



Instituto Superior de Economia e Gestão

UNIVERSIDADE TÉCNICA DE LISBOA

DESDE 1911

MASTER
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND
COOPERATION

DISSERTATION

The U.S. economic, political and
geostrategic response to
China's presence in Africa

NAME: MARIANA ANTON

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ABSTRACT

Africa has recently become a region of strategic importance for both the U.S. and China, which has resulted in what some have called *The third scramble for Africa*. Both countries are actively competing for Africa's natural resources, for markets and for political influence, using several strategies and tactics to ensure and expand their interests. This dissertation aims to analyse the main actions and reactions taken by the U.S. in Africa, regarding China's presence on the continent. It examines the two countries cooperation policy and their interests in Africa as well as the measures that have been taken by the U.S. to strengthen its strategic policy in Africa. It concludes that, even though the U.S. is using diplomatic, military and economic instruments to counter China's influence on the continent, it doesn't intend to attack China directly. Instead, the U.S. is employing a "smart power" policy characterized by cautiousness.

Keywords: U.S.; China; Africa; Third Scramble; Smart Power; Strategic Interests; AFRICOM; Oil;

RESUMO

A África tornou-se mais recentemente uma região de grande importância estratégica para os EUA e a China, resultando, na visão de alguns autores, numa nova corrida pela África. Ambos os países estão activamente a competir por recursos naturais, por mercados económicos e por influência política, no continente Africano, utilizando várias estratégias para assegurar e expandir os seus interesses. A presente dissertação tem como principal objectivo apresentar as principais acções e reacções desenvolvidas pelos EUA no continente africano, assumindo a presença cada vez mais forte da China em África. A dissertação analisa a política de cooperação dos dois países e os seus interesses no continente, bem como as medidas tomadas pelos EUA para reforçar a sua política estratégica no continente, como resposta às acções desenvolvidas pela China. A partir da análise realizada pode-se concluir que, apesar dos EUA utilizarem vários instrumentos diplomáticos, militares e económicos para conter a influência da China no continente, a intenção de Washington não é atacar a China directamente. Em vez disso, os EUA estão a empregar uma política de "*smart power*" caracterizada essencialmente pela cautela e prudência.

Palavras chave: U.S.; China; África; Corrida pela África; *Smart Power*; Interesses Estratégicos; AFRICOM; Petróleo.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, Africa has become a strategic region for new emerging powers, such as China, Brazil, India, Russia, for the European countries that once dominated the continent and also for the U.S. Not since the end of the Cold War has the U.S. been so actively involved in a scramble over political, economic and geostrategic interests on the distant continent. What's more, the opponent, as with the ex-USSR, is another communist state: China.

The key reason for Africa's growing importance on the international scene is quite obvious: Africa is home to some of the largest deposits of natural resources in the world, from rare metals, rare earth, non-ferrous and ferrous metals, to fossil fuel such as oil and gas.¹ Its impressive natural heritage has been the main reason for what some have called *The Third Scramble for Africa* - "competition for control of strategic resources" (YI-CHONG, 2008.p16) - with China, the U.S. and the European countries actively competing against each other for Africa's natural resources, for markets and for political influence.

The increasing presence of China in Africa has drawn a lot of controversy and strong criticism among some Western countries², which perceive Chinese foreign policy for Africa as a growing threat to their own interests. It is increasingly evident that Chinese economic involvement in several African countries has forced the traditional African partners, particularly Europe and the U.S., to reassess its strategic political cooperation with the continent. Therefore, taking into account China's influence on the continent, in recent years the U.S. has shown a growing interest in Africa in order to ensure access to energy resources, gain a geostrategic position and political influence in African countries, using several strategies and tactics to achieve its objectives.

This dissertation seeks to provide a basis for reflection and discussion regarding the main actions and reactions taken by the U.S. in Africa, regarding China's presence on the continent. More significantly, it aims to answer the following question: Has Chinese

¹ Figure No.1 and No.2

² About the myths of China's presence in Africa see BRAUTINGAM, (2009)

presence in Africa prompted an increase in American involvement on the continent, and if so, in what way?

Besides this, there are a set of other objectives to support this overall aim: (i) to understand the U.S. and China cooperation policy and their interests in Africa, (ii) to analyse how the "soft power" policy employed by China undermines the U.S. strategic plans in Africa; (iii) to examine what measures have been taken to strengthen the U.S. strategic policy in Africa as a response to China's presence in Africa and comprehend if there is an action - reaction effect. These objectives will help to test the central hypothesis: China is one of the main reasons that led the U.S. to engage with key African countries over securing its strategic interests, controlling China's growing international stature on the continent.

In terms of methodology, this study will follow the deductive approach based on the observation of empirical reality, taking into account a variety of disciplines such as History, Geopolitics, Political Science, International Relations and Economics.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters: the paper begins by exploring the theoretical basis for the research topic presented here, based on the theory of IR. The second chapter examines the U.S.'s foreign policy towards Africa and its interests on the continent. Chapter three describes the Chinese foreign policy and geo-economic strategy for the continent, exploring at the same time its interests in Africa. Chapter four addresses the implications of China's initiatives for the U.S. foreign policy in Africa. The chapter will also discuss various U.S. political, economic and military/security reactions to China's presence in Africa. Finally, the dissertation presents the main conclusions arising from the work and suggests some topics for future research.

It should also be noted that the research topic presented here, which has raised a number of political, economic, and geostrategic questions among academics, politicians, analysts and observers, is also an important issue for the international balance of power whose implications are still far from known.

Furthermore, it's important to acknowledge that the dissertation is not exempt from imperfections and criticism, nor can it be seen as complete.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

By analysing the main paradigms of international relations (IR) theory, this chapter attempts to provide a relevant framework about the political relations between states and their behaviour in international context.

Since the beginning of International Relations, which is often thought to be marked by the Treaty of Westphalia³, many scholars have tried to develop a wide variety of theories that could contribute to a better understanding of the international environment. Taking into account the great variety of theoretical perspectives, the existence of five major conceptions of IR it is often accepted: realism; idealism/ liberalism; society of states; pluralist – interdependent and neo-Marxism. There are, however, other authors who consider other main paradigms.⁴

The idealism approach of IR, that dominated the period between the two World Wars, underlies the belief that IR should be governed by certain ethical principles to achieve peace and harmony between independent entities. The idealists share a common interest for peace and for an international balance of power. They believe that international behaviour can be ordered through the use of rational mechanisms and legal institutions. Furthermore, idealists hold that cooperation is the central feature of international activity, which can control the warring passions of the states. The revival of idealism/liberalism thinking about international politics was accelerated by the development of neo-liberalism in the 80's. Neo-liberalism seeks to understand the behaviour of states through the institutions. Keohane believes that *"the behaviour of states is highly conditioned (but not determined) by the institutions"* (KEOHANE, 1989, p.2).⁵ The International Institutions are seen as purely utilitarian, being able to reduce the hostile international environment and allowing states to pursue common interests. Regarding states' interests, some authors like Joseph Nye, argue that in order to achieve their goals, states should use "soft power"⁶ - the ability of a country to persuade others

³ According to the international relations theorists the Treaty of Westphalia established the system of sovereign states with equal rights and protection from the intrusion of other states.

⁴ See for instance EVANS and NEWHAM,(1998); JACKSON and SORENSEN,(2007). Due to the space limitation I decided to focus only on the realism and liberalism approach.

⁵ KEOHANE, Robert, O., (1989), *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory*, Boulder, Co., Westview Press in CRAVINHO, (2006, p. 223)

⁶ The concept of soft power was developed in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (1990).

to do what it wants without force or coercion and without having to use “hard power” based on “*military intervention, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions*” (NYE, 1990, p. 166). In Nye’s opinion, sometimes a nation can achieve its goals only “*by employing the attractiveness of nation’s foreign policy, values and culture*” (NYE, 2004). He also argues that because the results of “soft power” are more diffuse and harder to achieve, states could also use a combination of hard and soft power – a synergy that leads to “smart power”. “*Power in the global information age*” Nye asserts “*will include a soft dimension of attraction as well as the hard combinations of coercion and inducement*” (NYE, 2008, p. 107).

On the other hand, the realist theory of IR, introduced mainly by Carr⁷ and Morgenthau⁸, arises in contrast to the idealist school of thought, which, according to the realists, failed to understand the international system leading to the Second World War. The main premise of realism is that there are fixed rules, which regulate individual and state behaviour: states, like man, are by nature self-interested and aggressive and will pursue their interests to the detriment of others. Inspired by Machiavelli (16th century), but essentially by Hobbes (17th century)⁹, realism’s point of departure is that the structure of the international system explains the behaviour of states and the aspects of IR. According to both classical and contemporary realists, the absence of a central authority is the essential feature of the contemporary international system. The idea of international anarchy¹⁰, is based on Thomas Hobbes concept of state of nature, according to which the “life” between all men is a permanent war of “all against all”, since states will use all their political power to promote their interests and there’s no one else that they can depend on but themselves. Furthermore, since states naturally seek to maximize their power in order to intimidate the weaker states, the level of mutual suspicion is constantly high.¹¹

The aggressive intent of states combined with the lack of world government, means that conflict is an unavoidable and ever-present reality of IR, meaning that we live in - what Aron called - “*the shadow of war*” (ARON, 2002, p. 54). Classical realists generally

⁷ (CARR, 1981)

⁸ (MORGENTHAU and THOMPSON, 1985)

⁹ It is also important to mention the Greek historian Thucydides, who was one of earliest scholars to reflect on the conflict dimension of IR, especially on Peloponnesian Wars between Sparta and Athens (431-404. BC).

¹⁰ Anarchy is seen as formal and it should be understood as order, stability and as a form of regulating the interactions among independent units.

¹¹ See also (HOBBS, 1949)

assume that states¹² are the central players in the international system, which has its roots in “human natures”. According to Morgenthau “*political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature*”.¹³ The interaction between the “egoistic passions” and international anarchy marks the concept of “power” as the theoretical core of IR. Thus, international politics is a game consisting of the use of power and the demand of power (“power” being the instrument and the goal of participation in the international system). The assumption behind this premise is that the accumulation of “power” is the states’ foremost foreign policy objective. In addition, Morgenthau believes that states have irreconcilable interests and each seeks to promote its interests in the most convenient way.¹⁴

Classical realism has been the dominant model of IR during the past six decades. Nevertheless, the classical version has received a lot of critical scrutiny. One of the most important approaches that redesigned the view of classical realism was neo-realism thought. Neo-realism shares many core assumptions of classical realism; however its defenders argue that it is the nature of the anarchic structure that explains the units’ behavior. That is, the neo-realists believe that only a systemic theory can explain the nature of international context (WALTZ, 2002).

The beginning of neo-realism was marked by Kenneth Waltz’s book *A Theory of International Politics* (1979). Neo-realism seeks to identify the structure of international anarchy in order to create explanatory theories of international behavior, considering many system-level theories as reductionists. In contrast to classical realism, neo-realists dismiss the role of human nature, focusing instead on a “top-down” approach where the “structure” of the international system plays the leading role in the relationships between states rather than the nature of the individual (DONNELLY, 2004, p. 24).

