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THE CHINESE SCRAMBLE IN EAST AFRICA: THE GROWING INTEREST OF CHINA IN UGANDA, KENYA, AND TANZANIA

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THE CHINESE SCRAMBLE IN EAST AFRICA:
THE GROWING INTEREST OF CHINA
IN UGANDA, KENYA, AND TANZANIA

BY
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UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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I dedicate this undergraduate honors thesis to God and my parents, Yong-Mi Kim and Jang-Ju Jo, who, opened the door for me to enlightening experiences in Africa and the United States and trusted in me with love and patience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	5
Chinese Scramble in Africa	7
Beijing Consensus	9
Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs)	11
South-South cooperation	15
Political Warfare	17
East Africa Case	19
Tanzania	20
Kenya	23
Uganda	24
Contrasting Reactions	27
Reactions from West	27
Reactions from Africa	30
Diverse Comments and Projections	32
Conclusion	35
Bibliography	38

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ABSTRACT

“We look again to the East, where the sun rises, and no longer to the West, where it sets.”

-President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe-

In the past, Africa has been known as a land of undiscovered natural resources. Today, countries all over the world are experiencing scarcity of resources while demands are rising; consequently, Africa has again become an important source to alleviate the rising demands. Over the years, Africa experienced different kinds of “scrambles” of powerful countries from the West in the form of colonialism and imperialism. When China emerged as a powerful global player, it has turned to Africa for resources. This “Chinese scramble” is distinctive from previous “scrambles” in many ways. China is establishing relations through the “Beijing Consensus,” a non-interference policy that strictly pertains to achieve economic goals. With its state-owned enterprises (SOEs) as efficient and less expensive agents, China has achieved great advantage to win over the hearts of African leaders. This South-South cooperation is particular in that it is different from traditional North-South cooperation in providing investments and aid. Even though the “Chinese scramble” is centered on economic terms, China is using it to promote political warfare to gain support from African leaders. By using bilateral relationships with three East African countries – Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda – the “Chinese scramble” has proven to be not solely about economic relations. African leaders are welcoming and preferring the “Chinese scramble” because it gives them the bargaining power in the international scene, and it also invites other potential players into the competition; however, it has caused great distress for former partners in the West. Many scholars have made diverse comments about the “Chinese scramble” and provided many different projections. Nevertheless, China’s new role in Africa has transformed Africa’s image in an international system, and it is exciting to see how this drama will turn out in the future.

INTRODUCTION

“We look again to the East, where the sun rises, and no longer to the West, where it sets,” (*FT*). This quote, by President Robert Mugabe in 2006, shows preference to Asian countries in the East over the European countries and the United States in the West. Africa always has been a land full of undiscovered natural resources. As the world is experiencing scarcity of resources while demand increases, Africa definitely has become a valuable source for many countries are striving to win over. In 2006, according to the *New York Times*, “China has put on its best face to court Africa which it called, ‘the land of myth and miracles,’ in its official posters of the third China-Africa Summit” (*Kahn, NYT*). During this diplomatic event, the leaders from 48 African nations came to Beijing; “China’s expanding engagement in Africa has captured world attention” (*Gill and Reilly*). This “Chinese scramble” in Africa shows unique characteristics compared to the traditional “Scramble” of European colonizers and “New scramble” of the United States.

The term “New Scramble” had been used to refer to the expanding interests of the United States in Africa. The term “Scramble” over the resource abundant continent was used in 19th Century when the European scrambled and nearly overtook the continent with colonization. During the 19th Century, the colonizers drove and dictated their interests in the continent. The Europeans had their turn in the late 19th Century with its scramble; now there is a new turnout, it is the period of the “Chinese Scramble.” Even though the influences of European presence did not entirely disappear, the new scramble over Africa by China has given African leaders some bargaining power to become stronger decision-making actors in the international scene.

As mentioned above, Africa is known as a land full of undiscovered resources. However, the discovered resources so far have proven Africa to be a wonderful source to suffice the need for increasing demands. Nevertheless, many African nations are underdeveloped and majority of the continent lives in extreme poverty. They certainly need investment, and aid from outside the continent to help transform the undiscovered natural substances to valuable natural resources. There have been many attempts by the United States and the rich European countries to have consistent relationship with African nations with abundant natural resources. However, these western countries have been the only players to deal with African countries; consequently, the western countries exploited the resources and caused many African leaders to be powerless to accomplish economic growth. The western countries have been regulating links with Africa with the “Washington Consensus.” The “Washington Consensus” refers to the set of conditions to promote good governance and democracy in Africa; best known condition in “Washington Consensus” is democratization of the nation state since many scholars assume that democracy promote peace in the world. African nations were required to follow this outline in order to receive investments and loans from United States and international organizations such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

With China’s internal economic expansion, it has decided to turn to Africa with set of policies that are described as “Beijing Consensus” by Ramo. The “Beijing Consensus,” according to Axel Berkofsky is “the ‘principle of non-interference’ a strategy of not bothering African and Central Asian dictatorships with Western-style criticism of human rights violations and political oppression in countries” (*Berkofsky*).

Although I was born in South Korea of Korean parentage, I have spent most of my adult life in East Africa. Initially, Koreans were a small group in a major region of Africa. Gradually, the dynamics of the region began to change to the extent that there is a significant presence of other Asian groups, especially Chinese, in East Africa. This paper explores this growing influence of China in the countries of East Africa: Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. It will examine what approach the Chinese are taking, what kind of relationship China is building, and what strategy China is using in its scramble for Africa. Through the bilateral relationships of East African countries – Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania – even though they do not produce oil, I will attempt to show that China's search for oil is not the only interest in Africa. I will discuss the contrasting reactions from the former suppliers of the aid, the West, and the receivers of the aid, who recently found an alternative business partner. Lastly, this paper will provide the diverse comments and projections about the Chinese scramble found in various newspapers and journals.

CHAPTER I. CHINESE SCRAMBLE IN AFRICA

As the expansion of China's involvement in Africa grew, a number of analysts had assessed the continent with the pins in the map, much as colonial cartographers did more than a century ago. Alec Russell from the *Financial Times* reports, "this time, however, the pins do not represent putative borders. Rather they reflect the progress of grandiose Chinese-backed infrastructure projects, in particular railways and roads that promise to open up the continent," (*Russell, FT*). Another article from the *Economist* shows other kind of "scramble" of China.

