Review

China’s peacekeeping operations in Africa: From unwilling participation to responsible contribution

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China is becoming an international expectation while making positive and tangible contributions to global peace and security and seeking to determine China’s contributions to the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. Contrary to the conventional wisdom focusing on China’s involvement in African economy, China’s engagement in multilateral organisations such as the United Nations Organisation for sustainable international peace and security is wonderful. The aftermath of the cold war witnessed China’s expansive engagement in maintaining international peace and security. In supporting the existing security-related architecture in Africa, Beijing places particular importance on the African Union (AU) and African regional organisations as well as the UN Security Council. By sending its largest troops in African war-ton countries named Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sudan while other great powers are reluctant to dispatch, Beijing has actively and substantively responded to conflict threat through mediation or conflict-resolution efforts and shown its responsible great power stand vis-à-vis international community. China’s new policy towards UN peacekeeping taking account its principles of sovereignty and noninterference is the key factor to pacify Liberia and Sudan (as cases study in Africa) and shown China as a responsible power much engaged in maintaining international peace and security.

Key words: China, peacekeeping operations, United Nations, Africa, Liberia, Sudan.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of peace and stability remain an important issue for the international community post world war II through United Nations Charter which calls for collective security. In its first article, the Charter explains. “The purposes of the United Nations are: to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace; ...”. Yet in its preamble, the United Nations worry about war, human rights violation and took engagement to save and prevent succeeding generations from any king of violence on human being and it is of a great significance even for local populations who are the first victims of the violence from internal conflicts as well as interstate ones.

Africa is one of the main areas where many persons are suffering from violence and China is helping to bring peace and stability by joining United Nations peacekeeping operations from early 1990’s. But it does not mean that China was constrained to or its contribution to peacekeeping operations is only devoted to Africa. China’s effort to peacekeeping operations in Africa from 1990’s is steadily and quickly transformed from unwilling participation to responsible contribution. This article proposes to examine the role China is playing in peace
maintaining peace and international security through its keeping operations in Africa in determining whether or not China’s approach withstands successful adaptation to a responsible great power, and implementation in, the African region. Overall, this paper tries to evaluate the impact of China’s contribution on the African local populations affecting especially, Liberia and Sudan.

CHINA’S RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

UN peacekeeping policy after the cold war

Here the question is that: To what stand UN policy in the post cold war period is different from the one implemented during the cold war? And what would motivate these changes and for what results? The cold war ended with the disappearance of the bipolarity in the early 1990’s. This period brought many changes in the UN. Thus, the United Nations goes back into the centre of international political events almost overnight. Yet, Article 24 of Chapter V of the UN Charter states: in order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its members confer on the Security Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Consequently, the number of vetoes fell to zero as the former enemies; the USA and the Soviet Union decided to cooperate. This period was characterized by the pre-development of the peacekeeping doctrine in the 'second generation' based on a gradual nature to the extent that missions in post-conflict situations mostly took place in a peaceful environment, built upon previously negotiated peace agreements or consensus between the conflicting parties. The expansion in the powers of the Security Council concerning processes which would have fallen under the non-involvement rule of the UN Charter a few years previously was the result and a new generation of UN peace missions at the same time has been created. With the end of the bipolar organization of international policy making and side-choosing, numerous local and regional problems have moved to center stage, to national governments, regional organizations, and the UN. The new dilemmas caused by complex emergencies now fill the in-boxes of decision makers.

Contrary to the cold war period, both U. S and the former Soviet Union leaders were willing to improve UN situation. Yet Gorbatschew’s speech on 7th December, 1998 in front of the UN General Assembly was in favour of strengthening the United Nations and highlighted the new challenges and opportunities. And after initial hesitation by the USA under Reagan, lively cooperation resulted, particularly under his successor George Bush Senior who spoke of a "new world order" in which an important role would be played by the United Nations.

Peace keeping and humanitarian assistance were conducted in this environment as separate activities involving completely different organizations. Peace keeping operations now called "traditional" peacekeeping were the responsibility of the Security Council to be implemented by the Secretary-General and his subordinates in the political departments of the central Secretariat, always on a case-by-case basis. Humanitarian assistance; essentially a question of dealing with natural disasters was entrusted to various UN organizations as a regular part of their mandate or duties. In other words, humanitarian crises have traditionally been dealt with by bureaucratic organizations authorized to respond almost automatically to non-political crises. Traditional peacekeeping, that is, political crises was dealt with by the Security Council and the Secretary-General on a case-by-case basis. Rarely did the two meet. As the results of the post cold war changes, peace missions were sent to Afghanistan and to the Gulf during Iraq-Iran war and their number increased suddenly. The blue helmets recovered from being a marginal element in international politics rose to become a central instrument with many successes such as in Angola, Namibia, Cambodia and Western Sahara. Most important, they received the Nobel peace prize in 1988. From 1988 to 2001, the number of UN peace missions increased to a total of 54. The changes of the UN did not prevent the organization from facing problems due mainly to a misunderstanding of the fact that the United Nations is not really a single political or bureaucratic institution with a distinctive character or personality, much less an independent authority. Most specifically, it is not a government and does not react as one. The UN, as knowledgeable people rightly insist, is a sort of permanent in-session conference, a parliamentary not an executive creature, and a highly decentralized one at that. Therefore, we found out now that the international response requires a mixture of classic political and humanitarian elements. Political and military officers find themselves working shoulder-to-shoulder with humanitarian fieldworkers from UNICEF, World Food Program and non-governmental organizations such as CARE and Medecins Sans Frontiers.