According to Waltz, the contemporary system is anarchic and decentralized rather than hierarchical. Order is not imposed by a supreme authority “*but arises from the interactions of formally equal political actor*” (DONNELLY, 2004, p. 17). Furthermore, in anarchic environments in Waltz’s view “*each unit’s incentive is to put itself in a position to be able to take care of itself since no one else can be counted on to*

¹² Note that states are seen as the dominant and unitary units because they act uniformly in the international system, and rational because they pursue to protect their national interests.

¹³ (MORGENTHAU and THOMPSON, 1985, p. 4) See also (NIEBUHR, 1932).

¹⁴ See also (CARR, 1981), (NIEBUHR, 1932, pp. 56-76)

do so".¹⁵ The main difference between states is "of capabilities, not function". Waltz argues that states differ not so much in what they seek to achieve, but in their capabilities to achieve goals that are largely shared. Moreover, in an anarchic order, the most important thing is how the states' capabilities are distributed among themselves, and how much power a particular state has in relation to others. The desire of each state to maximize relative power¹⁶ constrains each other, resulting in a "balance of power". This situation gives rise to the "security dilemma"¹⁷ which all nations face.

Furthermore, for neo-realists although material power matters, it is not an end to itself, but an instrument. As Zakaria notes, states seek to maximize influence, not power, or to put it differently "*states seek to maximize opportunities for implementing their preferences*".¹⁸ That is why states should seek to distribute the power between allies to ensure its leadership for longer. Regarding the balance of power, defensive realists agree that states have every interest in maintaining the existing balance of power that provides stability with survival being the main motive of states. Thus, the state's foreign policy should be characterized by "*cautiousness, alliance building, and interest-based interaction with other states*" (KHALID, 2007, p. 46)

On the other hand, offensive realists argue that states are not often satisfied with the simple balance of power. According to Mearsheimer, "*a state's ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system*".¹⁹ Since global hegemony is "almost impossible", a great power has two goals: to dominate its region and prevent other powers from dominating other regions.²⁰

Concluding, both classical and contemporary realism are adequate tools to help us understand the state's behaviour and motivations. Although often considered too simplistic and pessimistic, the realism approach provides us a guide on how states actually try to survive in a world whose nature is unlikely to change. It is worth noting that this framework will serve as a background for the analysis I intend to pursue.

¹⁵ WALTZ, Kenneth, (1979), *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., p.107, in DONNELLY (2004, p.17)

¹⁶ Relative power is the perceived amount of power that a state has in relation to other state.

¹⁷ This means that each state acts diplomatically and militarily to ensure its security and by acting in this way, the other states interpret its action as threatening.

¹⁸ ZAKARIA, F., (1998), *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, in TELBAMI (2002, p. 160).

¹⁹ MEARSHEIMER, Jonh J. (2001), *The tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, in KHALID (2007, p. 46).

²⁰ (SNYDER, 2002, p. 153).

CHAPTER II

U.S INTERESTS AND FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA: FROM BACKWATER TO STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Taking into consideration the power relations between the States there is a clear difference of how China and the U.S. are engaging with Africa. The foreign policies adopted by each country fit within a large context of national interests, and the way these policies are implemented generate different results for each country.

1. *THE U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA*

The end of the Cold War marked a major challenge for American policy towards Africa. The difficulty in defining a set of national interests in the region which could make a more proactive foreign policy, made Africa to be seen as a national interest backwater, not deserving the attention from the top decision makers - *“Africa was never really a big part of the strategic plan”*.²¹ As Chris Alden notes, traditionally US-Africa relations have been *“characterized in the main by indifference and neglect, punctuated by flurries of interest and action”* (ALDEN C. , 2000, p. 355).

After the Second World War, U.S. African policy was determined by a continuous effort to impose American values of democracy and human rights, constituting the base of the U.S. *“rhetorical Commitments to Africa”*. However, the manner in which these objectives were pursued generally remained shaped by U.S. geo-strategic interests – *“containing the Soviet/Communism expansionism on the continent and building ideological affiliations with African countries”* (SIMEON, 2010, p. 58).

It wasn't until the second term of the Clinton Administration (1997-2001) that Africa started to gain a new significance, *“even if was still seen through the lens of ad hoc humanitarianism, rather than in a strategic manner”* (LYMAN, 2006).²² The increasing emphasis on economic links to Africa and its integration into global economy, have been the main principles of Clinton's foreign policy towards Africa. In order to

²¹ Statements of General Charles Wald, U.S. National Security Interests in Africa event, 2004. Available at <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/appearance/480375388>

²² LYMAN, P., (2006), *“A strategic approach to terrorism”* in WALLE (2009, p. 5).

encourage trade and investment, the Clinton administration adopted a trade bill, The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) (2000), designed to liberalise the trade between the U.S. and eligible African countries.²³ Besides this, high priority was given to security issues and to the promotion of democratic enlargement.²⁴ In spite of the continuing efforts of President Clinton to create a more effective African policy, the truth is that it was never defined in the context of a long-term strategy.

Over the course of the Bush administration (2001-2009), Africa was perceived as being “a scar” on the conscience of the world. Thus, because of moral imperative obligation of the U.S., the grants for humanitarian intervention associated with poverty reduction and aid driving, rather than investment, have substantially increased.²⁵ Nevertheless, the events of 9/11 led the Bush administration to engage with Africa from a “war on terror” perspective, increasing the foreign aid and its military presence in various regions, especially in the Sahel and East Africa. However, despite the adoption of a large number of new development programs²⁶ African policy under the Bush administration continued with the failures of previous administrations. The absence of a careful strategic vision and lack of coordination between the different agencies prevented the establishment of a coherent and articulated policy in the African countries (WALLE, 2009, p. 11). Only by the end of his second term (2004-2009) and due to the potential growing importance of African oil, did Africa become a new strategic importance for U.S. interests. Coincidentally, it was then that the U.S. seemed to finally understand the growing magnitude of Chinese influence in Africa.

The mandate of President Obama brought high expectation, even if unrealistic. Early in his term, Obama indicated that he planned to develop a set of more comprehensive and effective policies towards Africa attempting to mix the economic and security interests in the region with some adjustments to the development agenda. On his visit to Ghana in 2009, Obama highlighted the importance of good governance arguing

²³ Currently covering 39 countries, AGOA’s main aim was to encourage trade with sub-Saharan countries providing trade preferences for quota and duty-free for about 1800 products expanding the benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences.

²⁴ Democratic enlargement represents the link between the expansion of democracy and the spread of market economies. About the spread of democracy in Africa see also COHEN H.J. (2011), “Democratizing Africa: Two decades of U.S. Policy”, *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol.33, No.5; and BRINKLEY, D. (1997), “Democratic enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine”, *Foreign Policy*, 116.

²⁵ U.S. aid to SSA grew from \$2.3 billion in the fiscal year 2002 to \$10.7 billion in 2008 (see figure No.3).

²⁶ For instance: President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

that “*Development depends upon good governance.[...]And that is a responsibility that can only be met by Africans*”.²⁷ The visit of the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton (2009), on the other hand, was directed to more specific economic issues. As Johnnie Carson puts it “*In this time of economic crisis, it is important that the United States and Africa work cooperatively as a major trading partners*” (cited in ORI, 2009)

While U.S. African policy under the Obama administration seems to be more engaging, it is also clear that it has stayed consistent with the long-term trend and interests. Numerous programs from the Bush administration have been kept in place, such as Africa Command (AFRICOM), and key allies on the continent have not changed much (WHITE, 2010, p. 27). In reality Obama's strategy in Africa is a solidification of existing policy rather than a statement of new policy.²⁸ Nevertheless, today more than ever Africa is becoming a priority region for U.S. interests.

2. U.S. INTERESTS TOWARDS AFRICA

The U.S. interests in Africa can be classified into three main groups: (i) economic interests; (ii) geopolitical interests; (iii) geostrategic and security interests.

2.1. Economic Interests

There is no doubt that natural resources, especially oil, are the key motives that brought together the U.S. and China in getting involved in Africa. As Walter Kansteiner, the assistant secretary of State for Africa noted, “*African oil is of national strategic interest to us*”.²⁹ This growing importance of oil was highlighted as top priority for the U.S. due to some factors that should be mentioned: “*(i) the rising domestic energy demand, (ii) new discoveries and production of oil in Africa, (iii) and new players moving into the continent*” (YI-CHONG, 2008, p. 19); (iv) the growing instability from traditional American suppliers, such as Middle East. Currently more than 20% of the U.S.’ imported oil has its origins in Africa.³⁰ New oil and gas discoveries, especially in West African countries, such as Nigeria, and Angola, have made the continent more attractive to the U.S.³¹ In addition to oil and gas interests, there are many other natural resources

²⁷Accra International Conference Center, 2009. See text at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-to-the-Ghanaian-Parliament/

²⁸ About U.S. policy in Africa under the Obama Administration see also WALLE (2009).

²⁹ Quoted in (CRAWLEY, 2002)

³⁰ See Figure No.4

³¹ See figure No.5

of extremely high importance to the U.S. economy, such as raw gems, and precious metals and minerals. Besides this, the U.S. is also seeking to expand its trade and investments in Africa and this is illustrated, in part by the expansion of total U.S. trade (imports plus exports) with sub-Saharan-Africa (SSA). Since 2000 U.S.-Africa trade has increased 221% growing from \$29.4 billion in 2000 to over \$94 billion in 2011.³² In the year 2000, trade with Africa made up 1,5 % of total U.S. global trade, and Africa's share had grown to 2,6% by 2011 (JONES and WILLIAMS, 2012, p. 8) However, unlike China, which is engaging with Africa by using economic instruments, the U.S. is less involved in promoting strong business ties in Africa. In fact, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has been largely stagnant. SSA countries are relatively minor destination of U.S. FDI. Africa, as a whole hosts about 1% of total U.S. FDI³³ being largely concentrated in mining and extractive industries, which together comprise some \$29 billion of the \$54 billion total stock of U.S. FDI in Africa.³⁴

2.2. Geopolitical Interests

Beyond the economic interests, the U.S. is increasingly seeking political and diplomatic support of African countries in the UN and WTO willing at the same time to counter attempts by others to do so. However due to the lack of a comprehensive diplomatic representation in Africa states,³⁵ the U.S. has had difficulty in getting political support from African governments. The emergence of a proactive Chinese policy in the region, the disastrous effects of the Iraq war, and the Bush administration's rhetorical commitment to unilateralism, weakened the U.S.' reputation in the region (WALLE, 2009, p. 14). Many countries prefer China as a partner, since it does not interfere in the affairs of other countries. There is also some evidence that by increasing their presence on the African continent, the U.S. is trying to reduce China's growing international influence, since *the U.S. acknowledges China as having the capability to threaten its global dominance and unipolarity* (SIMEON, 2010, p. 63).³⁶

³² See figure No.6

³³ See figure No.7

³⁴ See figure No. 8

³⁵According to Walle the U.S. diplomatic presence in Africa has declined due to the "*worsening institutional fragmentation in the foreign policy apparatus, contradictions in policy and the decline in the state Department's institutional capacity*" (WALLE, 2009, p.3)

³⁶ China's rise has led to "China's threat theory" according to which it is inconceivable to China to have a peaceful rise and will inevitably be a threat to the U.S.

