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DEPARTMENT OF **EU INTERNATIONAL  
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InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “THE EU AND CHINA: PARTNERS OR COMPETITORS IN AFRICA?”

On February 4 and 5 2010, the College of Europe's InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of EU-China Relations organised a two-day conference, in Bruges, on “The EU and China: Partners or Competitors in Africa?”. This conference was funded by the Life Long Learning Programme of DG Education and Culture, European Commission.

For the purpose of sharing with our readers the topics of discussion at the conference, we have edited this special issue of the *EU-China Observer*. The two-day conference in itself was considered as a huge success. Before and after the conference, the Chair was contacted on several occasions for further information about the conference papers. As EU-China-Africa relations is a fashionable topic in today's world, more and more people are concerned about how the three players interact with each other. This conference attracted participants from Europe, China and Africa. Their papers and discussions demonstrated the divergent and convergent interests between them and opened many unanswered questions for future consideration.

The abstracts, prepared by each conference participant, are arranged according to the order of the panels presented at the conference. Each panel included 3 to 4 papers. When designing the panels, we planned to take at least one paper from each of the three regions and country, but this goal was not fully realised after receiving the papers. This problem has also been addressed in further detail, in the closing speech prepared by Prof. Men. The abstracts of each and every conference participant both offer readers – who could not attend the event – a glimpse of the issues discussed, but also permits them to gain a better idea of the themes at stake, and of the importance of discussing such themes.

The abstracts came in all shapes and sizes, but after sufficient tampering they were all changed so as to be equal in distribution. This is important for us as organisers, because all individual contributions were equally important, and it is only through enhanced cooperation on a wide-range of issues and levels that a win-win-win situation between the EU, China and Africa, will be made possible. By publishing the entirety of the abstracts, we intend to reiterate the vitality of a holistic approach, for these three players.

Please note that these abstracts reflect the views of the authors solely and do not reflect the views of the organisations that they represent.



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## **Part 1: “The EU and China in Africa: Global Governance”**



## **THE EU, CHINA AND AFRICA: WORKING FOR FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION?**

Uwe Wissenbach\*

China's Africa policy is increasingly accepted, but not necessarily well understood. China has provided more development opportunities for many countries and strengthened African bargaining positions with other external partners, but it has also been confronted with a number of challenges. China's global economic impact and its engagement in Africa gives African countries more economic opportunities for trade and investment, more policy space and alternatives which allow them to challenge Western agendas and aid-related prescriptions. There is thus a lingering tension between China's political discourse and market-driven economic patterns of interaction which play out in the increasingly dense complexity of the China-Africa-EU relationship. This paper seeks to elucidate the fact that this is not a question of right or wrong, which has unfortunately dominated the debate about China and Africa. Rather it is a problem of managing complexity, interdependence, competition and cooperation which has by far not been well explored. This paper seeks to outline that there is no need for conformism of African partners with either European or Chinese templates, but there is a need for dialogue and cooperation around these different approaches based on a collective African strategy.

## **CHINA'S DELICATE BALANCING BETWEEN ENGAGEMENT WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND RELATIONS WITH WESTERN POWERS**

Suisheng Zhao\*

China's fast-growing economic, political and diplomatic engagements with Africa have not only attracted global attention but also caused some concerns among political leaders in Western countries about whether China has posed serious challenges to the interest of Western countries, including the European Union, on the African continent. To what extent is this concern justifiable? What are the implications of China's engagement with African countries for Western powers, particularly the European Union? What are the most important strategic and policy objectives of China in the continent? Where are these objectives located in China's overall strategy of diplomatic

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engagement? This paper seeks to shed light on these questions by examining the challenges of China's engagement with African countries and how China has placed its engagement with African countries in the context of competition with Western powers. It argues that as a rising global power that is expected to take more international responsibility, China's relations with Western powers cannot be disentangled from certain difficult issues involving China's third world friends in Africa, such as Sudan and Zimbabwe.

## **CHINA'S DESIGN OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: THE ROLE OF AFRICA**

Bo Zhiyue\*

This paper attempts to investigate the role of Africa in China's design of global governance. It will look at the historical evolution of China's design of global governance and locate Africa's role in China's current scheme. This paper will provide a historical background on the views of Chinese leaders in the eras of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, and pay particular attention to the new orientations of the Chinese leadership under Hu Jintao. The central idea of this paper is that in contrast to the era of Mao, when China aimed to create a new world of communism, China in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is prepared to create a peaceful, prosperous and harmonious world for its modernisation drive. In such a design, Africa is no longer forming a block of political allies facilitating China's political ambitions in the world. Instead, Africa plays an important role due to its tremendous natural resources. The economic and political logic behind China's new policies are examined in this paper.

