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<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> China's involvement in Africa continues to be a security interest in the U.S., and nowhere is China more relevant in Africa than in Nigeria. With the continent's second largest economy, 160 million potential customers and abundant natural resources, Nigeria is a regional power and China is finding increasing opportunity there. By examining speeches by Nigeria's leaders and extrapolating trends dealing with China's military, economic and cultural impacts it becomes clear that China is indeed supplanting the U.S. and Europe as being most influential in Nigeria. China's intentions in Nigeria are implicitly derived from China's public statement concerning its global and Africa-specific relationship principles and the views of China and Africa specialists. Chinese and U.S. strategic goals in Africa are similar but methods for achieving the goals differ. The U.S. focuses its African policy on democracy, good governance and human rights while China's policy is resource and business oriented. Nigeria benefits from the combination of these complementary approaches. U.S. Africa Command has been slow to react to opportunities presented by China's involvement in Nigeria. AFRICOM's lukewarm policy towards China is inadequate for the dynamic changes seizing Nigeria and the rest of Africa. U.S. security interests can be better served by AFRICOM attaining a more active posture towards China.					
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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

CHINA IN NIGERIA

by

Mark A. McDowell

Captain, United States Navy

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

2 November 2012

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## **Introduction**

China's involvement in Africa continues to be a security interest in the U.S., and nowhere is China more relevant in Africa than in Nigeria. With the continent's second largest economy, 160 million potential customers and abundant natural resources, Nigeria is a regional power and China is finding increasing opportunity there. Whether the issue is military procurement, direct foreign investment, petroleum, trade, immigration or infrastructure development, the bilateral trends are upwards. Nigeria and China are building rapidly on a decade long relationship in which China supplants U.S. and European interests in many sectors within Nigeria. The U.S. initially viewed China's involvement in Africa with suspicion and the creation of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) in 2007, in some measure, was a response.<sup>1</sup> China's involvement in Nigeria, however, has so far been positive and non-threatening to U.S. security interests. While the U.S. is wise to be vigilant, China's efforts in Nigeria will remain, on balance, beneficial for Nigeria, and by consequence, beneficial for the U.S. AFRICOM's lukewarm policy towards China is inadequate for the dynamic changes seizing Nigeria and the rest of Africa. U.S. security interests can be better served by AFRICOM attaining a more active posture towards China.

### **Nigerian--Sino Strategic Partnership**

Nigeria recognized the People's Republic of China beginning in February 1971 and Nigeria and China had friendly but modest relations through 2000. Nigeria and China signed their first Agreement on Trade in 2001, see Table III, when bilateral investments barely reached

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<sup>1</sup> William E Ward, *AFRICOM 2009 Posture Statement* (Washington, DC: U.S. Africa Command, 2009), 8, <http://www.africom.mil>. Thomas J. Christensen and James Swan, *China in Africa: Implications for U.S. Policy* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008), 49, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-110shrg45811/html/CHRG-110shrg45811.htm>.

\$1 billion in the \$48 billion Nigerian economy.<sup>2</sup> The trade growth rate has increased linearly for a decade and trade remains the dominant feature of Sino-Nigerian relations. The 2006 Memorandum of Understanding between Nigeria and China, moreover, describes their strategic partnership in economic terms.<sup>3</sup> Security and cultural issues are, nevertheless, finding resonance in the relationship. U.S. trade with Nigeria still exceeds the Chinese trade by 10:1 but the trend is in China's favor. China is buying more Nigerian oil, so the trend will accelerate.<sup>4</sup> Nigeria sees its fortune lying with China and not the U.S. During a visit to China in 2005, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo said, "From our assessment, this is the century of China to lead the world, and when you are leading the world we want to be very close behind you."<sup>5</sup>

Nigeria's military commitments domestically are increasing with unrest in the Niger Delta and northern regions. At the same time the military is playing a larger international role with the United Nations, the Economic Community of Western African States and the African Union. The need for up-to-date military equipment is intense and Nigeria is turning to China for

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<sup>2</sup> "Sino-Nigerian Relations" (China Daily, April 4, 2006), [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2006-04/17/content\\_569613.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2006-04/17/content_569613.htm). "Nigeria - GDP" (Index Mundi, n.d.), <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/nigeria/gdp> (accessed Sept. 21, 2012). "Strategic partner" has a loose definition in the national security context. This is as satisfactory a definition as any: a strategic partnership is, "...a long-term commitment by two important actors to establish a close relationship across a significant number of policy areas. This does not mean that there will be no differences between the partners ..., but that the partners recognize the importance of their commitment to each other and are prepared to try and reach common ground wherever possible." Stanley Crossick and Etienne Reuter, *China-EU: A Common Future* (World Scientific, 2007), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nigeria was the first country in Africa to sign such an agreement with China. Adanma Osakwe, "Exploring the Complexities of the China-Nigeria Relationship: Is China Good for Africa?" *International Affairs Review* 1, no. 4 (March 2012): 7.

<sup>4</sup> "External Affairs - Nigeria" (Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - West Africa, July 27, 2011), <http://janes.ihs.com>.

