

## Chinese foreign policy strategies' shifts towards Africa (Goals and Perspectives)

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### Abstract

African continent is gaining great importance to Chinese policymakers, and that importance increases with the steady growth of the Chinese economy, which necessitates the need for markets and resources founded in Africa. Therefore, this research paper examines Chinese strategies in Africa, their dimensions, objectives and prospects, as well as the stakes arising from them as one of the strategic topics that sparked widespread controversy.

The paper used the descriptive analytical method and aimed to identify Chinese policies' foundations towards Africa in particular, their determinants, objectives, extent of their impacts and the role they play in strengthening China's position in the global system. The paper concluded that there are many objectives of Chinese strategy in Africa, such as China's desire for African support on Taiwan issue and China's endeavour to gain African diplomatic support on several issues that bother it especially its accusation of violating human rights, its demands in South China Sea, United Nations' reform, besides Japan's accession possibility and the challenges it poses to Beijing, so , number of African countries in the United Nations, which represents about a quarter, is a serious bet for China on these issues. The paper also concluded that one of the major objectives of China's strategy, is its endeavour to create a multi-polar international system.China is striving to change the current balances in its favour and create a multi-national international system in which it is an active pole and Africa is one of the strategic regions through which such goals could be reached.

**Keywords:** China, Africa, Chinese Strategy, soft power, Interdependence, global system

## مستخلص:

تكتسب القارة الأفريقية اهمية كبرى لدى صانعي السياسة الصينيون، وتتعاظم تلك الأهمية مع النمو المضطرد للاقتصاد الصيني الذي يستلزم الحاجة الي الاسواق والموارد والتي وجدتتها الصين في افريقيا وبالتالي تبحث هذه الورقة البحثية في الاستراتيجيات الصينية في إفريقيا، ماهيتها وابعادها وأهدافها وافاقها، فضلاً عن المخاطر الناشئة عنها. كأحد الموضوعات الاستراتيجية التي أثارت جدلاً واسعاً.

استخدمت الورقة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وهدفت الي التعرف على مرتكزات السياسات الصينية تجاه افريقيا بشكل خاص ومحدداتها واهدافها ومدى تأثيرها وبيان الدور الذي تلعبه في تعزيز موقع الصين في النظام العالمي. وخلصت إلى أن هناك العديد من الأهداف الاستراتيجية الصينية في إفريقيا ، مثل رغبة الصين في دعم إفريقيا في قضية تايوان ، من خلال تقديم نفسها كبديل اقتصادي لها ، وسعي الصين إلى اكتساب الدعم الدبلوماسي الافريقي في العديد من القضايا التي تزعجها ، لا سيما اتهامها بانتهاك حقوق الإنسان ، ومطالبها في بحر الصين الجنوبي ، وإصلاح الأمم المتحدة بجانب إمكانية انضمام اليابان ، والتحديات التي تطرحها على بكين ، لذا فإن عدد الدول الأفريقية في الأمم المتحدة ، والذي يمثل نحو الربع ، هو رهان جاد للصين على هذه القضايا..

خلصت الورقة كذلك الي ان أحد الأهداف الاستراتيجية الرئيسية للصين، هو سعيها لإنشاء نظام دولي متعدد الأقطاب، اذ تسعى الصين جاهدة لتغيير التوازنات الحالية لصالحها وإنشاء نظام دولي متعدد الجنسيات تكون فيه قطبا نشطا، وتمثل إفريقيا أحد المناطق الاستراتيجية التي يمكن من خلالها تحقيق مثل هذه الاهداف.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الصين، افريقيا، الاستراتيجية الصينية، القوة الناعمة، الاعتمادية المتبادلة، النظام العالمي

## Introduction

The transformation in the international system, after the end of the Cold War, resulted in the emergence of the importance of the economic factor in international relations. This latter led to the emergence of strong economic powers that has gained great weight in the international arena, and the most important of which is China. The economic growth that China has experienced has awakened its ambitions for global influence, and among the most its prominent strategic directions in the last decade is the orientation towards Africa. Over the course of more than six consecutive decades, relations between Africa and China have grown, as many ties have gathered between the two sides and these ties have increased, influencing by the changes taking place in the international system, as China did not participate in the colonization of African countries, and it represented one of the active poles in the third world, and it merged in the competing frameworks with the West and facing the American hegemony in the world.

Cases of rapprochement between Chinese and African sides have emerged in the context of the struggle of African countries to obtain independence since the fifties of the twentieth century and the attempt by China to spread its socialist ideologies and form a bloc of southern countries to confront Western imperialism, and by the end of the cold war, relations between China and African countries increased in the context of the marginalization that Africa was subjected to after the end of its role in the conflict between the western and eastern poles during the cold war.

During the last three decades, Beijing has made great progress in Africa, and has emerged as a major and growing source of aid and unconditional investment, as it has replaced many foreign powers, especially the United States, as Africa's largest trading partner since 2009, but the United States tried to stand in the way of the Chinese rise in Africa, as part of its strategy to confront Chinese global growth, raising many doubts about the Chinese role in Africa, and the extent to which the Chinese side is keen not to harm African countries, as American statements and writings have increased confirming that China represents a new type of colonialism for Africa and that the flexible policy China's pursuit of cooperation with African countries will lead to dumping these countries in debt, allowing in the future the Chinese government and companies to control large parts of Africa.

### **Historical background of Sino-African relations**

China did not show interest in establishing relations even with independent African countries after the Second World War (Hajaj, 2006: 137). However, this view was different during the Cold War, as Beijing began to pay primarily political attention to the Africa, so Beijing was supporting the (South-South) discourse that characterized the Third World based on calling for a common struggle against all imperialisms. As Chinese diplomacy is based in one of its constant dimensions since the communist revolution on considering China as one of the third world countries, and Beijing sought to embody this, through its relations with these countries (Niquet, 2006: 365).

But after the Cold War, especially with the economic reforms pursued by China, and the tremendous growth it experienced after its reliance on a more liberal economy, subject to market logic, this new trend was reflected in China's relations with developing countries in general and with Africa in particular.

Beijing was forced to enter into competition with other developing countries in order to obtain foreign investment, thus undermining confidence in its previous commitments to the Third World (Abdulhay, 2014:171).

This desire to coexist with the hegemonic regime was translated by its transformation into a "responsible power" among the group of nations with the decision it took not to devalue its currency (yuan) during the 1997-1998 Asian crisis. Since 2000 and specifically after 2003, Beijing has tended in its foreign policies towards a "new maturity" according to the official expression, meaning that it is in a more realistic direction that takes into account the vital interests of the country (Bo, 2003:26). This trend was confirmed by Beijing's stance on the US war on Iraq and its endeavour to find a peaceful solution to the problem of the nuclear program of North Korea and Iran (Shen, 2004: 14-15).

### **Theoretical background of China's strategy towards Africa**

In this regard, we will review, not exclusively, the most important theoretical approaches, which could be used as a framework in understanding and interpreting Sino-African relations, and to explain Chinese foreign policy and the essence of its relations with Africa.

#### **Soft power approach**

First of all, the paper will examine the soft power approach as it could be useful in explaining and understanding Chinese foreign policy, which is described as adopting the peaceful rise.

The horizontal expansion and vertical depth of the concept and content of security have had an impact on global power shifts. After security- from the perspective of the realistic traditional approach- was linked to the state as a reference issue, and it is threatened militarily by another country, and on this basis the response to this threat is of course military. For this reason, it was considered that countries increasing their power and military arsenal is the only guarantee to achieve their national security against any threat. From this standpoint, military power was the main determinant of state power.

However, in times of globalization, the comprehensive expansion of the security content into political-economic-environmental and societal dimensions or sectors, in addition to militarism. As well as deepening it vertically through the level of analysis or the reference topic, several levels have emerged for the latter, which are comprehensive security, regional, international, national, local, human or individual.

