as the existence of the SEZ itself.

At the same time, the central government gave local governments considerable autonomy. They were free to use the tax revenues collected from the FDI to shape the legal, management and economic reality that businesses met in the new zones, and gradually learned what works and what didn't. For instance, they all slowly moved to create "one-stop-shops" where new businesses could do all their paperwork – from registering land to paying taxes.

Furthermore, the SEZs were opened with the explicit goal of "comprehensiveness". There was, essentially, no prioritization at first. The government initially allowed (and local governments sought) investment in all sorts of activity and sectors.

However, over time this changed. By 1994, the Chinese government offered no more incentive packages to foreign investors who were involved in pure processing or assembly operations – they wanted to shift emphasis toward actual manufacturing.

Africa cannot just transplant China's SEZ model

So, can African countries also succeed by copying this model? In our view, directly copying is neither possible nor advisable. In particular, there are two major differences to note between China's opening-up strategy, and the set of circumstances that most African countries find themselves in now.

First, before industrialization, China did not have a poor trade balance. The government, while industrializing, took steps to protect the Chinese domestic market for domestic manufacturers, thereby carefully managing imports for non-productive consumption. Most African countries do not have the opportunity to do this – their domestic markets are already highly liberalized, and many have trade deficits with China itself.

Second, while industrializing, China had very relaxed rules around intellectual property protection (where they existed), which allowed Chinese businesses to experiment and innovate within the SEZs, including learning from foreign techniques. This allowed and incentivized companies to move up and down the value chain to more technologically sophisticated production, developing technological and management competences to maximize quality (and minimize or mitigate environmental impact).

Nevertheless, many African countries are using and – we believe – should use SEZs to industrialize. But they must study China's model and adapt it carefully to their own circumstances.

How to adapt China's SEZ model for African circumstances

Here are six of the most important recommendations we usually make when supporting African government clients to design their industrialization strategies and SEZs/IPs.

1. An enabling environment is not just about low tax. China's experience clearly demonstrates other aspects such as basic infrastructure and utility costs in the zone really make a difference, as do "one-stop-shops". To get the best results, governments should develop feedback mechanisms with investors and industrial actors to ensure SEZs meet the real, economic needs of the investors.

2. Don't target specific sectors too much. As demonstrated by China's success with clustering, having various industries that can support one another is an important factor in enabling the success of SEZs.

3. Find and promote a success story. The presence of one Chinese firm in a sector is very useful in helping to trigger investment by other Chinese manufacturers. African countries should find anchor investors for proposed parks and develop case studies of these Chinese factories to highlight the attractiveness and feasibility of Chinese investment in their countries.

4. Embrace competition. African countries should let market forces determine the viability of SEZs. If that means the SEZ in a neighboring country has a better business case, so be it. Speak to the neighboring government and explore partnering or investing in that SEZ as well.

5. Develop a multi-market export approach. As Rwanda discovered when the US canceled its zero-tariff status in retaliation to Rwanda's ban on second-hand imports, reliance on any one market is precarious. China became its own factory and the factory of the world – bolstering recent moves to create a continent-wide Free Trade Area (which will be the largest in the world once ratified), Africa should adopt a similarly broad focus.

6. Go green. African countries seeking to learn from China's model would be remiss not to take environmental lessons from China's experience. Africa should avoid the long-term costs of environmentally-destructive industrialization and build in green policies into their industrialization approach. ◆

Big screen should show the true picture

Film is a powerful medium to help Chinese people understand Africa, and vice versa

By ***ZHANG YONG***, director of the Center for African Film and TV Studies, Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University

Film is one of the most popular forms of culture which directly talks to people of different countries. The Chinese and Africans may not understand each other's language, but they can appreciate a film's content or message.

With the advantages of capital, technology and resources, Westerners have monopolized the global audience's imagination of China and Africa, and have long dominated the production, distribution and projection of films worldwide. In particular, some of their documentaries made direct attacks on China-African relations, such as *Chinese Coming*, a story about the Chinese living in Africa, or *Chinese Mixed Sound*, a story about Africans in China, which hyped so-called neo-colonialism and racism.

Reasonable criticism can lead to solutions to problems and advance social progress. But these documentaries are reports of individual cases –

partial and could not show a panorama. They totally ignore the fact that the vast majority of Chinese in Africa and Africans in China are diligent, positive and contribute to local socio-economic development.

Fortunately, the Chinese film industry and box office appeal have improved tremendously. Chinese filmmakers now have the access and ability to shoot abroad with their accumulated experience, skills and money to make a mark in the African market. The blockbluster *Wolf Warriors II* is a good example. The film's quality matches that of Hollywood films, and the well-crafted plot hits the right notes.

The protagonist, Leng Feng, does business, drinks beers and plays football with Africans, drawing a vivid picture of Chinese-African interaction. Soon after a civil war breaks out, Leng is involved in an evacuation of overseas Chinese. After several confrontations with murderous rebels and their European mercenaries, he eventually succeeds in rescuing his compatriots, thus creating a Chinese-style patriotic hero.

A number of popular films about Sino-African relations reflect that the Chinese finally have created a positive image of Africans. They ended the European and American film monopoly, so that Chinese people no longer need to understand Africa via the pictures of Hollywood or other third parties.