<sup>5</sup> Howard W. French, "Letter from China: Growing Chinese Trade with Africa a Threat," *International Herald Tribune* (Shanghai, November 16, 2006), sec. Asia - Pacific, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/16/world/asia/16iht-letter.3567944.html>.

its hardware needs, see Table I.<sup>6</sup> After a 30 year hiatus, the Nigerian Air Force introduced new combat aircraft into its inventory in 2009 with the purchase of 12 Chinese-manufactured Chengdu F-7NI fighter and three F-7NI trainer aircraft.<sup>7</sup> Approved in 2005, the \$251 million contract is Nigeria's most expensive military acquisition.<sup>8</sup>

Nigeria's \$62.7 million 2012 Navy procurement budget ambitiously provides \$42 million for two 1,800 ton offshore patrol vessels, see Figure 1, as well as \$13 million for 12 smaller patrol craft. China Shipbuilding and Offshore International Limited will build the offshore patrol vessels with 50% of the second vessel to be built in Nigeria. The vessels will be capable of 20 days endurance and will carry 70 crew members. The offshore patrol vessels will be armed with one 76 mm and two 30 mm guns and will also have a helicopter hanger.<sup>9</sup>

The 2005 contract for the purchase of Chinese-made F-7NI fighters included \$32 million for the purchase of 20 live PL-9C missiles and 10 training rounds. The PL-9C is an advance short-range air to air missile and its sale to Nigeria is the first acknowledged export of this weapon.<sup>10</sup>

Nigeria's increasing reliance on China for military hardware is clearly evident, but other military assistance is less discernible. No country in Africa has conducted bilateral or

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<sup>6</sup> "Procurement - Nigeria" (Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Central Africa, April 11, 2012), <https://janes.ihs.com>.

<sup>7</sup> Segun Adeyemi, "Deliveries Of Chinese Aircraft to Nigeria Due In April" (Jane's Defence Weekly 2009, January 13, 2009), <https://janes.ihs.com>.

<sup>8</sup> "Nigeria: Nigerian Air Force Jet Crashes in Kaduna" (Actualité information Afrique - Afriquejet, March 5, 2012), <http://www.afriquejet.com>. Since taking delivery of the 15 aircraft, starting in December 2009, Nigeria lost three due to crashes in the year spanning March 2011 and March 2012.

<sup>9</sup> "Nigeria to Commission First Locally Built Warship" (defenceWeb, June 1, 2012), [www.defenceweb.co.za](http://www.defenceweb.co.za).

<sup>10</sup> "Air-to-air Missiles - Within Visual Range - China" (Jane's Air-Launched Weapons, October 31, 2011).



multilateral military exercises with China and only South Africa has participated in bilateral security consultations with China. Nevertheless, China has military attachés in 14 African countries, including Nigeria. Nigeria is one of the six African countries that have a reciprocal defense attaché in Beijing.<sup>11</sup> China achieves a low risk umbrella for its military involvement in Africa by participating in UN peacekeeping missions there. Nigerian and People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers have served alongside each other during six missions on the continent (i.e. UN Mission in Liberia, UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan, African Union/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur and UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo).<sup>12</sup> Military exchanges between China and Nigeria started in the 1980's and high level military leaders and delegations visit one another's countries routinely. As part of the F-7NI procurement, 60 Nigerian Air Force personnel recently trained in China, with the first group arriving there in late 2008. Security for China will be increasingly challenged as the number of its citizens and the value of its property grows, especially in places like the Niger Delta. More incidents like the kidnapping of Chinese workers in Nigeria in 2007<sup>13</sup> and in Sudan in 2012<sup>14</sup> will encourage the PLA to reevaluate, and perhaps expand, its role in Africa.

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<sup>11</sup> Susan Puska, "Resources, Security and Influence: The Role of the Military in China's Africa Strategy," *China Brief* 7, no. 11 (May 30, 2007): 2-6.

<sup>12</sup> "Peacekeeping Operations" (United Nations, n.d.), <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping> (accessed on September 29, 2012)

<sup>13</sup> "Niger Delta Militants Free Chinese Hostages" (Jane's Terrorism Watch Report - Daily Update 2007, February 25, 2007), <https://janes.ihs.com/>.

<sup>14</sup> Leslie Hook, "Zuma Warns On Africa's Ties to China," *Financial Times* (London, July 19, 2012), sec. World, <http://www.ft.com>.

Africa possesses less than 10% of the world's oil reserves yet oil hungry China receives as much as one-third of its annual oil imports from the continent, see Table II.<sup>15</sup> China is the world's second largest consumer of oil and Nigeria is the tenth largest producer and has the world's tenth largest proven reserves.<sup>16</sup> Chinese oil imports from Nigeria are, nonetheless, quite small with Nigeria supplying less than 3% of Chinese oil imports in 2010, see Figure 2. This situation will change as China rushes to invest in Nigeria's oil sector. In 2010 China negotiated a \$23 billion deal to build three refineries in Nigeria.<sup>17</sup>

Reports of China bidding on Nigerian oil exploration blocks and seeking drilling licenses have been routine since 2006, but the scope of Chinese ambitions recently became clearer. An August 2012 letter leaked from the office of the President of Nigeria indicates that state-controlled China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) is seeking to bid on one-sixth of Nigeria's oil reserves. If successful this would double China's oil imports from Africa and place CNOOC in conflict with western owned oil companies that have contracts in Nigeria due for renewal.<sup>18</sup> China's strategy for securing and diversifying its energy supply will ensure that China becomes more involved in African and Nigeria oil markets.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Christopher Alessi and Stephanie Hanson, "Expanding China-Africa Oil Ties" (Council on Foreign Relations, Backgrounder, February 8, 2012), <http://www.cfr.org/china/expanding-china-africa-oil-ties/p9557>.

<sup>16</sup> "The World Factbook" (Central Intelligence Agency, n.d.). <https://www.cia.gov> (access on September 30, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Spencer Swartz and Will Connors, "Nigeria, China Sign An Oil-Refinery Deal," *Wall Street Journal* (New York, NY, May 14, 2010), Online edition, sec. Business, <http://online.wsj.com>.