## **REGIME THEORY AND CHINA-AFRICA ECONOMIC RELATIONS: NEW OR OLD ORDER?**

Francis Botchway\*

China's activities in Africa have attracted significant interest in academic, policy and media circles in the last decade. The common concern has been whether China's Africa policy marks a significant change in Africa's international economic and political relations, and if so, to what extent does this impact on the interests of Africa's Western development partners? China has a long relationship with African countries. The landmark Bandung Asia-

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Africa conference in 1955 is seen as the foundation for modern-day Sino-African relations. The relations between 1955 and the mid 1990s were mainly political, with China seeking support and influence in Africa. African countries in return saw opportunities to escape the "clutches" of the Cold War superpowers. Since the mid 1990s, the forces unleashed by China's Open Door Policy have created significant momentum for China's interest in Africa. This time the focus is primarily economic. In 2007, China-Africa trade grew from less than US\$10 billion in 2002 to over US\$70 billion. In return, China is accorded access to supplies of natural resources such as oil, copper and cobalt. This has been termed "infrastructure for resource swaps." This paper aims to explore to what extent are the Chinese "infrastructure for resource swaps" any different from the resource extraction projects sponsored by Western companies and countries, in Africa? Furthermore, is the Chinese "model" a harbinger of a new international economic regime or simply a continuation of old ideas?



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## **Part 2: “The EU and China in Africa: The Security Dimension”**



## **TACKLING THE PROLIFERATION OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHINA-EU COOPERATION**

Thomas Wheeler\*

This paper argues that tackling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) presents a potential area for China-EU partnership in Africa. The paper gives a brief overview of some of Africa's security challenges, illustrating that SALW is an issue that links them all. It examines why China has a growing interest in African security issues, highlighting where China's commitments have been implemented and suggesting that change in how China approaches these issues offers an opportunity for EU engagement. Given this, and noting the specific commitments that both China and the EU have made to Africa on tackling SALW proliferation, it is suggested that there is, in principle, a foundation for future cooperation on this issue. The paper thus identifies areas for practical cooperation on the ground in Africa, with regard to the thorny issue of international arms transfers. Concrete suggestions will be provided on how obstacles to cooperation could be overcome in this domain. The paper concludes that SALW cooperation could be an entry point to further cooperative China-EU approaches to other security issues.

## **GOING NAVAL IN TROUBLED WATERS: THE EU, CHINA AND THE FIGHT AGAINST PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA**

Joris Larik & Quentin Weiler\*

Since December 2008, two kinds of gold-starred flags can be spotted on the horizon off the coast of Somalia, one on blue ground, one on red ground. Participating in the international community's efforts to combat piracy in these waters, both the European Union and the People's Republic of China have ventured, for the first time, into naval military operations far away from their home shores. This paper will analyse these two operations and the values and interests underlying them. It will be argued that in the face of a shared threat, both have found common ground for cooperation in the African theatre. At the same time, it can be seen as a test case for future naval power projection in an increasingly multipolar world, in which the two powers could eventually find themselves as rivals. Contemplating these different

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approaches raises the question of the motives of both actors in these troubled waters, who are both in search of further credibility and experience for their military forces. To which extent is cooperation driven by shared values? Or is it rather facilitated by the overlapping interests of two major trading powers? What is certain is that for both, this is not a once-and-never-again action, but a test case for the future. Whether both actors will end up as rivals or partners on the African sea or soil will constitute a crucial question for the future of global governance.

## **IS CHINA A THREAT TO AFRICAN SECURITY? SOME CURRENT THOUGHTS IN AFRICA**

Philip Idro\*

A threat assessment document written by Africans about the overall security situation in Africa does not exist. In this conference paper, security is defined as entailing both mental peace and material comforts. I argue that due to the poverty of these two bases in Africa, social issues can escalate into conflicts. Differences between, for example, China and Europe in achieving peace of mind and material comfort for its citizens show that there is no single universal format. However, Africa can learn from the support that both the EU and China show for the development of their technological and scientific knowledge sectors. The question remains: can Africa achieve security according to this format as well? Is China a threat to this development in Africa? It is true that there are heavy footprints of China in Africa. China can use Africa for raw materials, markets, votes in the United Nations and to build its image as a responsible world power. In order to achieve this, China is trying to build sustainable relationships in Africa. Africans need to get the best out of these deals, so as to secure the peace of mind and material comforts for themselves. Africans must also set their goals and support their needs in order to realise these goals, before China and the EU can safely support the development of an environment that fosters peace of mind and material comfort in Africa.

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## **Part 3: “The EU and China in Africa: Economic Cooperation and Competition”**



## THE EU AND CHINA: FRIENDS OR FOES IN AFRICA?

Eric Ogunleye Kehinde\*

This paper provides an analytical and rigorous setting for cooperation between EU countries and China from an African perspective, emphasising that this is an important precondition for Africa to maximise the potential benefits presented by Chinese engagements on the continent, while mitigating with the risks and challenges posed by their activities in areas of infrastructure development and resource extraction. Similarities and differences between Chinese and European development efforts in Africa will be elucidated. European and Chinese firms' entry strategy, mode of engagements and modes of operation in resource extraction will also be explored. Some examples are examined in order to highlight European and Chinese activities on the continent, with an emphasis on the lessons that could be drawn and the importance of synergy. The findings will be very informative for African policymakers in developing national, sub-regional and regional strategies in their engagements with China and the EU.

## COOPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND THE EU ON RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AND CREDIBLE LENDING IN AFRICA

Nayia Pyridi\*

One of the most interesting changes in international finance in recent years has been the emergence of a consensus on upholding minimum standards for projects financed in emerging economies. That movement has been led by the World Bank and supported by a growing share of commercial banks. A report produced by the IMF and the World Bank warned of an increase in funding to Sub-Saharan Africa by new alternative creditors, most notably China. It argued that China is financing corrupt regimes that have trouble obtaining credit from the IMF. The objections raised by the Western donors to Chinese funded development are twofold. One objection is that Chinese funding comes without conditionalities. The second objection is that Highly Indebted Poor Countries risk returning to a situation of heavy debt burdens. It seems that China does not share these concerns. It is precisely this backdrop that prompted the EU to focus the discussion of the EU-China's development partnership in Africa on the fight against corruption. The EU recognises the

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importance both of China as an emerging donor and its effective integration into the international donor community. This paper will highlight how the EU can work together with China to help the latter abide by the principles and standards of the international donor's community. It will also focus on the EU's attempts to develop a coherent strategy to respond to the new challenges raised by emerging donors in Africa.

## **TOWARDS MORE HARMONIOUS EU-CHINA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND COMPETITION IN AFRICA**

Lawal Gada\*

It is obvious that the majority of the 53 so-called independent African countries were colonised at one time or another by a European country. Before, during and after the colonial era, European countries have continued to undermine Africa in different ways. For example, Africa's natural resources have been exploited and supplied as raw materials to industrialised Europe: from gold in Ghana, to crude oil in Nigeria, via timber in Gabon and Cameroon. As this practice continued to impoverish African nations, the former European colonial powers were busy imposing strict visa restrictions upon African immigrants. However, in recent years, China has come to Africa with an open mind and with a symbiotic approach to its relationship with Africa. Above all, China does not seek to meddle into the political and socio-cultural affairs of the African nations it interacts with. Therefore, many Africans nowadays perceive China as a messiah, as a true friend and partner in progress, while on the other hand many consider Europe as an "unjustifiable parent" who deliberately refuses to empower and liberate "its child." Therefore, in the near future, Africa shall continue to open more of its doors to China, while simultaneously closing the existing doors through which Europe has exploited Africa, unless certain meaningful policies are put in place by Europe to right the wrongs of the past.

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## CHINA'S QUEST FOR OIL: IMPLICATIONS ON NIGERIA'S ENERGY SECURITY FUTURE

Uche Igwe\*

China's economy has experienced tremendous growth over the past couple of decades. With a projected growth rate of 11% of GDP for the next decade, the world's most populous nation needs to ensure its energy security. China has turned to Africa to help tie down sustained supplies of natural resources. China's influence in Africa is extending to Nigeria, a country that has historically exported the majority of its oil to Western countries. China, however, is becoming of growing importance for Nigeria. Chinese firms are increasingly gaining a foothold in its oil industry. For example, in December 2004, Sinopec and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company signed an agreement to develop the Oil Mining Lease. In June 2009, Sinopec acquired US\$7.3 billion worth of Addax Petroleum's assets. China's entry has shaken the US and European based oil companies, who represent Nigeria's traditional partners. It is believed that the offers made by the Chinese companies have provided Nigeria with options that will most likely change the future of its energy security. Nigeria is also currently implementing the extractive industries transparency initiative aimed at ensuring transparency in all transaction undertaken with foreign extractive industry companies. Given the rising oil prices, what implications does this have on the need to maximise the benefits accruing from these resources, thus turning the oil business into a blessing, not a curse for Nigeria?

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## **Part 4: “The EU and China in Africa: Conflict, Humanitarian Intervention and National Sovereignty”**



## THE GEOPOLITICS OF CHINA'S PRESENCE IN EAST AFRICA – A POTENTIAL AXIS OF CONFLICT

David Fouquet\*

China's deployment of a naval task force to participate in the international flotilla against Somali pirates in late 2008 was a rare and historic display of international military engagement for China that ran counter to its long-standing practice of relative non-engagement in such missions. The naval deployment to the region will be examined for its impact not only on China's cooperative engagement in international operations, as well as on its relation to a more regional context in East and Central Africa. China's greater involvement in African security issues may be seen as a natural extension of its increasing economic presence on the continent, which logically entails increased concern towards political instability in the region. The fact that China has billions of dollars of investment in energy, mining and other projects of strategic significance in trouble-plagued countries such as Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, has become of crucial importance to not only China and those countries, but also to nearby states and other rivals in the international community. In several of these and other African countries, Chinese workers and facilities have been the deliberate targets of sometimes lethal attacks and kidnappings. Given these important facts, this paper aims to shed further light on the importance of China's geopolitical presence on the African continent, and the impact that this has for all actors involved in Africa's security and development process.