The two cultures found themselves in tandem, but their operating assumptions, tactics, and objectives are not necessarily congruent and may even with the best will in the world; actually conflict. This potential conflict manifests itself most dramatically when the UN peacekeeping operation moves into the new world of peace enforcement, where the two sides of the UN operation may find themselves pursuing contradictory policies. There can be a serious policy conflict between feeding a refugee and solving the political crisis which made him a refugee.

The significant changes occurred in the UN policy after the cold war shaped Chinese leaders who move from reluctance stand to an active cooperation notably to the peace keeping operations though the difficulties the
Institutions are facing. This transformation of China’s foreign policy will be the key factor helping to ensure its responsibility as a growing power. This brings the research to examine the main characteristics of China’s foreign policy after the cold war.

**China’s foreign policy after the cold war**

Following the end of the cold war, China’s foreign policy is based on stability and international cooperation. In this stand, China made significant efforts to reduce tension in Asia, stabilized relations with Asian neighbors including Vietnam and Russia and ASEAN members and participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum. Yet in May 1989, Mikhail Gorbachev’s visit to Beijing marked the full normalization of Sino-Soviet Union relations. It seemed that China’s reform and opening up policy would enjoy an even more favorable international environment. In 1997, the ASEAN member nations and the people’s republic of China, South Korea and Japan agreed to hold yearly talks to further strengthen regional cooperation. In June 2001, China and Russia joined the Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to find the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The aim of SCO was to promote regional stability and cooperation to combat terrorism in the region. In the late 1990’s, Chinese foreign policy appeared to be focused on improving relations with Russia and Europe to counterbalance the United States. As consequence, in July 2001, President Jiang and President Putin signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Within the context that the US is the hyper power, China is concerned about how to reorient its foreign policy in a unipolar world. Here again, China worried about its new security concept and argued that the post-cold war era required nations to move away from thinking in terms of alliances and power blocs and toward thinking in terms of economic and diplomatic cooperation. The initiative of China’s peaceful rise as a part of China’s foreign policy encouraged its relations with ASEAN members to form a common East Asian market. Chinese leaders often reiterate China’s engagement for "independent foreign policy of peaceful development," stressing the need for a peaceful and stable international environment, especially among China’s neighbors, that will foster "mutually beneficial cooperation" and "common development."

Here, is the main eight-point diplomatic philosophy of the People’s Republic of China: China will not seek hegemony. China is still a developing country and has no resources to seek hegemony. Even if China becomes a developed country, it will not seek hegemony. China will not play power politics and will not interfere with other countries' internal affairs. China will not impose its own ideology on other countries. China maintains all countries, big or small and thus, should be treated equally with respect for each other. All affairs should be consulted and resolved by all countries on the basis of equal participation. No country should bully others on the basis of strength. China will make judgment on each case in international affairs on each matter on the merit of the matter itself and will not have double standards. China will not have two policies: one for itself and one for others. China believes that it cannot do unto others what they do not wish others do unto them. China advocates that all countries handle their relations on the basis of the United Nations Charter and norms governing international relations. China advocates stepping up international cooperation and do not play politics unilaterally. China should not undermine the dignity and the authority of the U.N. China should not impose and set its own wishes above the U.N. Charter, international law and norms.

China advocates peaceful negotiation and consultation so as to resolve its international disputes. China does not resort to force, or threat of force, in resolving international disputes. China maintains a reasonable national military buildup to defend its own sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is not made to expand, nor does it seek invasion or aggression. China is firmly opposed to terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. China is a responsible member of the international community, and as for international treaties, China abides by all of them in a faithful way. China never plays by a double standard, selecting and discarding treaties it does not need. China respects the diversity of civilization and the whole world. China advocates different cultures, make exchanges, learn from each other, and compliment one another with their own strengths. China is opposed to clashes and confrontations between civilizations, and China does not link any particular ethnic group or religion with terrorism.

**UN-China foreign policy towards Africa after the cold war**

For four decades, Beijing was highly skeptical of the United Nations’ peacekeeping efforts, primarily because the Chinese leadership saw how the UN was utilized for the Korean War to legitimize and sanction what was seen by China as an aggressive military intervention. At the end of the cold war and following the positive changes that occurred in the United Nations Organization (Yin, 2007), China has since viewed the normative principles such as: state sovereignty, non-intervention and non-use of force more flexibly than before. Thus, according to the fifth point stated earlier, China decided on an adoption of a rather active policy towards UNPKO. This include increasing commitment to UNPKO, training capabilities improvement, increasing participation in international cooperation and exchange activities, and large and ever increasing contribution of both military and police units.