<sup>18</sup> Tom Burgis, "Chinese Seek Huge Stake in Nigeria Oil," *Financial Times* (London, September 29, 2009), sec. East and West, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Zhang Jian, "China's Energy Security: Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities" (The Brookings Institute Center for Northeast Asia Policy Studies, July 2011), 32, <http://www.brookings.edu>.

The petroleum industry is not the only area in Nigeria where China is building large projects. Strength in Nigerian-Sino relations lies in the complimentary nature of their economies. Nigerian development is inhibited by infrastructure and capital deficiencies while China has one of the world's largest and most competitive construction industries and the ability to finance large projects.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, construction and infrastructure development are China's prime commercial inroads into Africa.<sup>21</sup> China's largest overseas construction project is the \$8.3 billion Nigerian Railway Modernization Project, see figure 3.<sup>22</sup> In 2007 Nigeria turned to China to build NigComSat-1, Africa's first geosynchronous satellite and it has recently ordered three additional satellites from China.<sup>23</sup> China is also involved in a 2,600 megawatt hydropower dam project in Mambilla, gas-fired power stations in Papalanto, Omotosho and Geregu and a rail mass transit system and new hospital in Abuja.

China's foreign direct investment in Nigeria emphasizes the petroleum industry and is actively encouraged by governmental aid programs. Besides targeting imports of natural resources, Chinese foreign direct investment focuses on importing low-cost African manufactured goods and exporting African goods to the world market (tariff-jumping), see Table IV.<sup>24</sup> Nigeria is a lynch-pin in the Chinese emerging strategy to establish special economic

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<sup>20</sup> Olugboyega A. Oyeranti et al., "The Impact of China-Africa Investment Relations: The Case of Nigeria," *AERC Collaborative Research China - Africa Project Policy Brief*, no. 8 (November 2010): 1.

<sup>21</sup> Lucy Corkin, Christopher Burke, and Martyn Davies, *China's Role in the Development of Africa's Infrastructure*, Working Papers in African Studies (Washington, DC: The Johns Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies School, April 2008), 3.

<sup>22</sup> Vivian Giang and Robert Johnson, "108 Giant Chinese Infrastructure Projects That Are Reshaping The World," *Business Insider*, December 5, 2011, <http://www.businessinsider.com>.

<sup>23</sup> "NigComSat" (Jane's Space Systems and Industry 2012, February 2, 2012), <http://janes.ihs.com>.

<sup>24</sup> Osakwe, "Exploring the Complexities of the China-Nigeria Relationship: Is China Good for Africa?" 6.

zones (SEZ) in key locations in Africa. China is planning five SEZs to help attract investment and integrate economic activity. China plans to invest up to \$500 million in two SEZs in Nigeria that will focus on manufacturing machinery and mineral extraction.<sup>25</sup> The Christian Science Monitor says the Lekki Free Trade Zone near Lagos will stretch over 16,000 hectares and will cost China and Nigeria \$5 billion.<sup>26</sup> Manufacturing, of course, is a forte of China and with small geographic areas and defined boundaries, SEZs help China overcome risks in areas with poor infrastructure and weak institutions.<sup>27</sup>

A 2010 article in *Business Daily Opiyo Ododa* contends, “The role China is currently playing in the development of Africa warrants that Chinese language to be taught in African schools and universities”.<sup>28</sup> To encourage the learning of the Chinese language and to foster cultural exchanges, China has opened two Confucius Institutes in Nigeria. In 2008 Nnamdi Azikiwe University and China’s Xiamen University opened the first institute.<sup>29</sup> A year later University of Lagos, in co-operation with the Beijing Institute of Technology, opened a second institute.<sup>30</sup> Confucius Institutes are opening world-wide, and eleven were operating in Africa in

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<sup>25</sup> Loro Horta, “China Building Africa’s Economic Infrastructure: SEZs and Railroads,” *China Brief* 10, no. 15 (July 22, 2010): 9–12.

<sup>26</sup> Michail Vafeiadis, “China ‘Buying Out’ Africa: Top 5 Destinations of Chinese Money,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, n.d., Online edition, <http://www.csmonitor.com/>.

<sup>27</sup> Osakwe, “Exploring the Complexities of the China-Nigeria Relationship: Is China Good for Africa?” 8.

<sup>28</sup> Opiyo Ododa, “Why Chinese Should Be Taught in Africa Schools,” *Business Daily*, October 19, 2012, sec. Opinion and Analysis, <http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/>.

<sup>29</sup> Margaret Egbula and Qi Zheng, “China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance” (OECD/The Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat, November 2011), 17, <http://www.oecd.org/china/49814032.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> James F. Paradise, “China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing’s Soft Power,” *Asian Survey* 49, no. 4 (August 2009): Appendix 1.

2007<sup>31</sup>. Confucius Institutes provide services such as administering Chinese proficiency examinations, organizing language and cultural exchanges, arranging translation services and providing information for students wishing to study in China.<sup>32</sup> The Chinese Embassy established a Chinese language center in Abuja that is teaching Nigerian students of all ages Mandarin Chinese as a second language.<sup>33</sup> *Xinhau*, China's principle news organization, has a branch office in Nigeria.<sup>34</sup>

Not only is Chinese money flowing into Africa, but Chinese migrants are rushing there too. There is a wave of Chinese economic migration to Africa as private business traders follow the paths established by state-influenced construction teams and mining and oil workers.<sup>35</sup> Nigeria is seeing some of the largest Chinese migration on the continent, see Table V. As Chinese investments in Nigeria increases and the large infrastructures projects come on-line, the number of Chinese living in Nigeria should increase significantly.