2.3. Geostrategic and security interests

A number of security issues, especially counterterrorism, became priority in the list of U.S. interests in Africa. After the bombing of U.S. embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar es Salam (Tanzania) in 1998 and the attacks of 9/11 the United States realized that Africa posed a serious security threat.³⁷ The “war on terrorism”, based on the idea that weak states can bring instability to Africa nations and the fear that al-Qaeda-type organizations could become established in African failed states, has been Washington’s rhetoric to justify its growing military presence in Africa. The National Security Strategy of 2002 is an example of these terrorist concerns: *“In Africa promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States – preserving human dignity – and our strategic priority – combating global terror”* (THE WHITE HOUSE, 2002). Under these circumstances the U.S. considers to have the moral obligation to ensure stability in Africa, leading it to install military programs in several countries. In 2007, in an attempt to find an appropriate response in fighting terrorism, the Bush administration announced the creation of AFRICOM³⁸ aimed *to protect and defend the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development.*³⁹ More recently, the deployment of approximately 100 American military personnel to Uganda, to advise military units in capturing or killing the Lord’s Resistance Army leader, Joseph Kony, can’t hide the purpose of containing the spread of terrorism in that region. A key question, for some, is whether the response to fight this small radical organization has an ulterior motive to achieve strategic interests, since this is a region that is becoming a new oil producing spot.

According to some authors, such as Michael Klare and Daniel Volman, the establishment of U.S. military bases in strategic African regions also seeks to help to ensure the access to natural resources and *“fight indigenous forces that might threaten*

³⁷ Pham, Peter, J. (2007), “Next Front? Evolving U.S.-African Strategic Relations in the “War on Terrorism” and Beyond”, *Comparative Strategy*, 26, pp.39-54, cited in CRUZ and STEPHENS (2010, p. 199)

³⁷Prior to AFRICOM’s establishment, U.S. military involvement on the continent was divided among three commands: U.S. European Command (EUCOM), U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). The command’s area of responsibility (AOR) includes all African countries except Egypt.

³⁹ AFRICOM Mission Statement from the official site <http://www.africom.mil/AboutAFRICOM.asp>

the free flow of oil exports and other minerals” (KLARE and VOLMAN, 2006, p. 303). Additionally, many American and African observers believe that this new political enhancement is the beginning of a longer U.S. military presence in Africa, in order to indirectly ensure free access to strategic resources; to observe China’s rise closely on the continent; and to create a secure environment for oil companies.⁴⁰ I will return on this topic in the next sections.

⁴⁰ See for example, CRUZ and STEPHENS, (2010); HABİYAREMYE, A. (2011)

CHAPTER III

CHINA'S PRESENCE IN AFRICA

1. CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA

Unlike the U.S., which presents a short-term strategy for Africa, China's engagement with Africa has evolved and expanded significantly over the last five decades. It was after the Second World War that China started to develop a strong political engagement with African countries, providing ambiguous support to the independence and liberation movements, in order to affirm itself as the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement⁴¹ and hoping to strengthen international alliances against the capitalist West and the revisionist communist Soviet Union.⁴² Throughout the 1960's and 1970's China provided financial aid, technological assistance, medical support and scholarships to the African countries.⁴³ However, the aid program was different from western approaches, by being based on bilateral and South-South cooperation (POWER and MOHAN, 2008, p. 10).

After a period of relative neglect during the 80's and 90's, the turning point was the beginning of the century. The year 2000 witnessed an upgrade in Sino-African relations, especially with the institutionalization of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). This forum, based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence⁴⁴, has been an effective instrument of soft power to establish a fair and mutually beneficial cooperation and a mechanism through which China is coordinating its activities in Africa. The various summits held every three years⁴⁵ are expected to promote political

⁴¹ Created in 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement includes 120 countries which advocate a struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism, and all forms of foreign aggression and pursue to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity.

⁴² KANZA, T.M., (1975), "Chinese and Soviet Aid to Africa; An African View" in VAN DE LOOY, (2006, p. 1)

⁴³ For instance, China's aid program in Guinea (1960 -1969). Also a total of \$120 million in aid was committed to Congo-Brazzaville, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Tanzania between 1963-1964. Other projects can be mentioned such as: the rail-way that connects Lusaka and Dar es Salaam, the construction of the stadium "Friendship" in Benin, Zambia - Tanzania rail-way.

⁴⁴(i) mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; (ii) mutual non-aggression; (iii) non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (iv) equality and mutual benefit; and (v) peaceful coexistence.

⁴⁵ The first summit was held in 2000 in Beijing. The second FOCAC Summit was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2003. The 2006 FOCAC Summit was held in Beijing. In 2009 the Summit was held in Sharm El Sheik in Egypt and in 2012 in Beijing. See figure No.9

dialogue and economic co-operation, with the long-term aim of common economic development and prosperity.⁴⁶ Thus, the Sino-African relations, defined by the President Zeming are based on the principles of: ‘*sincere friendship, equality, solidarity and cooperation, common development and being oriented to the future*’.⁴⁷

It is also worth noting the great emphasis that China has given to the historical context and to the evocation of political solidarity in its relationship with Africa, which are carefully employed to suggest a shared sense of identity as fellow third world states and also to present the “Chinese model” of development as a successful one (ALDEN and ALVES, 2008).⁴⁸ The Chinese model, known also as "Beijing Consensus", tends to serve as an example for many countries seeking development and maintaining their self-determination. China’s aid and economic cooperation differ, from the Traditional Western models, both in their content and in the norms of aid practice. China’s policy towards Africa is premised on respect for sovereignty and “non-interference” in national affairs, which differentiates it from western approaches that inevitably come with conditions (POWER and MOHAN, 2008, p. 17). Thus, its development assistance and economic support are apparently unconditional and does not require the respect for western values of good governance or human rights like the *Washington Consensus* does.⁴⁹

Furthermore, authors like Chris Patten argue that while the western approach is based on an idealistic view of good intentions, the Chinese paradigm is much more objective, pragmatic, flexible and effective (PATTEN, 2009). While the West determines what Africa needs, adopting general plans with little adjustment to demand, Chinese strategy is based on research providing what local people need, and adopting plans to local conditions, which “*gives it a great deal of credibility as a partner with relevant recent experience*”. (BRAUTIGAM, 2009, p. 11)

⁴⁶ (FOCAC, 2009)

⁴⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2002.

⁴⁸ About China’s model of development see also (COUNCIL, 2011)

http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-09/06/content_1941354.htm

⁴⁹ Washington Consensus policies are usually seen as a shift from state-led dirigisme to market oriented policies, whose principles are based on the structural change of the entire society, requiring good governance, the respect for the human rights, a transparent economy based on free market, etc.

2. CHINA'S INTERESTS IN AFRICA

From a materialistic point of view, the discourse of mutual interdependence reveals at the same time the economic and commercial nature of China's foreign policy towards Africa. This relates to the idea that Africa's resources are important to China's growth and that the engagement with Africa is a win-win situation for both parties (ANSHAN, 2006).⁵⁰

This renewed attention towards Africa was driven by a set of strategic interests. Firstly, like the U.S., China needs to ensure the access to energy resources, minerals and agricultural products, which are essential for its economic growth. After the U.S., China is the second largest oil consumer in the world and the importance of Africa as a top oil supplier for China has grown exponentially, as shown by figures No.10 and No.11, with Angola being at the moment, the main supplier of China's oil imports.

Secondly, China seeks to expand its economic relations with Africa. The favorable conditions with access to the African markets, and in some cases the weaknesses of some African states is extremely attractive for China's economic expansion. China's economic engagement with African countries combines three main elements: aid, trade and investment. Chinese aid, which consists of grants, zero-interests loans, debt relief and concessional loans, is mostly perceived as development projects to produce quick and tangible results, which enable China to gain political influence in African countries.⁵¹

Nevertheless, it is the trade transactions between China and Africa that provide the most powerful evidence of China's emerging economic interests on the continent. Chinese-African trade has grown rapidly since 2000, reaching \$160 billion in 2011 from just \$9 billion in 2000, surpassing the U.S.⁵² China's share in Africa's total trade has also been extraordinary, increasing to 13% from 3% a decade ago (JONES and WILLIAMS, 2012). Moreover, China's FDI stock in Africa in 2010 reached more than \$13 billion.⁵³ China is also Africa's largest single source of imports, while the U.S. is its largest

⁵⁰ Anshan, L. (2006) "The Emergence of China in the China-Africa Relations Context: Criticism of Three International Perspectives", *Journal of World Economics and Politics*, cited in POWER and MOHAN, (2008, p. 17).

⁵¹ See figure No.12. See also SAMY, 2010

⁵² See figure No.13

⁵³ See figure No.14.

export destination.⁵⁴ This economic trend in China's relationship with Africa is built upon its need for natural resources. The evidence of this is that fossil fuels and raw materials represent roughly 4/5 of Chinese imports originating from Africa and there are around ten African countries which account for 76% of all trade relations with China.⁵⁵ Moreover, the financial support from Chinese banks, including China Export-Import Bank has had a vital role in strengthening its economic relations with Africa. It provides loans to governments and supports Chinese companies, which are normally state-owned, to invest in Africa through export credits, loans for overseas projects and international guarantees.⁵⁶ Furthermore, in order to take full advantage of the Sino-African cooperation, China has also established commercial and investment hubs called Special Economic Zones (SEZ), "*which provide "infrastructure corridors" that link African producers and markets in China*" (SHINN and EISENMAN, 2008, p. 5). Its low interest loans and its funding mechanism of exchange, known as the *Angola Mode*,⁵⁷ have received strong criticisms among American officials, who argue that by pursuing this policy China allows countries to escape IMF and World Bank⁵⁸ regulations and also restricts the access of U.S. companies in Africa.

Thirdly, China seeks to become a major international player promoting a multi-polar world, in contrast to the American "bipolar system" (XU YI-CHONG, 2008), and at the same time wants to develop good relationships with all African countries to gain political support in regional and international forums. And lastly, China is seeking to end Taiwan's international recognition and replacing it with the recognition of Beijing. Generally speaking, Chinese interests in Africa are both economic and political interests.

Concluding, over the past decade while the U.S. has all too often ignored SSA in its policies, Beijing has quietly established relationships with the continent's political and business elites. The pursuit of its national and international interests instigate a more active and globally orientated foreign policy based on its historical traditions with

⁵⁴ About China's trade in Africa see also RENARD, M.F. (2011), "China's trade and FDI in Africa", *African Development Bank Group*, Working Paper, No. 126, May.

⁵⁵ See figure No.15

⁵⁶ See also (SHINN and EISENMAN, 2008)

⁵⁷ This is an exclusive economic funding mechanism in Sino-African cooperation: the payment of the loan for infrastructure projects is made in terms of natural resources.

