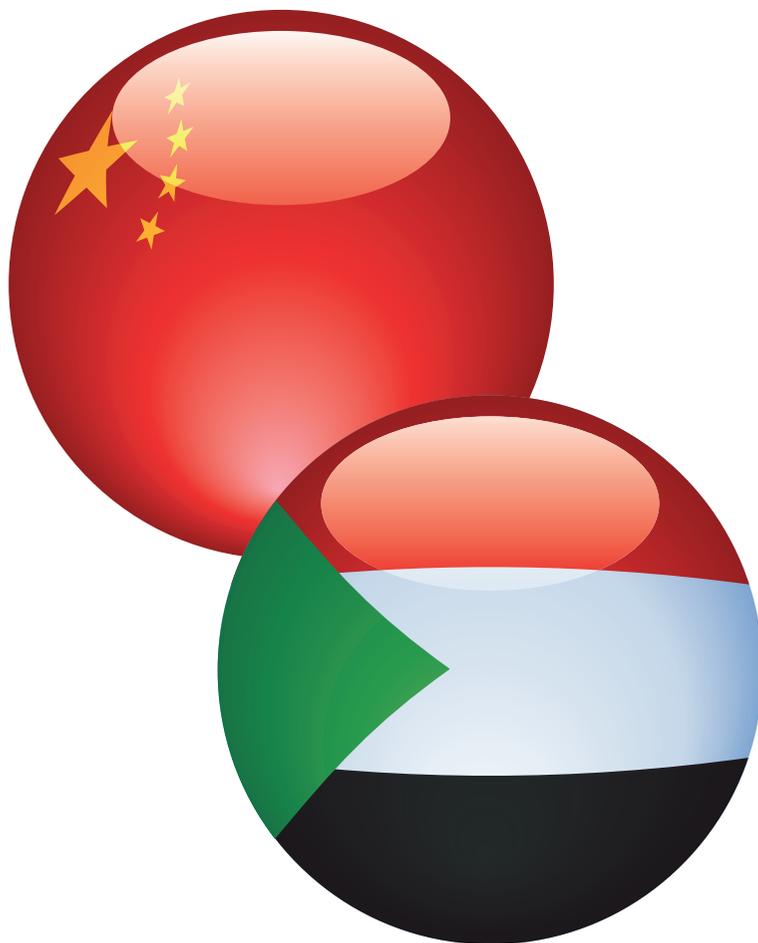


SYMPOSIUM ON CHINESE-SUDANESE RELATIONS

26 July 2007, Beijing



Organised by the Institute of West-Asian and African Studies,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,
and the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis, London

Introduction

The conflict in Darfur became a high-profile international political issue after 2003, especially after al-Qaeda encouraged Jihadists to open up a new front, to follow the fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan and in the Levant. By 2007, despite intensive international efforts to bring peace, and peacekeepers, to Darfur, the conflict continued. In the West, numerous rallies, conferences and debates encouraged Khartoum's most influential ally, China, to do more to resolve the crisis. The run-up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing added extra sensitivities to the Western pressure. Of course, China had its own interests in encouraging peace in Sudan in general and in Darfur in particular, not least that Beijing and Khartoum are important trading partners, especially in Sudan's booming oil industry.

In the West, China's policies in Africa are not always fully understood, and China's specific relations with Sudan are sometimes deliberately misinterpreted and politicised. Beijing's Institute of West-Asian and African Studies (a part of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) and London's Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis decided to jointly sponsor a conference on China's relations with Sudan. It was held in Beijing on 26 July 2007. This was partly an academic exercise. But it was also intended to have practical policy repercussions, including how to improve the chances of a settlement in Darfur.

So we asked a group of experts on China and Sudan to meet together to discuss the key issues. The group comprised influential Chinese academics, representatives from Sudan, who included government and opposition opinion, and leading scholars from the UK. Most of the papers presented are included in this book; others who presented informally or who did not send their final texts are summarised at the end of this collection.

Most of the dominant issues were debated, often with some passion, and a variety of opinions were aired. The most important conclusion – that China had an influential and positive role to play in Darfur, despite the shibboleth formal policy of non-interference – is explored in at least three of the papers by independent experts.

I apologise for the delay in publication, caused solely by the common academic inertia involved in finalising conference papers. Nevertheless, I hope that these proceedings contribute not only towards a resolution of the Sudanese conflicts analysed here, but also to a more general appreciation of China's dramatic engagement with the African continent.

A key figure in this symposium was Professor Yang Guang, Director General of the Institute of West-Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. I thank him for his joint sponsorship.

Professor Paul Moorcraft, Director, Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis, London.

March, 2008.

Some of the key people who attended the symposium, in alphabetical order:

Abdelmoniem O. Elbeiti, Minister Plenipotentiary

An Chunying, Deputy Director, IWAAS

Any Yongyu, President of China Association of African Studies

Bakri O. Saeed, Professor, President, Sudan International University

Farouk Ahmed Adam, Dr, MP

Hamed Al-Niel Abdel Gadir, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Energy and Mining

Hasan Haj Ali, Professor, University of Khartoum

He Wenping, Professor, Director of African Studies Section, IWAAS

Ibrahim Ahmed Abdelkarim, Minister, Sudan Embassy

Li Anshan, Professor of History, School of International Studies, Peking University

Li Baoping, Professor, School of International Studies, Peking University

Liu Baolai, Ambassador, Vice President, Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs

Liu Naiya, Dr, IWAAS

Mirghani Mohamed Salih, Ambassador

Mohamed Salih, Professor, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

Osman Elsayed F. Elseed, Ambassador

Pan Rixia, Research Fellow, IWAAS

Paul Moorcraft, Professor, Director, Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis

Richard Dowden, Executive Director, Royal African Society

Stephen Chan, Professor, School of Oriental and African Studies

Suolao Wang, Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Peking University

Xu Sujiang, Third Secretary, International Department of the Central Committee

Xu Tuo, Senior Editor Director, Editorial Department IWAAS

Xu Weizhong, Professor, Director, Department of African Studies, China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

Yahia Hussein Babiker, Lt. General, Chairman, Joint National Transition Team

Yang Guang, Professor, Director-General, IWAAS

Yang Lihau, Professor, IWAAS

Zeng Qiang, Research Professor, Institute of Asian and African Studies, China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

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School of International Studies Peking University)*
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*Professor He Wenping (Director of African Studies Section of Institute
of West Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)*
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China Institute of Contemporary International Relations)*
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1. China-Sudan Relations: The Past and Present

Professor Li Anshan (Peking University)

China-African relations have a long history and various works have been written on the subject.¹ There are, however, very few studies specifically on China-Sudan relations. Dr Gaafar Karrar Ahmed's article in Chinese describes the bilateral relations from AD 618 to 1368 covering the Tang, Song and Yuan dynasties, which is an important contribution to scholarship.² My paper tries to give a general survey of the history of China-Sudan relations, which will be divided into three parts – the ancient, the modern and the contemporary.

The Ancient

Nubia was considered as a main corridor for Sub-Saharan Africa and Egypt.³ The contact between China and Nubia started quite early, most possibly through North Africa and the Gulf region.⁴ As early as the Han Dynasty (202 BC – AD 220), “wen-se bu”, one of eight kinds of cloth, was imported to China from Rome, as recorded in Chinese classics. According to Shen Fuwei, a Chinese expert on the history of China-African relations, “wen-se” was taken from the ancient name of “Abyssinia” (Ethiopia) – al-Habasat, which was written in ancient Egyptian inscription as “Hbsti”, read as “Habasti”, “wense” was a translation of “basat”. Therefore, “wense bu” should be a cotton cloth made in Ethiopia and Nubia, since the latter had a longer history of cotton textile industry.⁵ It is recorded that Nubians were using cotton cloth around AD 250 and Ezana (Aeizanas), ruler of the Axumite Kingdom (AD 330 – 356), destroyed their towns and “burned their stores of corn and cotton” in his expedition against the rebellious Nubians in Seda (Blue Nile).⁶ It is assumed that wen-se bu, or wen-se cotton cloth produced in the ancient Sudan, was probably imported to China through Adulis, the famous African port. Shen Fuwei also suggests that wu-wen mu (“black wood”, possibly ebony), blue diamond and gold produced in Nubia were exported to China.⁷

The earliest delegation from Sudan came to China probably in AD 441. Song Shu recorded that a delegation from Su-mi-li visited China in that year.⁸ Shen Fuwei suggests that Su-mi-li is the Chinese translation of Musawwarat es-Sofra, therefore the delegation was from the Musawwarat es-Sofra, south of Meroe and Shendi, and north of Naga. Located on the west bank of Wadi el Banat, the city was the cultural and religious centre of Meroe with the famous lion temple built in 250-200 BC. The mission of the delegation must have been to promote cultural exchange for both sides, for example, the Chinese porcelain and the glass-melting technology of Egypt and Meroe, Shen assumed.⁹

Pottery was another product of cultural exchange for both sides. Ancient Chinese pottery and china have been discovered in various countries in coastal regions of East Africa.¹⁰ It is interesting that one piece of Meroe pottery collected by the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford University is nearly identical to a Chinese one excavated from a tomb of the Han Dynasty in Ding county in Hebei province; the style is almost the same. Shen Fuwei suggests that

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China's cultural exchange with Meroe may have started around the beginning of AD 11. During the Han Dynasty, the kingdom of Kush "is thought to have been styling its pottery and its bronze utensils after the fashion of goods from China which Indian or Arabian ships were bringing to its Red Sea port". We are not sure whether this assumption is true, yet the potteries of China and Meroe at the time have identical features.

Aidhab was an ancient town and the rendezvous for the merchants of Yemen and the pilgrims who came to Egypt and the sea-route back home passed here frequently. According to Idrisi, "At the extremity of the desert and on the borders of the salt sea is 'Aidhab', from which one crosses to Jidda in one day and one night. 'Aidhab' has two governors, one appointed by the chief of the Bega, and the other by the princes of Egypt."¹¹ G W Murray, who visited the site at the end of 1925, 30 years after it was rediscovered by Theodore Bent in 1896, described "the shards of celadon and blue-and-white China porcelain on the site" and concluded that they "are definitely Ming in date, that is, later than 1368". The prosperous city was gradually deserted by the pilgrim traffic after wars in the region; "trade with the Far East must have gone on right down to the final destruction of the city," until possibly the fifteenth century.¹² Murray wrote: "Many fragments of Chinese porcelain and celadon ware of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries showed a former trade with the Far East. I have not observed these elsewhere on the Egyptian coast, though 'pseudoceladon' – that is, imitations made locally – were seen at Old Qoseir and here." He was surprised that "the fishermen at Halaib still collect sea-slugs, which are shipped via Suakin (Sawakin) to China, so that the connection between China and this coast survives. Within human memory a junk has been into the Red Sea to collect them."¹³

Along the Nile River there are various ancient sites where Chinese pottery has been found in abundance. According to a Japanese archeologist, Chinese pottery was not only liked by the nobles and rich people in the Lower Nile, but also by elites in every city all over the Nile basin. In his exploration, the archeologist found Chinese pottery not only in Egypt, but also in different sites of Sudan and Ethiopia. "Therefore, China's medieval pottery went up along the Nile, gradually into the interior and finally arrived at Ethiopia."¹⁴ Recently, thousands of fragments of Chinese porcelain were found in various places in east Sudan, including the ancient kingdom of Sennar founded by the Funj around the fifteenth and sixteenth century.¹⁵ During the Tang Dynasty (618-907), commercial activities were frequent between China and other countries.¹⁶ Du Huan, an officer who was captured during a battle between Arabs and China in AD 751, returned to China by ship in AD 762. He wrote a travel note entitled *Jing Xing Ji* and mentioned places which have caused great interest among scholars. One passage described a place called "Molin", which invited several interpretations, such as East Africa, West Africa, North Africa, or more specifically, Mauritania, Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Malindi in Kenya, Mendi in Kenya and Meroe.¹⁷ Although there are different opinions regarding the exact location of the place, the majority agree that it is located in Africa.

Among the different interpretations, several scholars indicate that Molin is located in Nubia, or the Sudan. For example, Wheasley believed it was Meroe.¹⁸ According to Philip Snow, this is "a first Chinese impression of Africa – the first report on Africa by a complete

outsider since Nero sent his centurions to investigate the Nile". Judging from the religions that Du Huan described in his note – Snow presumes that "Du had probably made his way to the coastal fringe of the kingdom of Axum, the territory now known as Eritrea".¹⁹ Recently, the Sudan or Meroe version has gained favour. Ethiopian scholar S Munro Hay argues this point in his new work, and Wolbert Smidt also published an article to support the view. Smidt suggests "an etymological connection with Muqurra", which is another ancient Christian Nubian kingdom south of Napata centered in the city of Dongola (Dunqula).²⁰ Dr Gaafar Karrar Ahmed, a Sudanese scholar who received his history doctorate in China, thinks that Molin refers to Beja in east Sudan, judging from the history, geography and cultural description of the place. "We firmly believe that Du Huan's visit to Sudan in the mid-8th century means that this may be the first contact between Sudan and China recorded in documentation in the post-Islam period. So far as I know, the description in Jing Xing Ji is the earliest record about Sudan in Chinese documentation."²¹

The Modern: Geography, Experience and Commercial Agency

In modern times, both China and Sudan had the same experience of subordination by the European powers or other foreign countries. Sudan, after the defeat of the Mahdist movement by the British, finally became, in effect, a British colony while China turned out to be the trophy of several Western countries.