The author expresses the scramble in terms of China's business links with Africa: "One produced a map of Africa, highlighting new Asian oil interests: it was a forest of Chinese flags," (*Economist*). Whether the "Chinese scramble" is a merely brotherly help from another country from the South or a strict business centered strategy to acquire natural resources, the new "scramble" has emerged, and it is moving deeper into the heart of Africa.

According to the most recently updated article by Stephanie Hanson who is on the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), "China now ranks as the continent's second-highest trading partner, behind the United States, and ahead of France and Britain. From 2002-2003, trade between China and Africa doubled to \$18.5 billion; by 2007, it had reached \$73 billion" (*Hanson*). This active involvement of China in Africa is mainly due to the economic expansion China has enjoyed. According to Ikenberry (23) in *Foreign Affairs*, "China's extraordinary economic growth and active diplomacy are already transforming East Asia, and future decades will see even greater increases in Chinese power and influence." He also note, "The rise of China will undoubtedly be one of the great dramas of the twenty-first century. But exactly how this drama will play out is an open question." According to his research, the size of China's economy has "quadrupled since the launch of market reforms in the late 1970s and, by some estimates, will double again over the next decade." According to the *Financial Times*, "Chinese diplomats like to point out that they are not complete new comers to the continent... Yet the engagements on all fronts between China and Africa have accelerated rapidly over the past few years because the continent fills so many of China's immediate needs" (*Dyer*). With rich natural resources Africa "is no longer a marginal player, and has become especially important to the United States and China," (*Shinn*). This chapter will discuss the methodology China is using to achieve its benefits with set of agreement called the "Beijing Consensus,"

what kind of relationship China and Africa are maintaining, and other goals that China seeks on the continent.

BEIJING CONSENSUS

The approaches China took in establishing relationship with Africa are known as the “Beijing Consensus.” It is set of policies China is using to conduct foreign relations that implies its interests are strictly to promote business, without any political terms attached. According to Hanson from CFR, “The Chinese approach to foreign relations is officially termed ‘non-interference in domestic affairs.’ Chinese leaders say human rights are relative, and each country should be allowed their own definition of them and timetable for reaching them,” (*Hanson*). The term “Beijing Consensus” was originated by Joshua Cooper Ramo, the former *Time* magazine foreign affairs editor and Goldman Sachs advisor for China, and now managing director of Kissinger Associates. According to Sautman and Hairong (98-99),

China’s creation of an attractive (although not necessarily accurate) image, termed the Beijing consensus, itself distinguishes China’s links with Africa....While there is no consensus on the Beijing consensus, it is often discussed as China’s investments, aid, and trade not conditioned by demands of Western states and international institution. The Beijing consensus is about lessons of articulation of state and economy in China and her approach to international relations.

In defending China’s Africa aid stance, Morris from the *Financial Times* reports, “Liu Guijim, China’s special envoy for African affairs, said: “we don’t attach political conditions [to aid]. We have to realize the political and economic environments are not idea. But we don’t have to wait for everything to be satisfactory or human rights to be perfect.” The “Beijing consensus” emphasizes a non-interference policy and provides heavy investments to African nations without any political conditions attached; it appears to be attractive to various African leaders, but it distresses former players. With its growing economy, China has expanded its

influence over Africa to fill its need in natural resources. Africa has been an important ground because of its rich natural resources, especially oil; however, it did not have any power over negotiating deals regarding their natural resources until China arrived with heavy investments, and without a complicated list of political criteria to follow. Klein-Ahlbrandt and Small (39) in *Foreign Affairs* note that, “With China, however, they [African states] have been able to establish relationships free from tensions or discomfort over issues such as democracy.” With China’s growing interest in Africa, African leaders are obtaining the bargaining power they never used to have.

It is evident that the “Beijing Consensus” is a powerful instrument to challenge the approaches that former Western partners took. According to the article in the *New York Times*, “China does not follow the international lending standards intended to fight corruption in the region. It has embraced the leaders of Sudan and Zimbabwe, two countries that are under heavy pressure to improve their poor human rights records” (*Kahn*). According to the Wallis’ article in the *Financial Times*, “Beijing’s willingness to extend credit without conditions has put traditional donors on the back foot. It is challenging the bureaucracy around development aid and making it harder for the West to proselytize about democracy and good governance.”

With China’s booming economy, China not only provides heavy investments and aid but also forgive an enormous amount of debt. According to the *Financial Times*, “Chinese financial assistance to Africa is accelerating... according to a recent paper written by an economist at the IMF, China had extended loans and credit lines to Africa worth \$19 billion by the end of 2006” (*Dyer and Wallis*). Harsch, from the United Nations journal reported that China and Africa in their 2006 summit agreed on “The three-year action plan to forge a ‘new

type of strategic partnership’, that would be based on pragmatic cooperation, equality and mutual benefit.” The plan pledges that China will:

- Double aid to Africa by 2009 (to about \$1 billion)
- Set up a \$5 billion China-Africa development fund to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa
- Provide \$3 billion in preferential loans and \$2 billion in preferential buyer’s credits to African countries
- Cancel all debt stemming from Chinese interest-free government loans that matured by the end of 2005, for the 31 highly indebted and least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa that have relations with China (an amount estimated at around \$1.4 billion)
- Further open China’s markets to exports from African LDCs by increasing from 190 to 440 the number of products receiving zero-tariff treatment
- Train 15,000 African professionals, double the number of Chinese government scholarships given annually to Africans (to 4,000) and send 100 senior agricultural experts and 300 youth volunteers
- Build 30 hospitals, 30 malaria treatment centers, and 100 rural schools.

To describe what African leaders are experiencing with the Chinese presence in Africa, Michael Power, an expert on the relationship at Investec Asset Management gives a great illustration. He states in the *Financial Times* that “When the reality is China on your front doorstep with a nice big box with a ribbon on it, it’s difficult to say no” (*Green and Russell*).