Chinese and Nigerian senior officials visit one another's countries often, see table VI. Jiang Zemin was the first Chinese President to visit Nigeria, in April 2002 and Olusegun

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<sup>31</sup> Emmanuel Obuah, "Understanding Contemporary Sino-Africa Relations: Continuity and Change" (presented at the ISA's 49th Annual Convention, Briding Multiple Divides, San Francisco, CA, 2008), 12, [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p251834\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p251834_index.html).

<sup>32</sup> Paradise, "China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power," 648.

<sup>33</sup> Egbula and Qi Zheng, "China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance," 17.

<sup>34</sup> David H. Shinn, "Africa: The United States and China Court the Continent," *Journal of International Affairs* 62, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 44, 51.

<sup>35</sup> Giles Mohan and May Tan-Mullins, "Chinese Migrants in Africa as New Agents of Development? An Analytical Framework," *European Journal of Development Research* 21, no. 4 (2009): 1.

Obasanjo was the first Nigerian President to visit China, in April 1999 and then again in August 2000.<sup>36</sup>

### **China's African Strategy**

Given China's dramatic rise in Africa and the trends in Nigeria, U.S. Africa Command's leadership is surprisingly quiet on the issue of China. AFRICOM Commanders have not mentioned China in their annual testimony before Congress since 2009.<sup>37</sup> AFRICOM's first Commander, General Kip Ward, briefly mentioned China's rise in Africa in his first annual report to the Congressional Armed Services Committees in March 2009.<sup>38</sup> Even before 2009, AFRICOM leadership's public comments on China were short and vague. On AFRICOM's public website there is a document that appears to be answers to questions advanced prior to General Ward's confirmation hearing in 2007. In the document General Ward identifies Nigeria as one of the U.S. key strategic partners in Africa and adds that "to date, China's military involvement has not had any discernible impact on U.S. security interests in Africa."<sup>39</sup> The State Department felt the time had come for AFRICOM to engage more directly with China in 2008. Testifying before Congress in July that year, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs Theresa Whelan said "Congress should take a step to loosen those constraints and to set incentives for AFRICOM and related agencies to enter a dialogue with the Chinese at this

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<sup>36</sup> "Sino-Nigerian Relations."

<sup>37</sup> Ward, *AFRICOM 2009 Posture Statement*. William E Ward, *AFRICOM 2010 Posture Statement* (Washington, DC: U. S. Africa Command, 2010), <http://www.africom.mil>. Carter F. Ham, *U.S. Africa Command 2011 Posture Statement* (Washington, DC: House Armed Services Committee, 2011), <http://armedservices.house.gov/>. Carter F. Ham, *AFRICOM 2012 Posture Statement* (Washington, DC: U.S. Africa Command, 2012), <http://www.africom.mil>.

<sup>38</sup> Ward, *AFRICOM 2009 Posture Statement*, 8.

<sup>39</sup> "Advanced Questions for General William E. 'Kip' Ward, U.S. Army Nominee for Commander, U.S. Africa Command", n.d., <http://www.africom.mil/fetchBinary.asp?pdfID=20071029142917> (accessed on October 19, 2012).

moment when they are making much bigger commitments in support of African peacekeeping,"<sup>40</sup> AFRICOM Public Affairs issued several press releases in 2008 striking similarly hopeful notes about U.S.-Sino cooperation in Africa, but the subject seems to have been dropped after that. Because of the lack of public statements or reporting on the subject, it is speculative whether China is rejecting behind-the-scenes AFRICOM overtures or AFRICOM is not interested in partnering with China. If U.S.-Sino joint efforts in African are not being pursued because of disinterest on the U.S. side, AFRICOM should reevaluate its posture. Because the world is moving towards a G-2, a U.S.-Sino condominium,<sup>41</sup> AFRICOM's assessment of China's global and African intentions is necessary to fully evaluate the risks and benefits of pursuing US.-Sino cooperation in Nigeria.

The topic of China's global ambition is extensively analyzed with views ranging across the range of international policy models. The difficulty in gauging China's international intentions rises from emerging actors within China who are adding complexity and exerting influence over foreign policy decisions. Formal powers like the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the State Council and the PLA are now lobbied by new actors that include resource companies, financial institutions, local governments, research organizations, the media and netizens. Linda Jakobson and Dean Knox, researchers from the SIPRI China and Global Security Program, assert that "foreigners need to recognize nuances in Chinese perspectives and

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<sup>40</sup> Danielle Skinner, "U.S. and China in Dialogue About Africa Relations" (U.S. Africa Command Public Affairs, July 31, 2008), <http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=1957&lang=0>.