### CHINA IN AFRICA: "THIRD PARADIGM OF INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION?"

Sara Van Hoeymissen\*

Since the end of the 1990s, the protection of civilians in conflict situations has appeared on the UN's agenda as a distinctive thematic issue and has increasingly become part of peacekeeping mandates. Recent crises have shown, however, that conceptual breakthroughs such as the international principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) agreed at the 2005 World Summit, do not automatically generate sufficient international political will to launch humanitarian action in specific crisis situations. As a country with a traditional view on sovereignty and intervention, permanent membership of

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the Security Council and a rising profile in Africa, China's views are of crucial importance in this regard. This paper focuses on China's position on the protection of civilians at the operational level. It draws on empirical data from 3 specific case studies of grave humanitarian crises against the backdrop of armed conflicts in Africa, namely Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan, and analyses China's stance on, and acceptance of, certain forms of intervention in each of these crises. In conclusion, the author asks whether we are witnessing the emergence of a "new paradigm of international intervention" in China that allows for intervention "at least in cases of major humanitarian crises." It will also look into some of the implications of the emergence of such a paradigm, which is allegedly different from China's traditional stance on humanitarian intervention.

## **ETHICAL POWER CHINA: PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN AFRICA**

Jianxiang Bi\*

To unmask the issues of values and behaviour, this paper aims at conducting an in-depth study of China's peacekeeping missions *vis-à-vis* concerns and expectations of both the EU and African countries. The paper revisits China's decades-old mindset of sovereignty in an effort to explore anomalies emerging from the era of globalisation and to explain to what extent humanitarian intervention in Africa serves as a tool for Beijing to engage with the international community. Thereafter, the analysis will shift to the construction of Beijing's engagement rules which form the core of its peacekeeping missions in Africa. In doing so, this paper will explore the heterogeneity of Chinese peacekeeping missions in Africa, with emphasis on bilateral relations with countries rich in resources, where China seeks a variety of economic, security, and political agendas while appealing internationally for the support of its leadership in ensuring regional order and stability throughout these missions. Finally, this paper will show how this proactive approach will help rebuild trust and harmony with local people and authorities, thereby ensuring local peace.

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## **Part 5: “The EU and China in Africa: Clashing Models of Social Economic Development”**



## HOW CHINA IS INFLUENCING AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

Martyn Davies\*

China has a long and politically close relationship with Africa but this does not mean it makes business on the continent any easier for China's emerging multinationals. A number of Chinese companies' investments on the continent have already failed and more will undoubtedly fail in the future. However, Chinese companies are proving to be rapid learners in foreign markets, including Africa. The ability of Chinese companies to adapt to local African market conditions and operate in sometimes challenging political and economic environments will determine whether Chinese investment in Africa is truly long-term strategic, rather than merely short-term mercantilist. This paper considers what impact China's engagement with Africa is having on the development of the continent. In response, three questions are posed: What contribution will China have on the industrialisation efforts in Africa? Does China's concessional finance model offer a new mode of developmental finance for Africa's extractive industries? Will China's investment in infrastructure on the continent assist African regional economic integration? The central idea of this paper is that China's presence on the continent will strongly impact upon Africa's long-term developmental prospects.

## DOING BUSINESS WITH FOREIGN AID: A STUDY OF CHINESE AND WESTERN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT AID TO AFRICA

Hung Wing Lok\*

China's increasing aid to Africa has captured the world's attention, yet China is nevertheless repeatedly accused, by the West, of not doing more to improve the situation of local African populace. There subsist fundamental underlying differences in the ideas that exist in the East and the West regarding the transfer of aid. This paper primarily examines China and the West's involvement in delivering aid to Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While authors such as Lancaster and Browne argue that most Western powers are always using foreign aid to push African governments towards promoting democracy, freedom and human rights, China has a tradition of "non-interference" in its foreign policy towards Africa. Currently, the Chinese

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government is applying a special “Angola Model” to merge business ideas within its foreign aid policy, so as to fasten the development of African countries. The nature, trend, structure and outcomes between Chinese and Western aid to Africa will be compared, with Angola and Sudan chosen as country case studies to show that while the Western countries demand democratic reform, good governance and anti-corruption measures in exchange for aid delivery, China focuses more on economic rather than political development in its transfer of aid to Africa.