CHINESE STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES

Unlike former actors who have invested in private enterprises, China took a different route, and it is investing in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) as its agents to accomplish various infrastructure projects in Africa. According to Gill and Reilly, “Much of China’s aid is in the form of concessional loans to African governments for infrastructure projects, many of which are implemented primarily by Chinese corporations.” These Chinese corporations (SOEs) are supported by local governments in China to work in Africa. According to the article in the *Financial Times*, “In total, an estimated 800 Chinese state companies are operating on the

continent. By some estimates, Chinese contractors are winning 50 percent of all new public works projects in Africa, edging out competitors with higher overheads, although concerns about quality persist,” (*Wallis*). Chinese companies view Africa as an open market that had been exploited and neglected by Western companies. According to the *People’s Daily*, China’s newspaper agency owned by its Ministry of foreign Affairs, “Chinese enterprises had actively invested in African countries with a direct investment up to 305 million dollars from January to June in 2008.” According to *People’s Daily*, “The China-Africa trade cooperation is highly complementary as Africa is a land with a huge population, rich resources and great development potentials...The policy and legal environment for Chinese and African enterprises to carry out investment cooperation is improving constantly.”

China’s ability to process projects quickly gives it a huge advantage over the Western powers, which are its main competitors. Compared to the former infrastructure projects with the US, World Bank, and IMF, Africa has a tendency to prefer Chinese companies because they can produce faster results. Chinese state-owned enterprises focusing on aiding infrastructure is benefiting Africa because “For African governments, the investment in infrastructure is arguably the most important spin-off of the intensifying liaison” (*Russell*). An interview with a Chinese engineer hired to work in Africa in the *Financial Times* helps explain how quickly China can complete the projects.

Song Jing, an engineer for China National Electronics Import and Export Corporation... was speaking for Chinese colleagues across Africa when he proudly told the *FT* earlier this year: ‘No one can finish work as quickly as we can.’ On March 12 we dug the first foundations. By May Day we had put in the first steel structure. At the end of July we were more than 90 per cent finished (*Russell* 2008).

The author of the article which the interview was in argues that “it is stories such as this that encourage African governments to ignore the skeptics and instead, expand ties with Beijing” (*Russell*). Infrastructure projects that were designed by Westerners used to take years to even get started. The picture is made much clearer if we examine an interview that the *Financial Times* did with the President of Senegal, Adboulaye Wade:

Today, however, economic relations are based more on mutual need – the economic reality that the EU and the US cannot compete with China. I have found that a contract that would take five years to discuss, negotiate and sign with the World Bank takes three months when we have dealt with Chinese authorities. When products are affordable, innovative programmes become realistic. Today I find myself at the heart of an economic struggle with the EU. If Europe does not want to provide funding for African infrastructure – it pledged \$15 billion under the Cotonou Agreement eight years ago – the Chinese are ready to take up the task, more rapidly and at less cost (*FT*)

It is evident that African leaders and nations are welcoming the involvement of China, who is giving them the bargaining power on the international scene with much better deals. African leaders now have the option of choosing which players to make deals with, and they are tending to choose China over the traditional Western powers for its ability to complete complex infrastructure projects quickly.

The costs of the infrastructure projects that are billed to the African governments show significant difference between Chinese SOEs and Western companies. According to Kurlantzick in *Policy Outlook*, “China’s winning bids are based on low labour costs and profit margins and quick turn-around.” The *Center for Chinese Studies* of Stellenbosch University reported that “Most Western firms expect 15-25 per cent profits rates; most Chinese firms expect less than 10 per cent and many accept 3-5 per cent.” Burke and Corkin from the *Center for Chinese Studies* at Stellenbosch University also found that,

The success of China's companies, particularly state-owned enterprises (SOEs), can be attributed to several factors: cost competitiveness in overall bidding price; access to cheap capital through Chinese state-owned banks; access to skilled low cost labour; access to cheap building materials through supply chains from China; and political support from the Chinese government channeled through Chinese embassies and Economic and Commercial Counsels in the respective African countries, (7).

Among the factors that Burke and Corkin noted about Chinese companies' successful was the nature of Chinese workers; they are different from the workers from the previous partnered companies. The willingness of Chinese workers to live a simple lifestyle and to utilize their multifunctional skills in various areas drastically reduces labor cost. Other foreign companies usually pay their managers or engineers excessive salaries in addition to their own housing and transportation. These expenses are included in the cost of the infrastructure projects. The low cost of Chinese infrastructure projects are largely due to Chinese workers' cheap labor costs. According to Corkin, "Chinese workers often live on-site in very simple accommodation. Chinese managers, engineers, and labourers usually live together with little visible difference between them. This facilitates understanding and communication, drastically reducing costs," (142). Many Chinese workers are recognized for their skill and performance; moreover, they are multiskilled and are willing to be involved in various areas of construction. Therefore, their ability tremendously reduces the number of workers required at the site, and it reduces the labor cost required to complete the projects.

These state-owned Chinese enterprises enable numerous infrastructure projects to be completed much faster and much cheaper. Like the President Adboulaye of Senegal, many African leaders are more likely to make deals with China since they want to see the completion of the infrastructure projects in their countries faster with low cost. These state owned

enterprises are one of the unique characteristics of the “Chinese scramble,” and they definitely have given advantages to China.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

In the past, China has emphasized its ties to Africa by promoting their shared common experiences as developing countries; China and Africa have expressed their relationship as peaceful and cooperative, while the Western powers criticize relationship of China to Africa as imperialistic and exploitative. The nature of the relationship of China and Africa is expressed through the slogan of the China-Africa summit, “Peace, Friendship, Cooperation, Development” (*Khan*). China herself emerged from the developing south. Lyal White from *Mail & Guardian* argues that “In terms of political ideology and approaches to socio-economic development, China is closely aligned to countries of the south (marginalized developing countries).” What is unique about South-South cooperation is that it deviates from traditional nature of foreign investments and aid. Traditionally, when the foreign investments and aid projects were discussed, it tended to be North-South cooperation; North states refer to the rich and powerful states; whereas, South states refer to the less developed and marginalized states. China has been one of the poor countries, and now it has emerged as one of the important players of the global economy.