As early as the 1840s, Chinese intellectuals expressed their humiliation about the penetration and invasions of imperialist countries. Lin Zexu, an official in charge of burning opium, gathered a group of intellectuals to collect information on foreign countries and compiled a book entitled Records of Four Continents. He tried to understand the current situation outside China and search for a solution to the dilemma of Chinese humiliation. Unfortunately, he became a scapegoat of the government after the Opium War and was sent into exile. His work was left to his friend Wei Yuan, another intellectual who, based on the materials, published a work entitled Hai Guo Tu Zhi (World Geographical Records). The book comprised 50 volumes in 1842. It was expanded to 60 volumes five years later, and to 100 volumes in 1852. Volumes 33-36 introduce Africa, which was divided into five parts: east, north, south, west and central Africa. Volume 33 includes the Sudan and especially regions such as Nubia, Kordofan, Darfur, etc.²²

Another scholar-official, Xu Jiyu, a governor in Fujian, made a great contribution to the understanding of foreign countries. He published a book Ying Huan Zhi Lue (Concise Geography of the World), published in 1848, which was the most comprehensive geographical work in Asia at the time. He was highly praised by other scholars because of his contribution to scholarship, which "exhibited the author's extraordinary insight and bravery in its appraisal of a complicated world of competing states into which China was now thrust".²³ Hu Jiyu included Kordofan and Darfur in central Africa, and described the geographical location, natural typology, landscape and products. He also described the social conditions in these regions. Kordofan was a place where there was "no king but chief", "belief in Islam", with the White Nile cutting across it. He also mentioned that Kordofan

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produced cotton and ironware. Darfur was described in more detail. Besides geography, climate and products, he gave a vivid picture of daily life there. The people were all Muslims and practised farming. Every year, the King led the elderly to do farm work in public in order to encourage farming. Hu Jiyu wrote: "It is really extraordinary that such a thing was seen in such a place." Prosperous trade in Darfur was mentioned – a caravan was seen, and every team had more than a thousand people with several thousand camels. Local products were mentioned, such as ivory, wood, tobacco leaf, jade, spice, black pepper, jute, etc. From his description, we can see a prosperous development in Darfur at the time.²⁴

At the end of the nineteenth century, China and Sudan became the prey of the European powers. Despite the differences, they had a unique common feature in their history of resistance, to fight against the same British colonialist, Charles George Gordon. Gordon came to China when the Taiping (Heavenly Peace) Movement was active. It challenged the corrupt Qing Dynasty (1616-1911) and gradually developed into a national movement during the 1850s-1860s. After taking part in the plunder of Yuanmingyuan, the most beautiful royal park full of treasures, Gordon later joined the suppression of the Taiping Movement. The Qing government was badly defeated and greatly shaken up by the rebellious army. But Gordon's army with modern rifles contributed a great deal to the final repression of the Taiping army. He was honoured by both the British government and the Qing government. The Mahdist movement is a significant event not only in African history, but also in modern world history. It started as a struggle against Turk-Egyptian rule in 1881, lasted for 17 years and was finally suppressed by the British-Egyptian army in 1898.²⁵ The Mahdist movement is regarded as a great revolution in Sudanese history. This religious and political movement was linked with later nationalism in three aspects. Firstly, the Mahdist state greatly promoted and hastened the formation of Sudanese national consciousness. Secondly, the resistance against the British invasion led by Khalifa Abdullah Ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad, the successor of al-Mahdi, became the symbol of the primary resistance in Sudan. Thirdly, the movement made some impact on British colonial policy, thus establishing the foundation for the later "new Mahdism".²⁶

Under the leadership of al-Mahdi, the movement spread rapidly and won support in its fight against the Turkish-Egyptian ruling class. Gordon first arrived in Egypt in 1874, later he became the governor of Sudan. After the involvement of the British government in Sudanese affairs, the Mahdist movement turned out to be a struggle against British-Egyptian administration. The Mahdist movement began in 1881 and captured Khartoum in 1885 from General Gordon, who was killed by the Mahdists in the battle. After the death of al-Mahdi, the movement occupied almost all the territory of Sudan and established its own government. However, the movement was finally repressed by the British. As for the fate of Gordon, he got away from Chinese justice but received his punishment in Sudan.

Although both China and Sudan suffered during the colonial times, relations continued between both states. There were personal contacts and trade between the two peoples. Sudanese businessman Mohammed Haji Ali is a colourful example. During the nineteenth century, Guangzhou was a business centre in south China and served as a bridge between

China and the outside world. Dr Gaafar Karrar Ahmed's recent work on business contact between China and Sudan disclosed a fresh page of social and economic history.

During the nineteenth century, some ancient ports in Sudan recovered and stimulated prosperous business in the coastal region; Port Sawakin (Suakin) was one of them. It traded with the Far East, in rice, silk and spice from China and other countries. The opening up of the Suez Canal provided more opportunities for Sudanese businessmen. Mohammed Haji Ali, a well-known Sudanese businessman at the time, traded with Egypt as well as the rest of the Arab world. What is more, he developed a regular business connection with Asia and began to expand his business to China.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Mohammed Haji Ali set up the first Sudan commercial agency in China. In his office at Guangzhou, he imported ivory, hippo horn and various sea-foods from Sudan and exported silk and various Chinese local products to Sudan through Port Sawakin. He married two Chinese wives, An Xi and Guo Nan, while An Xi, the first Chinese wife and a Muslim, gave birth to a daughter named Fatima.

According to the oral history recorded by Dr Gaafar Karrar Ahmed, the family stayed in Guangzhou for more than ten years until Mohammed Haji Ali decided to return to Sudan. He brought with him An Xi, Guo Nan, Fatima, and another Chinese couple whose relationship with Mohammed Haji Ali is not clear. Most likely, they were the relatives of either An Xi or Guo Nan. Mohammed Haji Ali chose to settle down in Berber, a small city in north Sudan. Fatima was married to a Sudanese and had several children, while the Chinese couple had a daughter. As Dr Ahmed reminds us, there is in Berber a family of Chinese origin from Guangzhou, a city in south China.²⁷ The story of Mohammed Haji Ali provides a vivid personal example of the long history of China-Sudan relations.

The Contemporary: Darfur, Human Rights and Oil

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the relationship between China and Sudan has been a smooth one. Soon after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries on February 4, 1959, there were continuous exchanges in the cultural and educational fields. China sent its acrobat delegation to Sudan and opened a photo exhibition in Khartoum in 1960, while Sudanese delegations of students visited China in 1960, followed by the visit of a Sudan Delegation of Culture in the next year. Since then, delegations promoting cultural or educational issues have exchanged visits almost every year, and cultural activities were carried on frequently between two countries. For example, in 1979, 22 Sudanese youngsters received acrobat training in Wuhan, a big city in China, for one year.²⁸ There have been political and economic exchanges as well.

In recent years, Sudan has become a hot topic in the international arena, which concentrated on three issues, Darfur, human rights and oil. The Darfur issue is a very complicated one with historical origins, natural resources, national integration, religious conflict, refugee migration, poverty, etc. I would like to stress three points here. Firstly, the Darfur issue is mainly caused by environmental degradation, as pointed out by the UNEP report issued recently. "Environmental degradation, as well as regional climate instability

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and change, are major underlying causes of food insecurity and conflict in Darfur – and potential catalysts for future conflict throughout central and eastern Sudan and other countries in the Sahel belt.”²⁹

Secondly, the Darfur issue is a regional tragedy, which has affected many people and brought a disastrous impact in the whole region. Nevertheless the UN, its member countries (except the US) and regional organisations do not use “genocide” to describe the Darfur situation.³⁰ Thirdly, Darfur is an issue related to development and can be finally resolved only through development. Fourthly, the Darfur issue is expressed in terms of a conflict between different Sudanese peoples. It is a common sense that the nation-building is a difficult process for all countries. Just think about the US Civil War — after more than 80 years of independence, a war occurred with 600,000 deaths which prevented the secession of the southern Confederate states. It is important that the international community give the Sudanese people time to solve this problem. We can offer our help, but no intervention. Foreign intervention brings no solution, only more trouble, which has been shown in other parts of the world (Afghanistan, Iraq, etc.). What is more, the Darfur situation is moving in the right direction.

China insists on using influence without interference – respect is vital to finding solutions. China has used its ties with Sudan to persuade the Khartoum government to cooperate with the United Nations.³¹ As China is working to find a solution agreeable to all parties to alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese people, and so the Sudanese government trusts China. Recently, the Sudanese government accepted the “hybrid peacekeeping force” in Darfur.³² The turning point for the political process has resulted from negotiations with the Sudanese government based on equality, not coercion or the threat of sanctions.

Human rights is another issue which caused a lot of attention and China has been criticised for its neglect of human rights in Sudan. China has its own human rights problem (we acknowledge that and are improving it every day). The European Union constantly criticises China’s human rights, yet Britain, France and Germany are all trying by every means to promote their trade with China. Both the US and China have issued human right reports critical of each other, yet trade relations are growing. Why should we use another standard to treat Sudan?

We can imagine what the effects will be when the Sudanese people badly need humanitarian and economic aid, investment and cooperation from the international community, but new sanctions are imposed. China takes a different approach. Besides offering help to Sudan in building its oil industry, dams, power stations, infrastructure and other fields, Beijing has in recent years also sent several batches of humanitarian aid including tents, blankets, medical, agricultural equipments, hospitals, schools, etc., with a total value of RMB 80 million.³³

It is a fact that the trade between China and Sudan has been increasing rapidly, and the oil industry is a key element. The trade between the two countries was \$2.5 billion in 2004, with China’s oil imports of 5,770,342 tons, valued at \$1.6 billion. In 2005, the trade reached \$3.9 billion, with oil accounting for \$2.5 billion (6,619,913 tons).³⁴ All this is of course a win-

win situation. With the increase of national income, both the Sudan National Government and Southern government have shared oil income.

There is an accusation from the media that “China takes Sudan under its wing”.³⁵ Western academics have echoed this view. A very good example to refute this accusation is China’s reaction to Talisman’s withdrawal and Sudan’s response. In 2003, the Canadian oil firm decided to sell its interests in a Sudan consortium that also involved Chinese and Malaysian firms. The Chinese company wanted to buy the Canadian share, but this was refused by the Sudanese government. The latter awarded the share to an Indian firm, in order to diversify the investment base.³⁶ This demonstrates two facts: China and Sudan are equal partners; they can make their own decisions. With China’s investment and financial support, Sudan has built up a complete structure for exploration, production, refining, transport and sale of crude oil, gasoline and petrochemical products.

More important, technology exchange is advancing rapidly. Recently, a Chinese delegation of experts on oil technology led by Wang Qimin, an expert in oil production in Daqin, went to Sudan specifically to exchange technology with Sudanese engineers and technicians there.³⁷ The delegation gave three lectures on the experiences of the Daqin oil field to make the best use of oil deposits originally thought to be exhausted after some years’ production.

With increasing trade between China and Sudan, economic and technological cooperation covers a range of fields, including oil exploration, construction, road and bridge building, agriculture, textile, medical, education, etc. China supports the Sudanese government’s efforts to solve its problems, which can be achieved only by peaceful, consultative and comprehensive measures beneficial to the unity and development of the Sudanese people.

¹ For example, J.L. Duyvendak, *China’s Discovery of Africa*, (Stephen Austin and Sons, 1947); Teobaldo Filesi, *China and Africa in the Middle Ages*, (Frank Cass, 1972); Philip Snow, *The Star Raft: China’s Encounter with Africa*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988); Shen Fuwei, *China and Africa, 2000 Years of China-African Relations*, (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1990); Ai Zhouchang and Mu Tao, *A History of Sino-African Relations*, (Shanghai: East Normal University Press, 1996); Li Anshan, *A History of Chinese in Africa*, (Beijing: Chinese Overseas Publishing House, 2000.)

² Gaafar Karrar Ahmed, “Relations between Sudan and China from Tang Dynasty to Yuan Dynasty”, Chinese Society of Yuan Historical Studies, ed., *Yuan Shi Lun Cong* (Series of Yuan Historical Studies), Issue No.7 (January 18,1999), pp.197-206.

³ William Y Adams, *Nubia, Corridor to Africa*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

⁴ Sun Yutang. “China and Egypt in Han dynasty,” *Zhongguo Shi Yanjiu* (Study of Chinese History), Issue No.2 (1979).

⁵ Shen Fuwei, *China and Africa*, p.101

⁶ AHM. Jones & Elizabeth Monroe, *A History of Ethiopia*, (Oxford University Press, 1978), p.25. Jones also mentioned in the book, “Cotton is probably indigenous in the Sudan and has been cultivated from time immemorial.” Note.1.

⁷ Shen Fuwei, *China and Africa*, pp.101-102, 110, 138-140.

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⁸ Song Shu, or Book of Song, is the official history of the Song Dynasty (960-1279)

⁹ Shen Fuwei, *China and Africa*, pp.178-182, 183, 219.

¹⁰ Ma Wenkuan & Meng Fanren, *The Discovery of Ancient Chinese Porcelains in Africa*, (Beijing: Forbidden City Press, 1987), pp.7-29.

¹¹ Quoted in GW Murray, "Aidhab", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol.68, No.3 (Sept., 1926), p. 237.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.* p.239. See also Gerald Reitlinger & Martin Button, "Early Ming Blue-and-White: II", *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 90, No. 540. (Mar., 1948), pp. 67-73, 75; R.L.Hobson, "Chinese Porcelain Fragment, from Aidhab, and Some Bashpa Inscriptions", *Journal of Sudan Antiquities Service*, Vol.5 1957, pp.90-92.

¹⁴ Mikami Tsugio, *The Path of Pottery*, (Beijing: Wenwu Publications, 1984[1972]), p.28.

¹⁵ Gaafar Karrar Ahmed, "Relations between Sudan and China", pp.197-206; *Al-Sudan Al-Hadeeth Newspaper*, Khartoum Issue No.1465 (January 18, 1994).

¹⁶ Cen Zhongmian, "The sea road from Persian Gulf to middle East Africa during the Tang Dynasty", *Eastern Miscellany*, 41:18(September 1935); Li Anshan, *A History of Chinese in Africa*, pp.48-55.

¹⁷ Li Anshan, *A History of Chinese in Africa*, 49-50.

¹⁸ Roland Oliver, ed., *The Cambridge History of Africa*, Vol.3, (Cambridge University Press, 1977), p.193.

¹⁹ Philip Snow, *The Star Raft*, p.4. Snow marks "Molin" in the coastal region of Sudan in his map, see p.7.

²⁰ Wolbert Smidt, "A Chinese in the Nubian and Abyssinian Kingdoms (8th Century): The visit of Du Huan to Molin-guo and Laobosa," *Chroniques Yemenites* No.9, 2001. In the article Wolbert Smidt mentioned Munro Hay's forthcoming work. <http://cy.revues.org/document33.html>.

²¹ Gaafar Karrar Ahmed, "Relations between Sudan and China", pp.198-199.

²² Wei Yuan, *Hai Guo Tu Zhi*, (Yuelu Publisher, 1998).

²³ Fred W Drake, "Xu Jiyu's historic contributions" <http://www.xujiyu.cn/ViewInfo.asp?id=66>

²⁴ Xu Jishe, *Ying Huan Zhi Lue*, quoted from Ai Zhouchang, ed., *Selection of Materials on Sino-African Relation* (1500-1918), (Shanghai: East Normal University Press, 1989), pp.175-176.

²⁵ A B Theobald, *The Mahdiya*, (London, 1951); Mekki Shibeika, *The Independent Sudan: The History of a Nation*, (New York,1959); P M Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898*, (Oxford University Press, 1970).

²⁶ Li Anshan, *A Study on African Nationalism*, (Chinese International Broadcast Press, 2004), pp.118-134.

²⁷ Gaafar Karrar Ahmed "Commemorating Sudanese Businessman Muhammad Haji Ali Who Set up the First Sudanese Commercial Agency in China", *Arab World*, Issue 6 (2005), pp.59-62.

²⁸ Xinhuan, 1979/12/29

²⁹ United Nations Environment Programme, *Sudan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment, 2007*, 329.

UNEP's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch website is <http://postconflict.unep.ch>. The view is not new but neglected by the outside world. For a similar point, see Adam Mohammed, "The Rezaigat Camel Nomads of the Darfur region of Western Sudan: From Co-operation to Confrontation", *Nomadic Peoples*, VIII (2004), 230-240. The Sudanese Ambassador to the US provided the same explanation in his speech at the Press Club on 30 May, 2007, in answering the Bush administration's imposition of new sanctions on Sudan.

³⁰ It is noticeable that a much more serious disaster in the neighboring Congo did not cause much comment from the US and European countries. The exaggerated figure of the deaths in Darfur may have contributed to the misunderstanding of the situation. See Peter Apps, "Watch your facts, UK ad watchdog warns campaigners", 14 August, 2007. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L14822855.htm>

³¹ "What Kind of Crisis the Darfur Issue Is: a special interview with the special representative of the Chinese government," *Chutian Metropolis Daily*, July 8, 2007.