In the same transformative context of global security, global power shifts have deepened due to the intertwining of international relations and the secretions of globalization, and thus power is no longer primarily linked to military power, but rather goes beyond technology, economic growth, communications, control over interdependence and information (Benanteur, 2002: 91).

Global power today is based on resources such as soft power, meaning the cultural and ideological attraction to control international institutions, as well as on the sources of power, both tangible and intangible, and as Joseph Nye notes, soft power is less transformative, less compelling and less tangible (Anter, 2005:34).

The fragmentation approach to the concept of force has been hit with several criticisms, the most important of which is that the measure of strength is not a comparison with that of others, but rather the consequences of possessing this power. The overlapping of political entities in the economic and cultural fields, and the emergence of the concept of interdependence, led to the phenomenon of interdependence between entities, so that this interdependence in itself became one of the component of power that had no place in the traditional calculations of power (Abdelhay,1994:31-32).

Joseph Nye is among those who theoretically originated in the transformation of the content of power through his intellectual construction represented in the soft power approach, as he considers that both military and economic power are solid power, No longer sufficient for hegemony or control. Nye's approach is less economic, as it draws its inspiration from the ideas of Marshall Singer, who since 1972 has considered that power is based on the power of attraction rather than the power of coercion (Roche, 2016: 70).

Commanding power, meaning the ability to change what others do, can be based on coercion or inducement. While "Selective" power - the ability to shape what others want - can be based on the attractiveness of a person's culture, belief, and abilities (Nye, 2003: 75).

Nye believes that there are two phenomena that have greatly contributed to changing the concept of power; the complexity and intertwining of international exchanges and the transformations of power, which in turn refer to the work of Nye in his book, "Power and Interdependence.

" This power has become less tangible and less transformative, meaning that what can be achieved in terms of gains in some area is difficult to achieve in other areas.

Therefore, he calls on the United States to use non-military force to promote and entice its ideas and policies. Nye believes that the use of force by major powers may pose a threat to their goals, political, economic and even cultural aspirations. So, as Nye says, if the United States is to remain strong, Americans must pay attention to soft power. Nye adds that using the force he calls "hard" is more expensive than applying soft power. Countries accept to divide their options by accepting the values of cultural and ideological attraction, which Nye calls principle of co-option's (Roche, 2016:71-72).

Soft power is based on the ability to establish priorities that always tend to be attached to the sources of moral strength. Like an attractive culture, ideology or institutions. If I can make you do what I want, then I will not have to force you to do what you do not want to do. Also, the soft power is not quite like the effect, although it is one of its sources, and it is more than persuasion. In international politics, resources that produce soft power arise to a large extent from the values that an organization or country expresses in its culture, and in the models that its internal and political practice present, and the way in which it handles its relations (Nye, 2005: 11).

We argue here that although Joseph Nye is considered one of the pioneers of the liberal school, which is considered within the interpretive direction, but in the soft power approach, he was dominated by a formative character, So methodically, Nye relied on a philosophical approach in his intellectual construction, but cognitively, he was dominated by the post-positivist trend, as it called for what should be epistemological.

Normatively, Nye was not stripped of its ideological and principles, dominated by political and ideological character by calling on his country the United States to change its solid foreign policy, as he put it, if it wanted to establish its hegemony on the world. This came after the resistance the United States faced in many parts of the world in the face of its arrogant and solitary policies.

### **Soft power concept in Chinese policy makers' perspective**

The concept of soft power is no longer alien to the Chinese political dictionary. The Political Report of the Sixteenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 2012 highlighted that in today's world culture is intertwined with economics and politics,

Which proves that it occupies a greater place and a more important role in the race for comprehensive national influence.

In a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Assembly on 2/4/2016, President of the State and the Party Hu Jintao said that the increase and influence of the international role of his country is supposed to be expressed with a solid force embodied in the economic, technological and security fields, as well as soft power like culture. Researchers identified the sources of soft power in five resources: cultural attraction, political values, economic development model, international institutions, and the international image (Xin, 2011:76)

Chinese leaders have realized the importance of these elements in serving China's position on the regional and international levels. Indeed, for example, one of the direct results of the policy of openness following the end of Mao's reign was the increase in international interest in Chinese culture, which is the interest that successive Chinese leaders sought to exploit by developing a scheme to spread Chinese language and culture across the world in recent years by opening a large number of Confucian institutes to teach the Chinese language in the world, the leaders of China have realized the importance of the language in doubling the cultural attraction, until the number of foreign students studying the Chinese language has reached about 200 million students.

China is also intensifying its participation in major international exhibitions and forums in an attempt to spread on a wider scale.

This new trend of Chinese culture can be summed up as Chinese President Hu Jintao indicated in the report of the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of China on the need to deepen cultural exchange between China and abroad and to inspire the civilizational achievements of various countries. To deepen the international radiance of Chinese culture. (Hakimi 2015: 397-398)

Culture is one of the issues that soft power learners focus on, and China has a culture that is rooted in the age of time, based on principles. It adheres modernity without losing identity, maintains harmony in society and is in harmony with global civilizations, and national values and institutions are sources of Chinese soft power, and China is proud of being one of the developing countries, but it has been able to grow and surpass the Western powers thanks to its national values and institutions and it created its own style.

The Chinese look in their strategy of soft power to Africa the continent includes third world countries that have a civilizational and cultural record, as is the case in China. Beijing also realizes that peaceful development brought it to Africa immediately after the region became of great importance in reaching Chinese development goals due to the energy, markets and investments they represent, and China presents this policy in the framework of common benefits and interests, not economic exploitation (Kazem, 2017:32-33).

The Chinese foreign policy is a source of soft power, as it does not call for intervention, does not violate the sovereignty, respects the unity of the national territory, calls for peaceful solutions to conflicts, calls for the application of the rules of international law and the principles of the United Nations, supports respect for the cultures of other nations, and seeks an economic partnership based on common gain. China does not oppose the existing international system, but rather calls for reform. It is working to establish a multi-polar system. China has relied on public diplomacy in marketing the advantages of its foreign policy at the level of international public opinion (Kazem, 2017:29-30).

Strengthening solidarity with African countries remains an important part of Chinese foreign policy, which tries to deal with African countries through regional or international organizations, or through cooperation forums, conferences and unconditional aid. China is also trying to link its political goals to the economic aspect, to present itself as a global power in the global system and imposed the international pattern of polarization on the nature of its relations (Barham, 2015:193).

On the other hand, political values and practices at the internal level represent one of the elements of Chinese soft power. The images of Chinese success and influence and the country's foreign policy have become widely felt as a reflection of its rapid economic growth, which has become a wonderful model for many countries, as China has been able to achieve major economic successes during the last three decades.

Based on many indicators, observers of Chinese affairs began to talk about the so-called (the Beijing Consensus), which refers to the economic model of China based on hard work and innovation, modern initiatives, and independent practice away from the literal simulation of Western models, which can be viewed as an alternative to the Washington consensus proposal, as it differs from the latter, which prefers unified solutions for every situation, and Shock treatment methods,



And in turn Chinese development prescriptions are based on the peculiarities of each country with a keen desire for invention and experimentation.

Studies indicate the strength and efficiency of China in facing financial crises, and this is due to the strict control over the Chinese financial system, and thus providing the ability to protect the economic system from penetration and subjection to external influences, as well as the system of governance based on the concentration of power in order to control different areas of life (Hadidi, 2012). In the same context, Vladimir Popov stated that China's experience in successfully joining the ranks of development - if it continues - will become a turning point for the global economy, not only because of the size of China as a region or as a population, but because it is the first precedent in history, on which a successful model of economic development is based on a large scale to a continuous economic model, not of a Western character (United Nations: 2012).