In 2005, a Chinese official working on WTO affairs, Wu Jiahuang, made a presentation to the United Nations agency on the industrialization, trade and poverty alleviation through South-South cooperation. He argues that “China provides a model for developing states based on rapid industrialization fuelled by a high-level of investment and concentration on exports and, unlike the West, its low tariff, and low-subsidy regime allows other developing countries

to export freely to China and compete with her in world markets,” (*Sautman and Hairong*, 113). China considers a relationship with Africa a very important part of its South-South cooperation and strengthening efforts to achieve peace and development. China, with its grand strategic partnership with Africa, promotes political equality. According to the *New York Times*, Wenran Jiang, a political scientist at the University of Alberta, who has studied Chinese-African ties, argues, “African leaders see China as a new kind of global partner that has lots of money but treats them as equals,” (*Kahn*). China’s current engagement in Africa is rooted in more than fifty years of friendly, respectful, and supportive relations between China and African countries. Beijing was quick to assist the emergent nations of postcolonial Africa even at a time when China was itself was isolated, poor, and beset with internal upheavals (*Gill and Reilly*).

Scholars like Keet (79) point out the difficulties in promoting friendly and mutually benefitting South-South cooperation because “Most governments in Africa are not open and transparent about their international economic relations and investment agreements [while] Chinese government and economy are similarly, or even more, opaque and difficult to access and assess.” Keet also argues that “Africa may indeed receive (some) quantitative returns, but it is China that will achieve the further vast qualitative transformation of its economy, using the material and financial resources it gains from Africa,” (81). Despite obstacles to achieve South-South cooperation, African leaders view China as a lesser of evil. Frederick Chiluba, who was the President of Zambia, said in 2000,

[Developed countries] are not prepared to discuss the issues of justice and fair play concerning the international trade and commercial sector, which imposes considerable suffering and privation on developing countries ... [T]he developing world continues to subsidize consumption of the developed world, through an iniquitous trade system. The existing structure is designed to consign us to perpetual

poverty and underdevelopment ... It is unrealistic to expect support, relief or respite from those who benefit from the status quo.

Jamie Monson from Carlton College argues, “The thrust of China’s approach was anti-hegemonic and linked this key Chinese aid project form a more ideologically committed period to the present day, thus underlining the value of historical background...” (*Large*). South-South cooperation will face some criticism; nonetheless, this cooperation is largely based on friendship and respect for political equality; it is mainly because as a country that belongs to the South, China shares experiences that the developed world cannot convey.

POLITICAL WARFARE

The “Chinese scramble” not only conveys economic benefits and obtaining natural resources; even though, Chinese officials have stated that the “Beijing Consensus” is free from any political terms attached, there is a hidden political agenda that China is trying to achieve. Political warfare is “A non violent instrument of grand strategy, involves coordinated activities, and results [in] intangible effects on intended targets” (*Chau*). The Chinese State Council said that “As mankind is about to enter the 21st century, it is the aspiration of the Chinese government and people to lead a peaceful, stable and prosperous world into the new century,” (*PRC State Council*). China’s primary motive for having a close relationship with Africa is economic expansion; however, China is trying to use the “Chinese scramble” to benefit itself politically in the global system. According to Frynas and Paulo (106: 238) in *African Affairs*, “Diplomatically, China seeks African support for its status as a key power in world affairs as well as to diminish Taiwan’s chances of diplomatic recognition in Africa.” All African nations except two have rejected the status of Taiwan as independent state and have supported the “One China policy.”

Chau notes that George Kennan, in his State Department Policy Planning Staff memorandum, wrote, “In broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives,” (Chau 3). According to Chau, “the central aim of the PRC’s grand strategy is to become a global power, restructuring the world order – including the African continent – to achieve this objective,” (20). He argues that China is seeking freedom of action, access to natural resources, and authority around the world. China’s interest in playing as a major power in the international system was noticed by Boorman (1960) in *World Politics* when he wrote, “Internationally, revitalized Chinese national power, under Communist control, has signaled Peking’s primary foreign-policy goal: recognized status as a major world power on its own terms.” China’s goal has been achieved because China’s relationships with African nations have helped protect China from criticism of other nations about China’s poor human rights record. Li Anshan, an Africa expert at Peking University, said in the *Financial Times*, “Over the past decade, human rights proposals against China were defeated 11 times at the United Nations; without African nations’ support, China could not have defeated those proposals,” (Dyer).

China’s strong influence in Africa definitely transcends economic effect. Even though, China has strongly campaigned their foreign policies with “no political terms attached,” China is clearly promoting its political agenda in the international system through its involvement in Africa. An article from the *New York Times* said that “In a long term, Chinese officials say they hope not only that the overture will give their companies an edge in the competition for resources, but also that it will give their diplomats an advantage at the United Nations and other international organizations, where African countries can constitute a powerful voting bloc,” (Kahn). The “Chinese scramble” in Africa is definitely a win-win situation since African

nations are achieving economic benefits with respect while China is gathering rich natural resources and forming alliances with African nations. China's involvement in Africa is not merely to acquire natural resources but also to achieve a stronger voice and power in the international system by using political warfare. China's rise is definitely one of the great dramas of the 21st Century. With the help of its African friends, whether China will rise as global power next to the United States and the European Union is the question many are eager to find out.

CHAPTER II. EAST AFRICA: TANZANIA, KENYA, AND UGANDA

Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda are the three countries that are original members of the East African Community. With Lake Victoria at the center, Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda are considered somewhat less problematic in terms of internal conflicts compared to their neighbors in Africa such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Rwanda. Those problematic countries became famous because of its bloodshed conflicts that led to thousands of deaths. The mineral deposits in Tanzania and the recent discoveries of commercially viable oil reserves in Kenya and Uganda make East Africa an attractive area for China. However, unlike North and West Africa which by 2007 constituted 15.9 percent of oil exports in the world (*BP*), the East Africa does not produce any oil.

What is unique about the Chinese "scramble" is that unlike the "scramble" of the United States and western countries over oil, China provides heavy investments and aid, even to the countries that do not produce oil or natural gases; unlike conditioned policies western

countries and international organizations required for African nations to follow in order to receive loans, China's unconditional policies do not impose requirements. By observing the relationships of China with the three countries of East Africa, it will be evident that even though political history and present conditions differ, China's nature of relations will be the same. The relationships are bilateral and impose a policy of non-interference; even when the West pulls out during the internal turbulences such as regime changes and civil conflicts, China still keeps its promises of investments and aid.