## **THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CHINESE INFLUENCE IN AFRICA**

Christine Hackenesch\*

The international context for good governance promotion is currently rapidly changing. China's “no strings attached” policies in Africa have been blamed for reducing the effectiveness of traditional actors' policies of promoting good governance. Using the examples of Angola and Ethiopia, this paper analyses to what extent Chinese state engagement impacts on the effectiveness of the European Commission's policies in promoting good governance. This paper argues that measured against the output and outcome of its interventions, the Commission's policies of promoting good governance seem to be rather ineffective in both countries. While the Commission and China indeed have different objectives and have set up different instruments of engagement, in practice their policies in Angola and Ethiopia have few points of contact, since they engage mostly in different policy fields. Furthermore, Chinese loans and the Commission's principle of conditionality have not yet directly entered into conflict. Therefore, the findings suggest that China's overall activities have little to no immediate negative consequences for EU policies promoting good governance in these states. In effect, China's activities on the continent will potentially reveal more clearly the gap between normative aspirations in European development rhetoric on the one hand, and the effectiveness of concrete Commission interventions on the other.

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## CHINA'S AID TO AFRICA: A CHALLENGE TO THE EU?

Zhang Xinghui\*

As a result of China's notable increase of economic capacity, China has become one of the most important providers of development aid to Africa. Its aid to the African continent is channelled via three different mechanisms: debt relief, concessional loans and the aid budget of the Chinese government. On the other hand, the EU is a more institutionalised provider of development aid to Africa, as it has distributed financial packages to the latter for almost 50 years. Although China does not possess a concrete definition of development aid, as Western countries do, this has not prevented China's development aid from not only growing at a fast pace, but also posing a real challenge to the EU's development aid strategies in Africa. This paper studies the different areas where China's development aid is challenging the traditional performance of the EU, examines the changing strategies of the EU on development aid as a reaction to China's expansion in Africa and analyses the consequences of such interactions between China and the EU on African development.

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## **Part 6: “The EU and China in Africa: Conflicting Normative Powers?”**





## THE EU'S PERCEPTIONS AND INTERESTS TOWARDS CHINA'S RISING INFLUENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

Ian Taylor\*

As a smokescreen to its failed development policies in Africa, the EU is quick to sugar-coat these failings by pushing for the promotion of “good governance” and for the prominence of human rights in African politics and societies. In contrast, China's foreign-policy stance regarding human rights is based on two principles: the importance of the right to pursue economic prosperity and the principle of non-interference. Before critiquing those aspects of Chinese involvement in sub-Saharan Africa that impact upon governance and human rights, analysts need to understand both the Chinese human rights discourse and the nature of most African states. Nevertheless, China is changing the conceptions of human rights and sovereignty, and this paper aims to expose the fact that China's policies towards Africa are maturing, mainly because Beijing is concerned about the way it is perceived abroad. Furthermore, this paper aims to highlight that the divergences that exist between the EU and China in regards to good governance policies will have to be transformed, if China is to have a long-running and stable relationship with Africa. Therefore, it is up to the EU policymakers to encourage this convergence, and the first step would be to stop the perpetual criticism of China's role in Africa, in order to develop common commitments between the EU and China on how to deal with pressing challenges in Africa, in a mutual fashion.

## THE EU AND CHINA: CONSULTATIVE AND NORMATIVE FOREIGN POLICY IN AFRICA

Liu Lirong\*

China's increasing role in the African continent has been heavily criticised by the Western world as constituting a danger to global governance. The aim of this paper is therefore to primarily trace these differences, between the West and China in Africa, the first of which lies in the fact that Western countries strive towards a foreign strategy based on firm global objectives. China's main concern at this moment is the handling of internal problems – thus the country has no global ambitions. Traditional Chinese foreign policies are based on the principles of non-interference and the respect for national

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sovereignty. China's Africa strategy is no different as it follows China's own development experiences, emphasising sovereignty and economic growth. On the other hand, the EU's development policies demand the imposition of good governance standards. However, many commentators in Africa have upheld the difficulty of implementing these standards, whereas China's Africa strategy is not bound by conditions and offers more choices. The Chinese development experiences also show that human capital, economic freedom, investments in infrastructure are more vital for economic growth than political reforms. Nevertheless, these conflicts of interests should not deny future cooperation between China and the EU in Africa that should be based on developing global interactive standards, instead of imposing one-sided ideals.

## **THE EU AND CHINA IN AFRICA: PARTNERSHIP FOR A SUSTAINED BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**

Anna Visvizi\*

Many analysts have identified China as the rising power in the international system. However, in order to maintain its unprecedented economic growth, China needs to secure access to new markets and resources. Africa has acted as the "Promised Land" for Chinese investments and fuel-hungry economy. The rhetoric behind the strategic partnership between China and Africa is based on the rejection of the old colonial model of dependency, harmonious co-existence and the pursuit of common interests. The EU and its member states also share a long tradition of development cooperation on the continent, but as China has the capacity to turn into the major power in Africa, the question that should be asked is whether focusing solely on business does not deprive Africa of implementing deep reforms? From a different perspective, we should also ask how effective the EU is in its attempts to promote its values in Africa? The thrust of the paper's argumentation is based on the assumption that China, paradoxically, could grant credibility to the EU's attempts to foster reforms in Africa. The EU, in turn, with its vast development aid could reinforce Chinese involvement in building Africa's infrastructure. Benefits in the form of market creation, market access, returns on investment and finally in the form of political stabilisation would ensue. The aim of this paper is thus to explore the possibility of developing such a "conditional partnership."