Ferchen also identified three aspects of China's economic plan that could constitute examples for developing countries, namely the commitment to development as a national goal and the emphasis on developing infrastructure, experimentation and flexibility in political policies (Paul and Ferchen:2012).

As for the third component of China's soft power, it relates to its foreign policy. In the period following the end of Mao's rule, China adopted a new approach that was more daring and pragmatic, and Chinese foreign policy appeared more constructive in its dealings with regional and international affairs, making the search for a stable external environment that gives greater room to Beijing To focus on internal economic and social development as a major goal of the new approach to Chinese diplomacy, and at the same time for constructive relations with the major powers in the world through its adoption of the policy of (peaceful rise), which has become a basic element in Chinese foreign policy since 2004 (Hakimi, 2015: 400).

It can be said that the most important characteristic of the current Chinese foreign policy is three prominent manifestations, which are the work on the international and regional powers to ensure the peaceful nature of its economic advancement, China's growing involvement in international organizations and the strengthening of its international ties through new diplomacy.

The manifestations that serve China's aim to present a positive image of the new China in an attempt to erase that stereotypical image of China, the communist state that is not integrated into the international community, and which maintains a black record in the field of freedoms and human rights.

It is the goal that China seems to have relatively succeeded in achieving in the third world countries in particular due to the fact that Beijing's policy is based on a set of characteristics, perhaps the most important of which is respecting the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, and not linking economic issues with political and ideological issues. These indicators provide a partial explanation of the motives for concern in decision-making circles in the Western world and some neighbouring countries about whether China is seeking to use political power commensurate with its enormous economic strength, which is what it sees in it as a threat to the regional and global systems, especially since a set of data shows that China follows A traditional path to the behaviour of the rising powers under their closed political system.

China has shown a remarkable trend in its policies and statements that the existing international order does not respond to the radical developments that occurred in international politics after the end of the cold war. Through the strategic partnership approach as a Chinese soft power, China will be able to rally support and spread the practice of international politics within the framework of peaceful strategic partnerships instead of military and security alliances and blocs, but rather economic blocs that benefit all parties. China has not only promoted peaceful development without strategic obstacles, such as its need for resources, especially energy, modern technology, markets and investments, And in order to overcome them, it has adopted a soft power approach in the form of partnership with the major economic forces first, and then expanded to developing countries after the spread of Chinese interests. Chinese leaders and researchers affirmed that China should rise to the status of the major power in the structure of global power distribution, and that its progress in development qualifies it to ascend this position. To achieve this, China tends to choose soft power in the context of partnerships (Kazem, 2017:35-36). Beijing's ability to present an alternative political and economic model represents the greatest ideological threat felt by the West since the end of the Cold War, as described by one of the leading British foreign policy specialists.

However, soft power approach could be criticized through two elements, the first of which is the separation between hard power and soft power. Many theorists reject this separation, so soft power, despite all its advantages, and the results achieved, it will remain sterile if it is not based on economic or military power.

Giving priority to soft power in global hegemony is an inaccurate and relative proposition. All that is promoted by the retreat of the military variable, but it remains the decisive factor in ensuring the hegemony of states, and the US invasion of Iraq is the best proof of that. America did not resort to international institutions, nor an attractive ideology and culture to impose its hegemony on the oil sources in Iraq, but rather to its mighty military arsenal. On the one hand, the greater part of the world has not been transformed by the information flow revolution. Power in the globalized information age is taking its transformation into things that are less embodied and less coercive, especially among the developed countries. But most of the world is not made up of post-industrial societies, and this limits the transformation of power. Large parts of Africa and the Middle East are still locked into pre-industrialized agricultural societies, their institutions are weak and their rulers are authoritarian, and there are other countries, such as China, India, and Brazil, with economies similar to parts of the West in the middle of the twentieth century, and in such a diverse world, all three sources of power (military, economic, and soft) remain contained, and are related to varying degrees in different relations.

### **The Interdependence Approach**

The reason for our reliance on the interdependence approach, in the interpretation of (Sino-African) relations, is its focus on the economic dimension in international relations.

It is also concerned with the growing role of non-state actors. The Chinese strategy in Africa is concerned with the economic aspect primarily, although it has other dimensions, not economic, political and diplomatic. Just as Beijing's presence in the African continent is multifaceted, aside from the government presence, Beijing depends to a large extent on private and multinational companies that invest heavily in Africa.

Theory of interdependence is considered as a current within the liberal school, so the liberal perspective, which inherited the Enlightenment, is based on encouraging the role of political and economic institutions and relations, and urging peace and integration between countries.

This optimistic vision believes in the possibility of achieving peace between international enmities, through the development of trade and democracy, and gives a role to international institutions (Philippe, 2002: 96).

The theory of interdependence belongs to the transnational analysis, which is defined as a system of interaction in special areas between societal actors who share different status systems. This current depends on the multiplicity of actors in the interpretation of global interactions, unlike the approaches known as the Status Center, which considers the state a central and unitary actor in international relations (Battistella, 2015:193-195).

Transnationalism presents a less radical vision than globalization, as it records the independence of civil society from the state. 4 But it does not completely cancel the role of the state, according to the global view, that is, the actor is not limited to a specific time or space. This vision was expressed by James Rosenau in his book *The Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity* in 1990 (Roche, 2016:115-116).

The idea of vortexism borrows from mythology a view about the irregular interactions of the world. Rosenau imagines that the world has two readings: an interstate world ruled by the logic of competition, and a multicentric world outside of sovereignty (Senarclent and Ariffin, 2015: 110).

However, although the phenomenon of transcending national borders was an important addition to the vocabulary of international relations theorists, it remained undeveloped as a theoretical concept. Perhaps the most important contribution to pluralism was a development of the concept of interdependence. In view of the capitalist expansion and the emergence of a global culture, the pluralists realized that there is mutual communication between countries that carried with it a joint responsibility for the environment.

It is clear that the absolute independence of the state deeply rooted in the minds of state leaders was being encircled. Moreover, this process is irreversible on the part of the supporters of the liberal institutional doctrine, who, unlike realists, believe that the decline of state independence does not necessarily invite regret, but rather that they see that crossing national borders and interdependence as phenomena that must be managed (Balyis and others, 2011:432).

In 1977 a book was published for theorists (Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane) entitled *Power and Interdependence*.

In it, they announced the gradual decline of the role of the state as a unitary actor in the world stage. They also proposed the concept of (trans-national politics) and complex interdependence as a result of the transformations that the international system witnessed at the end of the seventies of the last century, especially in the economic field, with the increase in trade and financial flows between Countries. Shifts in the financial and monetary circles constitute a central milestone for globalization, as all these developments indicate a new expansion of the economic space (Senarclent and Ariffin, 2015:109). Globalization has recorded an increasing speed of direct investment flowing abroad and the capitalist system is in a permanent movement thanks to the increasing international capital (Senarclent and Ariffin, 2015: 73-74).

Nye and Keohane provided an explanation to describe these phenomena, especially those associated with state power, the transition of the economic field, the development of the network world, the increasing independence of non-state actors, ecological crises, and the expansion of the concept of security. This is despite their declaration that the state remains the central actor, but with its lack of ability to control and manage, in exchange for the emergence of other actors benefiting from the increasing emancipation towards power (Roche, 2016: 91).

According to (Senarclent and Ariffin, 2015: 109) (Roche, 2016:112) and (Battistella, 2015: 192). The complex interdependence model, in the analysis of international phenomena, relies on the assumption that the increase in actors, along with the national state, plays an important role in international life, especially transnational institutions, international institutions, non-governmental organizations, lobbyists and global public opinion .

International events, which can be illustrated by this model, are multiple and start from economic phenomena.