⁵⁸ For instance, in 2006, Angola refused the funds of the IMF, in part thanks to the high development assistance and investment that China has injected, or the situation of Sudan, which has rejected Western threats and sanctions with respect to the strong violation of human rights.

African countries and to a certain point on ideational factors⁵⁹ operated under the framework of a win-win cooperation.

⁵⁹ By ideational factors I mean norms, identities, values and beliefs, identified by constructivists theorists as been crucial for the comprehension of relations between international actors.

CHAPTER IV

U.S. RESPONSES TO CHINA'S PRESENCE IN AFRICA

After a brief review of the U.S. and China's foreign policy and interests in Africa, this chapter will analyze: (i) the implications of Chinese initiatives to U.S. foreign policy in Africa and; (ii) the various American responses to China's presence on the continent. The analysis of these parameters will be based on three main dimensions: economic, security and political. So far, it seems that the United States doesn't have an effective strategy to counter China's influence in Africa. What can be seen is rather an assembled set of measures aimed to limit China's dominance. Moreover, U.S.-China interaction on the continent can be viewed as an action-reaction sequence.⁶⁰

1. ECONOMIC DIMENSION

The Chinese initiatives and economic successes discussed in the previous chapter have been followed closely by the U.S. In 2000, the same year that China established the FOCAC, the Clinton Administration introduced a comprehensive U.S. trade and investment policy for the African continent - the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Since then, AGOA has been the main economic act to strengthen the U.S.-Africa relationship, and the only successful economic response to China in Africa and it also has had a predominant role in acquiring oil and natural resources. In fact, energy resources have dominated the products imported from Africa under AGOA. Since 2000 exports under AGOA have increased from \$8.15 billion in 2001 to \$53 billion in 2011⁶¹, 90% of which have been energy related products.⁶² Also, during the first term of the Bush Administration (2001-2004), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) (2004), a multi-billion dollar program which provides assistance for "compact agreements" to reduce poverty and stimulate the economic growth, was established.⁶³

⁶⁰I want to use this term, used mainly in physics, to better illustrate the American-Sino interaction on African continent. Based on Newton's Third Law of physics: "Every Action has an equal and opposite reaction". There is a great similarity between Newtonian force and diplomatic action. As in physics, every action in bilateral and multilateral relations (for instance: China's relation with African countries) can produce a response from the political elite of another country which is pursuing similar interests (in this case the U.S.) which is pursuing similar interests.

⁶¹ See figure No. 16

⁶² See figure No.17. About US energy security see also GROUP, (2001)

⁶³ MCC is currently working in 40 countries worldwide. In SSA, MCC has signed compact agreements with 5 countries - Mali, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Benin, and Ghana.

The Obama Administration has also been involved in promoting a more proactive U.S. economic response to China in Africa. Like his predecessors G.W.Bush and Bill Clinton, Obama has embraced AGOA to demonstrate that the U.S. commitment is more than just foreign aid, military ties, and special bilateral deals. It is a partnership in building the capacity for transformational change. On his official visits to Africa in 2009, Obama has clearly expressed his wish to help African states to develop economically and treat them as potential valuable international partners. Furthermore, Hillary Clinton also visited Africa in 2011, voicing U.S. desire for sustainable investments in Africa: *“We want a relationship of partnership not patronage, of sustainability, not quick fixes. We want to establish strong foundation to attract new investment”* (SECRETARY OF STATE, 2011).

It is important to note, the official visits have been a mechanism used by the U.S. leaders to contribute to a greater U.S. engagement in Africa. However, the number of U.S. official visits to Africa in contrast with the Chinese has been highly inferior, showing once again how different methods drive different foreign policies.⁶⁴

Although AGOA has contributed to increase US-Africa trade, *“the achievements of AGOA have by and large been below expectations”* (BROOKINGS, 2011, p. 3). In particular, it has not contributed to any visible economic transformation of African economies and has not been able to stimulate American investments in Africa.⁶⁵

More recently, in an attempt to encourage the U.S. and Africa to do business together, the White House has announced a new U.S. Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa.⁶⁶ In an attempt to spread the pillars of this new strategy, on July 31st 2012, the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton embarked on an official journey to several African countries. Apart from strengthening the U.S.–Africa commercial relations, Clinton’s visit has also been interpreted as an attempt to counter China’s influence in Africa. According to Viano, *“The U.S. wants to use this visit as a manoeuvre to limit the influence of China [...] cautioning African leaders not to strike deals too easily with China”* (VIANO, 2012).⁶⁷ This strategy comes only a few weeks after the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing. However, coming a bit too late in the game, only six

⁶⁴ Figures No.18 and No.19

⁶⁵ See also CARGILL, T., and VINES, A., (2010), *“Sub-Saharan Africa: Providing strategic vision or fire-fighting?”*

⁶⁶ About U.S. strategy for SSA see (THE WHITE HOUSE, 2012, (a)).

⁶⁷ Interview available at

http://www.voanews.com/content/clinton_trip_seen_as_countersing_china_influence/1452168.html

months left in his term, Obama's strategy is rather a solidification of existing policy than a new policy, and it doesn't really establish new economic initiatives and major innovations in US-Africa trade relations.

It's evident that the visits, speeches and meetings haven't resulted in delivering major economic agreements and diplomatic initiatives, apart from small programs, grants and loans. The institutional fragmentation and the lack of coordination between many American agencies deeply contrasts with the Chinese way of acting, making it difficult for the U.S. to achieve concrete economic objectives, especially as China gives African countries an alternative way of doing business and more bargaining power.

2. SECURITY AND MILITARY DIMENSION

Apart from economic responses, the U.S. has also been using military initiatives and tactics, aimed mainly at combating terrorism and containing local threats to try to secure the safe flow of natural resources from Africa. The U.S. has used a variety of security assistance programs and established military bases in Africa to enhance its military influence⁶⁸. As a result, the U.S. is now involved directly and indirectly in military and surveillance operations against an expanding list of regional enemies. They include: al-Qaeda in the Maghreb in North Africa; the Islamist movement Boko Haram in Nigeria; possible al-Qaeda-linked militants in post-Qaddafi Libya; Mali's Islamist rebels of the Ansar Dine, al-Shabaab in Somalia; Joseph Kony Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Central African Republic and Uganda; and guerrillas from al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula across the Gulf of Aden in Yemen (TURSE, 2012). However, the fight against terrorism can be seen as a strategic tactic whose goals go beyond mere "war on terrorism".

Many authors⁶⁹ argue that at a strategic level by increasing military presence in Africa the U.S. may target the access to natural resources and indirectly China's intensive presence in Africa. Although empirically it is more difficult to examine this, China is at least one of the potential reasons for U.S. military presence in Africa, and the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), seen by China as "*unpleasant and out of sorts*"⁷⁰, has been the main instrument in achieving this goal. Peter Pham stated in 2007 that AFRICOM's main objective is "*protecting access to hydrocarbons and other strategic*

⁶⁸ About the U.S. Military Programs in Africa see also VOLMAN, 2006.

⁶⁹ For instance HUNT (2007); PHAM J.P. (2008); HABİYAREMYE (2011)

⁷⁰ "U.S. Embarrassment in Africa,"

http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200703/15/print20070315_357931.html,

resources...ensuring that no other interested third parties, such as China, India, Japan, or Russia, obtain monopolies or preferential treatment".⁷¹ By using U.S. troops as part of the new African Command, some authors argue that the U.S. is intending to increase its presence in certain oil-rich areas, such as Sudan, Libya, Angola, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, ensuring in this way a beneficial investment climate for American oil firms and weakening China's relations with African governments. Moreover, AFRICOM's presence may threaten the political influence that China has established both on the continent and in international bodies.

Another consideration in the implementation of AFRICOM is to help to control strategic waterways and important ports around the continent. Since mid-2000 the U.S. Navy has significantly increased its presence in African waters, especially on the West African coast. In addition to other goals, such as combating piracy, illegal fishing and illegal trafficking, the fact remains that oil forms the primary interest and determines the nature of U.S. policy towards West Africa (and AFRICOM activities)⁷². In 2011 the Ambassador J. Anthony Holmes argued that the U.S. wants to "*ensure that the system operates without disruption*".⁷³ Thus, some authors believe that "*U.S. navy ships patrolling these areas could help reestablish maritime security*" (CRUZ and STEPHENS, 2010), and enable Washington to secure its strategic interests. On the other hand, some analysts argue that by expanding its military "arsenal" in African waters, the U.S. Navy is strategically trying to control in the future the transportation of oil and other minerals from Africa to China.⁷⁴

U.S. Officials claim that their increasing military engagement in Africa is a strategic partnership for cooperation, development and support for fighting terrorism. By incorporating military and security interests with development, the U.S. aims to embrace a strategy different than former policy mainly focused on a "hard power" policy. According to some authors, "*AFRICOM could be part of a greater U.S. foreign policy strategy for "smart power" in the developing world*" in order to win trust among African countries (CRUZ and STEPHENS, 2010, p. 195). The activities intended to fight terrorism and provide security could be classified as 'hard power', whereas other programs, such as military training and education programs, and humanitarian projects,

⁷¹ Cited in (WILLIAM, 2008)

⁷² See also (KLARE and VOLMAN, 2006)

⁷³ (US AFRICOM Public Affairs, 2011)

⁷⁴ See for instance Michael Klare (2008), *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*, A Holt Paperback, New York,

are intended to build 'soft power'. As Nye observes, "*the military can sometimes play an important role in the generation of soft power*" (NYE, 2008, p. 106). However, the AFRICOM military programs don't seem to generate soft power, since suspicions and skepticism has been raised regarding its main motives, making it harder to find partners for the implementation of the program.⁷⁵ The diminished credibility of American policy as a result of the Iraq war, as well as the incapacity of the Department of Defense in adequately explaining how the command will help African countries, aroused a fear that the U.S. was militarizing its foreign policy in Africa.⁷⁶ As Michelle Ruiters, a senior researcher at the Institute for Global Dialogue puts it "*AFRICOM would destabilize an already fragile continent and region, which would be forced to engage with U.S. interests on military matters*".⁷⁷ China, on the other hand, at the moment does not use military pressure to achieve agreements with African countries; it uses a "soft power" policy based on flexibility, consistency and pragmatism, which in turn provides transparency, legitimacy, accountability, visibility and recognition among African countries.

In spite of the attempts of U.S. efforts in projecting a soft power message, its military presence in Africa is still questionable.

3. POLITICAL DIMENSION

In order to better understand U.S. actions in Africa, it is important to acknowledge the rivalry between the U.S. and China in the international context. Since the late 80's, China's rise has been viewed with uncertainty and anxiousness in the U.S. Its rapid economic growth, its rising power and influence in the world, "*raised the specter of a new global rivalry for power and influence* (FRIEDBERG, 2005, p. 7). The U.S. prevalent debate has focused on two main schools of thoughts: liberalism - essentially optimistic - and realism - distinctly pessimistic. The main opinion in the U.S. is that a rising China has reshaped the existing global order and challenged the global leadership of the U.S. (ZHOU, 2011, p. 626). American pessimists from the realist school argue that China possesses a "*big challenge*"⁷⁸ for the U.S. and a great power rivalry between China and the U.S. is inevitable. Additionally, realists defend that China's growing

⁷⁵ At the moment AFRICOM is located in Stuttgart, Germany.