But at the same time, China's narrative defects in Africa are also exposed. Influenced by Hollywood movies, the narrative employed is narrow and simplistic. For example, to portray Chinese-style heroes, films could highlight Africa's conflicts, or even turn whole African areas into theaters of war.

If the diverse societies of Africans are not highlighted, audiences will be left only with impressions of war, which further strengthen stereotypes of Africa. Globally, the defects in films as well as TV dramas are that the African images they present are obsolete in the context of a rising Africa. Although African-themed films may not be able to enter overseas markets in a short time like films from Europe and America, Chinese films can no longer be satisfied with only domestic audiences. As the world changes rapidly, Westerners' view of Africa is transforming too, represented by *Black Panther*, a brand new African image in American films.

For China it is imperative to narrate Sino-African stories in the form of co-productions. When shooting *African in Yiwu*, for example, I worked with African directors, photographers and musicians, and learned a lot from them. It is a good way to absorb the best talents from the African film and television industry, participate actively in planning, screenwriting, production and other aspects.

At the same time, we need to update our understanding of the history and current situation of African films and videos. Sino-African cultural exchanges have a long history that provides us numerous stories and legendary characters, from navigator Zheng He to workers of the Tanzania railway, from China's medical aid teams to the Confucius Institutes.

Most importantly, we should shed limelight on the life of Africans in China and Chinese in Africa. The true, cross-cultural stories are always the most popular, and could promote mutual understanding. ◆

China can offer its expertise in water conservancy and treatment

By ***LI FENGTING***, vice-dean of the college of environmental science and engineering, deputy dean of UN Environment-Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development, Tongji University

African governments should pay more attention to water protection and management in the tide of urbanization

When you think of Africa, the manifold wonders of nature and its captivating landscapes come to mind. However, with rapid population growth and the acceleration of urbanization, Africa's ecology is under threat. In particular, the water resources and environment are under severe stress due to human activities, and many countries face serious problems such as shortages and worsening pollution.

To address such crises requires sufficient capacity in technology and economy. Developed countries have advanced technology in some aspects, but the high price makes it prohibitive. In China, mature cost-effective water treatment products and technologies have been developed, which are in a good position to offer solutions to improve people's health and quality of life in Africa. At the same time, it can also help to promote domestic technology and equipment localization in Africa.

Over the past 15 years, I have made more than 50 trips to the continent to help local engineers learn and use China's water treatment technologies, especially in the communities. With support from the UN Environment and Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, I led teams to Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Morocco, Sudan, Uganda and other African countries for surveys of water resources and water treatment demonstrations. From the Nile and Lake Tanganyika and Lake Victoria river basins, we sampled water to test for reagents, make field visits to water factories, established longstanding partnerships with the UN Environment and the UN-Habitat as well as governments, universities and businesses in countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia.

The Nairobi water quality improvement project is an example of good progress. The Ngethu Water Treatment Plant, which processes 400,000 tons of water a day, is the largest waterworks in East Africa. But in the rainy season, the conventional water treatment chemicals or water purifier treatment couldn't get good results. When turning on the tap, the water is often yellow or cloudy. We started working with Nairobi water experts seven years ago. In 2013, we developed efficient coagulants (coagulant/water purification chemicals) to effectively deal with the big fluctuations of raw water turbidity in the rainy season, reducing about 20 percent of the water treatment costs and improving the water production rate above 15 percent. Now the water quality has met the World Health Organization standards.

In sewage disposal, a Chinese research team in 2014 participated in a demonstration project of artificial wetland processing sewage technology in Kenya's third biggest city, Kisumu. Using the current technique, processing efficiency was low, resulting that a large number of pollutants flows into the Lake Victoria and threatens water quality. We established 600 tons/day-capacity artificial wetlands in the city, and selected several local natural plants for in-depth sewage treatment, thus reducing the nutrients entering the Lake Victoria. The project has been completed and long-term water quality monitoring will be carried out in the operation of artificial wetlands.

With innovative technologies being developed, the efficiency of water conservancy and treatment has been largely improved. However, accelerated urbanization has imperiled water resources, sanitation and the whole ecosystems in Africa. We should pay close attention to the status quo of the water resource and management. Through field investigation and data search, Chinese research groups have accumulated rich knowledge about the water resource situation in Africa. For example, we have investigated and evaluated water environment of seven typical cities and basins in Africa, including the Nile and the Lake Chad basin. Chinese researchers are poised to contribute their experience and wisdom to solving the water problems facing Africa and protecting the ecosystems.

On the other hand, African countries needs to cultivate professionals in water treatment and climate change, and the awareness of protecting water resource should be promoted. Since 2006, Tongji University and the UN Environment co-launched master's and doctoral degree programs in sustainable development catering to students from developing countries. Most graduates have returned to their home countries and worked in such fields as environment, land and resources, agriculture and international organizations like United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

China has been striving to realize the "Chinese dream", while Africa is also striving to realize its "African dream" of "seeking strength through unity, development and rejuvenation". The Chinese Dream and the African Dream are closely linked and mutually reinforcing, which will contribute to building a community of shared future for mankind. ◆

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