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Editorial

A new body of research is being written on China’s engagement and growing presence in Africa, but so little is known of the presence and role of Africans living in China. The Centre for Chinese Studies seeks to tackle this subject in greater depth in the coming months.

Booming trade between China and Africa is also being driven by African traders resident in China who have set up businesses in China’s major manufacturing and procurements centres – in particular in the cities of Guangzhou and Yiwu. China’s expanding exports to Africa are often assumed to be driven by tied purchasing of Chinese equipment by way of government-to-government investment deals or through the growing Chinese diaspora network in Africa. This is clearly not entirely the case.

Most Africans in China are from either West Africa or the Maghreb region. The Chinese government’s training programs for African civil servants are also boosting the numbers – the African community in China may now even amount to a quarter of a million. These are indeed sizeable and even surprising numbers. African private entrepreneurs are perhaps playing a greater role in China-Africa commerce than previously known. China-Africa relations are not solely the domain of politicians after all!

Dr Martyn J. Davies
Executive Director, Centre for Chinese Studies
Policy Watch

The African Presence in Contemporary China

By Dr. Adams Bodomo,
Associate Professor of Linguistics & African Studies
University of Hong Kong


Little did Runoko Rashidi and the other authors in that volume’s collection of articles know that 25 years later we would be dealing with empirically incontrovertible cases of real and concurrent African migrations to contemporary China and Chinese migrations to contemporary Africa.

While much more is known about the Chinese presence in contemporary Africa, little is known of the reverse of the coin. This short article seeks to outline the African presence in China. How many Africans are in China? Which African countries and regions are mostly represented among these migrants? Where in China are they found? Why do they come to China and how are they received? These are some of the questions we seek to answer.

While it has been estimated that some one million Chinese are living in Africa, there are only about a quarter of that number in China, with some 100,000 in Guangzhou alone, and the rest distributed in cities such as Hong Kong and Macau in southern coastal cities and Yiwu, Shanghai, Beijing and other mid- and northern Chinese cities.

Africans in China may be arranged into several categories: diplomats and other official representations from Africa in China; African students, studying both on short and long term basis in China; African professionals from continental Africa and from the African diaspora living and working in China; and finally, African traders, both on short and long term residence in China.

The last group is by far the largest. As part of the golden era of Chinese-African relations, many African traders began to move to China in search of cheap manufactured goods which they could buy and ship back home to Africa to sell for...
profit. While this process began with Africans who studied in China and remained there to do business, an obstacle appeared during the Asian financial crisis of 1997. Many African traders in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia that were more hard-hit by the crisis simply moved into China to continue their trade between Africa and Asia.

Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, is the richest province in China, also known as the world’s factory. Here, more Africans can be found than in any other part of China. Indeed a whole section of the city has been designated “Chocolate City” because of the large Africans presence there whose skins are seen to look like chocolate by the Chinese. In my paper titled “The African trading community in Guangzhou: An emerging bridge for Africa - China relations,” presented at the China Quarterly Workshop, School of African and Oriental Studies, University of London, September 25 - 28, 2008, which is based on field research I did among this African population, 77% of respondents were from Nigeria, and further sizeable numbers of respondents were from countries such as Guinea, Mali, Ghana, Senegal, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. On the whole more West Africans are found in the African population in Guangzhou.

The situation is different in Yiwu, a city in Zhejiang province, where there is a preponderance of people from the Maghreb region, particularly from countries such as Mauritania, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, and Algeria. Yiwu, termed the world’s largest commodities city, is a new metropolis created purposely by the Chinese authorities as a centre for sourcing commodities. Arab Africans from the Maghreb, especially those who studied in China, and speak the Chinese language fluently, having remained after their study programmes, control this business, however a growing population of black Africans are beginning to populate Yiwu, as I found out during a preliminary field survey there in December 2008 during which time I conducted a participant-observation at a large mosque frequented by African moslems among others.