³² "Sudan government deals with Darfur issue with a light pack," Xinhua News Agency,

See: http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2007-07/15/content_6377969.htm. Some American strategists acknowledge China's efforts in solving the Darfur issue. "The Chinese ambassador to the United Nations, Wang Guangya, has become very active and was widely credited in gaining Sudanese acceptance for the Annan Plan in November 2006." Bates Gill, Chin-hao Huang and J. Stephen Morrison, "Assessing China's Growing Influence in Africa", *China Security*, 3:3 (Summer 2007), p.13.

³³ Since 2004, China has sent five batches of materials for humanitarian aid to Darfur. The fourth batch worth RMB 20 million (\$2.6 million) from China left for Sudan on 16 August, including pumps, tents and blankets to help residents in the Darfur region improve their living conditions. "Humanitarian aid from China

leaves for Sudan's Darfur", 20 August, 2007. <http://www.focac.org/eng/zxxx/t353371.htm>; The fifth batch of aid worth RMB 40 million, including board-houses for at least 120 schools, generators, vehicles and pumps, was shipped on 25 Aug from China. <http://news.enorth.com.cn/system/2007/08/24/001839261.shtml>.

³⁴ "Statistics of trade between China and West Asia and North African countries, Jan-Dec. 2006", from China's Ministry of Commerce network.

³⁵ David Blair, "Oil-hungry China Takes Sudan under its Wing", The Daily *Telegraph* (London), April 23, 2005. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/04/23/wsud23.xml&sSheet=/news/2005/04/23/ixworld.html>

³⁶ For the entry of India oil enterprise into Sudan and its impact, see Raja Mohan, "Sakhalin to Sudan: India's Energy Diplomacy", *The Hindu*, Online edition of India's National Newspaper, Monday, June 24, 2002, <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/2002/06/24/stories/2002062404201100.htm>

³⁷ Daqin is an oil field in north China, which was explored during the 1960-70s.

2. Non-Interference and China's African Policy: The Case of Sudan

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With China's rapidly growing presence in Africa during recent years, China's non-interference principle continues to be questioned and criticised, mainly in the Western world. While the Finnish researcher Linda Jakobson claims that China's non-interference "is proving to be a burden",¹ the American writer Jonas Gamsø treats it as "problematic" one.² In fact, it is quite difficult for Chinese scholars to identify with such simple conclusions.

The Meaning of Non-Interference

Non-Interference is one of the Five Principles, which was first coined in 1954, and continued to be the basis of contemporary Chinese foreign policy for the following half a century. The Chinese Foreign Ministry explained in 2003: "China is ready to establish and develop friendly relations of cooperation with all the countries on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence."³ Thus the accurate meaning of non-interference for China is reciprocal non-intervention in each other's internal matters.

Such understanding accords with the Charter of the United Nations; in its Chapter VII the following article was constituted: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter."⁴ That is to say, China's non-interference principle has been founded on the international legal document, which is generally accepted by the whole international community.

Although some researchers seriously doubted the efficacy of non-interference in coping with the humanitarian crises of the African continent, China still reiterates its adherence to that principle in the significant foreign document China's African Policy, which was first published in January 2006.⁵ There are two paragraphs closely involving that principle, one from the position of the Chinese government,⁶ another from the stance of the Chinese ruling party, the CPC.⁷ Chinese former assistant foreign minister Lu Guozeng, who used to be responsible for the West Asian and African affairs inside the ministry, clearly stated at a press briefing held in Beijing on 12 January 2006, that China will not interfere in African countries' internal affairs.⁸

The Challenge of the Darfur Issue

Since the outbreak of Darfur's humanitarian crisis in 2003, China has had to confront

growing pressure from the Western world. In fact, there is no connection between Darfur and China at all. Darfur's crisis is Sudan's not China's problem, but China is still unreasonably accused because of its close relationship with Sudan.

In a "Letter to President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China from members of Congress" issued on 7 May 2007, 102 American Congressmen baldly yelled: "We urge you to impress upon Khartoum the need to halt Sudan's military operations throughout Darfur, to withdraw Sudanese troops from the area, and to honor its commitment to accept the 'heavy support package' which includes a robust African Union/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, under a UN-appointed commander, police officers, civilian staff and humanitarian workers."⁹ Some Western plotters even viciously bound the Darfur crisis with the Beijing Olympics; for example, the American Save Darfur Coalition publicly alleged in a "Sample Letter to the Editor About China and Darfur" that: "China's inaction on Darfur is now at a crossroads. There are increasing international calls for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and these are likely to increase in the months ahead. With its own international reputation at risk, China must decide whether to continue its policy of non-intervention and risk international condemnation, or act as the responsible global, diplomatic power it desires to be."¹⁰

It is obvious that these Americans want to see China's change its long-standing non-interference principle, and join in the chorus of Western sanctions against Sudan. But, if China really does what the Americans urge it to do, what is the difference between China's foreign policy and America's? Where is China's diplomatic personality? And what would Sudan think of China's behaviour? Would Khartoum retain the good relationship with China? It is China's inner fear that New Colonialism could be given concrete evidence and so tar China with the same brush, especially in the African perspective.

However, if China completely ignores the Western pressure and continues to do nothing on the Darfur crisis, some significant damage could be inflicted on Chinese interests and national image worldwide. The most dangerous harm is no doubt the appeal for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, which is being regarded by both the government and the people of China as a symbol of national pride and a display of economic prosperity. Since the beginning of this year, the Chinese leadership has realised that China has been dragged into a dilemma, which has compelled it to respond to the Darfur crisis much more zealously and aggressively than before.

The Reaction of China

On 2 February 2007, Chinese president Hu Jintao arrived in Sudan to pay a state visit on the third stop of his tour of eight African countries. The importance of this visit consisted not only in the need for protocol arrangements, but also the necessity of political consultation. President Omar al-Bashir had come to China three times since he became the ruler in 1989, while no Chinese supreme leader had ever set foot in Sudan since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1959. President Hu's visit repaired the diplomatic imbalance, and attracted great attention. During their bilateral talks, the two

heads exchanged views on the Darfur crisis. President Hu expressed China's deep concern and put forward a plan with four principles.

After President Hu's summit diplomacy in Sudan, China's participation in the Darfur issue has been quickly and noticeably upgraded. From 6 to 9 April, Chinese assistant foreign minister Zhai Jun, who is now in charge of West Asian and African Affairs, flew to North and South Darfur for a field inspection and talked with President al-Bashir. About one month later, on 10 May, China announced the appointment of Mr Liu Guijin, the former ambassador to South Africa, as its first Special Representative on the Darfur issue. He soon started his first tour of Sudan from 19 to 23 May, and a second tour to Sudan as well as South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt and the headquarters of the African Union (AU) and the League of Arab States (LAS) from 13 to 24 June.

Almost at the same time, Sudan gradually softened its opposition towards the third phase of UN plan for Darfur, and finally agreed to allow the deployment of a 20,000-strong "hybrid" U.N.-AU force in Darfur on 12 June.¹¹ Later, on 31 July, the last day of China's rotating presidency of the UN Security Council, Resolution 1769 was approved by all 15 members, which formally ratified and legalised the deployment plan. The Sudanese government officially recognised the resolution on 1 August. This quick response exhibited Sudanese willingness to cooperate with international institutions to solve the Darfur crisis. The question is: what was China's role in the shift of Sudan's position?

The Crucial Role of China

"The Chinese government played a responsible role in resolving the Darfur issue", according to Chinese Special Representative Mr Liu Guijin in his second press briefing on 5 July. "We have taken many positive actions. It should be said that obvious results were achieved. The Sudanese government has explicitly declared the unconditional acceptance of the third phase of the Annan Plan, that is, the hybrid peacekeeping operation. This is attributable to the efforts made by the Chinese government."¹² Assuming that such a statement is true, the further question should be asked: did China exert a lot of pressure on Sudan in the same way as the American congressmen urged? If the "pressure" means command, threat, coercion, sanction or other colonialist ruling measures, the answer is absolutely No. According to the same briefing, Mr Liu implied that the "positive actions" China took were mainly friendly persuasion and equal consultations. Why did China's "soft" posture work and America's "hard-ball" did not?

Besides the long friendship and mutual trust between the two countries, there are some other factors which ought to be considered. First of all, China respects Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity within the framework of the four principles declared by President Hu. Since the eruption of the crisis, international and regional organisations convened many conferences and reached a lot of agreements or resolutions, but Sudan was often excluded from attending negotiations or becoming a party to signatures on plans or agreements, which badly hurt Sudan's dignity and deterred the Sudanese government from cooperating.

China has always advocated that the Darfur crisis is chiefly Sudan's internal problem, which should be settled through dialogue and "should be helpful for Sudan's reconciliation process, its national unity and regional peace and stability".¹³

Secondly, China supports peaceful and political solutions to the Darfur issue, and opposes any sanctions or threatening use of force. On the one hand, Chinese leaders and special envoys endeavoured to constantly exchange views and repeatedly persuade Sudanese top officials to accept the third phase of the Annan plan, by saying that the plan is most widely agreed by the international community and is in line with the current and long-term interests of Sudan. On the other hand, China advised Western powers not to impose sanctions against Sudan. Mr Liu gave a vivid example to his Western colleagues in Paris and Brussels, when he said: "When we sit together to dine, our goal is the same, that is, to eat the course. The Americans use forks and knives. The Chinese use chop sticks. The Sudanese use hands. When we finish the course, our goal is fulfilled. Why do we have to use hard materials? Why do we have to use forks and knives? Can we use something softer? Why can't we use our wisdom and make joint efforts to achieve better results?"¹⁴

Thirdly, China provides Darfur with both humanitarian aid and development assistance, which were warmly welcomed by both the Sudanese government and Darfur people. Like some Western specialists and NGOs, China believes that "the root causes of the Darfur issue are poverty, underdevelopment and scramble for scarce resources for living such as water, land, and livestock."¹⁵ Based on this diagnosis, China emphasises the importance of reconstruction and long-term development for Darfur in addition to the peacekeeping operations and relief works. After President Hu promised to contribute 40 million Yuan to Darfur refugees in February, China dispatched five batches of aid materials such as pumps, tents and blankets to the Darfur regions with the total value of 80 millions (nearly \$10.38 millions) at the end of August 2007.¹⁶ Moreover, "Chinese companies participated in the water supply project in Darfur and offered mobile clapboard houses as classrooms for students. Recently we also sent a team of agricultural experts to build up a demo center for agricultural technologies in a bid to assist Sudan's agricultural development."¹⁷

China's policies toward Sudan "are widely recognised by the international community, particularly African countries, AU and LAS", said Mr Liu. He added: "The African countries all agree with the basic opinion of China on how to resolve the Darfur issue, that is, seeking a long-term and ultimate solution to the issue by political means and through consultations and dialogues on an equal footing."¹⁸ This remark illustrated China's current position on the Darfur crisis.

Conclusion

In Sudan, China has become much more active than in the past in dealing with an external crisis, which had damaged or was threatening the national interests of China. But this new phenomenon doesn't mean that China has given up its principle of non-interference, whether in theory or in practice. Compared to the Western "tough" diplomacy demonstrated by public censure, comprehensive sanction and military threat, etc., China's "gentle" diplomacy,

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illustrated by respect for sovereignty, private persuasion, close consultations, etc., seems to be more welcome and effective in the developing world particularly in the African continent.

It is impossible for China follow Save Darfur Coalition's orders, likewise, it is also unlikely for Sudan to obey China's orders.¹⁹ China often criticises the Western powers' interference in its domestic affairs, similarly, wouldn't China expect to be rebuked by Sudan for any unwelcome intervention? Therefore, non-interference is not China's "burden" but China's defence. China could modify its diplomatic style in light of new and complicated situations, but there is no need to abandon the principle of non-interference, which has undergone a severe historical test for decades and has turned into an outstanding component of its independent foreign policy.

¹ Linda Jakobson, "The burden of 'non-interference'", *China Economic Quarterly*, Q2, 2007.

² Jonas Gamso, "China's Trade Policy and Africa Evaluating Noninterference", August 16, 2007, <http://international-financial-affairs.suite101.com/article.cfm/noninterference>

³ "China's Independent Foreign Policy of Peace", <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/wjzc/t24881.htm>

⁴ More detailed explanations were formulated in another UN document issued on October 24, 1970 under the title "Declaration on Principles of International Law Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations", which stipulates that "No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are in violation of international law."

⁵ Mark Malan, "The Principle of Non-Interference and the Future of Multinational Intervention in Africa", *African Security Review*, Vol.6, No.3, 1997.

⁶ The original text: "China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, respects African countries' independent choice of the road of development and supports African countries' efforts to grow stronger through unity."

⁷ The original text: "The Communist Party of China (CPC) develops exchanges of various forms with friendly political parties and organizations of African countries on the basis of the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The purpose of such exchanges is to increase understanding and friendship and seek trust and cooperation."

⁸ "Chinese official reiterates non-interference policy on African countries' internal affairs", http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200601/12/eng20060112_234951.html

⁹ "Letter to President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China from members of Congress", http://darfur.3cdn.net/8946d0317ada7ce738_8nm6b1bnv.pdf

¹⁰ "Sample Letter to the Editor About China and Darfur", http://www.savedarfur.org/pages/sample_letter_to_the_editor_about_china_and_darfur

¹¹ "Sudan says accepts hybrid force for Darfur", http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSL12824505_CH_2400

¹² "The Chinese Government's Special Representative on the Darfur Issue Holds a Briefing to Chinese and Foreign Journalists", <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/zyxw/t344137.htm>

¹³ “Hu puts forward principle on Darfur issue”,

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2007-02/05/content_801432.htm

¹⁴ “The Chinese Government’s Special Representative on the Darfur Issue Holds a Briefing to Chinese and Foreign Journalists”, <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/zyxw/t344137.htm>

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ “Humanitarian aid from China leaves for Sudan’s Darfur”, <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/6241546.html>

¹⁷ “The Chinese Government’s Special Representative on the Darfur Issue Holds a Briefing to Chinese and Foreign Journalists”, <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/zyxw/t344137.htm>

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ The American Save Darfur Coalition published an advertisement in its website as saying: “The world is growing impatient. While China prepares to host the 2008 summer games, its failure to stop the Sudanese government’s genocide in Darfur remains shamefully unacceptable. As Sudan’s chief diplomatic sponsor, major weapons provider, and largest foreign investor and trade partner, China has more power than any other nation to convince Sudan to halt the slaughter and stop blocking UN peacekeepers. Yet, China continues to strengthen its economic and military ties with Sudan. How many more will die in Darfur before China acts to end the genocide?” - http://darfur.3cdn.net/19760a2179b0baba5d_8jm6ibihk.PDF

3. The View from Sudan

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Introduction

Sudan is passing through a critical phase in its history. The country is emerging from a civil conflict which has ravaged it for 39 out of the last 50 years. The conflict between the central government and the insurgents from the south erupted even before Sudan gained its independence. The last episode of civil war began in 1983 and lasted for 21 years.