⁷⁶ See Warner Jason, (2011), "Neo-Imperialistic and Anti-Security Blanket in Africa: The need for Nuance on the Debate about AFRICOM", *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, 105.

⁷⁷ Michelle Ruiters, "Why U.S.'s Africom Will Hurt Africa" cited in CRUZ and STEPHENS (2010, p. 204)

⁷⁸ (CNN, 2012)

economic power and influence in the world, will translate into increased military power and allow China to reshape the rules and institutions of the international system to better serve its interests.⁷⁹

On the other side, proponents of the liberal perspective suggest that U.S. officials should pursue an engagement policy instead of a containment one, since they believe that by reinforcing bilateral economic exchanges and institutional ties will create shared interests and reduce the uncertainty of a belligerent China. Liberal authors consider that the expansion of China's involvement in the international institutions will promote communication and mutual understanding, reducing at the same time the prospects for conflict.⁸⁰

These two main visions have also influenced the debate on China's engagement in Africa. There are four key concerns that dominate U.S. discussions with respect to the Chinese presence in Africa. The first major concern is defended by the realist followers who argue that the growing Chinese interest in Africa will directly affect the U.S. interests in ensuring access to African oil. According to BROOKES and SHIN (2006), Chinese investment in the African oil sector is a way of deliberately blocking the supplies to importing countries and keeping the U.S. out of African markets, advocating that the only way to ensure U.S. interests in Africa is through increased economic and military presence on the continent.

The second concern is focused on structural aspects regarding how China conducts business in Africa - calling into question the fundamental values of the West, particularly human rights, transparency and good governance practices.⁸¹ Some authors fear that its strong sense of autonomy, independence, and *no strings attached* policy can easily cease the long efforts of the U.S. to "improve" the African regimes regarding their transparency, governance and corruption.

Furthermore, another realist perspective argues that Chinese expansion in Africa is part of an overall strategy to challenge U.S. leadership in the world. According to this vision, China's growing economic and strategic power contributes to a major change in the balance of power over strategic and economic influence on the African continent,

⁷⁹ See LAYNE C. 1993, "The unipolar illusion: why new great powers will rise", *International Security* 17, 4; BRZEZINSKI Z. and MEARSHEIMER John J., 2005, "Clash of titans", *Foreign Policy*;

⁸⁰ About the effect of China's participation in international institutions see OKSENBERG M. and ECONOMY, E. eds., (1999), "China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects", *Council on Foreign Relations*;

⁸¹ About this vision see also (HILSUM, 2005, pp. 18-19)

which can bring a high potential for conflict and a change in terms of world leadership.⁸²

Finally, a more liberal and optimistic view, seeking to calm "the spirits", claims that *"the current state of China-Africa links is not a significant foreign policy threat to America's interest in Africa"* (YI-CHONG, 2008). According to this latter view, China's engagement in Africa should be seen as an opportunity for the U.S. since there are many areas for cooperation between the two countries.⁸³

By analyzing these political views, it is possible to see that the U.S. is also using political strategies as a response to China's activities in Africa. Although U.S. officials do not mention any country by name, often their remarks in official visits and speeches can be interpreted as a swipe at China. Hillary Clinton in her visit to Africa in 2011 mentioned *"It is easy to come in, take out natural resources, pay off leaders and leave."* Moreover, she characterized China as a new imperialist power in Africa stating that, *"Africa must beware of "new colonialism" as China expands ties there and focus instead on partners able to help build proactive capacity on the continent"*.

Furthermore, the Chinese separation of business interests from political concerns is seen by the Americans as an obstacle to African democratization. U.S. officials warn that China's support for dictatorial regimes undermines development initiatives on the continent. U.S. officials aim to convince the Africans that economic progress is possible even with high standards for human rights, democracy and good governance. Winning the hearts of the people and African officials by convincing them that America is a force of "good" which offers stability and security, has been the key play of the Obama administration. Nevertheless, the projection of good governance and democracy is sometimes called into question, especially when energy and security interests are at stake. The U.S. relationship with African dictatorial regimes, rich in natural resources, is important to U.S. energy and security, and has been recognized by Obama, as he mentioned that, *"our security interests will sometimes require that we work with regimes with which we have fundamental disagreements"*.⁸⁴ The U.S. may often support oil rich countries that may have bad human rights and *good governance* records as long as they

⁸² See for instance Bernstein and Munro, (1997), "The coming Conflict with America", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No.2.

⁸³ See for instance Wilson III, E. J. (2005) "China's influence in Africa: Implications for U.S. policy", webcast (www.cfr.org).

⁸⁴ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/02/AR2008030201982.html>

guarantee a steady flow of oil to the U.S. This view is also shared by the Chinese officials who perceive the U.S. zeal on democracy and good governance as hypocritical.

In brief, it is obvious that the U.S., like China, intends to pursue a “soft power” policy with African countries. Both countries have been very active on the African continent, but always cautious in their speeches and in diplomatic and political initiatives. In reality the two pursue their interests always “*under the veil of moral superiority*” (YI-CHONG, 2008, p. 15).

CONCLUSION

Before moving to the conclusions drawn from this dissertation, let's recall the central research question: Has Chinese presence in Africa prompted an increase in American involvement in the continent, and if so, in what way?

First of all, it's important to note that the competition for Africa is not recent, quite the contrary. Currently the "new scramble" for is taking place among the world's big powers and emerging countries, which are competing for commercial, political and geostrategic interests. Both China and the U.S. are using all their political and diplomatic efforts to ensure their interests on the continent.

Secondly, it is evident that since 2000, the U.S. - which comparing with other countries has never had a huge involvement and interest in Africa - has been increasing its presence on the continent, resulting in a competition with China. The analysis of various factors made throughout this research leads us to conclude that the U.S. involvement in African is largely due to the prominent presence of China on the continent. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that this is the only reason. Although there is a positive correlation between the two variables, the fast-growing U.S. presence in Africa can also be associated to a number of strategic interests important for the U.S. Economically, Africa is an increasingly important supplier of natural resources and a region with great investment and business opportunities. Besides this, the U.S. is seeking political support from African countries and has shown a great concern for security issues and instability on the continent, taking actions to combat terrorism and maintain security.

Thirdly, although, the U.S. doesn't have a clear and proactive strategy for China's presence in Africa, there is an increase need to counter its [China] influence on the continent. By doing that the U.S. is intending to increase its diplomatic, military and economic influence throughout Africa, which will give Washington a better position to gain, for the first time, political dominance in the region, to ensure the access to natural resources and to expand its military actions against the "war on terror".

The competition to achieve these strategic objectives emanates from the nature of this rivalry as well as the structure of the present international system. In this sense one can

conclude that the subject of the study discussed in this dissertation follows the theoretical realist approach initially mentioned, whereby both the U.S. and China will try to gain a position where they can use all their power to promote their interests, since there is no one else that they can count on. In effect both countries are trying to gain relative power by different forms. On one hand, China is using its “soft power” policy based on non-interference into the internal affairs of a nation and no strings attached approach, which gives China a marked advantage over the U.S. in their interaction with Africa. On the other hand, to counter China’s influence and ensure its strategic interests, the U.S. has been using diplomatic, military and economic instruments to strengthen partnerships with its new allies and “friends” and increase its military capabilities on the continent; develop new economic initiatives with certain countries. These initiatives highlight the action-reaction effect, which I believe to be the main characteristic of American -Sino competition on the continent. Furthermore, I can also conclude that the American actions have been developed under a political strategy that can be summed up as *“follow my words, not my deeds”*. This means that, while the U.S. is using all its economic and military initiatives, it is clear that it doesn’t intend to attack China directly, being cautious on their official speeches for fears of losing the support of African countries. Above all, the U.S. intends to use its values of democracy, respect for human right and good governance, sometimes under an almost ideological discourse, to encourage Africa to move away from China, showing that while China is above all interested in Africa’s resources, the U.S. is concerned with the Africa’s economic, political and democratic progress.

The basic morality and the return of soft power seem to shape the resources scramble in Africa. The instruments of power used by the Obama administration can be identify as being part from a “smart power” strategy, which has become the core principle of Obama’s foreign policy in Africa, but also in the world. When analyzing the American-Sino competition from a global perspective, one can say that the “smart power” policy is the recognition of the “relativization” of the American Power and the fact that, in Nye’s phrase, *“the U.S. can’t go alone”*. Theoretically speaking I would say that this competition represents a combination of neoliberalism and defensive realism, characterized by cautiousness, cooperation, and alliance-building.

Is this political strategy a new way of engaging the competition for natural resources in Africa? Is Africa a testing ground for both powers to decide their global position? Although there is too early to know the answers to these questions, the truth is that,

China's interest in Africa caused a sort of alert among Western powers and African traditional partners, and this dissertation is the proof of that.

This dissertation covers only a few main aspects of the American-Sino rivalry. Hopefully, however, it has managed to set the ground for further research on this matter. Therefore it is recommended that further studies be conducted in the following areas: understand the impact of the competition on stability in Africa; comprehend how competition for strategic interests in Africa is reshaping the global, political, and economic order; further research is need to determine the real dimension of the U.S. military involvement in Africa, and how this is affecting China's activity in Africa; and whether or not this competition could precipitate conflicts among major power.

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APPENDIX

Figure No.1 - Africa's Share of the World Total Production of Selected Minerals, 2005

Mineral	Share of world (%)	Major African producers
Cobalt	57	DRC, Zambia, Morocco
Diamond	53	Botswana, DRC, South Africa, Angola, Namibia
Chromite	44	South Africa, Sudan, Zimbabwe
Manganese	39	South Africa, Gabon, Ghana
Phosphate	31	Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, South Africa, Senegal
Gold	21	South Africa, Ghana, Mali, Tanzania
Bauxite	9	Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ghana
Nickel	7,5	South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe
Copper	5	Zambia, DRC, South Africa

Source: Yager R., Bermudez-Lugo O., Mobbs P.M., Newman H.R. and Wilburn D.R. (2005), The Mineral Industries of Africa, USGS: p. 1.14-1.15 (online: <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2005/myb3-sum-2005-africa.pdf>)