<sup>41</sup> Zhu Liqun, *China's Foreign Policy Debates*, Chaillot Papers (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, September 2010), 5, [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp121-China\\_s\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_Debates.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp121-China_s_Foreign_Policy_Debates.pdf). Zhu Liqun also considers a multipolar pantheon of world powers—the United States, Japan, China, India, the European Union and Russia.

acknowledge that they are not dealing with a monolithic state or static engagement strategy.”<sup>42</sup>

The first of three broad trends in China’s foreign policy that Jakobson and Knox see is that authority over foreign policy is fracturing. The second trend is that officials and actors have varying interests and views regarding the degree to which China should engage internationally. Lastly, especially among the new foreign policy actors inside China, is the view that China should be more forceful in pursuing its interests internationally.<sup>43</sup>

David Shambaugh, Director of the China Policy Program at George Washington University, also contends that the difficulty in gauging China’s international intentions arises from the debate inside China and within the CCP as to what its intentions should be. No developing nation has such an animated and diverse domestic discourse about its place in the world as does China.<sup>44</sup> Shambaugh sees different schools of thought at work in China, some of which are contradictory and some complimentary. A consequence of competing schools is a foreign policy reflecting several elements simultaneously. Indeed, the official foreign policy of China is less a subsumption of the individual schools of thought than a list of them,

*daguo shi guanjian, zhoubian shi shouyao, fazhanzhong guojia shi jichu, duobian shi zhongyao wutai* (major powers are the key, surrounding areas are the first priority, developing countries are the foundation, and multilateral forums are the important stage).<sup>45</sup>

Figure 4 shows a spectrum of seven distinct global identities exhibited by China. These policy orientations are clearly distinguishable but they are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

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<sup>42</sup> Linda Jakobson and Dean Knox, *New Foreign Policy Actors in China*, SIPRI Policy Paper (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, September 2010), vii, <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRIPP26.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> David Shambaugh, “Coping with a Conflicted China,” *The Washington Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 7–8.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 9.



On one end of the spectrum lies China's isolationist tendencies and on the other end are the tendencies for full engagement in global governance and institutions. Proponents of the "Nativist" school distrust the outside world and its adherents include Marxists, xenophobic nationalists, and populists. Realism has historical deep roots in China's intellectual worldview. As in the West, realists in China uphold the primacy of state sovereignty and reject arguments that transnational issues penetrate across borders. In the middle of the spectrum is the "Asia First" policy that reaches into China's imperial past and has the U.S. tilting to the Pacific. The "Global South" school has special implications for Africa because it contends that China's main international identity and responsibility lies with the developing world. The "Selective Multilateralism" and "Global" schools complete the spectrum. Deng Xiaoping's instructions to "maintain a low profile, hide brightness, not seek leadership, but do some things" is seen as selective multilateralism.<sup>46</sup>

Regardless of the internal debate, China's careful approach in the international arena is partly attributable to the CCP view that foreign overextension contributed to the fall of the U.S.S.R. The CCP examined deeply the causes of the implosion of so many communist regimes early in the nineteen nineties. China conducted an array of rigorous studies and analyses and the findings were surprisingly frank. The Institute of East European and Central Asian Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Science began publishing articles about the causes of the failures in its journal by mid-1990. The International Communist Movement Research Institute, the Central Party School, the International Department of the CCP and other intra-CCP departments conducted analyses. U.S.S.R expansionist and hegemonic policies were among the many

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 9–21.

reasons proposed for its collapse.<sup>47</sup> China internalized the failures of other communist regimes, including on the international front, and instituted reforms to correct its shortcomings. China is likely to adopt different international strategies than those used by the U.S.S.R. during the cold war and will be wary of global over-reach.

China's strategic policy toward Africa is found in a 2006 white paper entitled *China's African Policy*. The white paper reaffirms five principles of international relations that extend back to the "Five Principles of Coexistence" found in an Indian-Sino treaty of 1953. The five principles are: sincerity, friendship and equality; mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity; mutual support and close coordination; learning from each other and seeking common development; and the one China principle.<sup>48</sup> Much of post-colonial Africa finds appeal in China's emphasis on sovereignty and equality.<sup>49</sup>

Ambassador Shinn identifies four primary interests that China has in Africa. First is access to natural resources, especially petroleum but also minerals and, increasingly, agricultural products. Second, China seeks good relations with African countries to gain their support in regional and global forums. Third is the end of Taiwan's diplomatic recognition on the continent. Fourth, China wants African customers for its exports.<sup>50</sup>

Ambassador Shinn reasons that "China, more than the United States, views Africa from a long- term strategic perspective" but concludes that "the interests of the United States and China

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<sup>47</sup> David Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation*, 1st ed. (University of California Press, 2009), 49, 52–53, 62.

<sup>48</sup> "China's African Policy" (People's Republic of China, January 12, 2006), <http://news.xinhuanet.com>

<sup>49</sup> Lin Jones, "The Analysis of China's Africa Policy" (China Policy in Focus, October 2009), <https://sites.google.com/site/chinapolicyinfocus/china-s-return-to-africa>.

<sup>50</sup> Shinn, "Africa: The United States and China Court the Continent," 39. David Shinn is former ambassador to Ethiopia and Burkina Faso and U.S. Department of State Director for East African Affairs

in Africa are more similar than dissimilar.<sup>51</sup> U.S. and Chinese interests are similar in that their strategic objectives in Africa involve stability on the continent and access to natural resources. Each country, however, prioritizes its strategic goals for security and prosperity differently. President Obama, in his recent *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*, identified the strengthening of democratic institutions as the first pillar of US policy in Africa.<sup>52</sup> *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* links human rights and poverty alleviation to stability and security. At the same time the Obama Administration recognizes that African economies are some of the fastest growing in the world.<sup>53</sup> China, conversely, eschews involvement in the internal affair of other states but leads the world in direct investment in Africa. Stability is, nevertheless, good for business, and China seeks to contribute to stability by participating in such activities as UN Peacekeeping missions in Africa and through its economic activities such as debt forgiveness.