What is more is that, Beijing has also joined international
efforts to improve the peacekeeping capabilities of relevant regional organizations and has given political and financial support to relevant war torn host countries. Three reasons can justify the new China's policy towards UNPKO pre-conditions: Contrary to the cold war period as the most unstable for China, the aftermath witnessed China focusing on its economic development. Therefore, China has enhanced national strength derived from continuous success in economic, social and political development. Moreover, China has been provided with adequate human and material resources and political currency as well as, a self confidence for its active participation in UNPKO. On the other hand, the September, 11 incident has somehow created favorable international environment, which encouraged China to adopt a more active foreign policy and to be selectively active in international affairs despite its long-held strategy of keeping a low profile. Besides, accumulated experience in the UN regime since the early 1970's also promotes Beijing's enthusiasm for UNPKO.

**Strategic reasons**

As China rises and in accordance to its "peaceful rise policy" stated earlier, one of its urgent diplomatic tasks was to assure the world of its goodwill and intention to become a responsible power by integrating into the international community and making active contributions to international peace and security. Yet China has become an active member of regional organizations as stated earlier and participated in UN peacekeeping operations projects a good image in the eyes of both the developing and developed worlds and can also help strengthen the UN, whose authority has been challenged by a trend of unilateralism. China's support for the UN can yield valuable benefits, which serve its 'peaceful rise' aspirations as well as, a clout to balance against unilateralism and yield valuable political currency for it to promote its multilateral agenda. Moreover, as Beijing is becoming increasingly aware, its peaceful rise can much more be achieved within a peaceful environment. China's embrace of globalization makes its interests interdependent with those of the rest of the world and its increasingly active policy on UNPKO shows its willingness to join the international efforts in addressing peace and security-related matters.

China's participation in UNPKO can also yield other benefits, including improved skills and professionalism of the PLA and police personnel as well as, improved force projection capabilities as stated, Chinese peace keepers "were learning and practicing". In other words, participation in peacekeeping activities abroad carries important applications and lessons for the PLA. Many changes occurred in China-UN policy that raised China's profile and improved sensibly its relations as well as, its image. China joined the UN Special Peace Keeping Committee in November, 1988. From 1989, China started sending its personnel and twenty Chinese civilian officials were sent to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) to assist with election work. In 1990, China sent its first peacekeeping personnel on UNPKO comprised of five military units to UNPKO with 800 PLA engineering troops in two batches to the United Nations Transitional Administration in Cambodia (UNTAC). In May 1997, China agreed in principle to participate in the UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS). China voted in favor of all missions that carried out traditional peacekeeping tasks and all peace-building missions as well as, the continuation of all traditional UNPKO that were established during the Cold War era while abstaining from peace enforcement missions with the exception of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II).

Beijing was very careful in dealing with matters regarding Chapter VII of the UN Charter, in particular, the use of force, which usually constitutes as its reasons for adopting abstention or threatening the use of vetoes in UNSC voting like fro UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia which operated from February 1992 to March 1995. Stefan Staehle analyzed China's voting behavior in 14 UNSC resolutions which authorized the use of force in UNPKO during the period between 1992 and 1996: China abstained from those authorizing the use of force seven times while on another seven occasions, it voted in favor of such action.

Between 1988 and 1998, the heavy voting workload in the UNSC posed great challenges for Beijing's political will as well as, its long-held position on normative principles. This did not prevent it from expressing its normative concerns about the use of force. These were fully reflected in three cases: Iraq, Cambodia and Somalia but the latest will be discussed as a case in Africa.

On Somalia issue in the early 1990's, China voted in favor of all peace operations in Somalia, including UNITAF under the US and UNOSOM II commanded by UN, both of which adopted Chapter VII of the UN Charter and were authorized to use force. But China insisted that the operations were "exceptional" measures in view of the unique situation in Somalia and should not constitute a precedent. Beijing's flexible policy on international intervention in Somalia would be motivated by the well-publicized humanitarian disaster in Somalia; China did not want to be perceived as obstructionist by casting vetoes on Somalia-related UNSC resolutions and hindering humanitarian assistance. China decided on the strategy of cooperation with the West in the UNSC as long as its own core interests would not be harmed. The year 1999 marked the beginning of a new era for China's active participation in UNPKO which continues until
today. This is reflected in the growing number of countries China has sent its peacekeepers to East Timor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Congo, Liberia, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Haiti, Lebanon and Sudan. Here, Haiti will be pointed out as a specific case.

Haiti

On April 30th 2004, China voted for UNSC Resolution 1542, which authorized the establishment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). In September 2004, it dispatched a 125 person formed police unit (FPU) 77 as well as, another five civilian police officers to MINUSTAH. China’s participation in the Haitian mission implies a higher degree of significance. Unlike the previous police contingents China sent to East Timor, Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo, which were divided into groups of one or a few and dispatched to different UN police sections and mixed with those from other countries, the FPU that China now has in Haiti is a self-contained police force. Armed with riot control equipment ranging from batons, shields, pepper sprays and water canons to sniper guns, light machine guns and armored personnel carriers (APC), the FPU has strong operational capabilities and can perform various duties that generally neither individual police officers nor military troops could be able to do. The FPU can provide operational backup to individual police officers, or perform public control duties, which are usually regarded as being sensitive for military troops as well as too difficult for ordinary police officers. China’s contribution of a FPU reflects flexibility in its long-held position on the use of force by peacekeepers, which has long constituted its reason for refusing to send military combat troops on UNPKO. In short, after the cold war period, China’s foreign policy is characterized by flexibility with active participation to regional and international organization. In such a short time, China has become the most providers in troops among the UNSC permanent member.