Besides the political relations centered on power, authority and security, the multiplication and increase of economic, social and cultural interactions made political power less central in international relations. After the Second World War, global trade increased by a high rate, which encouraged a direct and strong connection between the main centers of the global economy, especially the rich countries. Trade brings private and public interests closer together. The merger movement and the liberalization of trade exchanges are working for peace (Roche, 2015:90-97).

The definition of national interest, according to the theory of interdependence, raises problems, because the direction of foreign policy has a conflictual appearance, from the logic of the simultaneous presence of groups with contradictory interests on a particular issue (Hitti, 1985: 97). The national interest of states goes beyond private interests. However, it is internal (esoteric), bounded by the internal societal demands of the state, not external environmental data. From here we conclude that it is not unitary but rather pluralistic, given the plurality of internal civil society (Charillon, 2002:91).

Generally, creating a network of interdependence constrains the state's behaviour in its external and internal activities. And thus affect that behaviour, as states are often forced to rely on these interactions as a result of the acquired benefits that they will obtain, which sometimes cannot be achieved from outside the framework of these relations despite the price that the state has to pay, which may be in Form of specific political opportunities, or restricting their choices in many areas (Hitti, 1985:97).

Accordingly, interdependence as a conceptual content aims to analyze the results of interdependence as a phenomenon in world politics, which is generally characterized by the lack of access to an equal and fair sharing of benefits between the various actors, and for this purpose Keohane and Nye developed two analytical methods, namely sensitivity and vulnerability, sensitivity refers to the speed and depth of change that one country brings about in another country. As an increase in the capabilities of some countries, and thus their ability to influence in other countries, some non-state parties may be subject in one way or another to the influence of a particular country for political, economic or other reasons. The state therefore uses these parties to exercise its influence on other countries that interact with those parties. <sup>3</sup> As for vulnerability, it relates to the capabilities granted to the actor / state (B) to resist the influence exerted by state (A) (Roche, 2016: 91).

### **Dimensions of China's strategy in Africa**

China's African strategy is based on consolidating two convictions, one of them is that China has no cultural-military colonial motives in Africa, and the second is that China, despite its economic and military advancement, is still classified within the third world countries, which makes African countries feel that they are dealing with an equal country and an example development. Chinese strategy towards Africa is based on three dimensions:

### **1/ The economic Dimension:**

Which represents in obtaining raw materials, such as oil and minerals. Likewise, food, as with the Chinese expansion in industry, water consumption and manufacturing areas, China needs in the future to secure its food needs through numerous food projects in Africa, just as China, which is expanding industrially, desperately needs to expand its global markets, especially in regions like Africa where there is little competition with Western products. Africa has a promising market, and its citizens have rising purchasing power with the United Nations estimates of African population to reach about 2.4 billion by 2050. Also, the size of the African economy is expanding, and purchasing power increases with improving income levels. China hopes to be the dominant partner in the African trade in the coming decades, especially since the size of the African economy was estimated at about \$ 2.49 trillion and the real GDP growth was 3.7 % at the end of 2020 (IMF,2020).

It should also be noted that African-Chinese economic relations are more important to African countries than Beijing. Sino-African trade represents about 15% of the total trade volume of the African countries, while it represents only 5% of Chinese trade. Beijing has a strong and important economic relationship with South Africa country which alone accounts for one-third of African-Chinese trade, it is also at the forefront of the continent's countries to which Chinese foreign investment directs (Thrall, 2015).

Among the economic aspects as well the issue of defining economic zones in the South China Sea which is the dispute between Beijing, Tokyo, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam over the Daiko Senkaku Islands which is a group of uninhabited islands located in the China Sea (Abdelhay, 2014:116). The South China Sea, which has always been important as a major artery for global ship movement, and has gained additional importance in recent years, Due to expectations that it has large stocks of energy as the Chinese Ministry of Geology and Mineral Resources stated that, the South China Sea contains a large amount of 130 million barrels of oil. It is a larger amount than the stocks of both Europe and Latin America together. The situations and stakes in the South China Sea are much clearer, but they may not pass with the same ease and flexibility that they experienced in "Hong Kong" (Klare, 2002:134-135).

The conflict is still at its most intense between the two countries, and no one can predict what will happen (Biernes, 2003: 114).

Therefore, China is seeking the support of African countries with the United Nations on the issue of defining economic areas limited to the China Sea. <sup>2</sup> We also envision that this recent Chinese insistence on acquiring these areas is linked to the increase in Chinese demand for oil and its policy to diversify the sources of this vital material (Niquet, 2006).

## **2/ The Political Dimension**

On the political level, China regained its legal status in the United Nations in 1971 with great support from African countries, and the Taiwan issue is one of the most important issues that define the diplomatic and military movement of China. Therefore, among the objectives of Beijing from its strategy in Africa is to marginalize Taiwan in the international system as China seeks to integrate Taiwan through several means, including economic, by following the linkage strategy, making the Taiwan economy, to a large extent, dependent on the Chinese markets, to reach an annexation to be achieved, through the long-term policy, which China believes that it will lead to the strengthening of the private sector, which will weaken the Taiwanese political system, thus making unity take place according to the Chinese vision (Abdelhay, 2014: 85).

In addition to military means, as all Chinese military activities against Taiwan are considered legitimate by China (Niquet, 2003:4) as it has developed sufficient military capabilities to attack or strike Taiwan, or impose a siege on it (Godement, 2001:23) .The only condition that China does not negotiate and deal with strictly is the issue of its political coherence regarding (one China) (Cheryl, 2007:6).

African countries that have strong diplomatic relations with China support Beijing's policy of "one China", While African countries are looking for China's support, which has the right to "veto" its issues in the United Nations and the Security Council, Features of the Chinese alliance with the third world countries appear for in the Iranian and Korean nuclear program issue and the Sudanese problem of Darfur. China also wants to benefit from the voting bloc of the African continent in international forums, and it wants African countries to support it in issues and purposes that achieve its foreign policy objectives around the world. As the importance of the international dimension in Sino-African relations has developed significantly since the year 2000.



Especially the issue of voting on the issue of China's human rights violations, which is a very important issue for her, because the major powers sought to pass decisions against China, accusing it of human rights violations (Niquet, 2003).

The West and international organizations accuse China of violating human rights in Mongolia, Qixiang and Tibet. As an independent district. As Beijing exercises (according to these accusations) continuous, systematic and intense police and military repression against the peoples of these regions. In addition to the encroachment of large numbers of indigenous Hanseatic tribes, which are the predominant sect in China (Biernes, 2003:104) and many American human rights reports, accused Beijing more than once, and toughened its position on human rights. (Godement, 2001:26).

There are those who believe that this issue is an American means of pressure to achieve commercial advantages in the relationship with China. Some American analysts believe that the United States is ready to forget this issue in the case China offers more investment opportunities to American businessmen in China. The most important aspects of this dispute are political freedoms, and the unpaid labour of prisoners. The United States has realized the size of China, as a huge market that must be invested, before Europe and Japan reach it (Abdelhay, 2014:138).

Washington pursues a pragmatic policy, just as it used the "Tiananmen" events in 1989, as a pressure card on China, to turn the balance in its favour to demand it to undertake human rights reforms. 1 And in the annual session of the United Nations on human rights in April 1999, China advocated against American criticism and many members, especially African countries, voted against the United States' decision accusing China of violating human rights (Godement, 2001:26-27).

In this context, voices emerged calling for a better representation of African countries at the United Nations.

And China supports these demands. The Organization of African Unity insistently demanded that Africa, as a geographical region, should be equitably represented in the main organizations of the United Nations. Especially in the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and all specialized institutions, it demands to have at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats, and obtaining "veto" right for the two permanent seats beneficiary countries (Lecoutre, 2005:17).