China's economic engine requires endless supplies of raw materials and along with its economic strength comes the capacity to exercise influence, especially in Africa. An extrapolation of African history suggests that the quest for resources along with uncertainty inevitably leads the PLA to Africa in staggering numbers as it has other external powers. If China follows this self-help paradigm, it could be expected to confront security challenges alone, while keeping other powers at bay. Doing business in Nigeria, as in much of Africa, is riskier than most other parts of the world. In April 2006, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta condemned China for its multi-billion investment in oil fields after detonating a car bomb in the south of Nigeria. The group warned that Chinese investors would be "treated as

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>52</sup> "U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa" (U.S. White House, June 14, 2012), 2, <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., cover letter.

thieves,” and threatened new attacks on oil workers and infrastructure.<sup>54</sup> In January 2007 gunmen kidnapped five Chinese telecommunications workers in Port Harcourt, Nigeria’s chief oil-refining city. Two weeks later, an armed group in the neighboring state of Bayelsa abducted nine Chinese oil workers. After an attack on a Chinese oil facility in Ethiopia in 2007, a China Daily article with the headline, “China needs to consider new channels to protect overseas interests”, stressed that “China must break through traditional diplomatic thinking . . . . The principle of self-restraint is insufficient to protect ourselves or to safeguard overseas economic interests and development.”<sup>55</sup>

Despite provocation and nativist introspection, China demonstrates little actual appetite for a unilateral security approach in Africa. China has no military bases in Africa, few military attachés, no bilateral defense agreements, no joint military exercises with African countries and very few naval ports visits. Instead, China seeks multilateral involvement to address African security issues. During the 1980s and 1990s China was likely to oppose international involvement in Africa but now it joins, and actively seeks, UN solutions to conflicts in Africa. In terms of its economic aspirations in Africa, China is certainly a revisionist power, but when it comes to security, China accepts the status-quo.<sup>56</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, speaking before a congressional committee in March 2010 explains why Nigeria is a top U.S. priority in Africa,

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<sup>54</sup> Johathan Holslag, “China’s New Security Strategy for Africa,” *Parameters* (June 2009): 23–24.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, 27.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 30–33.

Nigeria is simply too important to Africa and too important to the United States and the international community for us not to be concerned and engaged. Widespread instability in Nigeria could have a tsunami-like ripple effect across West Africa and the global community.<sup>57</sup>

Many analysts conclude that the U.S. and China have similar strategic goals in Nigeria and Africa but their methods differ. In an August 2011 paper on China's foreign policy Fanie Herman and Tsai Ming-Yen contrasted the US and Chinese diplomatic approaches to African countries like Nigeria. "The U.S. focuses on humanitarianism, good governance, and democratization of petroleum-producing states." China, on the other hand, "views SSA [sub-Saharan Africa] as a welcome offloading ground for its products in exchange for oil. An economic approach focusing on enlarging its commercial interests is the driving factor for China's engagement with petroleum producing states."<sup>58</sup> Ideology verses commerce is an ironically familiar theme to the U.S. with echoes ringing through its historical diplomacy in the Western Hemisphere and during the Cold War power. Historical legacy aside, the US and Chinese goals in Nigeria are complimentary.

There is plenty of work to do in Africa, and the Africans themselves will ultimately decide what courses to follow. China has a constructive role to play in Africa and provides both a useful model for the successful modernization of a developing country, and also has a long-standing relationship, including military-to-military contacts, with many nations on the continent. The United States and others will do well to continue to press China on issues of concern, such as Darfur, but also to look for opportunities to work bilaterally and multilaterally with China and its military in the region.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Jonnie Carson, *U.S. Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2010), <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2010/139002.htm>.

<sup>58</sup> Fanie Herman and Tsai Ming-Yen, "Preference Over Outcomes: Explaining US-Sino Oil Diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 5, no. 8 (August 2011): 296.

<sup>59</sup> Puska, "Resources, Security and Influence: The Role of the Military in China's Africa Strategy."

U.S. policy is that China's involvement in Africa is welcome and that the U.S. seeks opportunities to cooperate with China in the development of the continent.<sup>60</sup> U.S. inaction toward China, however, does not support this policy. AFRICOM, with its expansive role on the continent, should lead U.S. efforts to partner with China to help secure the stability of Nigeria as a priority for the well-being of the region.

### **Recommendations**

Perhaps no other place in the world is there a greater potential for U.S.-Sino cooperation as there is in Nigeria. U.S. and Chinese interests are similar, its strategic approaches are complimentary and the stakes are high. Nigeria is awakening to its role as a regional power, yet its depth of need makes it receptive to assistance from the world's two largest powers. In the area of aid, tri-lateral cooperation (China, U.S., African countries) is gaining a small foothold in Africa.<sup>61</sup> More can be done with AFRICOM initiating efforts to make U.S.-Sino-Nigerian cooperation flourish. Cooperative areas could include military medical assistance, military construction projects, military training (as the three countries did in Liberia) anti-piracy patrols (as in the Gulf of Aden) and establishing a permanent combined Task Force Nigeria in Nigeria to foster communications and coordinate peaceful military cooperation. Nigeria could be a laboratory for experimentation in how powerful, and usually competing countries, can combine efforts for the benefit of all.

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<sup>60</sup> "U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa."

<sup>61</sup> LI Anshan, "Africa: From 'How Could' to 'How Should' - the Possibility of Trilateral Cooperation," *Pambazuka News*, July 13, 2011, <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/74884>.