TANZANIA

The United Republic of Tanzania, a country emerged from the Tanganyika and Zanzibar region, achieved its independence from Britain in the early 1960s. The Central Intelligence Agency website notes, "One party rule came to an end in 1995 with the first democratic elections held in the country since the 1970s" (CIA). According to the profile by the African Study Center from University of Pennsylvania, "Tanzania has often attracted attention abroad as an exemplary African nation," and "Tanzania's political environment is more stable than in many African nations." Sautman and Hairong (91) note, "The symbol of China-Africa links from the 1960s to 1980s was the Tanzania-Zambia railway (Tazara) built by 50,000 Chinese." This 1,860 kilometer long railway is known as "Freedom Railway" among local people. *People's Daily* in China commented, "Although it is still not wealthy, China, a developing country, has extended to Tanzania economic aid worth more than 2 billion dollars since 1960s, making it the largest beneficiary of Chinese aid in Africa."

Tanzania with its stable government and successful economy makes it a good model for other African nations. Tanzania has not experienced violence or upheavals whenever

competitive elections are held; the country has also enjoyed political stability. Tanzania is also known to be economically stable; according to the World Economic Forum (2006) in its competitive index rankings, Tanzania stands 104th in the world and twelfth out of twenty-eight African countries. According to a publication by the United Nations Development Programme in 2007, Tanzania has a population of over 38 million and a per capita income of \$317 in 2005. By 2005, Tanzania had \$6,029 million dollars from Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock. It also records that “[Tanzania] has a number of attributes that make it an attractive destination for FDI despite its low-income level. First, the country has an 800-kilometre coastline with three ports. Second, it has enjoyed a history of political stability in spite of the ethnic diversity of its population. Third, its economic reform programme has been very successful.”

China established its diplomatic relations with this region in 1961 before the United Republic of Tanzania was formed. According to a document published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People’s Republic of China, “Since 1964, China has provided various kinds of assistance to Tanzania. China-Tanzanian joint venture cooperation started in the 1960s and has been developing rapidly in recent years.” From the same source, it is noted that in 2002, the total trade volume between China and Tanzania was \$128 million, of which China’s export was \$121 million and import \$6.62 million. On April 11, 2008, Chinese President Hu Jintao held talks with Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete in China, and President Hu held grand ceremony to welcome him. News from the website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China reports, “To further the bilateral cooperation, Hu made a four-point proposal. First, strengthen political exchanges. Second, expand mutually beneficial trade cooperation. Third, expand humanities exchanges. Fourth, deepen cooperation in the United Nations and on other multilateral occasions. Both sides agreed to make an efforts to deepen their traditional

friendship, expand pragmatic cooperation, and continue to push for all-round development of China-Tanzania and China-Africa friendly cooperative relations.”

KENYA

The Republic of Kenya has more economic growth than Tanzania and Uganda. Kenya contains numerous tribes but had been enjoying political and economical stability until early 2008 when the Presidential election somehow started a dispute among the different tribes. The *New York Times* reported about chaos: “Kenya is a mosaic of some 40 tribes, and for most of its history, they have intermarried and gotten along fine. But this election, the first competitive one between political heavyweights from different tribes, seems to have cracked open a new divide.” (*Gettleman*)

Jomo Kenyatta, the founding president of the Republic of Kenya, led the country from independence in 1963 until his death 1978. In 1978, Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi succeeded Kenyatta as president. Moi’s near-dictatorship from 1978 ended when he lost the election in 2002. President Moi consented on a political liberalization in late 1991 because of external and internal pressure. According to the *World Report 2008*, by the Human Rights Watch, “The World Bank and IMF, which pulled out of Kenya during the Moi regime, have begun lending again, especially in the areas of public sector management, fighting corruption and simplifying the legal procedures for starting a business of selling land.”

According to the Central Intelligence Agency website, Kenya was “A de facto one-party state from 1969 until 1982 when the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) made itself the sole legal party in Kenya. The ethnically fractured opposition failed to dislodge

KAMU from power in elections in 1992 and 1997, which were marred by violence and fraud” (CIA). According to the *New York Times*, “In late 2007, Kenya was in a position most of Africa would envy. Its economy had been humming along, with a growth rate around 7 percent and a billion-dollar-a-year tourism industry,” (Gettleman). Then came the election in 2007, in which President Mwai Kibaki was elected as the president of Kenya by a narrow margin. Early returns, however, suggested that Mr. Odinga, the opposition leader was heading for a landslide.

Within minutes of the official announcement, the country descended into tribal bloodletting. By New Year’s Day [in 2008] the death toll stood at more than 300 including dozens burned as they sought refuge in a church. More than 1,000 Kenyans have been killed and hundreds of thousands driven from their homes in the violence. Much of the fighting, like the voting, has been along ethnic lines, (Gettleman).

Even though Kenya has achieved economic success compared to other regions, Kenya has been known to be somewhat dangerous place to live, especially for foreigners. Unlike Uganda and Tanzania, there have been numerous reports of violence whenever elections are held. The *Financial Times* reports that “The People’s Daily, mouthpiece for the Communist party, [wrote] on the post-election crisis in Kenya last week, said democracy was not suited to Africans.”

When the World Bank and IMF withdrew from the country during the reign of President Moi, China enjoyed a deep connection with Kenya; both leaders made frequent visits to each other’s countries. China established diplomatic relations with Kenya in 1963. The bilateral relations record on the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs records, “In 1978, when President Daniel Arap Moi came in power, the relation of the two countries gained a fast development. With frequent mutual visits at high level the friendly cooperation has witnessed outstanding achievements in many fields” (MFA of PRC). It also notes that “the year of 2002

saw the trade value between China and Kenya reach US \$ 186.37 million, of which the Chinese export took up US \$ 180.576 million while the import was US \$5.798 million.”