Thus, in 2002, China joined the level 1 of UNSAS with the establishment of Chinese standby elements for UN peacekeeping operation. China’s UNSAS is consisted of an engineering battalion of 525 members, a medical element of 25 members and two transporting companies of 160 members to join UN peacekeeping operations at any time within three months. Furthermore, there are two peacekeeping personnel training facilities in China located in Nanjing in Jiangsu province and the other in Langfang in Hebei province, reflecting Beijing’s new permanent commitment to peace operations. In June 2007 the PLA convened the first major internal meeting on peacekeeping, where senior representatives of the PLA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Public Security gathered to discuss ways to further streamline and improve the selection, organization, training and rotation of Chinese peacekeepers. Later in the same year, Major-General Zhao Jingmin was appointed as the new Force Commander for the UN peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara (MINURSO); the first time that the UN has had a Chinese national head one of its missions.

China’s foreign policy towards Africa after the cold war

Following the cold war, Chinese interests evolved into more pragmatic pursuits such as trade, investment, and energy. Sino-African trade quadrupled between 2000 and 2006. China is Africa’s third largest commercial partner after the US and France, and second largest exporter to Africa after France. It is notably ahead of former colonial power Britain in both categories. Some western nations’ hesitance to become closely involved with countries they believe to be poor in the human rights field, such as Sudan, have allowed China an opportunity for economic cooperation. While the West largely neglected Africa after the Cold War, China’s foreign minister made his visits to African nations was the first official stop abroad in every year from 1991 to 2007. These visits have been both symbolic and real gestures of China’s respect for Africa. Since the turn of the 21st century, two-way visits have dramatically increased. The forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was also established, which in addition to its ambitious plans for Sino-African cooperation, provided a mechanism for routine meetings between Chinese and African heads of state. President Hu Jintao, in reinforcing China’s position in 2006, stated that “China and Africa are good friends, good partners and good brothers.”

The aim of this part was to identify and analyze both aspects of continuity and change in China’s policy towards Africa. China’s foreign policy toward Africa at the end of the Cold war is based on principles of equal treatment, a respect for sovereignty, noninterference, mutual benefit and co-development. These principles established in 1982 by the 12th CPC assembly are to govern China’s new foreign policy “Independence, complete equality, mutual respect, non-interference in Others’ Internal Affairs”. The Principle of non-interference as a safeguard of sovereignty has ensured China’s own sovereignty as well as, it gained the trust of African nations. The principle of equality in Sino-Africa relations challenges powerful nations and offers an alternative model for interstate behavior. The principle of mutual benefit is based mutual support for the development of politics, economics and other areas. These principles brought lot of changes in Sino-African relations which moved from free aid providing to aid intended to benefit both sides economically. The aim of this policy is to help Africa help itself. Chinese leaders have decided to help Africa to improve self-development that is more useful than free economic aid. That sped up and encourages
rapid economic cooperation expansion between the two sides. There was a reform foreign trade system and approaches to foreign aid, economic assistance began to include preferential and discounted loans, cooperatives and joint ventures for projects. During the first two years, Sixteen African countries benefited from China's new aid policy. In January 2006, Chinese government promulgated the white paper as the first in China's diplomatic history with Africa which focus on an enhanced cooperation in Sino-Africa relations, communication and cooperation on environmental protection and marks a milestone in the progress they have made together. The implementation of this policy leads China to base the relationship on very practical goals that were within its means. Yet by 2002, the CPC had established relations with more than 60 political parties in 40 Sub-Saharan countries, as many Africans have been convinced of China's sincerity in respecting African political choices and helping to promote economic and trade cooperation. From that time, there was a focus on "economic co-development" and cooperation was expanded in far more diverse levels than previously. 

There are some differences between China and West cooperation towards Africa that reinforced Sino-African relationship. First, China’s policy of noninterference respects the sovereignty of nations and acknowledges its limits in solving such a crisis such like humanitarian disasters. Second, while the West largely neglected Africa after the cold war, China’s foreign Minister made his visits to African nations the first official stop abroad in every year from 1991 to 2007 and more visits to Africa and submitted diplomacy (FOCAC) from 1980’s, designed to reassure Africa of China’s committed friendship. Thirdly, in diplomatic discussions with African nations, China does make friendly suggestions on issues of governance and intra-state affairs while Western interventions would coercive. Finally, in technical assistance and cooperation in science and technology with Africa is an area that has largely been refused by Western countries but is now a rapidly expanding part of Sino-African relations. 