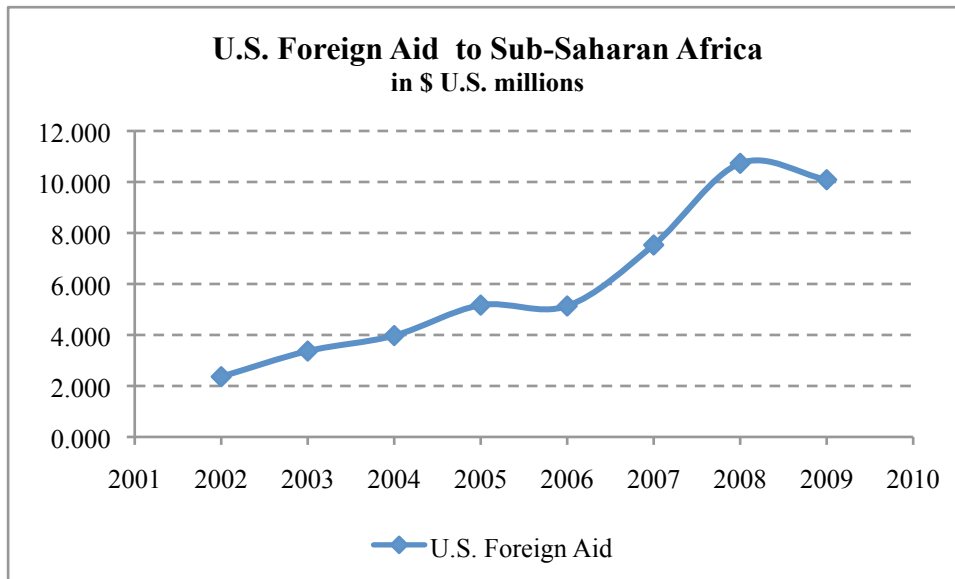
Figure No.2 – Africa's Oil Proved Reserves 1990-2010

	At end 1990 Thousand million barrels	At end 2000 Thousand million barrels	At end 2009 Thousand million barrels	Thousand million tonnes	At end 2010 Thousand million barrels	Share of total	R/P ratio
Angola	1,6	6,0	13,5	1,8	13,5	1,0%	20,0
Chad	–	0,9	1,5	0,2	1,5	0,1%	33,7
Republic of Congo (Brazzaville)	0,8	1,7	1,9	0,3	1,9	0,1%	18,2
Egypt	3,5	3,6	4,4	0,6	4,5	0,3%	16,7
Equatorial Guinea	–	0,8	1,7	0,2	1,7	0,1%	17,1
Gabon	0,9	2,4	3,7	0,5	3,7	0,3%	41,2
Libya	22,8	36,0	46,4	6,0	46,4	3,4%	76,7
Nigeria	17,1	29,0	37,2	5,0	37,2	2,7%	42,4
Sudan	0,3	0,6	6,7	0,9	6,7	0,5%	37,8
Tunisia	1,7	0,4	0,4	0,1	0,4	◆	14,6
Other Africa	0,9	0,7	0,7	0,2	2,3	0,2%	44,2
Total Africa	58,7	93,4	130,3	17,4	132,1	9,5%	35,8

◆ - less than 0,05%

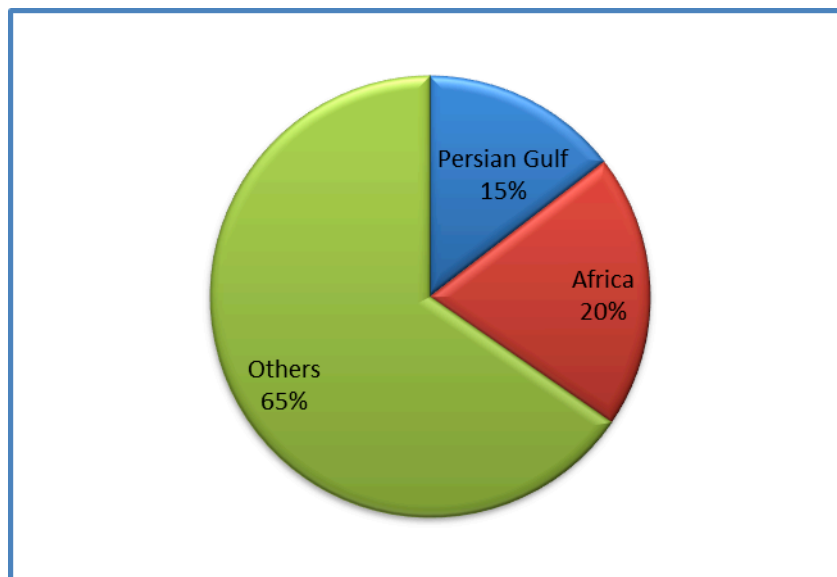
Source: BP statistical review World Energy 2011(available on: http://www.bp.com/assets/bp_internet/globalbp/globalbp_uk_english/reports_and_publications/statistical_energy_review_2011/STAGING/local_assets/pdf/statistical_review_of_world_energy_full_report_2011.pdf)

Figure No.3 – U.S. Foreign aid (2002-2009)



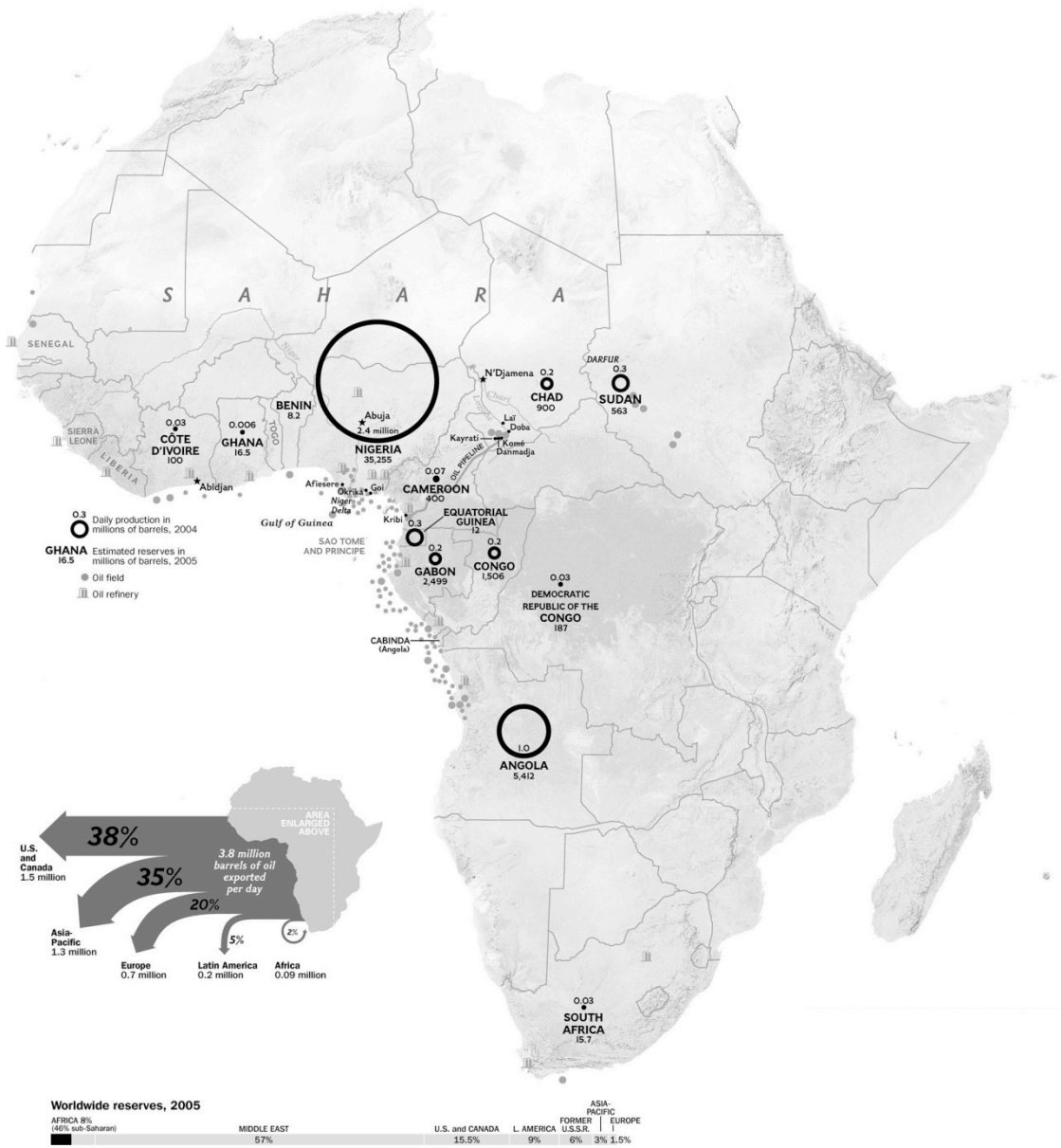
Source: U.S. Overseas loans and grants, USAID

**Figure No. 4
U.S. Total Crude Oil and Products Imports - 2010**



Source: IEA

Figure No.5 – Map of West Oil



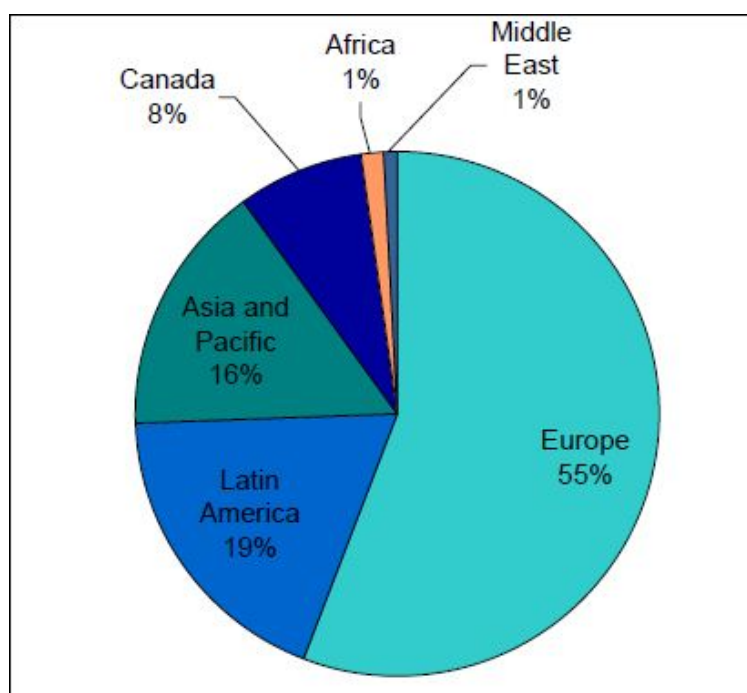
**Figure No.6 - U.S. trade with Sub-Saharan Africa
2009 - 2011**

	2009	2010	2011
U.S. exports merchandise	14,638	16,437	20,298
U.S. imports for consumption	47,159	64,351	74,019
Total trade	80,797	80,788	94,317

Source: United State International Trade Commission

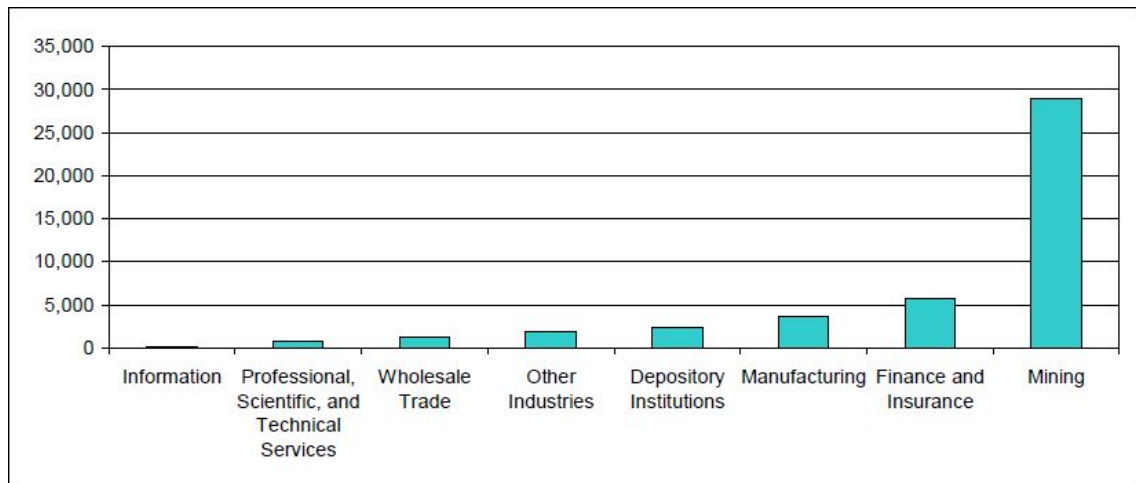
Figure No.7 - Stock of U.S. FDI Abroad, by Destination

(share of total, 2010)



Source: 2012, CRS Report for Congress "U.S. Trade and Investment Relations with sub-Saharan Africa and the African Growth and Opportunity Act", Congressional Research Service

Figure No.8
Stock of U.S. FDI in Africa, by Industry Sector, 2010
(in \$ millions)



Source: Analysis by CRS based on data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Notes: Excludes U.S. stock of direct investment in holding companies.