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## THE MACAO FORUM AND THE CHINESE PRESENCE IN AFRICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SINO-EUROPEAN RELATIONS

Carmen Amado Mendes\*

The two main goals of China's foreign policy in Africa reflect its domestic priorities: to maintain economic growth and political stability. Beijing achieves these goals through a combination of soft power and specific diplomatic principles. For some African leaders, China's approach is welcomed as a way of escaping Western sanctions, whilst obtaining credit and new infrastructure in exchange for natural resources. Therefore, the Chinese approach to Africa fosters a new concept of aid with "no strings attached," replacing so-called Western development norms with "Chinese characteristics." In effect, the Chinese development model is presented as a valuable alternative in countries where the Western model did not provide expected results. As aforementioned, this acclaimed success in Africa can be explained by China's soft diplomatic practices – such as Beijing's decision to reinforce its presence in Africa through the creation of regional forums. This paper will therefore examine the Macao Forum to analyse the impact of China's multilateral policy in Africa, in the framework of EU-China relations. The Macao Forum was created in 2003, as a mechanism "to reinforce the cooperation and the economical exchange between the People's Republic of China and the Countries of Portuguese Language." The creation of this Forum reveals Chinese interests in using one EU member state, Portugal, as an intermittent for cooperation with former Portuguese colonies in Africa, where Beijing has growing energy interests.

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## **Part 7: “The EU and China in Africa: Does Culture Play a Role?”**



## CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CHINA'S AFRICA POLICY

Li Anshan\*

Chinese culture has long been revered as one of the oldest and most authentic cultures in the world. It played an important role in consolidating Chinese society, giving identity to the Chinese people, and this has been well researched. In contrast, the projection of Chinese culture beyond its borders and the impact that it has on Chinese foreign policy remains quite poorly understood in Western academic circles. Using R. Shweder's definition of culture, this paper offers a historical and modern-day view of the application of Chinese culture in its foreign policy-making, with regard to the African continent, by analysing how the Chinese government applies variants of Chinese culture in its relations with its African partners. The paper seeks essentially to highlight that culture can influence diplomatic practices when combined with a variety of factors, and that Chinese culture has exerted noticeable impacts on Chinese foreign policy in general and, in particular, on its Africa policy. Despite the insistence of the Chinese government on the positive impacts of its cultural traits in its African rhetoric, behind the scenes, at times, the implementation has not been so consistent. In effect, this paper aims to elucidate the fact that the application of Chinese cultural principles to its foreign-policy has both positive and negative impacts.

## IMPERIAL POWER EUROPE? THE EU'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

Angelos Sepos\*

In a world of established and emerging superpowers, the EU is called upon to not only promote its interests but to do so in way that is in sync with the proclamations of its founding fathers, who see the EU as "a force for good in the world." The extent, however, to which Europe has done away with the other negative force of its history – imperialism – is another question. This is an important issue because it relates to the fundamental ontological question of what the EU is? It also has crucial implications on the recipients of this form of power projection across the world, that is, states and subnational entities, localities and people. The paper examines the drivers, mechanisms and consequences of the EU's imperial projection, taking as case study the ACP countries. According to the author, Europe's contemporary imperial tendencies are nowhere more obvious than in its relationship with the so-called Dark Continent, the Caribbean and Pacific group. Also, in light of the

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fact that the ACP countries mainly represent the least developed of the world's countries, it is an important testing ground for the overall credibility and ethics of European rhetoric and action.

## **IS HISTORY A BURDEN FOR EUROPEANS IN AFRICA?**

Alex Vines\*

Europe colonised Africa and this is a historical fact. Belgium, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom colonised across the continent, their legacy being language, culture, sporting ties and a large diaspora. 2010 is a good year to reflect on this history, as many African countries celebrate 50 years of independence. Decolonisation remains recent, and many Africans still have memories of it, although with the continents' youth bulge, many Africans increasingly regard this as history. Following the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, European countries continued to retain interests in Africa and saw, in Africa, a place that they could still assert influence. By the new millennium, this had been greatly reduced, as China, India and other powers increasingly competed for business and influence, and African governments – emboldened by increased commodity prices – began to pick and choose their partnerships. What is striking about Europe in Africa is that until the recent competition from China (amongst others), European policy toward Africa was driven more so by humanitarian paternalism and migration concerns. This paper seeks to examine the modern-day role of three European ex-colonial powers in Africa – France, Britain and Portugal – and analyse how history has impacted upon their policies towards the continent in different ways.