Following this development of Sino-African relationship, one might wonder if China is becoming a Neocolonial Power in Africa. The development of the former colonial countries namely France, Great Britain by exploiting African natural and human wealth is still present in people mind. That legitimates people anxiety whether China will behave similarly to acquire the continent’s resources and markets to sustain its own economic growth. There could not have an absolute answer. However, China presents many sights that distinguish Beijing attitude from the west. First of all, the current international environment is quiet different from the one many centuries ago has been transformed, precluding the possibility of any kind of neocolonialism. And China in 1950’s has provided significant supports to Africa’s struggle against colonialism. Furthermore, China’s Constitution explicitly opposes colonialism. Secondly, China’s behavior in Africa (at least till now) does not stand up to exploit African resources even though energy trade is more concerned and developing rapidly, it currently comprises a mere 8.7% of Africa’s total oil exports, still paltry as compared to Europe 36% and the United States 33%. Yet, Beijing has balanced energy trade with aid, investing in infrastructure, sanitation, electricity power and health to the tune of $ 4 billion while making substantial commitments to reduce and/or remit the debt of numerous African countries. Thirdly, African nations have irrevocably achieved full independence and have freedom to choose their partner by contrast to the West who has imposed themselves as partners.

Implications for China

China’s peacekeeping operations in Liberia

Before China supports any form of international intervention, three requirements have to be in place including UN authorization, respect of sovereignty, and the invitation of the target state. In September 2003, the UN Security Council unanimously voted a resolution for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission in war-torn Liberia for one year. China and Africa share a strong political and economic and the new Liberian government’s recent decision to open diplomatic relations with Beijing at the expense of Taiwan convinced China to send its first team of peacekeepers to the West African nation of Liberia, composed of five policemen, in November 30, 2003 and China at this time has dispatched peacekeeping police to Africa, in the country founded by American, at the request of the United Nations and approved by the State Council. From this point, many Chinese teams of peacekeepers will be sent as most of them working in Liberia rotate at an 8-month interval. Basically, Chinese peacekeepers are in charge of engineering, medical services and transportation. They help and are still helping supervise the enforcement of the cease-fire agreement by the country’s various parties, protect the security of the public and UN staff, maintain basic human rights, assist the state police in reforms and the country’s restoration, and offer training to local police. A total of 500 Chinese soldiers comprised of Chinese engineering corps, a transport unit and a field hospital in place served with the United Nations force in Liberia and were the first public fruit of the new diplomatic strategy by the new UN-backed government. They joined other foreign troops who helped keep the peace as an interim government prepared to hold elections in the late 2005. By sending this team, China helped make sure that this government will work, will function well and will bring peace to Liberia while Western countries are often wary of sending their soldiers to Africa. The arrival of the Chinese soldiers in Liberia signals a wider commitment to
peacekeeping in Africa in order to rebuild peace in the country as well as extend Chinese influence on the continent. Since 2003 China has contributed to the peacekeeping mission in Liberia with six detachments of troops and engineers, the latest with a total of 2,800 peacekeepers and the Chinese Transport Unit is the only logistic transport unit in UNMIL for logistic supply for all UNMIL units. The Engineering and Medical units are based in Zwedru in UNMIL Sector 4, which covers the southeast region of Liberia. The local population, authorities and UN representatives are satisfied with Chinese peacekeepers. The UN Secretary General's Representative in Liberia Abou Moussa during a ceremony of decoration stated that the UN was grateful to the Chinese contingents for opening up inaccessible areas and providing free medical services for the full deployment of the entire United Nations Mission troops in the West African country. The UN can never adequately award you for your invaluable service. The medals are a partial reward for your invaluable services. Mr. Louis Carlos Da Costa, deputy director of the UN Special Dispatched Group in Liberia, stated "I really admire the high sense of discipline and fine qualities you Chinese servicemen have displayed. You have done credit to your motherland and your army with your own actions." The transport contingent has ferried more than 14,000 tons of materials, the engineering contingent has rehabilitated 375 km of roads while the medical contingent has conducted more than 1,900 laboratory tests on patients of various diseases while at the same time providing free medical services to the locals.