In Hong Kong, there are more Africans of southern African origins, especially white Africans. The Southern African community in Hong Kong, comprising mostly white South Africans, boasts about 200 members. But this group of Africans is not easy to discern in the city, except on their Rugby Sevens weekend once a year when many South African whites wear their South African Springboks T-shirts. There is a sizeable population of black Africans in- and around the Chung King Mansions situated in Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, which is a busy shopping area for tourists in Hong Kong. This population is further described in my 2008 article “An Emerging African-Chinese Community in Hong Kong: The Case of Tsim Sha Tsui’s Chungking Mansions.”
HKU introduces new programme in African Studies – the first of its kind in Hong Kong and Southern China

The University of Hong Kong (HKU) has introduced a new Bachelor of Arts (BA) Programme in African Studies at the School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts. This is the first of its kind in Hong Kong and southern China.


For more information about the programme, please consult the African Studies website at: http://www.hku.hk/AfricanStudies or consult our Undergraduate Admissions staff by email: africa@hkucc.hku.hk

Dr. Adams Bodomo is Associate Professor of Linguistics and African Studies at the University of Hong Kong and a Coordinator of the university’s African Studies Programme.
Hosting Africans – What are China’s Concerns, If any?

By Dr. Liu Haifang,
Associate Professor, Institute for West Asian and African Studies, Beijing

Towards the end of 2008, amid the severe winter of the global financial crisis, the presence of thousands of homesick African students was testing China’s hospitality. As a responsible power, as it claims to have become in recent years, is China ready to host ever increasing African students, emerging businessmen and traders, besides the already resident diplomatic and commercial African expatriate population?

An observer might reply positively, if he or she had visited the Pilipili African restaurant on the chilly night of Dec. 20th, 2008 (before 2008, this was the only African restaurant in Beijing, owned by a Chinese entrepreneur who is also the CEO of Holley-Cotec Pharmaceuticals Co, Ltd; the influential Chinese medical company working in Africa producing anti-malaria medication), where a festive Christmas celebration for overseas African students organized by China-Africa Youth Club (website: http://www.cayc.org.cn/) was taking place. This wholly non-profit club was founded in 2007 by the director of the Liaison Division of China-Africa Business Council, which, as a non-governmental entrepreneurs’ association among other private sectors in China only generally becoming prominent in recent years, was established in 2005. The founder of the African students club, nicknamed “big brother of Africans” spoke eloquently about the original idea of creating the club: “When communicating with African students, I understand they need such an organization to make friends, to sit together to have a feeling of family, especially during holiday seasons,” he said. Though no African student pays any membership fees, membership brings very luxurious privileges, such as touring in China both for sightseeing and visiting successful enterprises in other cities, not to mention celebrating special festivals or other daily cultural exchange programs.

An event as small as a non-profit organization's Christmas party for African expatriates might be a drop of water in a larger ocean of Chinese readiness to host Africans in the PRC. For instance, together with human resources totalling 15,000 immigrant Africans from various ranks coming to be trained in China, there are increased intakes of new African students from 2000 to 4000 and the annual scholarship for African students has been increased – these...
To assist in these ends, the Youth Club has previously invited overseas student managers from many universities (to aid human resource provision), as well as many African alumni now working for Chinese companies back and forth between China and Africa, and also companies that have business in Africa that are seeking, or have obtained such support, such as the newly established privately aggregated China-Africa Development Fund.

The non-governmental cultural organization established for African students functions as a rich resource for business, though it may only be useful in several years’ time.

The question remains, what can companies expect from donating money for operating this club and supporting the club members to travel, if not just a token of their sympathy for African students in China? At the Pilipili Christmas party, as more and more businessmen and entrepreneurs entered the restaurant and joined the ongoing conversations, their expectations from the Youth Club became rather explicit: they are looking to some of African students to take advantage of their ‘special backgrounds’ to promote business, among those coming from family of higher-rank positions in their own countries, or according to their particular talents respectively, to become agents to bridge relations with their African counterparts. There have been some successful cases, such as one Cameroonian graduating from Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, who is now Chief Representative in Africa for a famous fertilizer company based in Guangxi Autonomous Region.