The Sudanese civil war caused an estimated loss of two million lives and displacement of millions of others. It devastated the whole country and deprived it of opportunities for stability and development. The comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) between the central government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) stopped the war and loss of lives. Moreover, the CPA provided a comprehensive framework for peaceful transformation of the country into a multi-party democracy. The CPA was meant to serve as a blueprint for long-term peace and stability for the entire country, which is still the site of a serious conflict in Darfur. The chronic conflict in Sudan was primarily driven by feelings of marginalisation and unequal distribution of power and wealth between the centre and the periphery – real or perceived. The CPA dealt with these issues for the whole country. The CPA also recognised the right of the Southern Sudanese for self-determination which was a demand of a large section of the Southern Sudan population.

The history of democratic rule in Sudan told us that democracy was not sustainable for long periods of time. Three democratically elected governments were overthrown by the military, leading to totalitarian regimes. However, it is important to note that democratically elected governments tended to crumble or get stuck in deadlocks which paves the way for the army to take over. Every time there was a coup overthrowing a democratically elected government, it was well-received by the public who had had enough of the incompetence and corruption of the politicians and their continuous struggle for personal gains. The public would welcome the military rulers at first as saviours of the country but eventually the popularity of such regimes decline mostly due to failure in dealing with the chronic problems of the country, especially the economic ones. The Sudanese have never had a platform in the past to probe the root causes of political instability in the country and confront the real issues. The discussions which led to signing of the CPA were the first time since independence when the Sudanese addressed the root-causes of conflict and ways of building a sustainable democracy through a full transformation process which does not exclude any political formation or point of view from participation.

Progress in implementation

Many important steps of the CPA have been implemented, notably the formation of the

national unity government, the parliament, formation of the government of South Sudan, constitutional revision, wealth-sharing arrangements which secured transfer of funds to the South, implementation of significant part of forces' withdrawal arrangements, establishment of several commissions etc. Some aspects of the CPA have not yet been implemented or are lagging behind schedule. This should not be surprising in an agreement of such magnitude and detail. The two parties to the agreement are still committed to solving their problems through peaceful negotiation, despite the negative rhetoric which surfaces occasionally about specific issues and which could sometimes be quite heated.

Those who say that the implementation of the CPA is not moving fast enough have their arguments but many of them fail to see the context in which this historic agreement is being implemented. This is an extremely detailed agreement and it should not be surprising if some aspects of it proved more difficult to implement than what was thought up in closed rooms in Naivasha. It is also natural if some elements in both the National Congress Party (NCP) and SPLM are not in complete approval of the provisions of the CPA and they may not seem very enthusiastic about the process of implementation. However, all evidence shows that these elements are too weak and isolated and they pose no danger to the agreement.

The huge progress in the implementation of the CPA was overshadowed by the eruption of violence in Darfur. Failure to solve the Darfur problem will continue to threaten the viability of the CPA

Criticism of the CPA

The provisions of the CPA were unanimously accepted by political formations in Sudan. Even the criticism by Sadig Almahdi, the leader of the Umma party, was aimed at the bilateral nature of the agreement rather than its main provisions. The rest of the political parties accepted the fact that the bilateral negotiation of the agreement was necessitated by the circumstances and they agreed to participate in the executive or legislative structures of the transitional period which would culminate in free elections. Some minor players on the Sudanese political scene were disappointed in the CPA and its implementation because of their unrealistic expectations. Some of them were counting on the SPLM outdoing the NCP politically and were disappointed in the performance of the SPLM which is struggling to transform itself from a military formation into an effective political movement. Some of them were upset that the SPLM is giving more emphasis to the issues of the South rather than helping undermining the NCP. Some of these groups, sometimes disguised as civil society organisations and receiving external support, continue to criticise the implementation of the CPA which did not fit their predictions and hopes of weakening the NCP.

The CPA came as an unpleasant development to many interest groups in the West, especially in the United States where the coalition between "Neo Cons", the extreme Christian right and some Zionists was completely focussed on bringing the regime in Khartoum down. Many of these groups voiced their concern that the partnership between the central government and SPLM will not dismantle the regime but, on the contrary, it might give the regime new life. The democratic transition embedded in the agreement was

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of no importance to them, especially that it might bring the NCP back to power through the ballot box and give it legitimacy. Some of these groups seem to capitalise on the resentment of the Silva Kiir leadership by the group of relatively young and ambitious Southern politicians called sometimes “John’s boys”, referring to their close association with the late John Garang. If these groups continued to play this game they will threaten the implementation of the CPA or trigger a power struggle within the SPLM/A with disastrous consequences.

Many of these groups hostile to the CPA in the USA and Europe are going through a renewed phase of panic because the hope that free elections are going to remove the NCP from power is now shaky because of the very poor political performance of the SPLM and the Northern opposition parties which are riddled with disagreements and splits and some of them are in complete disarray. Those groups may intensify the anti-government campaign and use all means in their disposal, some of which may threaten the progress made so far and deprive the country of this golden opportunity to address its historical woes.

Roadmap to the future

The CPA has achieved a lot for the people of Sudan already. The engagement of the international community (especially the USA, United Kingdom, Norway and Italy) was crucial to the conclusion of peace negotiations and signing of the CPA. The international community has a moral obligation to continue to support implementation of the CPA and other agreements like the East agreement and Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) to ensure peaceful transformation of Sudan into a sustainable multi-party democracy which promises peace, stability and development. This means working closely with Sudanese authorities in the North and South. The continuous rhetoric by some interest groups about the lack of credibility of the government is an attempt to prevent the international community from constructive engagement with the Government of National Unity (GoNU), in pursuit of their ideological priority in Sudan, which is regime change. The engagement of the USA is hampered by the insistence of the Bush administration on pleasing these groups which are active and very vocal elements of the conservative coalition. This has led to the American government sometimes sending contradictory messages and adopting apparently non-reconcilable attitudes towards Sudan. The peoples, countries and organisations who want to make Sudan realise the peaceful, democratic transformation should have the moral courage and responsibility to confront these groups which are intent on continuing to use the problems of Sudan, especially Darfur, as a battleground for an ideological objective of toppling the “Islamic state” in Khartoum. The government has shown tremendous courage and dedication in reaching the CPA with the SPLM. The government continued to be engaged in negotiations with rebels from Darfur and agreements have been signed already with several rebel groups from the East and Darfur. The government has agreed to the deployment of peace keepers in Darfur when its legitimate concerns about the earlier drafts were addressed. The record of the Sudanese government in the war against terrorism speaks for itself. The margin of political and press freedom in Sudan is far greater than in many countries which are considered darlings of the West. There is no reason for the international community to hold back full and

non-biased collaboration from the Government of National Unity in Sudan and therefore hamper the political transformation of the country.

The political and moral support by the international community should go hand in hand with material support. The international community has made a lot of pledges for economic support but it has not made good on them. There is a lot at stake if the CPA stalls. The loss of life and destruction which can take place might even overflow across political borders into neighbouring countries.

Economic sanctions, divestment campaigns and continuous and unfair criticism will only help the enemies of the CPA. Sudan needs more assistance not economic sanctions and criticism. The international community should adopt a constructive approach and address tasks which need doing in the time scale set by the CPA to keep alive the CPA and the hopes of the Sudanese people in a prosperous future.

4. The Darfur Issue and China's Role

Professor He Wenping

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Since early 2003, the Darfur issue has been the cynosure of the world's eye, thanks to special attention devoted to it by the Western media, human rights' organisations and politicians. Since China and Sudan have had a long tradition of friendship and close political and economic ties, the Darfur issue has also become an excuse for some organisations to attack China, thus fueling the media frenzy even more. What, then, are the real issues behind this problem, and what is China's role in resolving it?

Ecosystem Deterioration: Root Cause of the Crisis

Located in west Sudan (which is bordered by Libya, Chad and the Central African Republic), Darfur covers an area of 500,000 square km, about one fifth of the total area of Sudan. There are about 80 tribes in this region, the least-developed area of Sudan, and the two biggest tribal groups are Arab and African. The former is a nomadic tribe distributed over the north of the area, and the latter an agricultural tribe inhabiting the central and southern parts. Apart from occasional conflicts over land and water, the two tribes have more or less always coexisted peacefully. In the past history, all tribes in Darfur had united and fought against British colonial aggression in the early twentieth century.

In the 1970s, drought drove Arab tribes from northern Darfur and from neighbouring countries like Chad and Mauritania, to central and southern Darfur, leading to an increase in population from three million people 20 years ago to its current six million. This factor, combined with famine, began to prove disastrous for the fragile ecosystem, and frequent land and water disputes erupted. According to statistics given by Sudan scholars, there were only three conflicts from 1968 to 1976, and five from 1976 to 1980, but this increased to 21 from 1980 to 1998.¹ In February 2003, two armed forces organised by the Darfur African tribes, namely, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA, consisting mostly of land-tilling villagers) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), launched a large-scale anti-government campaign demanding autonomous rule. The military conflict caused a lot of casualties and the Darfur issue has been emerging since then.

In terms of the root cause of the Darfur issue, the secretary general of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, wrote an article called "A Climate Culprit In Darfur" published in the *Washington Post* on 16 June 2007. In the article, the secretary general pointed out: "Amid the diverse social and political causes, the Darfur conflict began as an ecological crisis, arising at least in part from climate change." He said the rains in southern Sudan have declined some 40 percent since the early 1980s. And this coincided with a rise in temperatures of the Indian

Ocean, disrupting seasonal monsoons. This suggests that the drying of sub-Saharan Africa derives, to some degree, from man-made global warming. He then argued that any peace in Darfur must be built on solutions that go to the root causes of the conflict, that is, global warming. Otherwise, similar problems to the Darfur issue may occur in many other parts of the world.²

The Sudan government also established a research committee to investigate the root causes of the Darfur issue after the armed conflict broke out in 2003. After a thorough research into the background and all related factors concerning the issue, the committee also concluded that the root cause of the conflict is the ecosystem deterioration caused by the drought in the region in the past two decades. The increasing population fights for limited resources including water and land, and the fighting later on gradually leads to armed conflicts.³

Since the drought and global warming are the root causes of the Darfur crisis, then how did the ecological conflict gradually turn into a political and religious war later?

Reasons for the "Escalation" of the Crisis

In 2004, the Darfur issue was upgraded from a domestic conflict to a "world focus" conflict. There were several reasons behind the upgrade.

First, the deterioration of the regional situation. Since February 2003, the two military forces, SLA and JEM, began antigovernment action in the name of protecting themselves from Arab militia attacks, which had killed over 10,000 people, and left about 1 million homeless (the number is given and admitted by the Sudan government).⁴ Although the number of casualties varied from different calculations and sources, the fact is that the situation in Darfur did get worse in 2004 and the fighting has resulted in a large-scale "humanitarian crisis".

Second, in 2004, international societies held photographic exhibitions and lectures to mark the tenth anniversary of the Rwanda massacre, in a bid to prevent it from happening again. Since the Darfur crisis also involved elements of tribal conflict and religious disputes as well as the locals' terrible relations with the central government and the war in Southern Sudan, it seemed easier to link this issue with another Rwanda massacre. Throughout 2004, there was a heated debate about whether the Darfur crisis could be defined as "genocide" or not. In the West, especially some right-wing Christian organisations and anti-Arab interest groups in the US wanted desperately to label the Darfur conflict as "genocide" that would pave the way for more sanctions against the Sudan government and a possible future Western military intervention led by the US. In doing so, they played up the Islamic background of Northern Arabs and the Islamic Sudan government behind them. They simply forgot the following fact, that is, different from the South black Sudanese who believe in traditional religions and Christianity: the black people and Arabs in Darfur all believe in Islam. Just as American scholar Scott Straus pointed out, during the Rwandan genocide, State Department spokespersons in Washington were instructed not to utter the "g-word", since, as one internal government memorandum put it, publicly acknowledging "genocide" might commit the US

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government to do something at a time when President Bill Clinton's White House was entirely unwilling to intervene.⁵ And the Khartoum government also refuted this powerfully when it said that the Darfur issue is "the scapegoat of the international society and the UN when they feel a prick of conscience for their not doing anything in Rwandan genocide". The use of "genocide" in Darfur is "a pure lie", because "to a great extent, the ethnic groups in Darfur have mixed together for a long period of time". It is quite difficult to distinguish ethnic distinctions such as "Arab" or "African" simply due to the skin colour and appearances. And there are no so-called pure "Arab" tribes or pure "African" tribes that have never inter-married with other tribes. Therefore, "the years of ethnic mixing together has made the accusation of ethnic discrimination and 'ethnic cleansing' or 'genocide' unbelievable".⁶

Finally, and also the key factor, is that the US involvement made a big difference. The unimaginably strange development, especially for the Sudan government and people, is that the US had never paid much interest in Sudan's "human rights" and "conflicts" when Sudan was experiencing the second civil war between North and South, the longest civil war in African history from May 1983 until the early 2005 which claimed two million deaths and four millions homeless. However, the relatively new Darfur issue that broke out in early 2003 has created the greatest and unusual "attention" and "care" of the US.

In fact, the "interests" of the US government on the Darfur issue stem from the presidential election in 2004. During the campaign, George Bush's tough and unilateral diplomatic strategy had been attacked by the Democrats. To get more votes from Africans and Christians and beat down Clinton's administration, which did nothing during the Rwanda massacre, and meanwhile transfer domestic media and people's focus from the mess in Iraq and mountainous criticism, the Bush administration used the Darfur issue as leverage.⁷

Although the UN, the African Union and the EU had all refused to use "genocide" to describe the Darfur issue and the UN had categorised the issue as a humanitarian crisis, the US Congress still passed a resolution in July 2004 labelling the Darfur issue as "genocide" and demanded that the US government promptly impose sanctions on Sudan. This led to the internationalisation of the Darfur issue. From then on, the US government has put forward a number of sanction initiatives in the UN Security Council but they failed to pass due to disagreement among the permanent members on the Council. Therefore, according to William Engdahl, "genocide was the preferred theme, and Washington was the orchestra conductor... only Washington and the NGO's close to it use the charged term 'genocide' to describe Darfur. If they are able to get a popular acceptance of the charge of genocide, it opens the possibility for drastic 'regime change' intervention by NATO and de facto by Washington into Sudan's sovereign affairs."⁸

In essence, the fundamental reason that the US magnifies the Darfur issue internationally in recent years is that Sudan, unlike Rwanda, has important strategic and economic interests for the US. First, in terms of geopolitics, Sudan's strategic location has crucial meaning for the US global anti-terror war after the "9/11" event. Actually, the US anti-terror wars in Africa are mainly concentrated in the Horn of Africa and Central-West region of Sahara, and Sudan is the important link with these two regions. Since the middle of the 1990s, Osama bin Laden

and al-Qaeda had plotted many terrorist attacks targeting the US from the bases in Sudan. Therefore, the US government worries about that the extreme Islamic terrorist organisations could penetrate Africa on a large scale if the Darfur conflict gets out of control. What's more, Sudan has rich and abundant oil and natural gas resources (at least 8-10 billion barrels reserves), and also ample oil reserves under South Sudan along the Upper Nile until the Darfur region border with Chad. The US, of course, is also eager to come back for the resources, as do multinational oil companies such as Chevron and Exxon that once prospected and exploited oil in Sudan in the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, the internationalisation of the Darfur issue will be beneficial for the US to put more pressure on the Sudan government and “re-shuffle the cards” for oil resource distribution in the region. Just as William Engdahl rightly pointed out, “Oil, not human misery, is behind Washington's new interest in Darfur.”⁹

Darfur Issue and its “Links” with China

Normally China has nothing to do with the Darfur issue that is located in west Sudan, far from China. Just as China's special envoy to Darfur Liu Guijin said, “It is not China's Darfur, it is first Sudan's Darfur and then Africa's Darfur...”¹⁰ However, on the one hand, in the West, since the Sudan government has been widely regarded as the supporter for Janjaweed-militias attacking “African” villagers, on the other hand, China and Sudan have been enjoying sound traditional relations. Furthermore, in the recent decades, China and Sudan have been jointly developing oil exploration and generating profitable results. And also China has long insisted on the principles of “non-interference in other countries' domestic issues” and “no-strings attached economic assistance” policies. It is natural, therefore, that some organisations and persons in the West should link China with Darfur, and say that China's investment in Sudan and its cooperation with the Sudan government are worsening the regional conflict; and China only emphasises its own economic interest but ignores the “human rights” situation in Darfur, so China should take some responsibility for the humanitarian crisis there, etc.¹¹ At the official level, Western countries led by the US also exert pressure on China to take a tougher stance against the Sudan government in the name of “caring about human rights” and “isolating autocratic regimes”, etc. In September 2005, then assistant secretary of the US State Department. Robert Zoellick had put the Darfur issue into the agenda that encourages China to behave as a responsible stakeholder in the international stage.