**Table I**Nigerian Major Military Procurement<sup>62</sup>

Type	Manufacturer	Role	Qty	Origin	First Delivery
OPV	China Shipbuilding and Offshore Internl/ Port Harcourt Naval Dockyard	Patrol Craft - Offshore	2	China	2015
PL-9C	Luoyang Opto Electro Technology Development Centre	Air to Air Missile	15	China	2010
F-7NI	GAIC	Combat Aircraft	12	China	2009
FT-7NI	GAIC	Training Aircraft	3	China	2009
42MP Surveyor	ATR	Maritime Surveillance	2	France	2009
Manta	Suncraft International	Patrol Craft - Offshore	2	Singapore	2009
Mi-24V 'Hind-E'	Mil	Helicopter - Attack	2	Ukraine	2008
AW139	Agusta Westland	Helicopter - VIP Transport	2	Italy	2006
Response Boat - Small-class	Safe Boat Inc	Coastal Patrol Craft	15	US	2005
105 mm Model 56 P	Oto Melara SpA	Howitzer	18	Italy	2003
RG-31 Charger	OMC	Armoured Personnel Carrier (Police)	1	South Africa	2003
CN-235	Airtech	Transport Aircraft	201	Spain/ Indonesia	2003
MT-LB	Huta Stalowa Wola SA	Multi-purpose Armored Vehicle	67	Poland	2002
A 109E Power	Agusta	Helicopter - Utly	3	Unknown	2002
Balsam Class	Marine Iron and Shipbuilding Corporation	Buoy Tender	4	US Coast Guard	2002
2600 Mk II	Damen	Patrol Craft	1	S. Africa	2001
155 mm	Otobreda	Self-Propelled Howitzer	2	Italy	2001
Casspir III	BAE Systems Land Systems OMC	Armored Personnel Carrier	5	South Africa	2001
Mi-24P 'Hind-F'	Mil	Helicopter - Attack	7	Russia	2000
Mi-34S 'Hermit'	Mil	Helicopter - Training	9	Russia	2000

<sup>62</sup> "Procurement - Nigeria."

**Table II**China's Crude Oil Imports by Origin (% share)<sup>63</sup>

Crude oil imports from	1990	1997	2005	2006	2008	2010
Middle East	39%	48%	46%	44%	46%	46%
Russia/Central Asia	n/a	n/a	11%	11%	10%	10%
Atlantic Basin	n/a	n/a	23%	5%	3%	3%
Asia Pacific	60.0%	26.2%	8.0%	4.0%	n/a	n/a
Africa	0.0%	16.7%	n/a	32.0%	23.0%	22%
Others	0.0%	9.6%	12.0%	4.0%	18.0%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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<sup>63</sup> Zhang Jian, "China's Energy Security: Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities," 17.



**Table III**Major Agreements Between China and Nigeria<sup>64</sup>

Type of Agreements	Year
Agreement on Trade, Investment Promotion and Protection I	2001
Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Tax on Income	2002
Agreement on Consular Affairs	2002
Agreement on Co-operation on Strengthening Management of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Diversion of Precursor Chemical	2002
Agreement on Tourism Co-operation	2002
Agreement of South-South Co-operation among China, Nigeria and FAO <sup>2</sup>	2003
Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Partnership	2006
Agreement against fake products exported to Nigeria from China	2009
Memorandum of Understanding on promotion bicameral economic co-operation and partnership between Ogun State of Nigeria and Zhejiang Province of China	2009
Memorandum of Understanding on peace co-operation	2010

<sup>64</sup> Egbula and Qi Zheng, "China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance," 4.

**Table IV**China's top African trading partners in 2010<sup>65</sup>

Import	%	Export	%	Total trade	%
Angola	30.5	South Africa	18.3	South Africa	22.3
South Africa	25.6	Nigeria	11.3	Angola	17.5
Sudan	9.0	Egypt	10.7	Sudan	6.2
Libya	6.0	Algeria	6.7	Nigeria	6.2
Zambia	5.2	Liberia	6.5	Egypt	5.8
DRC	5.0	Benin	4.4	Libya	4.8
Congo, Rep.	4.1	Morocco	4.3	Algeria	4.0
Mauritania	1.9	Libya	3.5	Liberia	3.1
Algeria	1.6	Ghana	3.3	DRC	3.0
Nigeria	1.5	Sudan	3.2	Zambia	2.9

Source: UN Comtrade, <http://comtrade.un.org>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 7.

**Table V**Estimates for Chinese Immigration for Selected African Countries<sup>66</sup>

Country	1963	2000	2001	Estimate for 2003-2007
South Africa	5,105	70,000	30,000*	100,000-400,000 (2007)
Mauritius	23,266	40,000	35,000	30,000 (2005)
Cameroon	N/A	450	50	1,000-3,000 (2005)
Sudan	N/A	45^	45	5,000-10,000 (2004-2005)
Lesotho	N/A	2,500	1,000	5,000 (2005)
Ghana	N/A	465	500	6,000 (2004)
Liberia	27	45^	120	600 (2006)
Nigeria	2	10,000	2,000	100,000 (2007)
Mozambique	1,735	500	700	1,500 (2006)
Ethiopia	18	8	100	3,000-4,000 (2006)
Algeria	N/A	30	2,000	8,000 (2003)
Cote d'Ivoire	N/A	1,300	200	10,000 (2007)
Zimbabwe	303	500	300	10,000 (2007)

<sup>66</sup> Mohan and Tan-Mullins, "Chinese Migrants in Africa as New Agents of Development? An Analytical Framework," 590.