To honor Chinese peacekeepers’ contributions, many roads and bridges have been named after the nation in Liberia and even in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2009, the eighth batch of the Chinese peacekeeping engineering detachment to Liberia was completely repaired successfully and the ring road in the B3 theatre of the mission area thus, enabling it to resume traffic within just one week following the local government’s request to help repair the road. The detachment named the road “Ping’an Road”(safe road). On March 3, 2010, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has commended Chinese Peacekeepers in Liberia for their indispensable role and constructive contributions towards this war-torn country during her tour of Chinese UN Peacekeeping Engineering Contingent Base in Zwedru, Liberia contributing not only to the security and peace of Liberia but also to the postwar reconstruction and development by helping locals build and renovate some public facilities such as bridges, roads, etc, and providing free medical treatments to local communities. A few days later, precisely on March 15, 2010, UN Deputy Envoy Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu decorated 558 Chinese Peacekeepers with UN medals for their contributions to peace in Liberia and has lauded Chinese Peacekeepers for contributing to the development of Liberia’s infrastructure and opening up the possibility for Liberians to contribute to their own development. "China has been a strong and real partner in Liberia's development and has made many significant contributions, such as the rehabilitation of roads around the country," said Ms. Mensa-Bonsu, adding that Liberians can attest to “the systematic hard work and dedicated services that the Chinese people make daily to the Country's development." She also highlighted the achievements accomplished by the three components of the Contingent, such as maintaining a road network of 303 KM, as well as connecting Zwedru to Tappita, Fish town and Pyne town. She also singled out nine female doctors, technicians and nurses and thanked them for providing essential healthcare services to over 1,500 UN staff and members the local population. Ms. Mensa-Bonsu said that in addition to clocking over 346,985 km supplying over 36,260 tons of cargo, water and fuel in support of UNMIL's work, the Chinese 'blue helmets' had provided crucial logistical support to the Government of Liberia during the November 2009 Montserrado County Senatorial by-election. Moreover, China had donated $50,000 worth of medical supplies and recreational materials to communities in Zwedru and had saved the lives of a community near Freezone in Monrovia, which would have been obliterated by a fire outbreak. China is currently the largest contributor of military and police forces to peacekeeping operations among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and has sent 14,600 peacekeepers to missions around the world in the last 20 years. By contrast, at the end of the cold war, Africa received little international attention from the West. The former colonial powers refrain from committing much of their own troops on the ground in these missions while conflicts have shattered local people's lives how urgently they needed a helping hand to rebuild their homes. Although, they do pay much more of the UN peacekeeping budget whereas Beijing currently only contributes 2.67% of the general UN and PKO, they are about to lose their influence on the continent. China is taking an active part in UN peacekeeping mission, which reflects China's responsible attitude about world peace and stability and the main purpose of the UN Charter. Peacekeeping missions also provide opportunities for exchanges between China's military and its foreign counterparts, with more Chinese peacekeepers joining UN peacekeeping missions, China will provide more foreign language and psychology training courses to help them adapt. According to Chinese Ambassador to Liberia Zhou Yuxiao (in 2009), the Chinese peacekeepers serving within the United Nations Mission in Liberia would remain in the country up to 2011 when the Liberians would go to polls to elect a new president. In February 2007, President Hu Jintao met Chinese peacekeeping troops in Liberia and southern Sudan and put forward a four-point principle for the solution of the Darfur issue, which includes a peaceful solution through dialogue on an equal footing, improving living conditions, and respect
for sovereignty and territorial integrity. Hu's visits and proposal indicated that China attaches great importance to the peacekeeping missions. China has participated in the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) since 2003. Despite the fact that this is the operation to which China contributes its largest number of troops with 581 troops as of April 2009, there is very little research on China's participation.

**China's peacekeeping operations in Sudan**

The crisis in Sudan's Darfur province, is an internal conflict between government-backed militias the Popular Defense Forces (PDF) known as Janjaweed and local Darfuri resistance movements composed of 27 rebel groups that the main two are Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). In the 1990's, tensions between Omar al-Bashir's Congress Party and Darfuri politicians were increasing such that in 2003 violence broke out. To solve this political problem, Beijing tried to balance its ties with the different parties in Sudan crisis carefully and has shown its interest in a political settlement of the Darfur crisis because of the potentially destabilising influence the crisis has on the rest of Sudan and regional stability. Yet the negotiations among different parties have been concluded by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005 with the possibility of the South becoming independent from the North in 2011. In this stand, China and the West views opposed to how the UNSC should respond to Darfur (Dan, 2008) crisis, a domestic one. Beijing is determined to defend the principle of state sovereignty, while avoiding to undermine the legitimacy of the UNSC in global governance, or to come into direct conflict with the U.S or Europe. At the same time as the security was deteriorating, it increased the possibility of Western intervention in Sudan. Consequently, from 2004 onwards, the UNSC has examined the crisis in Darfur on multiple occasions when China has defended and protected its reputation as a responsible international player, particularly in Africa. China's strategy was to threaten to use its veto against resolutions that included economic sanctions or regular abstain from voting and before 2006 has expressed its preference of local or regional solution to the crisis. China's position became more flexible by 2006 to accept the necessity of international action as the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's statement: 'China is very much concerned about the stability in Darfur (...) and of course we supported the international society's decision to send in peacekeepers'. Wang Guangya, the Chinese representative in the Security Council, also played an important and constructive mediating role behind the scenes during the negotiations of the 'Annan Plan', the roadmap for the deployment of the UN-AU peacekeeping force, in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in November, 2006.

There was further diplomatic pressure by the appointment of Liu Guijin as China's special representative for Africa, with a special focus on Sudan; in May 2007 as during the same year there also was the continuation of active diplomacy and adoption of a mediating position between the Western call for intervention and the Sudanese resistance thereto. China took important action to help to draft a resolution acceptable by the government of Sudan and the West and to hold regular visits in Sudan and meetings with the Arab League and the AU deployment of UNAMID. Finally, China approved the resolution 1769 in the Security Council for UNAMID deployment. On 11 June 2008, Hu received Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha in Beijing, and reaffirmed that a political solution was the key to the problem in Darfur and that the peacekeeping operation and the political process should be pushed forward to attain this. China has sent five batches of humanitarian aid for Darfur in 2004 and the fifth, worth $ 5.2 million, was sent in August 2007, consisting of 'cross-country vehicles, ambulances, medical instruments and mobile houses'. China also contributed $ 3.5 million to AMIS, the African Union Mission in Sudan, in June 2006. China contributes 444 troops to UNMIS in South Sudan and 322 troops to UNAMID.