Some even go further. In the past year, with the approaching 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, some organisations such as “the Save Darfur Coalition” and persons such as French presidential candidate Francois Bayrou and Hollywood actor George Clooney and actress Mia Farrow joined in the criticism of China and called for a so-called “boycott” of the Beijing Olympics.¹² Furthermore, previously, over 100 US Representatives threatened the Chinese President in a letter, pointing out that if China did not take measures with regard to Darfur, the 2008 Beijing Olympic Game might be jeopardised.¹³ Hence, without rhyme or reason, the Darfur issue has been “linked” with China and even with the non-political international sports event.

In fact, the above “links” have ignored the huge changes in Sudan's political and

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economic situation in the last decade, through the Sino-Sudan oil and other economic cooperation, and the positive role the changes have brought to the maintenance of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South as well as the general political stability in the whole country.

First of all, the strong economic recovery in Sudan is closely linked with China's involvement. China and Sudan enjoy traditional friendship. Since the diplomatic ties were established in February 1959, the relationship has developed smoothly. The first trade treaty between the two governments was signed in 1962. So far, China has helped to build many projects including the Friendship Hall, a textile factory, road-bridges, hospitals, power stations, etc. In terms of the oil industry, China's energy cooperation with Sudan has dramatically improved Sudanese oil capacity. Chinese companies started to explore for energy resources in Sudan in the late mid-1990s. By the end of 2003, their investment totalled \$2.7 billion, with which they built 1,506 km of oil pipelines, a crude-oil processing plant with a capacity of 2.5 million tons a year and several gas stations. With the Chinese investment, Sudan turned itself from an oil-importing country into an oil-exporting country. More importantly, it established its own oil industry consisting of prospecting, exploitation, refining and transportation facilities and sales networks with China's help. In addition, China spent over \$20 million in building schools and hospitals for the country.¹⁴ Apart from the improvement of "hard ware" capacity, Chinese companies have also paid great attention on the "soft ware" capacity building such as improving local employees' technical and management skills. According to Zhu Junfeng, the general manager of the Sudan project of China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), the CNPC has employed many local employees and their percentage among the total has reached over 90% in some joint programmes. Mr Zhu said, through the training for local Sudanese, it could not only meet the personnel demands of the projects themselves, but they also have trained many technicians and managers for Sudan's oil industry. Sino-Sudan cooperation is mutually beneficial, providing a win-win situation.¹⁵

In contrast, Shell has been engaged in oil exploitation in Nigeria for over 50 years. Nigeria still exports crude oil and imports gasoline. Not owning any oil production and processing facilities, it remains a raw-material exporting country.

In the last ten years, Sudan's economy, driven by the strong "oil dollars", has recovered pretty well. Oil production has been improved from a low level in 1993 (2,000 bpd) to the current more than 500,000 bpd. Crude oil exports amounted to roughly 84% of total exports in 2006.¹⁶ And Sudan's economic growth rate has been maintained around 8-12% annually which ranks one of the best among North East African countries. The inflation rate has also dropped from 135% in the 1990s to the current 5%. Per GDP income has improved from US\$ 280 to the current US\$ 1,080. Foreign exchange reserves have reached US\$ 1.44 billion at the end of April 2005. Sudan then had the capability to repay the loan provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Sudan's voting rights in the IMF were restored in 2000.¹⁷

Secondly, the development of Sudan's oil industry with China's help has played a very active role in the successful signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). After the

export of oil started in 1999, Sudan's foreign exchange reserves have been increasing annually. According to the statistics given by the Sudanese Energy and Mining ministry, the total oil revenue from 1999 to July 2005 had reached \$15 billion. The oil income had accounted for 53.7% of national fiscal revenue in 2003. Only with the oil revenue at hand, could the NCP-dominated central government in the capital, Khartoum, and the SPLM-led autonomous Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) finally reach the deal over the resource sharing of 50-50 split, after 2% of the revenue allocated directly to the oil-producing regions themselves. At present, the Ministry of Finance and National Economy publishes a monthly report on oil revenue, which is prepared with assistance from the Energy and Mining ministry and southern officials. According to the data given by the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, the GOSS had received US\$473 million in oil revenue for the first five months of 2006. During this period, the South's reported monthly share of oil receipts increased from US\$ 72 million in January to US\$ 112 million in May.¹⁸ There is no doubt that the increased oil income received either by the central government in Khartoum or GOSS in the South had greatly eased the budgetary constraints in the North and the South and improved people's living standards as a whole. And that is very helpful for the consolidation of the CPA. According to Hamad Elneel A Gadir, Deputy Secretary General of Sudanese Energy and Mining Ministry, "oil has becoming a main factor for development, peace and unity in Sudan. Sanctions against Sudan are sanctions against Sudan's development, peace and unity."¹⁹

China's Stance and Role in the Darfur Issue

There are two major allegations levelled at China by the Western media and international organisations. One, that China objected to using sanctions on Sudan when the UN Security Council was discussing the Darfur issue; and two, that China has not pressurised the Sudanese government enough to change its stance.

In fact, the Chinese government has taken a stand on diplomacy already, that regional and international conflicts should be settled through diplomatic means such as dialogues and negotiations; this applies not only to the Darfur issue, but also to the North Korea and Iran issues. History tells us that sanctions can only deepen poverty, and poverty deepens conflicts. Those that are hit hardest by sanctions are the common people, not the authorities. Besides, isolating the Sudanese government creates only new levels of confrontation. The root of the Darfur issue is poverty, and so economic development and cooperation are the solution. This is China's method of attacking the problem, based on dialogue, negotiation, development and cooperation. Actually, at the current moment, according to Chinese Darfur special envoy Liu Guijin, "Too much pressure or expanding sanctions will not be helpful for the peaceful settlement of the issue, but further complicate the situation, and many previous cases had already proved that issues like Darfur would never be properly addressed without the country's internal political process."²⁰

Since the Darfur issue emerged, China has been in constant communication with the relevant people, playing mediator, promoting dialogue between top leaders, dispatching envoys and discussing the problem in the UN Assembly. President Hu Jintao held discussions

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with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on the Darfur issue during the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in November 2006 and his visit to Sudan in February 2007. He made four principal points on the issue. They are:

1. Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected, and the settlement of the issue should be helpful for Sudan's reconciliation process, its national unity and regional peace and stability.

2. The issue should be resolved by peaceful means and by sticking to dialogue and cooperation based on equality.

3. The African Union and the United Nations should play constructive roles in peacekeeping missions to Darfur. Wisdom and creativity should be employed in order to improve the efficiency of the peacekeeping mission to create favorable conditions for achieving peace in the region.

4. Finally, it is imperative to improve the situation in Darfur and the living conditions of its locals. For this purpose, China has offered assistance totally valued at 80 million Yuan to the Darfur region, and donated \$1.8 million to the peacekeeping organisations of the African Union.

Last November, at a conference held in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa featuring representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, African Union, Sudan and other African countries, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan outlined a three-phase plan (the Annan Plan) to offer assistance to African Union troops stationed in Darfur. In the first phase, the UN would send in military equipment valued at \$21 million, and dispatch nearly 200 officers, police officers and officials as intelligence officials and councillors; in the second phase, the personnel and equipment sent to the African Union troops should reach a certain amount and scale; in the third phase, a UN-AU united force should be established in Darfur with 17,000 soldiers and 3,000 police, under the command of the UN.

China supports the Annan Plan, and believes it is practical and acceptable to Sudan. China hopes that agreements can be signed between Sudan and other sides through discussion and negotiation.

The Chinese government has dispatched five envoy groups to Darfur. In 2007, Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun paid two visits to Sudan; during his second visit in April, he acted as China's envoy and made a thorough survey of the situation in Darfur. More importantly, he also made a three-point proposal regarding the solution of the Darfur issue. They are:

- First of all, the Sudanese government is willing to conduct a dialogue and cooperate with the international community on the Darfur issue. The international community should pay special attention to the methods of conducting dialogue with the Sudanese government in the future to make its work more effective.

- Second, the Darfur issue in essence is an issue of development, and the peacekeeping operations and political process should be pushed ahead in a balanced manner. The backward Darfur region has little natural resources and suffers from extreme poverty. The basic way of resolving the Darfur issue is economic reconstruction and development. Without economic

growth, it will be impossible to improve the living conditions, people will continue to fight for basic living materials and the root cause for local conflict will not be eradicated. China appeals to the international community to provide development assistance to the people in Darfur, in addition to humanitarian assistance. Meanwhile, peacekeeping is closely linked with the political process. Advocating peacekeeping on one hand and supporting the armed confrontation of rivals with the government on the other hand will undermine the reunification and territorial integrity of Sudan, and go against the consensus of the international community.

Finally, China is willing to continue to play a constructive role on the issue of Darfur. It is the basic objective of the Chinese government to realise peace, stability and economic reconstruction in Darfur through negotiations. China is fully aware of the situation in Darfur and has offered extensive humanitarian assistance and donations to the region and the African Union Mission in Darfur. China expects to continue to make contributions to the peace, stability and development of the Darfur region.

On 10 May 2007, the Chinese government appointed Ambassador Liu Guijin as the special representative of African affairs. Liu is a veteran diplomat to Africa, having served as the Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Director General of the Department of African Affairs of the Chinese Foreign Ministry and the Chinese Ambassador to South Africa. This is the third time that the Chinese government has appointed a special representative, an indication of its concern for the Darfur issue. After assuming office, Ambassador Liu immediately made a five-day trip to Sudan, and discussed the plight of Darfur with high-ranking Sudanese leaders, so as to accelerate the political settlement of the issue and afford local people a better life and security.

Subsequently, due to China's constructive efforts, the Sudanese government announced a total acceptance of the second phase of the Annan Plan and a willingness to accept the hybrid UN-AU peacekeeping force in Darfur, and this is an important step towards politically resolving the issue. Moreover, to promote the implementation of the second phase, China has decided to dispatch 315 Chinese military engineers to the region as part of the Annan Plan.

The Future of Darfur

With the implementation of the second phase of the Annan Plan as well as the Resolution 1769 passed by the UN Security Council on 31 July 2007, more African and UN troops will mobilise in the area, with better equipment and rations; this will go a long way to stabilising a humanitarian rescue. It is foreseeable that the third phase of the plan can also be carried out smoothly, if the warring sides agree to erase their suspicions of each other and settle the problem based on practicality and a conciliatory attitude. But the nature of the conflict, rooted deeply with the ecosystem deterioration as well as religion and politics, could make a quick resolution difficult, and the world should prepare itself accordingly.

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5. The origin of the Darfur crisis and some suggestions for its solution

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The issue of Darfur has become a much-debated topic all over the world in recent years. Many people hope to solve the Darfur crisis as soon as possible, but to have this problem solved is not an easy job. The joint efforts of the whole international community are necessary.

The origin of Darfur crisis

Darfur is located in western Sudan. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the people of Darfur suffered a lot because of natural disasters, especially the severe drought. Arabs and non-Arabs in the region have a long history of conflict. Because of the worsening of the living conditions in that region, the conflict between the Arabs and non-Arabs escalated in these years. In 2003 the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) openly went against the government, because they think that the government did not protect them properly from the attacks against them by the Arab Janjaweed militia. In April 2004, Darfur was classified by the United Nations as the most serious crisis of the world.

Darfur is the crossroad of various ethnic groups, religions and cultures in Africa. In the colonial period, Darfur was the border area which separated the British Empire from the French colonies. In the cold war, Darfur was among the disputed lands between the West and the East. So the historical background of Darfur is very complicated.

The Darfur crisis also has more recent causes. There are a number of current obstacles for the resolution of the conflict. The core problem is not the settlement of the hybrid UN and AU peace-keeping forces in Darfur, but rather the mistrust between the Sudanese government and the West, and the mistrust between Khartoum and the rebel forces.

The Sudanese government is distrustful of the Western countries' real intentions. They are especially suspicious of two Western intentions. First, they think that the Western countries' ultimate goal is regime change, to topple the Sudanese government. Their second suspicion is that Western countries want to encourage the independence of Darfur, which will make Khartoum lose the support of its own people. At the same time, Western countries and NGOs accuse the Sudanese government of committing genocide, and claim that Khartoum is not serious about resolving the crisis.

There is also a deep distrust between the Sudanese government and the rebel forces. Khartoum does not believe that the rebel forces could become strong enough to pose a serious threat to the government. At the same time the rebel forces do not believe that the

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Sudanese government will treat them fairly. With the support of some Western countries and NGOs, they usually ask for more at the negotiation table than Khartoum can give them.

Some suggestions to solve the Darfur crisis

Darfur should be resolved as soon as possible because the resolution of the crises is in the interest of Sudan, Western countries and China. But because of the complexity of the crisis, we must be realistic. To solve the Darfur crisis, each party's concerns must be addressed. Only with the combined efforts of the Sudanese government, the rebel forces, the UN, the AU and other parties concerned can the Darfur crisis be resolved.

To successfully resolve Darfur, the four principles put forward by President Hu in February 2007 are still relevant: respect Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity; solve the issue by peaceful means and by adhering to dialogue and coordination based on equality; the African Union and the United Nations should play constructive roles in a peacekeeping mission; improve the living conditions of local people.

To successfully solve the Darfur crisis, some concrete steps will be necessary:

- The Sudanese government should be more cooperative with the international community and make more efforts to fix the Darfur crisis.
- Western countries should give some guarantee to the Sudanese government that they will not support regime change in Sudan and they will not support the independence of Darfur.
- The rebel forces should be persuaded to sit down together with the Sudanese government to forge a political settlement of the conflict.
- The international community should make more efforts to establish peace and stability in Darfur via a political settlement. US presidential special envoy to Sudan Andrew Natsios pointed out that the "only way to deal with this is ultimately a negotiated settlement, because, over the long term, we have to have some kind of an agreement between the people who live there, who have been at war with each other."