Presently, there are over twenty Chinese companies doing their businesses in Kenya. The internal conflicts and human right issues do not seem to be a problem for Chinese; contrastingly, those issues have been core reason for the Western supports to diminish. The last visit by President Hu Jintao to Kenya was made on April 2006. Upon his arrival he sent a written statement that said, “The two countries have continuously enhanced their friendship and cooperation in various fields and strengthened consultations and cooperation in international affairs that helped safeguard the common interests of the two countries and the vast majority of developing countries” (*Luan*).

UGANDA

The Republic of Uganda is a former colony of Britain and achieved independence on October 9, 1962. The boundaries that define the territory of Uganda were drawn by Britain which disregarded the various different ethnic groups with different cultures. Because of the wide variety of ethnicity, the country was not able to adapt a unified political system until the country was run by brutal dictator, Idi Amin. According to the Central Intelligence Agency website, “the dictatorial regime of Idi Amin (1971-1979) was responsible for the deaths of some 300,000 opponents; guerrilla war and human rights abuses under Milton Obote (1980-1985) claimed at least another 100,000 lives.” China and Uganda established their diplomatic relations on October 18, 1962. During the period from 1962 to 1985, the bilateral relations between the two countries witnessed a steady development in spite of the regime changes in Uganda. China has been a faithful friend, which has made large investments and given aid to

Uganda over the years. According to the Uganda Investment Authority, “Over \$35 million has been invested in Uganda by the Chinese from June 30, 2007 to June 30, 2008. Also, the Chinese government has given over \$85 million in aid over the last four years.” (*Muwanga, NV*)

Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986 and ever since then he has been serving as head of state. Museveni is well known for being an ally of the United States and he is known for claiming his legitimacy of his ruling by the popular will of Ugandan people. According to Sautman and Hairong (88-89), “The most-praised African US ally, Yoweri Museveni, for example, incarnates ‘competitive authoritarianism,’ having tried his main opponent for rape and treason and changed the constitution to stay in office after 20 years as Uganda’s president.” Friendly visits from former U.S. presidents including Bill Clinton and President George W. Bush signify a strong alliance with the United States.

Even though President Museveni is a strong ally to the United States, he has also made a close alliance with China. Since he came to power, Uganda and China have experienced a high level of bilateral cooperation. Sautman and Hairong (95) note, “Even such US allies as Museveni see Africa’s ‘donating’ of unprocessed raw materials to the West as allowing a small part of humanity to live well at Africans’ expense; they contend Africans need investment that will permit them to sell coffee and not just beans, steel and not just iron ore.” The *Financial Times* reports, “In his address to the closing dinner [at China and Africa Summit 2006], President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda was caustic about the record of Western businesses. Uganda received \$1 per kilogram of coffee it grows, he said, before the beans are roasted and ground in London and sold for \$20. ‘For each 1kilogram of coffee we are donating \$19. We have been doing this for a long time. But we are fighting it. We are going to change’” (*Russell*).

The document on Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China notes, “In 2002, the trade volume between the two countries came to US \$33.66 million, among which China’s export was US \$28.06 million, and import US \$5.6 million.”

James Baba, the State Minister in the Vice-President’s office commented in the *New Vision* Uganda’s newspaper, that thirty years ago, China was one of the third world countries which was similar to Uganda in many conditions. This implies that Uganda is one of many developing countries who are admiring the success of China and trying to follow in its footsteps. There are also some politicians who are cautious about Chinese involvement, they have expressed their opinion and suggested ways to prevent this foreign presence to be another exploitation of their natural resources. Salim Saleh, Ugandan Minister of State for Microfinance, called for fair trade between Uganda and China. He said in his interview with the *New Vision*, “Uganda imports from China are worth about 300 million dollars, while the exports are between 20 million dollars and 30 million dollars only.” He urged the Ugandan business community to be disciplined and choose carefully the right enterprises in order to achieve prosperity and favorable competition on the international market.

Like other African countries, these three countries show a variety of political and economic conditions. Despite their differences, China has been reaching out to them to build strong relationships. Whether Chinese relations with Africa are imperialistic like previous Western relationship or friendly like that of a peer country from the Southern hemisphere, it is hard to analyze the nature of the relations, but something that is definitely clear is that with China’s growing influence in Africa, African leaders have more power in decision making and bargaining with more options.

CHAPTER III. CONTRASTING REACTIONS

When the “Chinese scramble” emerged and the world’s attention was focused on Chinese involvement in Africa, there have been two very different reactions. Africa welcomed Chinese involvement and because of China’s role in Africa, it was finally able to gain bargaining power in the international system; however, Western institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF and other Western countries who are still involved in Africa under the “Washington Consensus,” were pessimistic about it. There are many different assumptions made by various scholars about why Westerners are pessimistic about Chinese operations in Africa. Many were skeptical of China’s cozying-up to dictators, its exploitation of natural resources, and its perceived affinity toward Africa. Africans, on the other hand, enjoy the relations with China for many reasons. African leaders have achieved new bargaining power internationally and a chance to enjoy autonomy, which was their legitimate right under the nation’s sovereignty but has been trampled on by colonizers and major powers in post colonial years.

REACTIONS FROM WEST

From a Western perspective, China’s involvement in Africa has ruined the efforts of the Western institutions to achieve democratization throughout the African continent over the long period of time. Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Small note that “China is often accused of supporting a string of despots, nuclear proliferators, and genocidal regimes, shielding them from international pressure and thus reversing progress on human rights and humanitarian principles.” In the report for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Shinn writes, “A senior U.S. official warned that Beijing's ties with ‘troublesome’ states would have repercussions.

Countries deemed troublesome by the United States that export significant quantities of oil to China will probably continue to cause tensions between the United States and China,” (*Shinn*). In *All Africa*, an Africa magazine, the pessimism of the West is expressed as the fear of neutralization of the efforts of democratization; “The success of China’s involvement in Africa is actually feared that it could neutralize US and Europe’s efforts to promote democracy and good governance on the continent,” (*Onyango and Odhiambo, All Africa*). The *New York Times* reported that “Some Westerners expressed the concern over Beijing’s low-interest loans and gifts that undermine efforts to foster good governing in Africa. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have expressed their concerns that China’s unrestricted lending, including a \$2 billion credit line for corruption-plagued Angola, has undermined years of painstaking efforts to arrange conditional debt relief,” (*Kahn, NYT*).