The West was strongly in favour of international action in Darfur from the outbreak of the crisis in February 2003 onwards with the promotion of the principle of the international community's responsibility to intervene if human rights atrocities take place. That would decrease the pressure on the French troops in the region while France, because of its experience and presence in the region, will be able to play a leading role in coordinating this mission. France is mostly concerned about the implications the conflict in Darfur has on regional stability because France's old colonies Chad and the Central African Republic and uses some of its old African colonies as a military training ground. In fact, France, Britain, USA and Russia have different degree of concern according to their interests or not. France has voted in favour of all resolutions of the UNSC condemning the violence in Darfur and co-sponsored key resolutions 1706 on 31 August, 2006 and 1769 on 31 July, 2007 which authorized the deployment of a hybrid UN-AU peacekeeping force. French support for AMIS has also been consistent.

Europe Union has been mostly active in the area of humanitarian assistance and provided Darfur with funds totaled $ 1 billion in December 2007for humanitarian assistance, support for the political process and the African Union Mission in Darfur. Supports for UN resolutions related to sanctions and active diplomatic role in the creation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and in the creation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between North and South Sudan reinforced by the appointment of the Special Representative Torben Brylle.
to oversee all of the EU’s diplomatic contributions to AMIS and the implementation of the DPA and the CPA. Supports to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in the form of logistical assistance, airlifts, financial contributions and the provision of expertise since 2004 as well as, subjects Sudan to a number of unilateral sanctions, notably an arms embargo, and it has also restricted the movements of certain individuals 'who impede the peace process'. The European Union is willing to consider other necessary measures to press the government of Sudan to fully cooperate with UNAMID.

Military commitments elsewhere can explain the reluctance of Germany and the UK to become militarily involved in the Darfur crisis when all three have expressed their support for AMIS.

There are some limits in the West’s actions toward Darfur peacekeeping. In fact in practice, Europe has committed little but humanitarian assistance, directed towards the consequences, but not the causes of the conflict that in spite of European aid and support for peacekeeping missions and putting pressure on the Sudanese government, its influence at the local level remains insignificant in comparison with China’s.

Furthermore, China proves an indispensable party to Washington when it comes to influencing the government in Khartoum and is able to operate as a mediator and the US has praised China for using its local influence constructively. By defending the principle that external parties can only intervene with the consent of the Sudanese government China shapes the conflicts between the principles of state sovereignty versus interventionism. At the question if China and the West are partners in Darfur crisis, one might say that China and Europe do not act as partners in managing the Darfur crisis due to the fact that many of their interests and principles are opposed. But they have to cooperate in maintaining international peace and stability benefit for both as well as the World.

Influence of China’s soft power in Africa

The first nine months of 2008, witnessed the deployment around the world of the roughly 2,000 peacekeepers in China, on average, 77% were in Africa. China is by far the largest contributor to Africa peacekeeping among the Security Council’s permanent five members, with 63% of total P-5 contributions to the continent. The composition of Chinese deployments is generally on the softer side of such military interventions. Of the total number around the globe, 5% are military observers, 14% are police, and 81% are troops. In Africa, 91% are troops devoted to carry out combat units tasked with defending UN installations and personnel as well as local civilians in immediate danger. This component includes engineers, logistics staff, and medical personnel. Many of Chinese troops are deployed in their organic home units, which leaves the contributing countries to utilize for projects other than those mandated by the mission. We can identify UNAMID in Darfur which has consisted of a 321 member engineering contingent dispatched to help with the construction of camps, roads, and bridges. Beijing has recently decided to send well diggers and other relevant equipment to Darfur to solve the water shortage facing the hybrid African Union–United Nations force. UNMIS in Southern Sudan with 444 engineers, transport experts, and medical personnel. UNMIL in Liberia with 563 engineers, transport experts and medical personnel (He, 2007). MONUC in Congo with 218 engineers, transport expert and medical personnel. While in Congo, according to the UN Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit’s chief, stated that Chinese medical personnel are “providing some of the best medical support anywhere in Central Africa.” Roads and bridges are in honors of peacekeepers in Liberia.

In all, according to Wei Yanwei, vice director of the Peace-Keeping Affairs Office of China’s Ministry of (Jennifer, 2008), National Defense, Chinese peacekeepers worldwide have built or repaired more than 200 bridges and 7,500 kilometers of roads, airports, and water supply infrastructures, and they have treated nearly 50,000 local patients. Moreover local populations benefit from many facilities, items of infrastructure, and services constructed and rehabilitated.

As results, peacekeeping operations was to develop and nurture China’s national interests, to maintain friendly and non-interventionist relations with recipient governments and at project the image of a responsible stakeholder on the international stage. It is in this aspect of peacekeeping; the soft-security portion of nation building and reconstruction that the greatest opportunities lie for using soft power to promote China’s wider national interests. In Africa: Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Liberia are also where it has made large investments in natural resources and where stability, infrastructure, and good government-to-government relations will ultimately redound to its economic interest.