For all these considerations, Beijing emphasizes the role of the United Nations. It is known that the more the Security Council is strengthened, the more influence China has, because of its permanent membership, and the veto right. Therefore, China seeks to enter the United Nations, directly, in the policies of resolving international disputes, to increase its influence through the organization. Especially since China has relatively less influence than the United States, outside the organization, while inside it they have similar rights (Sheikh, 2004:152-157).

China also views Africa as part of a comprehensive strategy through which it seeks to compete with encircling American efforts, and is working to produce a new type of strategic partnership with Africa, based on the principle of equality, mutual trust, and mutual profit at the economic level (White Paper, 2011). African countries have been an influential factor in Chinese foreign policy since they contributed to the vote in favour of China against Taiwan, and as a result of international changes, its relations with Africa have shifted to be more pragmatic, based on mutual interests and benefits, Just as China relies permanently on the voting bloc of the countries of the African continent to call for the amendment of several international agreements, African countries are also necessary for the Chinese interests that seek to implement the one-China policy, and to adjust the international balance in their favour in exchange for Western hegemony led by the United States in the field of international relations, especially human rights. China also aims In the context of developing its relations with African countries to confront the attempt of Japan to join the permanent membership of the Security Council, in light of the growing issue of reforming many international institutions, and the United States welcoming of this accession through which it seeks to prevent the emergence of competitive global powers, and this explains the attempt of the United States to urge Japan to rearm to use it against China in East Asia (Asian Studies,2019).

The issue of the possibility of Japan winning a permanent seat on the Security Council is met with strong opposition from Beijing, which is another element that confirms the importance of African countries voting. Here, a real competition appears, between Beijing and Tokyo, over the African arena. Africa's weight in terms of its vote with the United Nations appears to be very effective,

And is more important to Beijing than Japan, given the growing economic interests that govern it with Africa that outpace On the Japanese influence (Niquet,2006). The first and most important interest of Chinese national security is its fear of Japan's return as a military power, which grew from many historical legacies, due to the horrors that Japan practiced towards China, and that stance remains the focus of the Chinese perception towards Japan today. Therefore, Beijing sets in its sights a major goal, which is to prevent Japan from becoming a competing power, and the United States plays an important role in this equation, being one of the limiting factors for the return of the Japanese military doctrine. 1 As Sino-Japanese relations are affected by the pattern of US relations, with both sides (ECSSR, 2001: 105).

The Japanese-American rapprochement frightens China from Japan's future participation in implementing the containment strategy towards China, in cooperation with the United States. These concerns were reinforced by the security agreement in 1996, which dealt with the issue of helping Japan build missile defence platforms (Abdelhay, 2014:163).However, this view may change. In the past few years, we have witnessed economic convergence between Beijing and Tokyo as many Chinese companies invest in Japan. 4 China achieves through the economic relations with Japan a relatively small trade surplus compared to the United States and the European Union. Japan also remains relatively closed to Chinese manufactured products (Namihei, 2003:16).

Despite all of this, Japan was one of the first to lift the ban on China after the "Tiananmen" events, and China was the first to benefit from the Japanese development and aid program. 1 So, we think that the economic approach may reduce the intensity of diplomatic and political competition between the two countries, which may overcome historical hatreds (Laroche, 2000:337-338).

The political dimension also includes confronting international interference in internal affairs, as China relies in its foreign policy on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, and then it seeks to achieve this with African countries, This principle has been appreciated by African governments and exchanged with China as well. Then the latter urged African countries to reject international interference in the states' internal affairs, especially human rights and democratic government matters,

In order to enable it to confront and prevent this international principle that is followed due to the danger it poses to the African countries internal policies, as well as to the internal system of China. Added to these political goals, the goal of promoting political system type based on one party, and the centralization of economic planning for African countries, on the basis that it is a successful style of governance and economic progress as an alternative to the democracy advocated by the Western world, a call that is being welcomed in most African countries that are ruled by dictatorships (Mahdi, 2014).

Another the goal is enhancing the international image of China and its political influence by supporting African economic partners' stability, which is in line with the growth of China's large economic and political investments in the continent, as well as with its desire to appear as a responsible global power within the region which is part of its endeavour to create a multi-polar international system, to break the American hegemony over the strategic outcomes of the international system. Observers argue that the world is rapidly evolving towards the formation of multipolarity. The presence of China, as a prominent regional and global power, represents a serious challenge to the major powers present, especially the United States (Thrall, 2015).

China will undoubtedly become the first power before even Europe, opposing the current status of the United States as the only superpower in the world. China has become less conservative in showing its regional ambitions in East Asia, as defending its vital interests pushes it to express more opposition to US hegemony in the world.<sup>1</sup> China has no sense of inferiority complex towards the powers that are superior to it. Except that China is in no hurry to have a global role (Biernes, 2003:119). Chinese military power has not yet risen to the ranks of the major powers, and it needs a long time to achieve that. Especially since China does not focus on the military factor in building its power, but on the economic one. (Abdelhay, 2014:29).

The Chinese policy in Africa has a wide dimension that falls within the framework of its strategy to weaken the Western powers, especially the United States. In a way that creates an international situation compatible with Chinese global interests.

Beijing's strategy in Africa is to create a pluralistic environment. The African continent could be the scene of this new environment after the Cold War.

Beijing relies on the "South-South" speech, which is a speech that resonates positively with the African countries (Niquet, 2006).

In 1998, and after the publication of Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro's book "The coming conflict with China" which experienced unrivalled success, Washington starts to be aware of the Chinese growth and that China will become, during the next decade, a difficult partner for the United States. But it can be said that the evidence of the process leads to the fact that China cannot play this role by crowding out the United States for the foreseeable future (Biernes, 2003:119). But it could in the distant future. After the Cold War, the United States tried to benefit from its international position widely, by having wide authority over NATO, whose interference in the internal affairs of countries has start raising problems at the level of international law about its legitimacy (Chauprade, 1999:261). This indicates that the United States is still the largest global power at present.

### **3/ Military and security Dimension**

China has security interests in Africa, especially in areas bordering waterways, such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and perhaps later Egypt. China's security interests in Africa stem from protecting its economic investments, as Chinese companies have a group of investments and contracts worth more than one billion dollars in 12 African countries, and then its security interests increase in protecting these investments from political instability, civil wars, Terrorism, kidnapping and then maintaining its growing political influence.

This was evident in the Chinese People's Liberation Army's involvement in the "new historical missions" strategy that began in 2004, and its participation in UN peacekeeping operations which is the largest area for China's armed participation in Africa. It contributes to 7 of the eight missions that take place within the African continent, most notably the Gulf of Aden 2008 operation to combat piracy, the evacuation of non-combatants from Libya in 2011, and the operation of the People's Liberation Army infantry forces in the United Nations missions to Mali and South Sudan in 2013 (Thrall,2015) Which affirms the expansion of China's global role in safeguarding international peace and promoting common development.

During the past few years, China was able to increase its influence in Africa through the establishment of significant economic power,

And it was imperative to secure strategic naval outlets for this growing influence, China has tended to conclude a deal with Djibouti to buy a share of the strategic port of Djibouti with an amount of \$ 1,800 million, given the importance of its strategic location overlooking the Indian Ocean and the southern entrance of the Red Sea, where the Bab al-Mandab strait is an important pass for global trade, and for any upcoming military moves from Europe or the United States towards the Arab Gulf region and East Africa (MCRS,2015)

### **Aspects of Chinese strategy towards Africa**

Although the Sino-African rapprochement during the modern era has been based on political dimensions, in light of China's support for national liberation movements, and its attempts to spread socialism in its Chinese sense across the continent during the twentieth century .According to Gregg Brazinsky, the Communist Party sought to introduce Maoist doctrines in guerrilla wars and support groups that they deemed likely to emulate the Chinese experience (Nyabiage, 2019)

However, the transformations that China witnessed and its endeavour to become a major economic power in the world, as well as the change in the shape of the international system after the end of the Cold War, has contributed to China's tendency to adopt policies that focus on economic interests with the countries of the African continent, while reducing political cooperation between the two sides. In addition to the increasing Chinese interest in adopting new security and military initiatives.