China pays close attention to the humanitarian and security situation in Darfur, but it also knows the complexity. The Chinese government appointed Mr Liu as special representative on the Darfur issue and this reflected Beijing's commitment to further consult, communicate, and coordinate with the concerned parties for a resolution to the issue. The Chinese government has used all possible diplomatic means to convince Khartoum to cooperate fully with the United Nations and the African Union in bringing peace to Darfur. China has played a very active role in its own way. Although China's efforts are misinterpreted by some people, they are recognised by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. At a press conference in June 2007 after a meeting on Darfur in Paris, he said he was "satisfied" with China's contribution to the diplomatic process and that the Chinese government has played a "constructive role".

China is always ready to play a "positive and constructive" role on Darfur and join hands with the Sudanese government and the international community to restore peace and stability in the Darfur region and help with their development. But the Chinese

government could only be a mediator between the Sudanese government and the Western countries. It could not dictate its own wishes; nor can it dictate to the Sudanese government nor the Western countries. If Western countries still want regime change in Sudan, it is impossible for China to persuade the Sudanese government to commit suicide. Only the Sudanese government and Western countries understand their own motives, and when they are ready to make concessions then the mediation of China could be successful.

It is now high time for all parties concerned to make real efforts to end Darfur's tragedy. If they combine their efforts, a solution is possible.

6. Darfur: From State-building to Ethno-nationalism

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The Darfur crisis exemplifies a very sad trajectory of state-building failure.¹ As the title of this submission suggests, the crisis signals the beginning of a shift from state-building to ethno-nationalism, knowing that as a rule nations strive to create states responsible for protecting their nationals and citizens. Outsiders such as China can support this process if those fighting for self-rule, autonomy, federal or co-federal arrangements are united in intent and purpose and therefore capable of pulling together the energies of their people towards achieving this goal.

China, however, is particularly ill-equipped to play a major role in resolving the Darfur conflict: 1) it wasn't a colonial power or a modern interlocutor in Sudan's crises and conflicts and therefore does not carry the moral dilemma that characterises the Western actors; 2) its interests in oil and mineral resources are currently well-served by the current government, this makes it a real or perceived protagonist; and its huge trade surplus with the West, particularly the United States, is too valuable to sacrifice for the sake of Darfur.

In order to deal with these issues, I first introduce Darfur conflict in order to explain the internal difficulties and complexities which made its settlement near-impossible under the current arrangements. I conclude by four scenarios where I attempt to explain what role could China play in each and whether it will be effective in doing so.

Background

State formation failure to yield state-building in Darfur as part of the Sudan is a result of a long history of encroachment by centralised states whether colonial (Turco-Egyptian, 1821-1881) or national (the Mahdiya, 1881-1898). As outsiders to the Darfur polity, the Turks and the Mahdist states imposed their own vision of state-building: Centralised Islamic states under the authoritarian rule of the metropolis – Istanbul and Omdurman. They pitched Darfur ethnic groups against one another and divided them into allies and enemies. War and rebellions were so common that no ethnic group or part of Darfur was spared the wrath of their harsh rule which was as brutal as it was dehumanising.

Darfur was annexed and became part of modern Sudan only in 1916, following the collapse of the Mahdist state and the Anglo-Egyptian re-conquest (1898-1956).

The Anglo-Egyptian rule imposed its own vision of colonial state formation. It introduced the Indirect Rule and the Native Administration systems, using ethnic or tribal groups as administrative units based on the traditional concept of Dar or homeland. For instance, Dar became an equivalent to expanded Districts hence Darfur, Dar Massalit, Dar Zaghawa etc. However, in most cases, Dar was never inhabited by one single ethnic group due to population mobility and changing settlement patterns because of human-made and environmental crises.

In a sense, the Native Administration system reinvented Darfur's pre-colonial states and

almost froze them in history, albeit under colonial control. It offered the tribal leaders local sovereignty and autonomy in administering mundane but important local affairs.

Essentially, the Native Administration system was a “divide-and-rule” device employed by the colonial government to keep intact local ethnic entities and loyalties. By and large, the colonial state formation had succeeded in subverting state-building within Darfur, let alone Darfur within Sudan.

After independence, the Sudanese political elite, both northern and Darfurian, exploited the Native Administration system for political gains. Various ethnic group leaders became intermediaries between their people, the central government and the emergent political parties. A client-patron relationship emerged where the tribal elite offered homage, loyalty, political support and more importantly votes during elections. Darfur was carved up by competing political parties whose support bases depended on tribal loyalty augmented by a Native Administration system superimposed on local government structures.

In exchange, the northern political elite and the sectarian political parties (the Umma and the Democratic Unionists, joined later by the Muslim Brotherhood/National Islamic Front) offered Darfur leaders, whether Arab or Africans, blessings (*baraka*), access to government patronage, legitimacy and a few show-case appointments in government or civil service positions at the provincial, regional or national levels.

In short, a feature common to both colonial and national rule is that they were both predatory states. In a textbook case of predatory state-building, they were engaged in one or more of the following four practices:

1) War-making

In fact, Sudan consummated its independence in a civil war which started a year before independence was officially declared in 1956. We Sudanese have spent much of our independence fighting wars in which the state is directly or indirectly involved. The first civil war between South and North (1955-1972) and the second civil war (1983-) which although it began in the South, soon engulfed the East, the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile, and of course Darfur. In Darfur’s case, war-making has been a deliberate and systematic act by government against what is perceived as a periphery struggling to assert its autonomy. The 2003 rebellion by Darfur liberation movements and the state retaliation which was unrelenting was part of this war-making effort.

2) State-making

Owing to Sudan’s short experiences with democratic rule, military or military-civilian governments have predominated. Unfortunately, military and military-civilian governments have maintained an authoritarian-cum-predatory state-building pattern which nullified any prospect for democratic state-building. In other words, duties enshrined in democratic state-building, such as the responsibility to protect life, property, liberty, civil, and political rights, have been in short supply. Seen from this perspective, from the majority, Sudanese post-

independence states have hardly earned their legitimacy from competitive politics, democratic rule or electoral consent. In the circumstances war-making has become an instrument of convenience for state-making.

3) Protection of sources of support

Any government's responsibility is to protect all citizens regardless of whether they support it or not. However, this has not been the case in the Sudan, where the state has abdicated two of its most cherished functions:

a) Neutrality, i.e. any state is expected to act as a mediator or an arbiter of different ethnic, religious and other claims; and

b) Monopoly over the use of force and coercion.

During a great part of Sudan's post-independence history, the state has been unperturbed about sharing the monopoly of force with non-state actors or paramilitary groups such as tribal militias, including the use of the Janjawid at an earlier phase of the current crisis. The result has been devastating as Darfur's case illustrates.

4) Resource extraction and land alienation

Predatory states are infamous for using force and coercion for resource capture (land, oil, minerals etc.) purposes. Three characteristics have pre-dominated in predatory state resource extraction and land alienation patterns in Darfur:

a) An increased orientation of the economy towards national and international markets has spurred demand for increasing state intervention. Increased state intervention triggered off conflicts of interest between non-Darfurian rulers both colonial and national, mostly from central or northern Sudan, entrusted with exercising state authority and local elites operating under authoritarian centralised states. Naturally, these conflicts were not just about jobs and employment, they were also about: who governs? How resources are managed and the factors of development re-distributed by whom and for whose benefit? Darfur fared worse than most in all these respects.

b) An intensification of the conflict between the agrarian and pastoral sectors, on one hand, and between these and the state-sponsored modern sector, on the other. Recurrent droughts and famines in the desert and semi-desert zones of northern Darfur during the last three decades have contributed to mass displacement of peoples. As a result southward population mobility to central and southern Darfur (endowed with fertile lands and higher rainfall) began in earnest. Furthermore, in recent years, an increased human and livestock population density in central and Southern Darfur has intensified resource conflicts. However, I hasten to add that the current crisis cannot be attributed to, or brushed aside, as mere resource conflict. The state involvement has escalated the conflicts from locally-contained to a national and regional crises; and

c) Inequitable and mal-distribution of the factors of development accompanied with a skewed power-sharing grid. Resource siphoning from the periphery to the centre has resulted in severe regional disparity which aggravated already existing severe social and ethnic

cleavages, creating grievances and resentments in a political context ripe for rebellion.

Therefore, the emergence of Darfur's major liberation movements, off-shoots and new coalitions is not an event. It is a cumulative outcome of a long history of a failed predatory state-building model. Therefore the liberation movements' demands for equity and equal treatment, justice, citizenship rights under democratic dispensation, power and wealth sharing and equitable distribution of the factors of development should be treated within this complex context.

An obvious conclusion from this analysis is that treating the Darfur crisis within a narrow framework insensitive to its complex history and realities is apt to fail and will unwittingly prolong the suffering of the very people outsiders try to rescue.

Understood in the light of this submission, Darfur liberation movements have premised their struggle on the need to reverse the dominant predatory state building pattern and to create the necessary conditions for nurturing an alternative democratic future.

However, in the current situation, this objective is in contravention of the core values of liberation struggle – liberation is not democratic because it uses force and violence to achieve its stated objectives. It creates circumstances that augment the persistence of the very predatory state building model the liberators contrive to subvert.

Likewise, it is in contravention of the political orientation of the Sudanese state which has initially ascended to power through non-democratic means. It has neither improved on the record of its processors nor engineered a state-building model capable of averting the build up to the crisis, probably misguided by its support base among Darfur members of the National Islamic Front or its successor, the National Congress Party. Therefore, in the short term, the prospect for negotiating a democratic peace leading to a democratic state-building perspective is rather bleak.

Conclusion: What Can China Do?

The role China plays in the Sudan hinges on what scenario or scenarios will unfold as a dominant way forward. These scenarios will be informed by whether the peace architects will open the space for the traditional leaders and their historically and socially embedded role as intermediaries between the Darfur elite, the sectarian political parties and Sudanese government. Although historically these forces had harboured contradictory interests, the current crisis might have drawn them closer to each other and further from the government. China's role is also contingent on whether the current monopoly of peace negotiations by the rebel forces and Sudan government will be broken. Obviously, those excluded will become spoilers and future obstacles to achieving sustainable peace.

The question then is what is the end-game of linking Darfur's past to its present and its relevance to future scenarios. I propose four possible scenarios:

A) It is legitimate to ask the question whether all Darfur liberation movements will keep to their promise of negotiating within the current framework of a future united Sudan. There is also the likelihood that one or more movements may opt for an independent statehood option. An inner Darfur states formation, based on Dar as modern mini-states, cannot be

excluded. The current divisions amongst Darfur liberation movements (despite inter-Darfur and intra-ethnic groups' short and long-term alliances) resemble a reinvention of an ancient divisive polity. There are today 20 different liberation movements, warlords and bounty hunters in Darfur, which make a grim reading of its future.

However, the maturation of these mini-states into fully-fledged states is unlikely to take shape with immediate effect. Moreover, it is contingent on whether the current stalemate will persist over an extended period of time, whereby the liberation movements' faith in the current state of play is exhausted.

China has a limited role here as it has been perceived by the rebel forces as an ally to the Sudan government and that its interests in Sudan's oil and minerals are more important than abiding by issues of self-determination that would make Darfur's future slide towards the US and its Western allies.

B) Unlike South Sudan or any other liberation movements, in the case of Darfur there is a glaring absence of an all-powerful single liberation movement that can negotiate on behalf of a united Darfur. In this sense, Darfur holds all the ingredients of balkanisation, particularly as unity among its liberation leaders has proven impossible. Without reaching a Darfur-to-Darfur settlement, it will be difficult, indeed almost impossible, to reach a binding agreement with the government. The proximity of some Darfur liberation front leaders to the Chad government makes this prospect even stronger. The interplay between Central African armed-opposition groups and Darfur border communities might entice them to develop more permanent interests in the Darfur conflict.

The direct outcome of balkanisation is the prolongation of the current mayhem and peoples' suffering. The second outcome is that it will continue to weaken Darfur's collective bargaining power and make it an easy prey for its enemies.

Unfortunately, the balkanisation scenario signals a complete retreat from the current unitary democratic state-building to the triumph of a balkanised ethno-nationalism, short of even the prospect of returning to pre-colonial state formation.

Again China has no historical or cordial relationship with any of the rebel forces, has no interest in supporting or strengthening any of them at least for the time being, and China is in no position to compete with the Western powers over winning the hearts and minds of Darfur rebel movements. After all Darfur rebellion leaders are Western educated, with a long historical relationship with Western activists and self-determination lobbies in the G8 capitals and have commenced the organisation of their rebellion under the watchful eye of these forces. China is no match for these global civil society activists, some of whom have already begun agitating for a boycott of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

C) The "outsiders" solution means the continuation of the current business-as-usual approach, with the main aim to strengthen certain aspects of the Darfur Peace Agreement, accommodate some of the grievances of the non-signatories, and continue within the parameters of the current quasi-democratic state-building pattern. Obviously, this is the dominant paradigm articulated by the United Nations, the African regional body (AU) and others. Despite its many merits, if only to give it its dues, the dominant paradigm is neither

creative nor innovative. And even decries the endless possible configurations of the situation on the ground. In a more generous note, a priori to the unlikely success of the dominant paradigm is an end to the current standoff. This may occur only by making the government realise that the dominant paradigm is less endangering to Sudan's unity and national integrity than the two former scenarios – mini-statehood and balkanisation.

China has not been in favour of an imposed solution on the Sudan and was able to use its Security Council presence effectively. However, there are limits to how much China would tolerate vis-à-vis the fact that the potential failure of peace negotiations if conducted under arrangement similar to the failed round of talks of October 2007. China has no cards to play here as the rebel forces have disintegrated into warlords, divided Darfur in small fiefdoms and are not in hurry to reach a solution short of the collapse of the government in Khartoum – a long term prospect that few would gamble that it is not in sight.

D) A democratic state-building model under a hybrid AU-United Nations mandate. Although this scenario is plausible, its outcome, judging by similar experiences (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, East Timor etc.), is equally uncertain. Although the United Nations has some successes to its credit, the recent history of other interventions has illustrated that democratic state-building in volatile peace-making operations is almost impossible. It has time and again produced dramatic failures in countries characterised by severe divisions amongst the liberation movements, or in regions awash with arms and neighbouring countries immersed in intractable civil wars and where the losers from peace are determined to subvert the process, with or without government support. Darfur has all these negative attributes at hand which will be a major hindrance to any United Nations mission. More importantly, a liberal or democratic peace-building without developmental peace building is not attainable considering Darfur's tragic level of underdevelopment.

China can (and will) play a minimalist role by increasing its support to the AU-United Nations hybrid force. All the signs are that China will not send combat troops to Darfur but has already appointed an envoy to Darfur and proposed to send a few hundred technicians to support the peacekeeping operations. Sudan-China oil dependency is better served by China playing an open policy towards both rebels and government so that it should not jeopardise its long-term interests in Western Sudan which seems to attract several other resource-hungry new industrialising countries (Malaysia, India, South Korea, and others).

War and political violence engrave in the minds of nations a collective memory and cultivate their inner strength derived from past glories, and turbulent and sad present. The horror stories that keep coming out of Darfur and those involved in the making or remaking of its history make a grim reading. Times of great upheavals are by nature times of great desperation which often invite desperate acts. It is for this reason alone I will not exclude the retreat of some Darfur liberation movements from the hope of creating democratic Sudanese state to ethno-nationalism at best and warlords at worst. And this will be a sad prospect indeed.