Implications for China and recommendations

Since the late 1990’s, Beijing has increased peacekeeping activities focused on a case-by-case basis. But this principle or practice subjects China’s engagement to certain persistent limitations. China’s expanding engagement in peacekeeping activities offers new opportunities and remains a topical and important issue area for cooperation between Washington and Beijing. In general, peacekeeping helps to open a new avenue for engagement with the international community and offer an opportunity to deepen China’s commitment to global norms of confidence. It can also deepen china’s security-building measures, (Chin-Ha, 2009) conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction. Besides, in
Africa, it suggests a gradual accrual of operational knowledge and a better understanding of the political dynamics and complexities on the ground. China strengthens its commitment to regional stability and security building and improves international peacekeeping capacity. It constitutes potentially beneficial areas of constructive military cooperation between the United States and China as the two countries seek to work together in areas of converging interest as well as it opens the window for a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of China’s peacekeeping capabilities. It appears that China is prepared to shoulder greater responsibilities and to play a more significant role in supporting the UN peacekeeping (He, 2007) system. Working on peacekeeping training activities and capacity-building thus, provides a useful platform to build confidence and greater understanding between US and China militaries for emerging interest at the policy-making level within the State Department to explore future prospects for working with China to help build African peacekeeping capacity.

Some problems rose as case-by-case leads to selection so as Chinese peacekeepers operate mainly on the margins. Expectations within the international community should thus be modest but cautiously optimistic while state sovereignty and non-interference will continue to be the most important concern for Chinese policymakers. Moreover, practical matters of political, military and bureaucratic will and capacity will slow China’s responsiveness in peacekeeping affairs. Insufficient air and sealift capacity has also inhibited China’s ability to commit to the rapid deployment of significant numbers of troops over long distances. China’s financial contribution to UN peacekeeping operations hovers at around 2% of the overall DPKO budget need to be increased if China wants to play a larger role commensurate with its status as a permanent member of the Security Council and a rising global power.

Some recommendations could increase China’s stand. Thus, over time, it is possible that China will aim to gradually counterbalance U.S. influence and more actively shape in ways consistent with Chinese foreign policy principles and national interests the norms guiding UN peacekeeping operations. It requires more substantive Chinese commitment in several key areas, including better-trained troops and a more capable military that can deploy effective rapid-response teams. The need to improve the quality of its peacekeeping troops, expand its contributions beyond maintenance, engineering and medical units, demonstrate leadership capabilities at the DPKO and in peacekeeping operations around the world. China also needs to provide a greater financial contribution.

China’s deployment of naval vessels off the coast of Somalia has been warmly received by NATO, the European Union, and the United States. Washington should take the lead to sustain closer dialogue and policy coordination with China on other mutual security concerns such as a more robust level of assistance for forces in Afghanistan. That supposed a higher diplomatic level (Chin-Hao, 2009) in order to enlist greater support from the Chinese. China’s interest in taking part in peacekeeping operations in East Timor, Haiti, and Darfur all point to a more flexible view of intervention. When there is broad international consensus around a specific intervention, China has tended to lend its support. Washington should also work with Western countries to increase cooperation with China in peacekeeping seminars, training courses and other capacity-building programs. Explore concrete ways in which China could play a more active part in planning, coordination and leadership roles at the DPKO to increase its financial contributions. In the long run, collaboration on peacekeeping and other related forms of military-to-military exchange would also contribute to building greater openness and transparency within the PLA.

The expansion in Chinese engagement in peacekeeping provides an important and widening window of opportunity for the United States to engage with China more closely on peacekeeping-related issues in order to strengthen China’s commitment to global stability, ensure greater convergence between Chinese and other international interests on questions of regional security, and encourage more effective international peacekeeping operations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article does not purport to cover all the areas of China’s peacekeeping in Africa, nor does it offer an extensive analysis of all Chinese peacekeeping around the World. However, that did not detract from the value of the research and, in fact, has added to it. It has added to the value of the study so far as it has enabled the researcher to devote greater time, effort and space to the evaluation of Chinese peacekeeping contribution on local population in war-ton countries in Africa.

In this paper it was devoted to the changes that occur in Chinese foreign policy mainly towards UN and Africa after the cold war with specific focus on Peacekeeping in Liberia and Sudan as well as, its implications for the international Community. This paper has made three contributions to the field of China’s peacekeeping operations in Africa, each of which needs now to be highlighted:

1. The confirmation that China is a great responsible power. Its active and massive engagement in peacekeeping in Liberia and Sudan in the late 1990s while other great power became reluctant to dispatch is greatly appreciated by UN Representatives in the region, especially in Liberia, the local populations as well as the authorities.
2. The second contribution draws from the first. Peacekeeping is a part of Chinese soft power that includes economic, diplomacy, infrastructure, cultures...Again, the field has approved the influence of Chinese soft power in Africa at the expense of the West although the US has invested much more money in Africa than any other country.

3. The consequences in the international system at the end of the cold war. In other words, the implications for China to become more responsive to international expectations while making positive and tangible contributions to global peace and security. Despite the limitations, the position adopted by the paper was that Chinese peacekeepers are well accepted and have participated in improving local populations in Liberia and Sudan. That reinforced China’s stand as responsible great power. China is a credible and sustainable leadership in East Asia as well as, in Africa and its soft power is growing at expense of the West.

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