In this context, the Chinese policy tries to deal with African countries through organizations, whether regional or international, and through cooperation forums and conferences and is keen to employ soft power to achieve its goals in the African continent, just as China tries to integrate its political goals with the economic side and thus seeks to present itself as a global force in the international system and impose a pattern of polarism on the nature of its relations, and through the development of Sino-African relations based on the economy and through several Methods, including unconditional aid (Hadi, 2015:193)

The most important features related to the Chinese trends in the African continent can be illustrated as follows:

## 1 / The economic aspect

The African continent is of great importance in the Chinese perceptives in the soft policy and strategy of partnership in the Chinese geo-economic drawing, and with the growth of China's economy, this importance increases and takes renewed images and paths. The northern and north-eastern part of Africa has gained importance in its control of the global civil and military transportation traffic between Asia, Europe and Africa, and on the other hand the western and southwestern part has gained importance in its connection with the navigation movement coming from America and the Far East, which constitutes an attraction factor for all the international economic and military superpower competing for Africa (Maher, 2017:98)

Moreover, African countries possess the largest reserves of many wealth and strategic minerals, , in addition to the huge reserves of oil and gas, and experts estimate the volume of African oil between 8 and 9% of the total global reserves, equivalent to 100 billion barrels of crude, which is easier and faster in its extraction, and the ease of transporting the crude flowing from the wells to vessels anchored at the surface, which carry out filtering and refining works, so that its derivatives are ready for loading directly (Tazani, Juan, 2015: 31)

Here it can be said that the geo-economic components of the African continent are what prompted China to establish a strategic partnership with it. Peaceful Chinese development is the engine for the rise of China, which depends on securing resources, especially energy, markets and investments. Energy like oil and natural gas ranked first in Afro-Chinese economic relations, markets and investment opportunities which prompted it to put its highest priority on maintaining strong relations with African energy suppliers by adhering to a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of those countries by supporting and assisting oppressive dictatorships in obtaining the required legitimacy and acceptance.

African countries view the Chinese practices as a partner, while China declares through officials that its relationship with Africa is a relationship of friendship, brotherhood and a partnership that achieves joint and developed cooperation between the two parties. This cooperation escalated in the third millennium, and according to Chinese government sources,

More than 600 companies were formed in Africa with Chinese funding during the last ten years, China has exempted African goods from duties, with more Chinese investments supported by detailed loans (Madani, 2015:171-173).

China has endeavoured to reward its African friends with political support and economic and military aid. Beijing also presents the unique Chinese development model by praising the great economic growth that has been achieved under the supervision of an authoritarian state controlled by the rhythm of one party, a model that is suitable for Africans to emulate as it is the guarantor of stability for them, and the dictators' sense of comfort ensures the flow of energy that China needs. China has surpassed the stage of slow entry into the continent to build strategic relationships, as it managed to become the first business partner for a wide number of African countries (Alag, 2014:11-12)

International developments also contributed to strengthening the Chinese trend in light of the vacuum left by Western countries that directed their attention and development support, which African countries used to benefit from to eastern European countries, in order to integrate the latter and absorb it into the Western system with its liberal capitalist orientations, just as African countries are no longer able to compete with eastern European countries in attracting Western investments as a result of the large gap between the two regions in the infrastructure that attracts private investment, and the provision of an atmosphere of political stability.

As well as energy security, where energy security has become a vital matter since 1993, when China became an importer of oil and sought to take advantage of African oil reserves to diversify its energy sources. And after the events of September 11th, China faced threats due to its dependence on unstable oil supplies in the Middle East (more than 60%). In response, Chinese policymakers began to activate the exit policy, which focused mainly on the strategy of encouraging state-owned companies in the first place to venture abroad to access natural resources and open up to new export markets for Chinese products in Africa, Central Asia and South America to secure new raw materials (ERA, 2009).

China's economic participation in Africa has been rapid since the official launch of the exit policy in 2001, and since China moved late to Africa after the Cold War, the Chinese state-owned companies' strategy to access oil and mineral resources was often met with opposition from private Western companies.



As well as the security risks in African countries rich in natural resources, they were seeking to provide loans to African governments in exchange for access to natural resources which for African countries was an attractive alternative to loans from the West because it came without any political restrictions, and in light of the global financial crisis of 2008, which also led to a sharp decline in trade between the European Union and Africa, China in 2009 became Africa's largest trading partner, and it kept this position since then.

Internally, the rapid population growth and modernization in China indicates that the country will face a scarcity of food, water, energy and mineral resources. These challenges have made development in Africa crucial for future development in China and the Chinese Export-Import Bank aims to invest more than a trillion dollars in the continent by 2025 (Tiboris, 2019:1).

The relatively low levels of Chinese foreign direct investment contrast with the large increase in Chinese engineering contracts and the high volume of Chinese loans granted to African countries in exchange for access to natural resources or largely infrastructure projects (estimated at \$ 143 billion from 2000 to 2017) (Grieger and Claros,2019:2).

Chinese investments in Africa focus on large infrastructure projects such as dams and electric power, water, sanitation and oil development projects, as investments in the energy and transportation sectors accounted for 58% of China's total investments in Africa in the period from 2005 to 2018, and 60% of its investments. Over the past two years. China also invest in agriculture, according to the Chinese finance database maintained by the American Enterprise Institute, 10 of the 39 sub-Saharan countries obtained 60% of all China's projects in the region in the period from 2005 to 2018, among these ten countries, China concentrated the majority of its projects in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia, and in these countries the investments of China and the United States overlap. Ethiopia and the Chinese Export-Import Bank plan to invest more than a trillion dollars in Africa by 2025, and Kenya and Nigeria represent important countries for the future of food, and they are also part of the priorities of the United States' Water for the World program.

The infrastructure sector is also considered one of the most important Chinese investments in Africa, as it represents more than 10% of its total investments in the continent, with competitive offers that made them win most of the open deals in Africa in the field of huge facilities, in addition to pumping many huge investments in many fields,

Which made them an alternative to Western investments that are usually accompanied by political and security dictates, which remained an obstacle to achieving any economic development and progress for African countries (Hammoudi,2015).

In order to consolidate and strengthen bilateral relations between China and Africa that are based on South-South cooperation and achieve mutual benefit, the two parties established the China-Africa Cooperation Forum in 2000, which introduced the African continent a new era with China aimed at promoting African countries and achieving development in various fields, and introducing the African continent In the global economy, as China has taken many important measures aimed at strengthening cooperation, such as exempting the debts of many African countries, cancelling customs duties, establishing many training courses for workers, and giving scholarships to African students to pursue their postgraduate studies in Chinese universities (Shinn and Eisenman,2012:156).

## **2/ The cooperation aspect**

Chinese efforts in Africa have been increasing over the past two decades, but their pace began to accelerate in 2013, when Chinese President Xi Jinping launched his ambitious project (Economic Silk Road Belt), which passes through Central Asia and Europe, in addition to the (Maritime Silk Road for the twenty-first century) , Which passes through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Europe, with the aim of reviving old trade routes and strengthening existing ones, and Beijing then harmonized these two visions together and described them as the Belt and Road Initiative.

While this initiative appears to target regional economic areas, it is in fact a global initiative and stimulated by economic and strategic interests. The initiative would allow China to more efficiently use savings and construction capabilities, expand trade, strengthen economic and diplomatic relations with participating countries, and diversify China's energy imports and other resources through economic areas that circumvent the roads controlled by the United States and its allies.