¹ See David Waldner's seminal work on State-building and Late Development (Cornell University Press, 1999), which I have applied to the case of Darfur.

7. Sino-African Relations and Sudan's Darfur Issue

Professor An Yongyu

(President of the China Association of African Studies)

Historical contacts between China and Africa

Although China and Africa are thousands of miles apart, friendly contacts may be traced back to the remote past. As early as the third century BC, there was mention in Chinese historical writings of the Egyptian city of Alexandria, which was at that time under the jurisdiction of the Roman Empire. Discoveries were made in Egypt, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zanzibar islands of Tanzania of porcelain, coins and silk products produced in China from the Tang to Ming Dynasties (AD 618 – 1644). Ancient books, including records on foreign countries published in China's Song Dynasty (AD 960 – 1279) contained detailed descriptions of local customs, practices, topologies and products in Egypt, Somalia, Zanzibar, Madagascar and so on. During the Yuan Dynasty (AD 1206 – 1368) contacts between China and Africa continued to develop. In his travel notes, famous Italian traveller Marco Polo described the Chinese envoy sent to Madagascar by Emperor Kublai Khan. An outstanding navigator in China's history, Zheng He, commanded a fleet manned with about 30,000 sailors on behalf of the Chinese government and at least three times reached some East African countries such as Somalia and Kenya. They brought to the African people chinaware, lacquer ware, silk, satin and variety of handicrafts, while China imported frankincense, ivory, young elephant, zebra etc. In July 2000, as Chinese Ambassador to Kenya, I travelled to Lamu Island. There in the Lamu Museum I saw some chinaware of the Song and Ming dynasties. I also heard the story that one big ship of Zheng He's fleet was wrecked and sank by striking a reef in the sea near Lamu and some Chinese compatriots stayed in Lamu. There is a special graveyard for the Chinese victims on one of the islands till today. Large-scale friendly contacts between China and Africa were not interrupted until after the fifteenth century due to the invasion into China and Africa by Western colonialists. Even so, some envoys and people of the Qing Dynasty (AD 1644-1911) still set foot on African soil. By the time Liu Yulin arrived in South Africa as Consul General to British South Africa, in April 1905, the Chinese labourers working there already numbered 40,000. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the friendly relations between China and Africa have experienced a big leap.

New developments in the twenty-first century in Africa and the Darfur region

The first few years of the new century witnessed a continuation of complex and profound changes of globalisation. Safeguarding peace, promoting development and enhancing cooperation is the common desire of all peoples and represents the irresistible historical trend.

Sharing similar historical experiences, China and Africa have all along sympathised with and supported each other in the struggle for national liberation and forged a profound friendship. For years China has provided assistance to the best of its ability to African

countries, while African countries have also rendered strong support to China on many occasions.

Africa has a long history, vast expanse of land, rich natural resources and huge potential for development. We are happy to see Africa becoming more stable than it was in the twentieth century. At that time, 16 African countries were simultaneously in wars or in conflict. The GDP growth for Africa as a whole in 1992 was 0.9%. And this century has seen a steady and fast economic development. In 2005, African GDP growth was 4.5%, in 2006 it was 5.4% and in 2007 it is expected that it may reach 6%. We have every reason to believe that both the political and economic situation in Africa will be much better in future.

Obviously there are a few regions in Africa still having problems. In Somalia, more than 20 different parties or races have been fighting each other since early 1991. Even so, the major parties of Somalia signed an agreement and a government has been set up. President of Somalia Mr Yousuf is trying his best to move towards a better situation though there is a long way to go.

The Darfur issue has been a long-standing problem. The causes may be foreign or domestic. But the fundamental reason is poverty, backwardness and under-development. The Darfur region is situated in the Western part of the Sudan, with 500,000 square kilometers and about 7.7 million population. Farming and livestock breeding is mainly engaged in by the majority of the people in the region. The Chinese government and people have profound sympathy with the people there. Earlier the Chinese government sent Zhai Jun, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Sudan. He toured the Darfur region. Later the government appointed Ambassador Liu Guijin, Special Representative for the Darfur region. Up till now China has rendered financial and material support of more than 10 million US dollars. We firmly believe that the Darfur issue can be solved only through peaceful negotiation and dialogue. Any kind of boycott is of no use. The Chinese government also firmly supports the Annan Programme and agreed to dispatch peace-keeping engineering forces to Sudan and Darfur. Under UN auspices, 315 Chinese peace-keeping forces arrived in the region in September 2007. We hope that, with the efforts of international community, the United Nations and African Union, the Darfur issue can finally be settled, so that the economy and the living standards can improve.

Recent Developments in Sino-African Relations

On 30 May 1956, the People's Republic of China established diplomatic relations with Egypt. Therefore 2006 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. On 12 January 2006, the Chinese government issued China's African Policy, announcing to the world China's intention to develop a new type of strategic partnership with Africa, featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation, and cultural exchange. During his visit to Kenya, Algeria and Nigeria, President Hu Jintao presented a five-point proposal for a China-Africa strategic partnership: strengthening political mutual trust, expanding economic cooperation, increasing cultural interaction, cooperating on security issues and coordinating closely in international affairs. In June 2006, Premier Wen

Jiabao visited seven African countries. The Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was attended by Heads of State, premiers and ministers of 48 African countries. The Forum adopted a declaration and an action plan (2007-2009), re-emphasised the development of a new type of strategic partnership, and during the Forum President Hu Jintao proposed eight steps to strengthen Sino-Africa relations. The eight steps caught the attention of the African people and their leaders.

2006 also saw closer economic and trade links between China and Africa. In 1950, the total trade volume between China and Africa was only 12 million US dollars. In 2000, it was \$10.6 billion. And in 2005, it increased to \$39.7 billion. In 2006, it was \$55.5 billion. In 2010 it is expected to reach \$100 billion.

Trends within China-Africa Relations

China attaches much importance to developing closer relationship with Africa. President Hu has visited African countries three times since he became China's head of State in 2003. The reasons for China to do so are as follows:

- China is playing a more and more important role in the international arena. China needs to expand cooperation with African countries, in order to engage more actively and constructively in world affairs.
- China needs African resources. China and Africa should draw on each other's strengths to work for mutual benefit.
- China needs to enhance the traditional friendship. The foundation was laid by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai as early as the 1950s. In the late 1980s, when Africa was to some degree "forgotten" by Western countries, China continued to stress the importance of improving its relations with Africa.
- The forum on China-Africa Cooperation provides a mechanism to strengthen these relations. For useful advice on developing a more fruitful cooperation, the Chinese government is more efficiently cooperating with Africa in human resources and the anti-malaria field, for example. The forum guarantees this periodic strengthening of China-Africa relations.
- The Taiwan issue is also an important reason why China is paying more attention to Africa. Five African countries have no diplomatic relations with the PRC. Reunification is a vital issue for China and it needs to narrow the international space in which Taiwan can lobby for its so-called independence.

Africa also needs China's support:

- Africa views China as an emerging power, and depends on China to get the international community to focus more on development and Africa's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- Africa needs to share the growth of China. African countries are discovering more opportunities in China and want more Chinese trade and investment.
- Africa likes to learn from China. Many African countries have sent officials to China to learn

from the Chinese experience of rapid development.

We don't suggest that African countries replicate or copy the "China model". Personally I think China has also learned from the 1950s by copying the "Soviet model". Each country must try to find its own solutions to development issues. Nevertheless, China and Africa can still learn from each other and make common efforts to strengthen Sino-African relations.

8. Naiveties and Africa: The case of Sudan

Stephen Chan

(Professor of International Relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London)

All of the great and emerging powers must be careful of making old mistakes over Africa. In particular, they should avoid quarrelling over access to Africa in such a way that the African states are treated simply as passive actors, able to be flattered and purchased. All 53 African states, each one of which requires a different approach, have become much more complex than in the years of the Cold War. The United States, and the West in general, have fears over China's growing posture and activity in Africa. Elsewhere, I have outlined ten key fault-lines in the Western analysis of Chinese involvement in Africa. These may be summarised as:

The West focuses on Chinese trade and other expansionisms in Africa, but these are only a small part of an increasing global expansion by the Chinese. In trade terms, for instance, it is a very small part. Africa accounts for only 3% of Chinese trade.

The West generalises Africa and, therefore, China's role in Africa. However, there are 53 African states, with many disparities and individual emphases. The Chinese posture is also different from state to state, and there are differences of approach within states – some not very good, some simply racist – depending on the background of the Chinese operators concerned.

The West imagines the Chinese benefaction towards Africa as endless. However, it – like so much else – is dependent on China's being able to sustain its international trade surpluses with the West. The money has to come from somewhere.

Similarly, it is dependent on Chinese domestic savings. A financial collapse, or even scare, within China would see a sudden reduction in Chinese financial capacity to help China – let alone Africa.

The West views with alarm the Chinese buying of future options on “upstream” African oil. However, much of this has to be speculative. Not all the oil envisaged will be there. Even so, in the purchase of “upstream” options, the West blames the Chinese for its own operating difficulties. Western oil companies compete against what is essentially the Chinese state, and also against one another.

The West views with alarm what it terms the “Shanghai School” of development investment finance and aid, without immediate conditionality. That conditionality is apparent further down the years, as African partners are locked into the Chinese agreements. However, the agreements also mean China is locked into Africa – and Africa may not always be beneficial to China. As for the “Shanghai School”, already Indian operators are imitating the Chinese approach, and so will the Malaysians and Russians.

The West is only now recognising that, in Sudan and Zimbabwe for instance, and in many other parts of Africa, the Chinese are continuing very long modern histories of assistance and cooperation. However, not all these histories bring contemporary benefits to the Chinese. There is nothing in Zimbabwe, for instance, except economic meltdown, political unrest, and pariahdom. What the West now begins to see as Chinese historical advantage may also be the Chinese becoming prisoners to history gone sour.

The West looks on amazed at the high level of Chinese diplomacy. Both the Chinese President and Prime Minister have visited Africa many times – George Bush has done so once (at the time of writing). However, this is a trick the Chinese have in fact stolen from the West. It is a direct copy of the French methodology towards Africa. Even the 2006 Sino-Africa summit in Beijing was a replica of the Francophonic African summits in Paris.

The West imagines all manner of Chinese “inside tracks” but, in fact, Chinese knowledge of Africa can be surprisingly naïve and simplistic – and based on very little “fieldwork” of a scientific or even political scientific sort. The standard of Chinese risk-analysis is such that they are more exposed to risk than most Western operations.

So that there is a sense of gambling on the part of the Chinese. It is not always, as the West imagines, part of a grand plan.

I concluded that short analytic article with the wry note that, from the African point of view, the competition between the West and China was wonderful news. For the first time, in a manner far more advanced than in the Cold War, they can pick and choose, play one off against the other/s. They feel like Hugo Chavez. Like Chavez, they will come to enjoy flexing some muscle.

If the West displays certain naiveties in its approach to Africa, so, I am afraid, do the Chinese. I do not propose to make a list here. There is a list to be made, and I will publish that elsewhere. I wish here to concentrate upon one key item. It is in fact signalled in my Point 7, above: the Chinese are often prisoners to history. By that I do not mean History as the forward-moving progress of the people into the future; I mean being locked in chains from the past.

It was at the Bandung Conference of 1955 that Zhou Enlai proposed key principles that later became part of the belief and behaviour system of the Non-Aligned Movement – to which almost every African state belonged. This Movement and these principles were of the utmost importance during the Cold War. They allowed some sense – often it was only an illusion – of equidistance between the quarrels of the great powers. It was a zone not so much of non-alignment, but of non-commitment. It wasn't a safe zone. States were constantly pulled left and right in their international relations, and the Chinese – along with positive benefits – greatly complicated the picture as a third great power. Africa was made greatly messy in the so-called “second Cold War”, in which hot war was fought on African soil – safely removed from the West, the Soviet Union, and China. The African memory of non-alignment, and Zhou's key principle of non-interference, is more mixed than Chinese analysis might today find comfortable.

Even so, the Chinese have assiduously clung to the principle of non-interference in cases such as Sudan and the atrocities in Darfur. Behind the scenes, to be sure, the Chinese are scrambling to be part of a diplomatic solution to the conflict. And, again to be sure, sensing a vulnerability in the Chinese Africa profile, and leveraging pressure against the Beijing Olympics in 2008, the West (that had turned a blind eye to many earlier Sudanese quarrels and bloodshed) has made a key issue out of China and its non-condemnation of the government of Sudan. The Chinese, in reply, have clung to the principle of non-interference – in the misconception that it is still a driving principle for all African states. This is now only partly true.

Earlier in 2007, on 6 March in Beijing, at a high-level Track Two conference hosted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Patrick Mazimhaka, the Deputy Chair of the African Union Council, made the key point that non-interference should no longer be regarded as a dominant sole principle. What was of emerging significance was the new AU principle of non-indifference.

When he said this, and I was present, the Chinese delegates seemed surprised. It was as if they had supposed the principles behind the OAU had been transposed straight into those of the AU. The OAU had itself been changing over time, but the AU was created – at least in part – to reflect contemporary needs and conditions; and, just as the OAU was some kind of mirror to the NAM and sought to be a safeguard for the new and fragile African states, so the AU seeks (tentatively to be sure) to reflect international concerns over internal atrocities.

In 2000, the OAU Assembly institutionalised its rejection of unconstitutional changes of government. This was a pressing enough issue. Between 1956 and 2001 there were 80 successful and 108 failed coups d'états in Africa. However, in assuming a position of continental judge of national constitutionality, the OAU had clearly begun its move away from non-interference. The rejection of unconstitutional change was enshrined as Article 4p of the AU Charter.

In fact, Article 4 contains, in its various sub-clauses, a whole range of normative issues, i.e. political morality issues able to be judged and formally adjudicated. It is the machinery of adjudication that is still being put into place as operational under all circumstances, and as a regular machinery of recourse on the part of interested and affected parties. So, it is a beginning only, and there is much road to travel – but Mazimhaka was right. What is of emerging significance erodes sole reliance on non-interference.

Non-interference is one of the norms in Article 4. These norms may be summarised as follows:

- Sovereign equality (4a)
- Non-interference (4g)
- Respect for colonial borders (4b)
- Peaceful settlement of disputes (4e, f, i)
- Condemnation of unconstitutional changes of government (4p)
- The right of the AU to intervene in a member state in grave circumstances (4h)

The historical architecture of these norms is that the first four cited are drawn from the years of the OAU. The last two are of the AU era proper, i.e. of the new millennium (although 4p came during the last days of the OAU). It is 4h that is of particular concern to the question of China and Sudan/Darfur. Properly speaking, 4h (the right to intervene) is a key qualification of 4g (non-interference), and comes immediately after in the list of sub-clauses. It is this key qualification that is expressed as 'non-indifference'. Non-indifference is established upon humanitarian grounds. However, what is meant here is not simply the delivery of humanitarian assistance; it is actual intervention under "grave circumstances" of humanitarian lapses on the part of a government. This intervention is premised upon the "responsibility to protect", and is mirrored by the UN General Assembly World Summit Outcome Document of 2005, and UN Security Council Resolution 1674 of 28 April 2006. In some ways, the AU was ahead of the game – and the AU's "grave circumstances" were to do with "war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (4h of the AU Charter).