## Table VI

### Diplomatic Visits<sup>67</sup>

#### Visits to Nigeria

Vice Premier Geng Biao	October 1978
Vice Premier Huang Hua	November 1981
Vice Premier Tian Jiyun	November 1984
Vice Premier Wu Xueqian	March 1990
Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen	January 1995
State Councilor and Secretary General of the State Council Luo Gan	September 1996
Premier Li Peng	May 1997
Special Envoy of President Jiang Zeming, State Councilor Ismail Amat	May 1999
Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan	Jan. 2000
President Jiang Zemin	April 2002
Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Wu Bangguo	November 2004
President Hu Jintao	April 2006
Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi	January 2010

#### Visits to China

Head of State, Gen. Yakubu Gowon	September 1974
Vice-President Dr. Alex I. Ekwueme	March 1983
Chief of the Army Staff Gen. Ibrahim Babangida	September 1984
Chief of the Army Staff Gen. Sani Abacha	October 1989
Chief of the Defense Staff, General Abdulsalami Abubakar	July 1997
President Olusegun Obasanjo	April 1999 and August 2000
President of Senate Anyim	December 2001
Vice President Abubakar	July 2002
Deputy Speaker Nwuche of the National Assembly	July 2002
President Olusegun Obasanjo	April 2005
President Umaru Yar'Adua	February 2008
Minister of Commerce and Industry Jubril Martins-Kuye	August 2010

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<sup>67</sup> "Sino-Nigerian Relations."

## Figure 1

### Nigerian Offshore Patrol Vessel

On March 29, 2012 the Nigerian Navy announced acquisition of two 95 m, 1,800 tons, Offshore Patrol Vessels from China.<sup>68</sup>



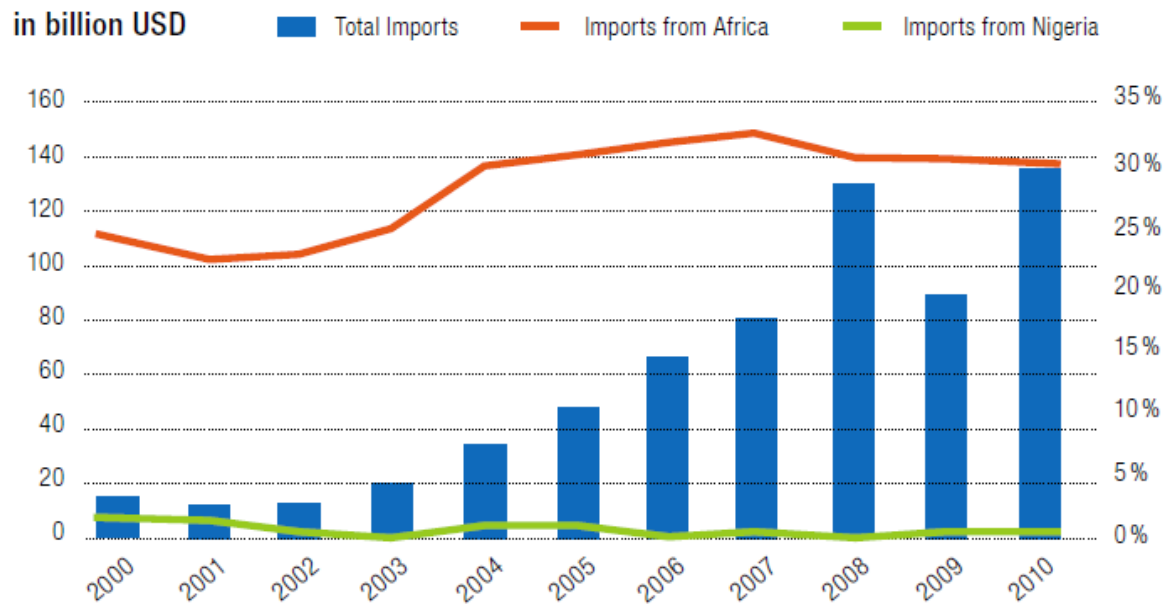
A computer-generated image.

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<sup>68</sup> Mrityunjoy Mazumdar, "Nigerian Navy To Acquire Two Chinese OPVs" (Jane's Defence Weekly 2012, April 10, 2012), <https://janes.ihs.com>.

**Figure 2**

China's Petroleum Imports from Africa and Nigeria, 2000–2010<sup>69</sup>



<sup>69</sup> Egbula and Qi Zheng, "China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance," 11.

**Figure 3**

\$8.3 Billion: The Nigerian Railway Modernization Project is China's Largest Overseas Project<sup>70</sup>

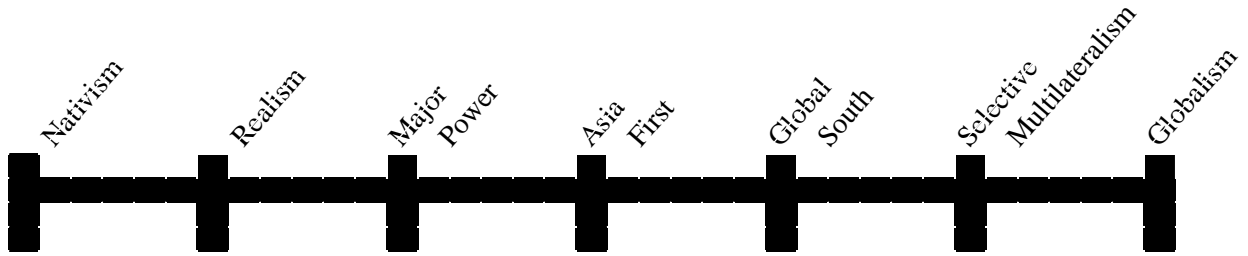


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<sup>70</sup> Giang and Johnson, “108 Giant Chinese Infrastructure Projects That Are Reshaping The World.”

**Figure 4**

Spectrum of Chinese Global Identities<sup>71</sup>



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<sup>71</sup> Shambaugh, “Coping with a Conflicted China,” 10.



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