The Chinese see that their initiative is beneficial to the developing world, as almost all countries face deficiencies in infrastructure and a lack of resources to overcome them, and that China is providing large packages of loans to these countries, but the West believes that this initiative lacks transparency and it works to facilitate the export of China to its authoritarian model,

And that the terms of the commercial loan bring about a new round of debt crises in the developing world, and that the projects do not have sufficient environmental and social guarantees.

In Africa, some major borrowers suffer from problems related to their ability to bear debts, while others have integrated loans from China into sound macroeconomic programs, and some of the major borrowers are authoritarian countries with poor human rights records, but the other main participants are from African countries that adopt a number from democratic principles (Dollar, 2019)

The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative is the main engine for building Chinese policy, and at the beginning the initiative extended to East Africa only, today this policy includes the whole of Africa, and it can be considered an improved version of the (exit) policy, as the two policies are very similar in focusing on the search for resources and markets.

This project, which most estimates indicate that it costs more than a trillion US dollars, aims to connect China with more than 130 countries through a network of railways and shipping lines, in order to increase the volume of trade deals and increase Chinese influence in the world.

### **The security and military aspect**

With the increasing economic interdependence between China and Africa, China's definition of national security interests expanded, so China became interested in securing sea cargo along the main sea lines of communication linking East Africa with Chinese ports, against the increasing pirate attacks since the new millennium, moreover, besides violent conflicts in A number of African countries, the actions of many terrorist groups such as Boko Haram operating in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, have threatened the security of Chinese workers and caused economic losses for Chinese projects worth 20 billion dollars, which necessitated a Chinese response. Thus the need for China to confront external security threats in order to defend its economic interests, preserve political legitimacy at home, and enhance its image as a responsible superpower, has provided an excuse to accelerate the building of its naval capabilities within the framework of the massive modernization of its armed forces.

In mid-2017, China tended to announce the establishment of its first military base outside its borders in Djibouti,

As it confirmed that this base was taken care of in the framework of supporting Chinese peacekeepers working in Africa and confronting pirates, but a realistic explanation confirms that this rule comes Within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, which seeks to link China with 68 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe through trade deals and infrastructure projects, the establishment of this base also comes as part of China's participation in the regional and international rush to attend and establish military bases in the Horn of Africa region to dominate the surrounding sea lanes through which 20% of oil imports comes from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and South Sudan pass into China.

### **Discussion over the Chinese strategy on Africa**

Africa is no longer the neglected and marginalized continent, but it has begun to be a magnet for all international powers because of its strategic interests in it, but the great influence and great effort comes in favor of China, which considers that Africa is not a goal in itself, but it represents an important and effective tool in order to achieve its dream, strength and prosperity (Salah, 2019).

Chinese presence also has many positives and opportunities arising from its strategy in Africa, including the Chinese financial and diplomatic aid to Africa and the investments it makes, most of which are concentrated in the infrastructure and it also invests in areas where Western companies refuse to take risks for security reasons.

Beijing's presence in Africa poses challenges, including China's support for authoritarian regimes on the continent through China's dealings with some authoritarian regimes that secure freedom of movement within their countries by allowing them to invest in their sectors and infrastructure. In contrast, Beijing is a sanctuary for these regimes, especially diplomatically.

The second threat facing Africa is economic, represented in the Chinese companies competing with their African counterparts. In addition to the proportion of labor flowing. Chinese companies produce cheap and medium-quality products that suit the weak purchasing power of the African citizen. This policy created intense competition for African companies.

Numerous Western writings have also appeared, which emphasize the developmental dimensions of Western aid to Africa, along with criticism of the loan and grant policy adopted by China in Africa,

As these writings show that these loans have no returns on economic development in these countries, as they are closer to the individual loans that Chinese lending institutions link to the institution or the supposed person and not the economic system of the country as a whole, as China provides loans to African countries, while Western countries, especially the United States of America, provide grants and other types of flows that Western powers view as supporting development, including development aid in its various forms.

Also, Chinese investments in Africa are often accused of being opaque and biased, influenced by a number of political considerations more than economic. China is also accused of lacking the quality of Chinese products, and of its attempt to flood the local African market in the absence of a legal rule that protects local producers and investors against the Chinese invasion (Cabeston, 2013:156).

To counter these accusations, China has tended to adopt a number of new options, including intensifying cultural and tourism cooperation programs between China and African countries to counter these anti-China sentiments by doubling educational scholarships for African students in China, and with a package of training programs that mix between training young politicians and government officials, and during the 2018 Africa Cooperation Forum, Chinese President Xi Jinping introduced the concept of forming a CSR coalition in an attempt to force Chinese companies to take affirmative action (Wu, 2019).

On the other hand, despite the fact that Chinese presence in Africa has been governed by the economic character during the past period, the coming period will witness a political role for China in its project as an upcoming international power in the face of existing powers, by seeking to establish an influential global Chinese dimension in the course of global politics and economy (Shahrour, 2014:8).

China has shifted from non-interference to selective and increasing participation in bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the field of peace and security by defining the narrow borders of its foreign policy framework, on a case-by-case basis. Many African countries are suffering from acute armed conflicts, terrorism or free piracy off their coasts, and with the high number of violent attacks against Chinese workers, local Chinese public's calls to take action, and the increasing economic loss, Chinese government was forced to respond, as the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of foreign countries was no longer compatible with Chinese global ambitions,

And China's adherence to this principle led to its focus on the interior only, and left the global security system led by the United States along with other actors.

In other areas, China has adopted a two-dimensional strategy towards African security issues to protect its economic and security interests, and consolidate its influence in Africa. On the one hand, it has contributed to the existing multilateral structures and tools to promote peace and security, and has participated in peace-keeping missions led by the United Nations in Africa, and in the anti-piracy actions imposed by the United Nations off the Horn of Africa, this participation provided an excuse for China to accelerate the construction of its huge fleet, to be present in the Indian Ocean and beyond and to establish the first military base abroad in Djibouti. On the other hand, it expanded its military presence, by engaging African countries bilaterally through joint exercises and military training, and by building a multilateral military infrastructure through the newly established Sino-African forums on security issues. (Grieger and Claros, 2019:1).

In addition to the dimension that the state drives to Chinese immigration to Africa, there is an increasing presence of Chinese private companies operating in more stable African countries, which are not explained in official Chinese data. McKinsey's report for the year 2017 focuses on field work in eight sub-Saharan African countries, which together account for nearly two-thirds of Africa's GDP. The report points out that the establishment of industrial facilities that benefit from low-cost labor in Africa has become a powerful driver for the increasing presence of Chinese immigrants working in Chinese private companies, as their participation in manufacturing that mainly targets African consumers instead of export markets, contributes to job creation and technology transfer, in addition to that. A 2019 report, based on field research in Angola and Ethiopia, challenges negative perceptions of the business practices of Chinese companies in Africa, as African countries generally view China's economic participation in Africa positively as an opportunity for industrialization. (Grieger and Claros, 2019: 1).

However, the success of the Sino-African relations also depends on the extent to which the Chinese decision maker is aware of the security situation in Africa, as the expansion of the areas of influence and interests of China has created many security challenges that China faces, such as the kidnappings of Chinese citizens or attacks on Chinese interests,

Sites and facilities, which makes China think Seriously, establishing military bases that allow it to defend its interests and facilities (Hoslag,2009:24-25).

### **The Prospects of the Chinese policy of rise and its impacts on Africa**

Many analysts have asserted that the increasing presence of China in Africa will continue because the relations between the two sides represent a very attractive model for both China and many others African countries, and because of the great and urgent need for infrastructure, which China wishes to finance, and the money that China provides for projects can be accessed easily and with less conditions than Western loans, and for China, the acute shortage of natural resources is expected and the need to expand global demand for Chinese products makes Africa a target for investment.