## **TOWARDS A 'UNITARY ACTOR'? PERCEPTIONS OF CHINA'S ROLE IN AFRICA ACROSS EU INSTITUTIONS**

Frauke Austermann\*

Since the establishment of a Common Foreign and Security Policy, EU "actorness" at the global stage has been heatedly debated. Apart from the EU's difficulty to speak with "one voice," European integration scholars have pointed at a much less researched factors which limits EU actorness, namely inter-institutional inconsistencies. Thus, the European Commission with its powerful role in trade policy is much more likely to take a cooperative approach towards the EU's second biggest trading partner, China. The

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European Parliament, by contrast, does not shy away from harshly criticising China. A recent and fiercely debated topic in EU external relations is the role of China in Africa, which is a highly interesting case study with regard to the role of EU identity politics, concerning its actorness in current global politics. Pulling the strings together, this paper researches how the EU's perception of China's role in Africa differs across EU institutions. The main hypothesis is that due to varying roles and powers of the three main EU institutions in the framework of EU foreign policy, there are at least three different institutional perceptions of China's role in Africa. Because of these different identity politics pursued across the EU institutions, the EU, as a whole, is therefore far from constituting a unitary actor when it comes to the role of China in Africa.



## CLOSING SPEECH AT THE CONFERENCE

Jing Men\*

Dear colleagues, dear friends, good afternoon!

After two days of intensive discussions on whether the EU and China are partners or competitors in Africa, it is time to close the conference. Yet, rather than declaring the end of the conference, I would say that this conference will mark a new starting point in our research on this topic.

During the two days,

- About 90 participants from all over the world except South America attended this international conference
- 26 papers from 7 panels have been presented and discussed
- Many issues have been addressed: global governance, the security concerns of both the EU and China in Africa, the economic cooperation and competition between the EU and China in Africa, the evolving understanding and policy on humanitarian intervention and national sovereignty, the comparison of the different models of social and economic development, the role of culture and norms in the making of the EU's and China's respective policies in Africa and the human rights issue.

This international conference offers a good platform for all of you to be here to exchange your research results, to get to know each other, and to establish a network so that we can keep in touch and further promote the research on EU-China -Africa relations.

The idea of organising this conference dates back to the end of 2008. When I was preparing for the course on EU-China relations at the College of Europe, I found that apart from EU-China bilateral relations, what the EU and China are doing in the other parts of the world, and what impact this has on bilateral relations, should also be examined. As Africa is traditionally regarded as the backyard of Western Europe, and China's growing presence in and engagement with Africa has triggered various reactions in Europe, it is time to examine the EU's policy in Africa with regard to the rising influence of China in the continent. Since then, we started to prepare for this conference, and we are glad to see that this conference has attracted so many colleagues and friends from all over the world. This indicates that what the EU and China are doing in Africa is indeed an important topic which deserves a good research.

While discussing about the EU and China's policy and behaviour in Africa, we cannot forget our African counterparts. Therefore, when we issued invitations, we envisaged a balanced discussion in each panel, where we

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should not only listen to the European and Chinese voices, we should also be aware of Africa's stake. What turned out in the final version of the conference programme, however, indicated that we do not have any African presentations in both panels discussing norms, culture and human rights. In contrast, in panel 3 on the economic issue, 3 out of 4 presentations were from African participants. Such an uneven distribution of African participants did not reflect our expectations, but on the other hand, it indicates what our African colleagues are mostly concerned about.

During the two days' discussion, despite of the different views on many issues dealing with EU-China relations in Africa, consensus has been reached between the participants that we need each other: the EU and China need each other, Africa and China need each other, the EU and Africa need each other. Cooperation is the most optimal mean with which to facilitate the achievement of common interests. This is a very important starting point. The recognition of common needs will motivate the Europeans, the Chinese and the Africans to find solutions to the problems that exist in the process of cooperation in amongst the three different pairs of bilateral relations. Whether there should be trilateral cooperation remains to be seen. During the first day of the conference, the Chinese and the European participants discussed about the difficulties to engage in trilateral cooperation, and this afternoon, Prof. Martyn Davies voiced very clearly, on behalf of Africa, that bilateral cooperation is much more preferable to trilateral cooperation.

When discussing about the role of the EU in Africa, certain participants pointed out that the Europeans arrived in Africa much earlier than the Chinese. At the conference, others also mentioned that more than 600 years ago, during the Chinese Ming dynasty, a large fleet led by Zheng He, travelled far away from the Chinese coastal line and arrived in East Africa. The idea of doing business on an equal footing was observed between the Chinese and the Africans already 6 centuries ago. History has a legacy. Between the Africans and the Chinese, one of the reasons that led to the establishment of brotherly relations during the Cold War era was because both were either colonised or semi-colonised by European powers. Such shared experience brought them closer. What happened to them in the past partly contributed to the solidarity shown in China-Africa relations during those years.