Figure. No.9 - Overview of commitments made during FOCAC meetings

FOCAC I (2000)	FOCAC II (2003)	FOCAC III (2006)	FOCAC IV (2009)
<p>Financial commitments Debt cancellation of up to RMB 10 billion for the HIPC and LDC countries in Africa within 2 years.</p> <p>Trade and investment give preference to import of African products "in the light of demands and conditions of the Chinese market" ensure operation of <i>Investment and Trade Promotion Centres</i> by China in Africa and assist African states to set up similar entities in China. establish a China-Africa Joint Business Council create a China-Africa Products Exhibition Centre in China China will provide special funds to support Chinese investments in Africa;</p> <p>Capacity building send additional medical teams to Africa, including equipment, in order to train local medical staff. establish an African Human Resources Development Fund (AHRDF);</p> <p>Environmental cooperation In areas including pollution control, biodiversity conservation, protection of forests, fisheries and wildlife management</p>	<p>Financial commitments China will continue to increase assistance for African countries (no figures provided);</p> <p>Trade and investment China will grant tariff-free access to some commodities from LDCs</p> <p>Capacity building China will train up to 10,000 African personnel in various fields within 3 years</p> <p>Cultural cooperation China will sponsor an art festival focussing on African arts and a Chinese cultural presentation in Africa. China will hold a China-Africa Youth Festival in China in 2004.</p> <p>Other China will grant Approved (Tourism) Destination Status to eight African countries for Chinese citizens who cover their own expenses.</p>	<p>Financial commitments Double aid to Africa by 2009 (2006 as benchmark year) provide US\$ 3 billion as preferential loans US\$ 2 billion as preferential buyer's credits within 3 years provide RMB 300 million (ca. US\$ 40 million) for artemisin (anti-malaria drug), Cancel government debt; namely: matured interest-free loans due in 2005 owed by HIPC and LDCs.</p> <p>Trade and investment set up the China-Africa Development Fund (CADFund), an investment fund with US\$ 5 billion capital increase the number of zero-tariff export items from 190 to 440 for the 30 least developed African countries establish 3 to 5 trade and economic cooperation zones in Africa within 3 years.</p> <p>Capacity building Within 3 years: train 15,000 African professional, send 100 senior agricultural experts, set up 10 special agricultural centres, build 30 malaria prevention centres, dispatch 300 youth volunteers, and increase the number of scholarships for African students from 2,000 to 4,000 per year.</p> <p>Infrastructure build an African Union conference centre build 100 rural schools build 30 hospitals</p>	<p>Financial commitments provide US\$ 10 billion in concessional loans provide US\$ 1 billion for African small and medium size business cancel debt associated with interest-free government loans due to mature by the end of 2009</p> <p>Trade and investment duty-free and quota-free treatment for 95% of products from African LDCs</p> <p>Capacity building launch China-Africa science and technology partnership, carry out 100 joint demonstration projects on science and technology research and receive 100 African post-doctoral fellows in China. train 20,000 professionals in various fields increase the number of agricultural demonstration centres to 20, send 50 agricultural technology teams, and train 2,000 agricultural experts launch a China-Africa joint research and exchange programme. build 50 China-Africa friendship schools and train 1,500 school principals; increase government scholarships to Africa to 5,500 within 3 years.</p>

Source: Centre for Chinese Studies, Stellenbosch University (2012 May)

Figure No.10

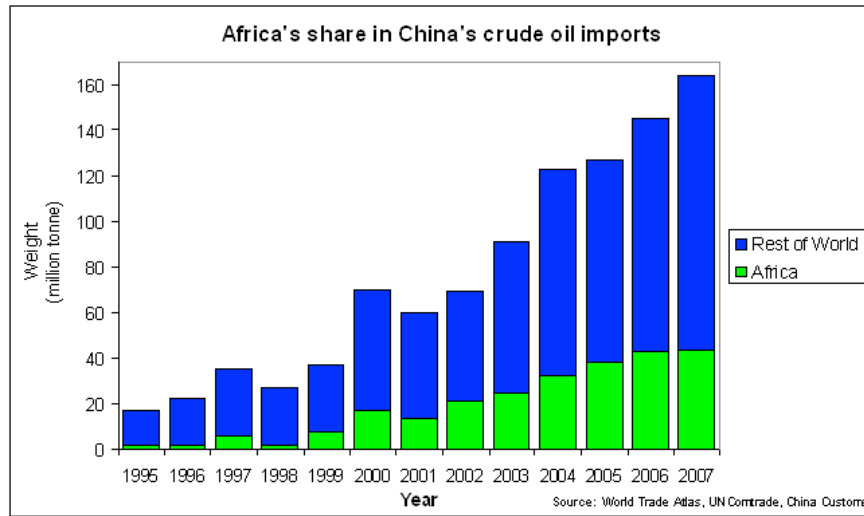
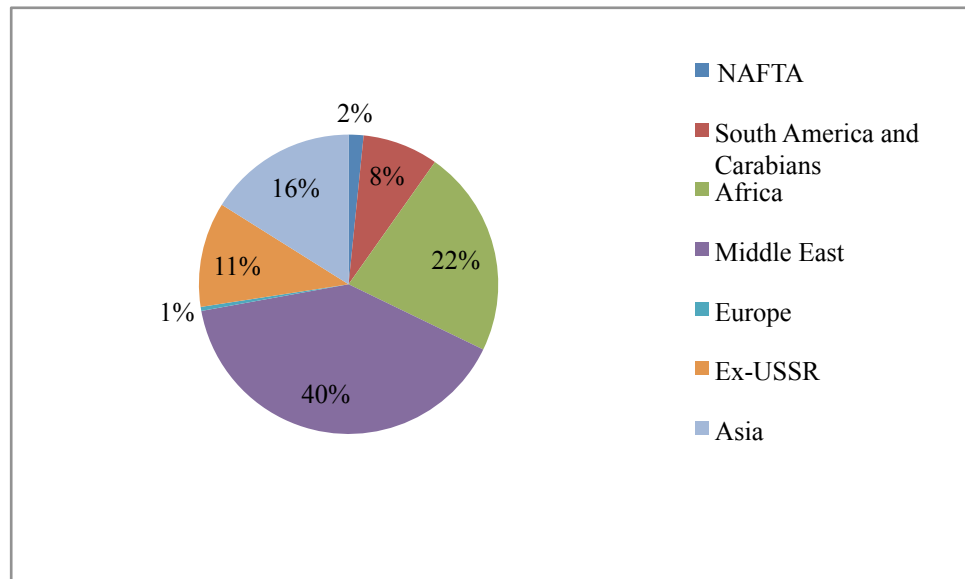


Figure No.11
China Oil Imports by region - 2010



Source: IEA

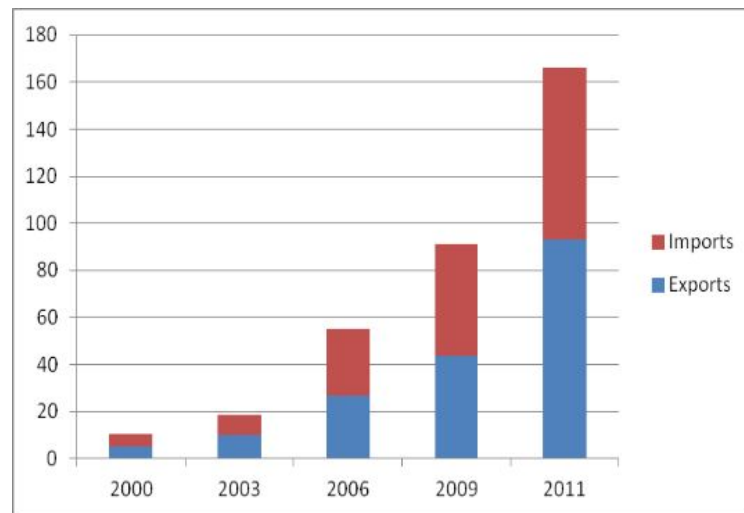
Figure No.12
China's aid to Africa

Year	A. Official Annual Expenditure for China's External Assistance		B. Africa: Estimated Annual Expenditure for China's External Assistance		C. Official Annual Expenditure for China's External Assistance		D. Eximbank Concessional Loans Annual Disbursements		E. Total Chinese Aid, Annual (C+D)		F. Official Expenditures for External Assistance to Africa		G. Eximbank concessional loans disbursed to Africa		H. Total Chinese Aid Annual Disbursements to Africa		I. Accumulated Eximbank Concessional Loans, based on D.		J. Accumulated Eximbank Concessional Loans, Africa only	
	RMB mil	% of Expenditure to Africa	RMB mil	IMF Annual Average Exchange rate, RMB/US\$	US\$ mil	RMB mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	% to Africa	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil	US\$ mil
1996	3212			8.3	387	190	23	410	13								23	13		
1997	3552			8.3	428	588	71	499	39								94	52		
1998	3720			8.3	449	550	66	516	37								160	88		
1999	3920			8.3	474	660	80	553	44								240	132		
2000	4588			8.3	554	755	91	645	50								331	182		
2001	4711	41	1932	8.3	569	1060	128	697	70	233					304		459	253		
2002	5003	41	2051	8.3	604	1431	173	777	95	248					343		632	348		
2003	5223	40	2089	8.3	631	1932	233	864	128	252					381		865	476		
2004	6069	38	2306	8.3	733	2608	315	1048	173	279					452		1,181	649		
2005	7470	33	2465	8.2	912	3485	425	1337	234	301					535		1,606	883		
2006	8200	30	2460	8.0	1028	4579	574	1603	316	309					624		2,180	1199		
2007	11154	30	3346	7.6	1466	5679	746	2213	411	440					850		2,927	1610		
2008	12559	33	4144	6.7	1874	6502	970	2845	534	619					1152		3,897	2143		
2009	13296	39	5185	6.8	1955	8117	1194	3149	597	763					1359		5,091	2740		

Note: Figures in bold from Chinese sources, others are author's estimates. Column A includes grants and zero interest loans and aid in kind, including cash aid, military goods, training expenses, expert salaries, interest subsidies for concessional loans, and fees and administrative costs associated with aid. Eximbank concessional loans are estimated between 2002 and 2005 on the basis of reported 35% annual growth rate (China Eximbank Annual Report 2005). This rate is assumed to vary between 23% and 35% after 2005. Estimates for percentage of official annual expenditure, Eximbank concessional loan disbursements, and percent of aid allocated to Africa are based on (a) official sources, (b) interviews, and author's estimates extrapolated from (a) and (b). Figures do not include scholarship aid.