In reaction to the criticisms of the West, China’s Special Envoy on African Affairs Liu Guijin has argued in the *People’s Daily* that “China fully supports good governance, human rights and rule of law in Africa, but African countries’ national sovereignty and dignity have to be respected.” Sophie Richardson of *Human Rights Watch*, however, comments, “China insists that it will not interfere in other countries’ domestic affairs but it also claims to be a great friend of the African people, but that doesn’t square with staying silent while mass killings go in Darfur,” (*Kahn, NYT*).

Another reason why Western countries are pessimistic about Chinese involvement is that African leaders are preferring to work with China; Weizhong argues that “China has proved perhaps more popular than them in Africa and they envy the successes achieved in Sino-African relations,” (*Weizhong, 75*). Many western companies who used to make deals

with African nations on various projects are losing money to Chinese state-owned enterprises, and are definitely not pleased with the new competition. The *Financial Times* reported that “Many US businesspeople talked openly of the dangers of being left behind. US delegates fretted that China was gaining not just a head start but also an unfair advantage in Africa through its willingness to waive human rights issues in its business deals,” (*Russell, FT*). Western countries are concerned that African nations are opening doors too wide for Chinese investors and are welcoming exploitation by their Asian partners. President Wade from Senegal poses an interesting question, “But if opening up more free markets is a goal that the West prizes, why is Europe fretting about China’s growing economic role in Africa” (*Wade, FT*)? Since it has been shown that China is doing a much better job in aiding African nations by helping them to develop their economy and society, the West, which had enjoyed African resources without any competition, is now fretting over another player that gives Africa better deals.

The World Bank, however, has accepted the “Chinese scramble” and African leaders’ preference for China; it has agreed to work with Chinese development bodies on aid programs in Africa in order to transform relations with a country that is rivaling its influence as a lender. Even so, despite the World Bank’s intervention of Chinese involvement, the West still expresses its criticisms and says that “[Chinese involvement] is undermining painstaking efforts to put development assistance to the continent on a sustainable footing,” (*McGregor, FT*). However, Western countries now have fewer options than before; it will be interesting to observe how they will adjust their policies in order to maintain their influence in Africa.

REACTIONS FROM AFRICA

Africans are welcoming this new player who is willing to provide enormous investments and low interest loans in exchange of natural resources and being a friend to China when China needs votes for standing in the international seat. Frynas and Paulo in *African Affairs* note that “The Chinese loans and investments in particular have opened new policy options to African leaders. The significance of Chinese loans and investments needs to be seen in the overall context of the bargaining power of African states,” (*Frynas and Paulo* 106:250-251). African leaders believe that since China is from the developing part of the world, it understands the situation better than Western institutions. Berkofsky in *Asia Times* says that “Not surprisingly, Africa’s dictatorships and autocratic regimes welcome the arrival of Chinese-style ‘soft power’ and economic assistance as an alternative to the European and US versions of both,” (*Berkofsky*).

Adboulaye Wade, the President of Senegal, said in the *Financial Times*, “China’s approach to our needs is simply better adapted than the slow and sometimes patronizing post-colonial approach of European investors, donor organizations and non-governmental organizations,” (*Wade, FT*). Moeletsi Mbeki, a South African businessman and political analyst told the *New York Times*, “China has offered Africa a new model that focuses on straight commercial relations and fair market prices without the ideological agenda, they are not the first big foreign power to come to Africa, but they may be the first not to act as though they are some kind of patron or teacher or conqueror; in that sense, there is a meeting of the minds,” (*Kahn, NYT*). Like elsewhere in the world, Chinese goods cost less than imports from other countries. As Donnelly note in the *Boston Globe*, “Africans also find Chinese goods to

be cheaper than Western imports and, often, local goods: a 50kg bag of local cement costs \$10 in Angola, but imported Chinese cement costs \$4.” Many African countries live under the poverty line and Chinese deals are too sweet to resist for African leaders who are constantly trying to see growth in economic development.

There has not been enough study of the relations between China and East African countries. The scarcity of written information and evidence makes it very difficult to analyze specific characteristics of such a relationship. However, it is clear that China has been actively involving itself with these three countries, and they all appear to have gained economically and politically.

Now that China is actively involved with the African continent, African leaders definitely have some bargaining power with Western nations. Jefferey Herbst, the provost of Miami University and an Africa expert, has said in a *New York Times* article that “African countries can now play to multiple audiences,” (*Cohen, NYT*). A recent five-country survey by the Steadman Group, a research firm showed that “49% of business leaders feel that China’s increased economic activities in Africa will have a positive impact on their businesses compared with 30% who felt that it would have a negative impact. Another 20% of the respondents felt that China’s increased engagement with Africa would have no impact at all.” (*Onyang and Odhiambo, All Africa*) According to Harsch’s article from the journal of United Nations, “Whatever questions African may still have about China’s economic relations with the continent the high African turnout in Beijing was a clear demonstration that china has succeeded in winning the confidence of its African partners.” (*UN 20;3*)

At the beginning of the 21st Century, China's growing interest and involvement in Africa caught the world's attention. Africa is abundant in natural resources, however, it has not been able to experience economic growth and development. Because the West, who imposes strict rules in giving investments and aid, was the only player to deal with Africa, Africa was undervalued internationally. Now, the West is fretting about China's interactions with Africa. However, the countries that receive heavy investments and assistance are welcoming their new partner, who has given them bargaining power to deal with Western countries. With its unconditional terms, cheap and fast aid projects, and non-interference policy, China has undoubtedly won the hearts of Africa leaders.

CHAPTER IV. DIVERSE COMMENTS AND PROJECTIONS

The emergence of Chinese involvement in Africa has caught the attention of many scholars. Some are critical of the "Chinese scramble," arguing that it is another form of imperialism; some analyzed that the distinctive feature of the "Beijing consensus" may fail in the future. However, Ikenberry provides an argument that China will eventually rise as one of the strong powers in the world. China's involvement in Africa brings a much wider effect in alternating the status of China and Africa in an international scene. The "Chinese scramble" helps China to achieve its goal of being a global power while it also gives Africa an opportunity to be more powerful by its bargaining power in the international system.