It is also difficult to make simple generalizations about the Belt and Road Initiative in Africa, for this reason it would be wise, for Western countries to tone down their rhetoric about the initiative, as such a large number of projects may work well, and it will be useful if Western countries provide more support to the International Monetary Fund to help countries manage their loans, and to the World Bank to provide more infrastructure financing, which increases options for developing countries in Africa.

Under this background, it remains to be seen how the future security cooperation between the European Union and China, which has remained in its infancy until now, will be complementary or competitive, in the search for African solutions to African problems.

What matters to us in this research paper is not only to narrate the Chinese ascension process and highlight the Chinese capabilities, but more importantly, what is the impact of this rise on the level of the global system, and its impact on its relations with the African continent.

Many researchers argue that by the end of the twenty-first century, China will be at the center of world affairs much more than America, which dominates these affairs, and will remain so for a while (Biernes, 2003:101) and that if China continues at this pace, it will surpass the United States, starting from 2041, to become the first economic power in the world, with what results from that at the level of geopolitics (Ramonet, 2004).

The magnitude of Chinese global exchanges several years ago raise special questions in the West about the possibility of shifting the center of the global economy, specifically towards Asia and China, in a way that reshapes the international balance (Golub,2004:18-19).

The increase in Chinese economic growth made it a developed and large country, and enabled it to have a geopolitical movement (Godement, 2001:8). But despite this, many analysts believe that Chinese influence will not exceed Asia and will not have global influence.

In this regard, Brzezinski argues in his book *The Great Chessboard* that there are gaps in predicting the future of Chinese power and the role it will play in the world. He believes that China will be a regional power in Asia, and its role will not extend beyond the continent for several considerations, the most prominent of which is the reliance on statistics. This mistake was made regarding the future prospect of the Japanese role, but it failed to play this role. According to Brzezinski, China cannot continue to achieve growth rates for the next two decades.

In addition, the rapid economic growth may create negative side effects that may limit the freedom of movement for Beijing, it is related to the increase in energy and food consumption, increasing economic growth may allow China to increase the building of its military and nuclear power in the short term, but in the long term, it may end with what had happened to the Soviet Union in the arms race with the United States. In addition to the causes related to poverty, regional discrimination in development, which may create resentment on rural parts, and the political lockdown that the Communist Party knows, which may produce internal political explosions (Brzezinski, 2016:199-200). For all these considerations, Brzezinski believes that China is unable to play a vital global role.

There is no doubt that China has made substantial economic gains during the past two decades, during which it transformed from a limited economic power into a larger energetic power that has an effective role in the international economic arena. However, the low levels that China's current economic and military growth started with, should be recognized. When China began its current reform process, it was far behind other countries in its international standing. Either now, by traditional measures of power, it is a rising power, but there are many question marks about its near future confirming that the future of China as a great power is still not defined, if not excluded (ECSSR, 2001:100).

This is about some who are pessimistic about the future of Chinese power, but it is worth noting that most of the fair analysts and experts estimate that Beijing will have a prominent global role in the international system.



If the laws of history determine that the extraordinary economic growth of the major countries inevitably reflects on the growth of their military capabilities, and that their military supremacy leads them to enter the mission of the international conflict in order to change the balance of power and change the so-called international system in their favour (Wagihallah,1995:67).

All these changes, in the internal and external economic environment of China, created the material capabilities to greatly raise the level of military spending, and aroused greater Chinese interest in defending trade routes, expanding freedom of use of nearby Asian waters, and their influence in them. It has also provided Beijing with a new source of potential diplomatic influence in Asia and beyond (Zad et al, 1997:154).

What can be said is that the reforms pursued by Beijing are comprehensive reforms that followed a unique model that remains to the point of time obscure, as it ranges between the modern capitalist system and the traditional socialist factors that China has known since 1949, yet it is an effective model from an economic point of view in particular, and the bet Or the challenge that Beijing faces is political reform, which remains a serious obstacle to a true and comprehensive rise of China.

## Conclusion

It is noted that the Chinese strategy towards Africa was based on realistic scientific foundations through which China sought to study African societies from all aspects, which helped to create a kind of flexibility in bilateral dealings between China and Africa, and to make Africa more responsive to China and Chinese products, especially when taking into account the purchasing power of the Africans.

China's policy and economic strategy towards Africa that is based on cooperation and trade exchange away from political objectives and interference in the internal affairs of African countries and the nature of their political systems, have made African countries receive Chinese investment with great welcome, whether at the level of political systems or even at the nation's level, due to its development attractiveness , in addition to the great temptations that accompany those investments, and on the other hand, the success of the Chinese experience and its achievement of great development rates, form an incentive and an experiment that African countries seek to emulate and repeat at the local level.

China has a huge cash stock of nearly 3 trillion dollars, these enormous financial resources are directed in large part to Chinese investments abroad, and in all fields and the Bank of Import and Export supervises this process, this state banking institution plays a key role in granting loans to African governments through preferential terms.

In addition, technical assistance and technology transfer have always been part of Sino-African relations, and through this factor, Beijing was able to demonstrate its ability to actually help Africans and support them by harnessing technology to help them by employing it in projects related to infrastructure, agriculture, transport , technical training and medical assistance on the one hand, and on the other hand, China has helped the African individual to obtain modern technological products, especially in the field of automated media and communications, at competitive prices that respond to the purchasing power and the simple per capita income of the African citizen.

During the previous period, China pursued a pragmatic economic strategy with most countries of the African continent based on the basis of mutual benefits and interests between the two parties, far from all political calculations or interference in the internal affairs of African countries. China has pursued a smart policy that deals with every political system in Africa according to its peculiarities and features which increased the African welcome to the Chinese partnership, especially in light of all the aid and incentives that China gives that contributed to helping African countries rely on themselves and develop their vital sectors, especially the agricultural sector, which has become of great importance in the strategies of economic advancement and the achievement of sustainable development in Africa.

On the other hand, despite the fact that the Chinese presence in Africa has been governed by the economic character during the past period, the coming period will witness a political function for China in its project as an upcoming international power in the face of the existing powers, by seeking to establish an influential global Chinese dimension in the course of global politics and economy. success of the Sino-African relations also depends on the extent to which the Chinese decision maker is aware of the security situation in Africa, as the expansion of the areas of influence and interests of China has created many security challenges that China faces,

Such as the kidnappings of Chinese citizens or attacks on Chinese interests, sites and facilities, which makes China, think seriously, establishing military bases that allow it to defend its interests and facilities.

Based on all this, Sino-African relations' development depends on the extent to which each side realizes size of the challenges facing this relationship, starting with security challenges that Africa is facing now, from the spread of terrorist groups, organized crime and illegal immigration to the challenges presented by the international system and the consequences of globalization in all its fields.

According to what was reviewed through the study, it became clear that China is using soft power in drawing the picture of partnership with African countries, it makes from the legacy of the African and Chinese cultures what gives an emotional and historical meaning to the partnership, just as China was able to benefit from the historical background of Africa and its previous experiences with colonial powers to be able to communicate with African societies and focus on the economic aspect and the acquisition of confidence through social projects and the creation of Job opportunities to employ manpower there. China has proved that orientation towards Africa was a strategic choice, given the promising investment and enormous resources the continent bears.

In addition, partnership between Africa and China seeks to change the existing situation, as the world is experiencing complex and profound changes in light of growing global challenges and economic recovery, and thanks to this partnership, opportunities will be created to establish a new type of international relations centered on cooperation and mutual gain, and its tools are persuasion and attraction not coercion and submission. The partnership between China and African countries enhances domestic and regional security and stability in the region, so it is a mutual benefit partnership, as it is beneficial to China in securing the reasons of its sustainability of development and advancement, while the partnership - for African countries - leads to sustainable growth and improvement in the social and economic infrastructure, an influx of new investments, and more economic trade relations.

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