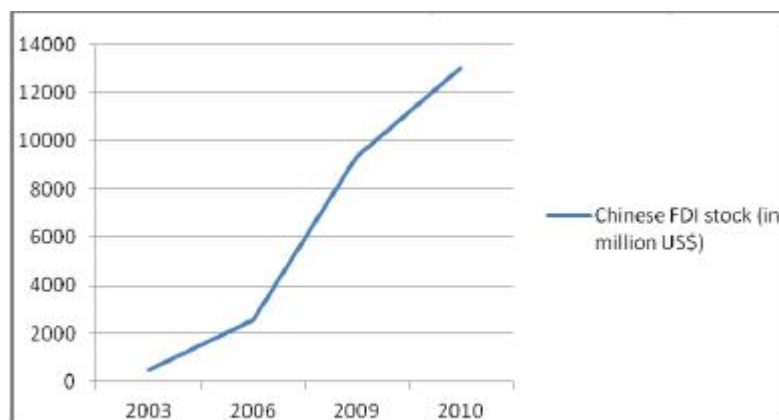
Sources: China Statistical Yearbook; China Eximbank Annual Reports; Qi Guoqiang, "China's Foreign Aid" (for figures in bold). Author's estimates and interviews.

Figure No.13
Chinese – African Trade
 (in \$ billion)



Source: China Statistical Yearbook

Figure No.14
Chinese FDI Stock to Africa 2003-2010
 (in \$ millions)



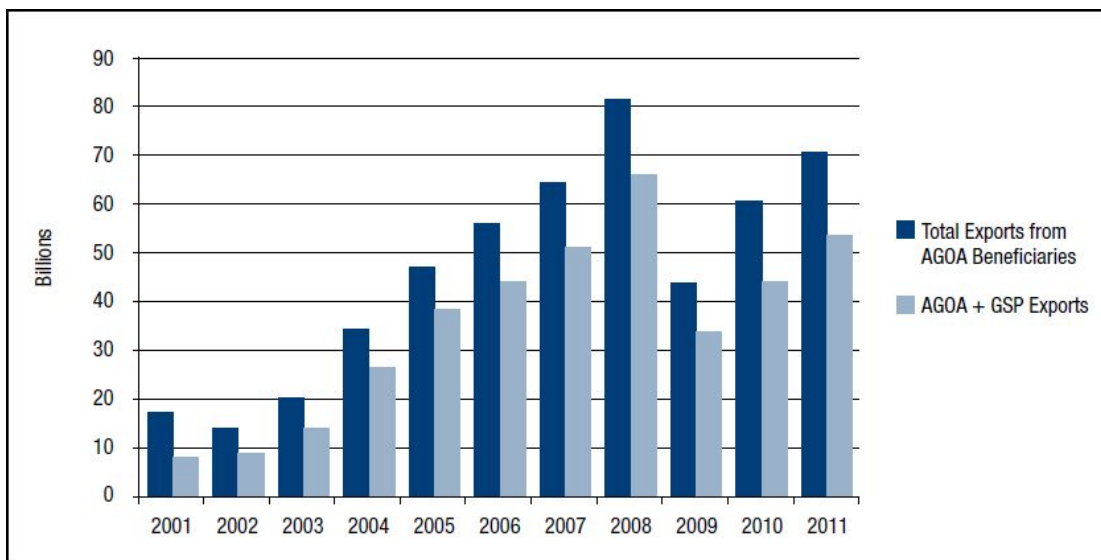
Source: 2010 Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment

Figure No.15 - China's top 10 African trading partners between 2006 - 2010

	Economic type	Average annual trade, 2006-2010 (US \$ million)	Share in total China-Africa trade
Angola	Oil export	18,627	21%
South Africa	Diversified economy	166,86	18%
Sudan	Oil export	6,445	7%
Nigeria	Oil export	5,774	6%
Egypt	Diversified economy	5,384	6%
Algeria	Oil export	4,155	5%
Libya	Oil export	4,154	5%
Republic of the Congo	Oil export	3,241	4%
Morocco	Diversified economy	2,548	3%
Benin	Agriculture	2,097	2%
Weight of top ten trading partners in total China-Africa trade			76%

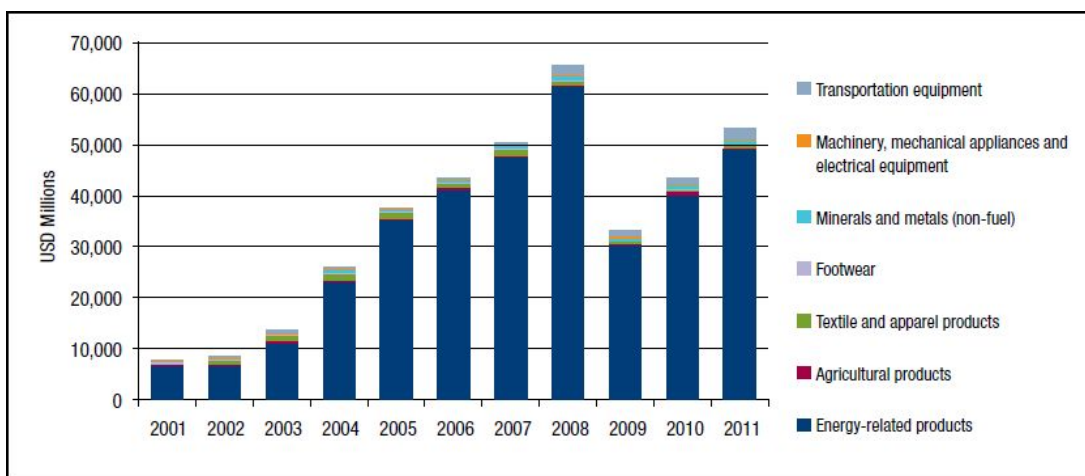
Source: YONG (2011)

Figure No.16 - Exports from AGOA beneficiaries: Total Exports and AGOA and GSP Eligible, 2001 - 2011



Source: BROOKINGS, A. G. I. (2011)

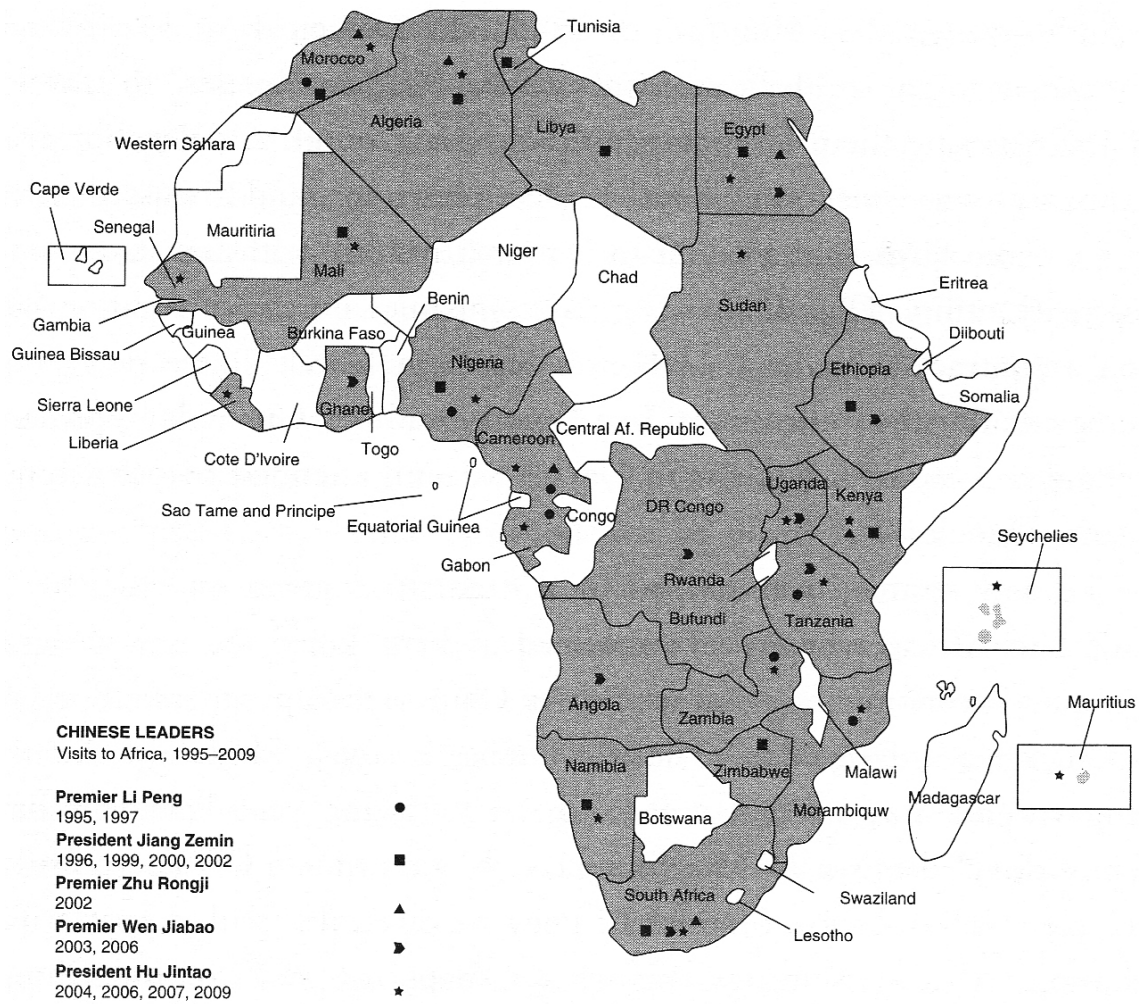
Figure No.17 - Composition of AGOA and GSP Exports, 2001 - 2011



Source: BROOKINGS, A. G. I. (2011)

Figure No.18

Map of Chinese leaders' visits to Africa



Source: BRAUTIGAM, (2009)

Figure No.19
United States's official visits to Africa

President	Year	Country
Barack Obama	2009	Ghana
George W. Bush	2003	Senegal
		South Africa
		Botswana
		Uganda
		Nigeria
Bill Clinton	2000	Nigeria
		Tanzania
	1998	Ghana
		Uganda
		Rwanda
		South Africa
		Botswana
		Senegal

Source: The White House website