Dot Keet, an African political economy expert from South Africa, argues that whether or not Chinese government has good intentions for the African continent, there cannot be a mutually beneficial interaction because of their highly uneven level gains, (81). She argues

that the inequality will eventually result in China making much greater gains from what China acquires in Africa, even if the gains were taken using fairly generous Chinese aid. According to Keet, China and Africa are both gaining position, but China gains much more than Africa, even if it this is not the intention of China. Berkofsky writing in the *Asia Times* notes that Chinese “soft power” concept is different from the original concept of neo-liberalist Joseph Nye introduced in 1990. Berkofsky argues that China’s policy toward Africa looks like good old power politics, which is “securing energy and profits at the expense of other countries that are unable to offer China oil or other commodities.” But this argument seems to be somewhat incongruous since the good old power politics theory applies only when the bigger power is gaining; however, African nations are also gaining from China’s growing involvement with them.

Another criticism, voiced by Gill and Reilly, concerns China’s approach to Africa through State-owned enterprises. SOEs are currently showing tremendous success in Africa by completing infrastructure projects faster than those of Western countries. Gill and Reilly point out that the expansion of Chinese influence over Africa through state owned enterprises (SOEs) will likely result in a hamstring, which political scientists call a powerful “principal-agent” dilemma. The ‘principal-agent’ dilemma is “An increasing set of tensions and contradictions between the interests and aims of government principals,” (38). That is, the aims of bureaucracies in Beijing, which focus on increasing national interest, may contradict the aims of their agents in the field, the companies and business which are operating in Africa. (39)

Hugo Restall, the editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* was quoted in the *Asia Times*, “The West now needs to face the possibility that it has welcomed a Trojan horse into the

international community, suspecting that we still know relatively little about Beijing's 'real' foreign-policy goals, except the obvious: 'China is ready to re-establish primacy in Asia,' (*Berkofsky, Asia Times*). According to the *Financial Times*, "China has become a threat to the West since it became the model for the world; China's ability of achieving economic development growth without liberal democracy, created the biggest ideological threat the West has felt since the end of the cold war," (*Leonard, FT*). Ikenberry acknowledges the growing power of China and suggests the United States must establish a firm Western order in order to prevent China from becoming the hegemon of the world. According to Ikenberry, as China gets more powerful and the power of United States erodes, realists predict that two things are likely to happen. "[First,] China will try to use its growing influence to reshape the rules and institutions of the international system to better serve its interests, and other states in the system – especially the declining hegemon [US] – will start to see China as a growing security threat; [and second,] the result these developments, they predict, will be tension, distrust, and conflict which are typical features of a power transition." In a realist's mind, as the power of the challenger state grows and the power of the leading state weakens a conflict or war becomes inevitable. Another realist scholar, John Mearsheimer writes, "If China continues its impressive economic growth over the next few decades, and the United States and China are likely to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war." The Economist Intelligence Unit of OECD has projected GDP of China, United States and OECD from 2005 to 2030.

Table 1. Projections of GDP, 2005-30

At Purchasing Power Parity in U.S. Dollars (trillions)

	China	U.S.	OECD
2005	9	12	34
2010	14	17	44
2015	21	22	55
2020	30	28	73
2025	44	37	88
2030	63	49	105

SOURCES: OECD, Economist Intelligence Unit.

Ikenberry continues by saying that the United States' "unipolar moment" will inevitably end. If the struggle of the 21st Century is between China and United States, he predicts, China will have the advantage. He suggested that if the United States wants to preserve its leadership, Washington must work to strengthen the rules and institutions that underpin the Western order.

CONCLUSION

Through research, I have discovered that the "Chinese scramble" is definitely a major story in contemporary Africa. Since the emergence of the "Chinese scramble," other regions have made attempts to counter this influence Chinese influence. The "Chinese scramble" has been mutually beneficial to both China and Africa. The purpose of my research was to investigate this unfolding relationship between China and Africa. More needs to be explored about this relationship and it will require greater scrutiny in observing and balancing the costs and the benefits for all countries involved.

An article in the *New York Times* reports that “From China’s perspective the Western powers and Western companies have had their chance in Africa and really nothing has happened, China is trying a different approach; it is saying, ‘Let us have a chance,’” (*Kahn, NYT*). China seems to be nonchalant about all the criticism from Western countries. However, the Chinese involvement in Africa has been hindered by its experiences with governments that did not give them the results they hoped for. Nonetheless, China still considers Africa as an important partner and keeps investing heavily to help meet its rapidly-growing consumption. (*BBC News*)

The “Chinese scramble” in Africa is done through the “Beijing Consensus,” which is a non-interference policy in domestic politics of Africa. The uniqueness of South-South cooperation that is distinctively different from traditional North-South cooperation is preferred among African nations because, even though China has set of conditions, the conditions of China are still much better than those of Western countries and institutions. Through the cases of East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda) it was evident that Chinese involvement is not merely for oil consumption but much wider and greater purpose.

While the Western countries are worried by China’s growing influence in Africa, African leaders are celebrating their new status on the international scene, given by the bargaining power they have achieved through Chinese involvement. Now, African leaders have multiple audiences. Not only the United States, the European countries, and China but Japan has set its foot in the door when it saw Chinese growing interest in Africa. The *New Vision* reports that “Japan invited over 50 leaders for the conference in Yokohama, Japan. Its interest in Africa is seen in part as an attempt to counter Chinese influence. Japan is about to

launch a new assistance package for African countries,” (*Osike, NV*). Japan is only one of the players who decided to come into the fierce competition over Africa; as more countries decide to come into competition, African leaders and the nations will achieve more powerful status by increase in their bargaining power.

The “Chinese scramble” is mutually beneficial to both China and Africa; however, it does not mean they are equally benefitted by it. Therefore, it is hard to tell whether the “Chinese scramble” has brought positive effect or negative effect over all to Africa; perhaps, it is too early to determine the result. Despite all, China’s new role in Africa has definitely transformed Africa’s image in international system and it is exciting to see how this drama will turn out in the future.

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