China-Africa relations underwent changes in the post-Cold war era. In other words, the relationship between the Chinese and the Africans has been changed from brothers in the past to business partners at present that is explained by Chinese economic growth. The search for materials and natural resources guides China to intensify China-Africa relations in the economic field. Such exploration has led to various reactions both from Europe and Africa.

While examining the rising influence of China in Africa, we have also discussed various concepts and raised many questions. The definitions of these concepts quietly evolve, which challenges our traditional understanding of international relations. When peacekeeping involves also peacemaking, it makes the issue more subtle and delicate. In the same vein,



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humanitarian intervention and humanitarian assistance follow different understanding of international norms. Shall we follow the classical definition of sovereignty? Or shall we adapt ourselves to limited sovereignty due to the new situation in some African countries? Should the sovereignty of failed states be respected? As to China, some participants stated that it is changing from being a status-quo power to a responsible stakeholder, but some others exposed that China is a revisionist power. When we look at China's policy, behaviour and its rising trajectory, it is not a surprise that we reach different conclusions, concerning whether China is a revisionist power or a status-quo power.

For several years now, there have been more and more discussions on whether China acts responsibly in the international community. The Chinese government, attaching considerable importance to its image building, has been making efforts to improve its international image by emphasising and defending its foreign policy moves from internationally recognised norms and moral standards. Looking at the history of Chinese language, we may be surprised that the equivalent word for "right" or "rights" did not exist until the emergence of modern China. For several thousand years in Chinese history, under the influence of state philosophy Confucianism, the Chinese, from the ruler to the ruled, stressed responsibilities and duties that they each should fulfil, instead of rights that they should enjoy.

Since China has been a member of the UN for nearly four decades, together with its global rising influence, it is expected to shoulder more responsibility. During the two days discussion, it has been made clear that China's business approach is not sustainable in the long run. If China's rapidly developing economic capability makes it a rising power, then, the question remains whether China is ready to take the responsibilities resulting from the influence that it has? All in all, there are lots of questions that are calling for the further research into EU-China relations in Africa. In other words, as scholars, think tanks or policy practitioners, we still have a lot to do in this field in order to find answers to all our questions.

In 2008, the Chair of EU-China Relations was set up at the College of Europe. Financially sponsored by the InBev-Baillet Latour fund, the EU-China Chair focuses on the teaching and research of EU-China relations. We teach a course on EU-China relations in Bruges and a compact seminar on the same topic in Natolin, the sister campus of the College of Europe.

This international conference is the second such activity organised by the Chair. The first conference was organised in April 2009 on "Prospects and Challenges for EU-China Relations in the 21st Century: The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement." Some participants were here last year and contributed papers to that conference. This conference has been organised thanks to the financial support of DG Education and Culture, European Commission. Therefore, we would like to give our heartfelt thanks to the European Commission for its support to academic research activities.



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Thanks to your commitment and cooperation, this conference was held successfully. I would also like to thank all the paper contributors, the discussants and the chairs, and all the participants, without your active involvement, this conference would not have taken place. We are very glad to meet all of you here and we hope that we can keep in touch with you and preserve this network for it to stimulate further research and exchanges of views.

I also would like to thank our Rector Prof. Paul Demaret and the Dean of the International Relations and Diplomacy Department, Prof. Dieter Mahncke, our colleagues, Prof. Sieglinde Gstöhl and our teaching assistants, our secretary Sabine Dekeyser, the Communications Office and many other people who supported us in one way or another for the organisation of this conference.

In particular, I would like to give my thanks to Benjamin Barton. He has worked on this conference for several months: all of you received emails from him, and some of you even received dozens of emails from him for the circulation of research papers, the reservation of hotel rooms, the reservation of meals, the information concerning transport and most importantly, the conference programme. In order to arrange good food for us, he contacted several restaurants and made selections. He contacted several hotels in Bruges in order to find a nicer environment and better rooms for you, he contacted the other departments at the College of Europe and coordinated with them so as to ensure a smooth preparation for this conference. This work was very time consuming, but he did a very good job. I suggest that we give him a warm round of applause to thank him for his hard work.

As we mentioned in our call for papers, we plan to publish an edited book to include some of the papers presented at this conference. We are negotiating with a publisher and we hope to secure a contract soon.

Since the beginning of 2008, we have run an electronic journal: the *EU-China Observer*. The idea is that we publish this journal once every two months. The length of each article in the journal is 2,500 words. Any of you who are interested in contributing papers to our *EU-China Observer* are welcome to contact either Benjamin Barton or myself so that we can discuss the paper proposals and the issues that you would like to address in your paper.

Before ending my speech, I would like to announce a final news item: next February, we will organise the third international conference, which will focus on EU-US-China relations. Our idea is that we will organise an annual international conference on EU-China relations. If you have interesting proposals, do not hesitate to contact us. We can explore the possibilities of jointly organising conferences in the future.

Finally, I wish all of you a very good and safe journey home and I look forward to seeing you again next year.

Thank you very much!