Now, as noted above, making these principles operational and justiciable is difficult, and there is not a universal determination to make them so. Despite this, the AU Assembly in 2004, despite defining the deaths in Darfur as outside the realm of genocide, nevertheless called them a "humanitarian crisis". There were sufficient hard-liners against the Sudanese government's position for Sudan's bid to assume the Chair of the AU in 2006 to be declined – despite the AU summit being held in Khartoum. This was billed as a delay in Sudan's chairmanship, but was still a diplomatic slight. So there is change underway in the AU – very visibly in its Charter principles and, more slowly yet visibly, in its political behaviour and judgement. With all these changes taking place, it is diplomatic and political foolhardiness for the Chinese to cling only to the principle of non-interference. In fact, it is an historically-based naivety – and the Chinese must learn, very soon, to move at least as fast as the AU itself.

It is now, on the eve of the Beijing Olympics, that a change of approach must come. The problem is that, once sacrifice or nuance the principle of non-interference, there is the danger of sanctioning a regime of interference by others in the internal affairs of China. To that extent, China reveals itself as feeling as insecure as many of its African "friends". Perhaps the key naivety in China's international relations is not towards Africa, but towards itself. China is grown-up now. It is powerful. Africa and the world need China. China must develop the confidence to make powerful statements and take powerful actions against "humanitarian crises" and those who foster them. And, after all, if it comes down to the decision-making of a merchant mentality, to whom else would or could Sudan sell its oil? Africa may have more choice now than in the Cold War era, but Sudan would risk far more conditionality in its dealings with the West than ever it would with China. The "Shanghai School" approach has worked in Sudan. The risks therefore of a stronger posture within Sudan are much smaller than many Chinese think; the benefits internationally, and in Africa itself, are much greater. And, at a stroke, the US leverage against Beijing's profile in Africa is smashed.

9. China's Model of Development and Sudan

Richard Dowden (Director, The Royal African Society)

Unlike most people at this conference I am not an academic. My experience of Africa comes from 30 years of travelling and listening to people in Africa, mostly as a journalist. Africa is a difficult place to understand and what you are told is not always what is really going on. So talking to Africans on the ground is often the best way. I was delighted when President Konare, Chairman of the Africa Union Commission, told me that when he visited Darfur he left his staff and bodyguards behind and stayed a night in one of the refugee camps to listen and understand what is really happening there. That is how the best journalists operate.

The post-colonial history of Africa has been like Achebe's house. In his 1966 novel, *A Man of the People*, Chinua Achebe, the Nigerian novelist, described these new nation states as houses left behind by the colonialists. All the Africans, he said, had been out in the rain but when the colonialists abandoned the houses, everyone ran to them "and the fastest, the brightest but hardly ever the best" got there first, rushed in and slammed the doors, leaving everyone else still out in the rain. This is as true today as it was when he wrote the book.

One of the worst examples is Mobutu Sese Seko who constructed several palaces in his home village, Gbadolite, and built an airport there so big that the Concorde could land. He hired it so he could take his family shopping in New York. Mobutu was the true successor of King Leopold of Belgium who created the Congo state as his personal estate. Supported by the Americans, Belgians and French, Mobutu allowed the wealth of the country to be sucked out and sent overseas. The people were left with nothing. It was nothing short of rape. I am sad to say that one of those palaces was a gift from China.

The elites who took over continued to act like the departed colonial masters. They ruled in their own interest, exploiting and exporting the wealth. Maybe it was simply not in their class interest to develop their countries but to keep the people poor and ignorant while they exploited the country, keeping the profits for themselves. An estimated 60% of Africa's privately owned wealth is not invested on the continent but sent to bank accounts overseas. This is not true of all of Africa and there have been some wonderful African leaders but many have behaved like this.

Why has Africa failed to fulfil its promise of development over the last 50 years? Compared to most Asian countries which started out at the same time and with apparently similar development problems, Africa has fallen badly behind.

Some concentrate on external factors – the fall in world price for Africa's raw materials or the ways in which African economies were geared to export raw materials and import manufactured goods. But these conditions also applied to many Asian countries which managed to diversify exports, industrialise and grow rich. Others suggest internal causes such as lack of education, poor health and rising populations. Nowadays it is fashionable to blame aid. But aid was also provided to Asia.

At the heart of Africa's failure is a political failure – the failure of the African states to set free their people and enable them to develop their economies. Political power struggles and conflicts absorbed so much of the attention of Africa's political leaders in the first four decades after independence that development was sacrificed.

That political instability grew out of the colonial legacy. Old societies were forced to live in new states that they had no part in creating. Nigeria for example has more than 400 ethnic groups, as well as religious divisions and regional splits. The big question has been who gets the oil wealth. Oil money came in straight at the top of the government – destroying every other source of wealth and power in the country. Whoever was at the top had total power and he was accountable to oil companies, not to the Nigerian people. It is the same in Sudan – which has 138 language groups. Nigerians, Ugandans, Ivoriennes are all patriotic but they have no common shared sense of nationhood.

Sudan is no exception. In the nineteenth century Egypt, then part of the Ottoman Empire, was pushing into Sudan in search of slaves and other goods. The British were trying to take over Egypt and Sudan – and also trying to stop slavery. After the battle of Omdurman in 1899 the British took over Sudan. They conquered Darfur in 1917.

The only development enabled under British rule took place along the River Nile and around Khartoum. The rest of Sudan stayed poor and neglected. As long as local rulers did not challenge them, the British rulers were content to let them live as they always had done. But if challenged by rebels the British used violent repression and armed the rebels' neighbours and encouraged them to attack.

Nothing has changed. The present rulers rule Sudan in exactly the same way as the British did. There is no development except along the Nile. The rest of the country is neglected. If the people in the periphery complain – as they did in Darfur – the government sends in the army and arms the neighbours. Sudan is just like Achebe's house.

When the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equity Movement started their rebellion in 2003, the Sudan government armed the Janjaweed Arab militias and bombed villages sending thousands of people fleeing from their homes. Some 200,000 people died. It was exactly the same tactics that I saw used in South Sudan during the 21-year civil war there.

In normal circumstances China's strict policy of government-to-government relations based on the principle of non-interference is logical. Aid is given without conditions. That is a more mature and equal relationship than African states have with the former colonial powers. African rulers say that China treats them like grown-ups. But circumstances in many African countries are not normal. Many of them are suffering rebellion or civil war.

Does that mean China remains neutral in such circumstances and ignores what the government is doing? Does it ask how that government came to power and whether it truly represents the interests of the people? Remember Iran in 1979 where both China and my own country went on recognising the Shah even as he was falling. That made relations with the subsequent Khomeini government very difficult.

China's re-engagement with Africa has been good for the continent. The wealth for Africa created by China's demand for its raw materials, its investment in African

infrastructure and projects have done more for the continent than anything other outside engagement for the last 50 years. China and mobile phones are changing Africa far more than all the Western aid, rock concerts and G8 meetings.

However, what will be the long-term impact? Remember it has been the politics and issues of governance that have caused the ruin of many African countries in the past. Is our – Britain's, America's China's – engagement with Africa going to assist its peoples or hurt them? Is our engagement helping to bring development to their people or making the ruling African elites richer so they can send their money back to bank accounts in London or Switzerland? Does the road we are building go to the rural area to allow the peasants to bring their goods to market? Is that airport in the president's village to allow his family to go shopping in New York or Dubai?

In recent years African governments, Western governments, Western companies and NGO's have – more or less – signed up to the principles of sustainable development and good governance. This means that you look at the long-term economic, social, political and environmental impact of your engagement with Africa. The details are not perfect but the principles of sustainable development are clear. They ask the question: will your aid, investment, mine, factory make the recipient people better off, better educated and enjoy better health in ten or 20 years' time?

The principles are not just Western inventions. They are enshrined in the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Union Charter which all African governments have signed up to. Increasingly they are the principles adopted by the World Bank and other multi-national agencies. They are principles that have been learnt the hard way, from bitter experience of development failures in Africa that have left African people worse off. As I said, China has a new and much better starting point for engagement in Africa than Western countries have but let us hope it learns from the mistakes the Western countries made in Africa and does not repeat them. But it is also in its interest. China has now made huge investments in Africa. In areas of instability how will they be protected? Can you rely only on the national governments if they are at war with the people in the area where you have invested?

In Darfur the warring factions have fragmented and there is probably little the Khartoum government can do to stop the fighting immediately. Darfur needs a comprehensive peace settlement and the Sudan government is not capable of delivering that on its own – even if it wanted to. That means it needs a concerted effort from outsiders, the African Union, the United Nations and Sudan's partners. The government of Sudan is nobody's puppet. It is used to living with war and rebellion and if these wars are to be ended, it will take a huge effort of all Sudan's partners.

As a member of the UN P5 and Sudan's largest trading partner, China is well-placed to offer the host a regional peace conference, bringing together not only the factions fighting in Darfur but also the other countries in the region that are affected by the war. I do not agree with those who say that the road to peace in Darfur leads through China but China could be much more engaged with peace-making – not just peace keeping. That also applies

to South Sudan which faces difficult times between now and the 2009 election and the referendum on the future of the South. If China plays that positive role there can be no threat of an Olympic boycott.

10. Summary of other papers and discussions

The Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement, *Yahia Hussein, Co-chairman, Joint National Transition Team, Sudan*

Yahia Hussein explained that the CPA was signed on 9 January 2005. It is, he said, a very lengthy, elaborate and detailed document. It is composed of six protocols:

- Machakos protocol (framework).
- Power sharing protocol.
- Wealth sharing protocol.
- Resolution of Abyei conflict.
- Resolution of the conflict in the two states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.
- Security arrangements.
- Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation modalities.
- Implementation modalities and global implementation matrix and appendices.

Why was the CPA so lengthy and elaborate? And why did it take so much time to negotiate the CPA? The Declaration of Principles (DoP) was signed in 1997; the process rejuvenated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) started in January 2002; the first round of talks started in May 2002 and the Machakos Protocol was signed in July 2002, while the final agreement was signed in January 2005.

The agreement was not an accord to stop war, but a comprehensive design to bring about sustainable peace, not only between the North and South, but all over the country, a design that the late Dr John Garang labelled as a “paradigm shift”. Indeed it is a paradigm shift that fundamentally restructured the Sudanese body politic:

- A bill of rights and fundamental freedoms.
- A decentralised system of government with devolution of power to various levels of government.
- Autonomy for the South and equitable representation at the national level.
- The formation of a broad-based government of National Unity and general elections no later than the fourth year of the interim period.
- A constitutional review process and a national review commission to prepare a draft national interim constitution to be adopted by the legislatures.
- The right of self-determination for Southern Sudan; the parties to the agreement commit themselves to maintain the unity of the country.

Conclusions

The CPA was the outcome of the Sudanese parties’ will, resilience, and commitment to end

war, rebuild their country and end the suffering of the people.

The CPA was a showcase in favour of constructive engagement by the regional and international powers in conflict resolution (IGAD, Italy, Norway, UK and USA). Fourteen presidents and their representatives of countries and regional and international organisations put their signatures as witnesses to the CPA.

Oil Production

Thanks to the efforts of China and other countries that cooperated with Sudan to explore and utilise its national resources:

- Oil money encouraged the parties to confidently move towards peace: stakes became high (the promise for development).
- Helped resolve the issue of revenue sharing: revenues at hand that could be used for rebuilding the country.
- Oil now helped finance the peace agreement: the government of South Sudan receiving an average of \$100 million a month.
- The national government was able to finance its obligations towards building the new institutions called for by the peace agreement.

Energy and Economic Development, *Hamed Al-Niel Abdel Gadir, Deputy UnderSecretary, Ministry of Energy and Mining of Sudan.*

Mr Gadir outlined the history of the oil industry in Sudan, explaining why the oil majors such as Chevron and Total left the country, to be replaced by China, Malaysia and others. He said that Sudan was still relatively unexplored by international standards. “Oil for development is the vision,” he said, and compared Sudan with Norway’s plans for investing in the future.

An open discussion completed the morning’s session. The campaign against Khartoum was analysed, especially sanctions and divestment, and alleged Western attempts to create the conditions for regime change.

The session chairperson, Professor Paul Moorcraft, left some open questions to be resumed after lunch. He said that anyone who had witnessed the poverty of the Internally Displaced Persons’ camps in Darfur would ask how sanctions could aid economic reconstruction. He also noted that the CPA was a rare foreign policy success for the Bush administration, but it had not been trumpeted in Washington. And yet the achievements of the South had paradoxically encouraged insurgency in the West and East. Was the CPA cast in stone, or could other regions hope to satisfy their aspirations without further violence?

The afternoon session was chaired by Professor Yang Lihua, of IWAAS. The first speaker was Professor Hasan Haj Ali, University of Khartoum, who spoke on the regional and international dimensions of Darfur. Dr Liu Naiya, of IWAAS, spoke next on the humanitarian

10. SUMMARY OF OTHER PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS

aspects of the Darfur crisis. Dr Farouk Ahmed Adam, a member of the Sudanese parliament, also spoke on Darfur. He supported Professor Ali's views that Darfur's crisis was not simply triggered by under-development. This was a problem common throughout Sudan, not just Darfur. Dr Adam argued that Darfur had been deliberately internationalised as a proxy war by the West against Khartoum.

This led to an open discussion about the role of the Save Darfur Coalition, which had spent 13-14 million US dollars campaigning in the West. One commentator asserted that "Whatever China does in Darfur would never be enough; the goalposts will always be moved" because the external lobbies are waging "war by pressure group". The comparison was made with exile pressure groups encouraging war on Iraq before 2003. One supporter of Khartoum said: "Chinese foreign policy should not be made by Hollywood actors."

In the final open discussion, Professor Stephen Chan suggested a precise Chinese contribution to Darfur peace-keeping, besides the engineering contingent. He said that China should send 100 helicopters with 1,000 support technicians – air mobility was the key deficiency in the current peace operations.

In the closing summary, Professor Moorcraft took up a key point in Professor Chan's paper – China's insistence on non-interference. Professor Moorcraft said that he had been on the receiving end of Chinese alleged non-interference, for example, during China's support for Mugabe's guerrillas in the Zimbabwe liberation war. He also wryly commented on his first-hand experiences of Beijing's very helpful non-interference – namely military support for the Mujahadeen in Afghanistan during the 1980s. The point of questioning the relativity of the Chinese principle of non-interference – which Professor Chan had said was outdated even by the AU standards – was to suggest that China did have a lot of leverage in Sudan, especially Darfur. China was, in effect, a "reluctant superpower", which could do a lot of good in Africa in general and Sudan in particular. Although Professor Chan's suggestion about more helicopters was an interesting point, it was more important to concentrate on political solutions. There was a danger that increased military intervention, even under a UN banner, could radicalise the region and foment a Jihad that would benefit only al-Qaeda. It was wrong, Professor Moorcraft said, to demonise US intentions, which, however misguided, were not evil. Washington could play a part in the political settlement, along with China. There was no peace to keep at present, so the UN mission was likely to be ill-fated. What was required was political leadership and political pressure, akin to the process at Naivasha. He concluded that, although the peace train did not run only through Beijing, China could and should play a more active role in the peace process.

Professor Moorcraft concluded the conference by thanking Professor Yang Guang, and all his staff at IWAAS, for the excellent work in hosting the conference.



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