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The non-governmental cultural organization established for African students functions as a rich resource for business, though it may only be useful in several years’ time. It is however regarded as a cultural home for most of the interviewed African students who had joined the club. Just two days ahead of the Christmas celebration at Pilipili restaurant, the China-Africa Business Council organized a forum on Strategy of China-Africa Business Cooperation under the Global Financial Crisis, participated in by Chinese entrepreneurs, scholars, representatives of African banks (such as Ecobank, BMCE Bank), DFID China, Chinese and African media, etc. During the Forum, a consensus emerged among those Chinese entrepreneurs who had stayed in Africa for a while: cultural engagement was a commonly identified need in order to create strategic economic relations with Africans. Many reported even collecting thousands of pieces of African artworks to carry back to China. They
The answer is fortunately not as much as in many European countries where immigrants are usually made out as scapegoats for many domestic problems, especially in the face of economic downturn caused by the global crisis. Despite China’s close engagement with the global economy and it’s shifting fortunes, the voice of anti-Africanism towards those emerging African businessmen, traders and their African helpers has not been heard yet. In fact, these Africans are more likely regarded optimistically as business partners——however, is business enough?

Researching “Africans in China” on the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), the most authoritative and inclusive online database in China, even in Chinese, produces not a single result. Further, news or reportage about Africans via a search using keyword “African” can be received, yet even with this not as many results emerge. Despite a dearth of academic articles, one emerged; a conference paper by a Ph.D student from Zhongshan University investigating an African community in Guangzhou from an Urban Studies perspective. Among the few non-academic articles in Chinese, some gave observation to the emerging “chocolate city, Guangzhou,” while others described the lively Pilipili African Restaurant with a title of “To feel Africa in Beijing.”

Quite at odds with the general ignorance of African activity in China, “illegal immigrant Africans” has become a popular search term in the Chinese media since 2006. In a survey published by International Herald Leader, a newspaper produced by the Xinhua News Agency, it was pointed out that most of these illegal immigrant Africans come with papers, but stay and “evaporate” in due time, and, with many coming from poor backgrounds, they come to China only for to earn money working in African business’s Chinese branches in Guangdong or Zhejiang. This finding was welcomed by some civil servants within the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Ministry of Security, and in some reports circulated within the Ministry, who thus appealed for the government to realize the urgency of tightening the management of expatriate Africans in China generally.
All this literature apparently reveals the presence of large numbers of African traders and their African workers in China as a relatively new topic; yet along with this quickly emerging trend, this output has also raised awareness among both civilians and the government in terms of how to better manage the presence and growth of these African communities. Many traders have commented that what concerned them greatly was their visa: they have to leave China after between one to six months in order to reapply to enter it, which is naturally a costly and time-consuming process. The complications of the Chinese visa system result in some Africans becoming illegal immigrants. At least increasing number of immigrant Africans has led some Chinese to raise awareness in government circles of the growing problem of illegal African immigration and the need to monitor African communities more closely, with an eye towards finding appropriate solutions that balance China’s growing concerns of security and its openness to business.

China’s recent turn of policies towards ‘bailing out’ its economy and industries in order to enhance domestic demand should not distract from the national need to alter so-called ‘export oriented’ modes of thought, alongside popular psychological preferences for ‘exotic’ or foreign goods and tastes—both of which are trends that will take time to transform, given the deep seated pathology of China’s national self-confidence which has been mending since the mid-19th Century. China needs time to stimulate its domestic consumption, and in the meantime it will still need reliable markets with which to trade.

Africa has been less immediately and directly affected by the financial crisis than the West; this means that people who know how to improve Sino-African trade and can bring good business connections and advice in improving relations in China will be even more welcome than usual. On the other hand, many African traders that run successful wholesale businesses between Chinese companies and African retailers (on being interviewed in November 2008) do not believe the global financial crisis has influenced their business in China too much. According to them, volumes of goods moved are likely not to shift much, and small retailers are not frequenting the wholesalers as much recently; not because of the global crisis, but more likely due to the Christmas season.
China aims to increase coal production 30% by 2015
China is aiming to increase its coal production by about 30% by 2015 to meet its energy needs, the government has announced in a move likely to fuel concerns over global warming. Beijing plans to increase annual output to more than 3.3 billion tonnes by 2015. That is up from the 2.54 billion tonnes produced in 2007, according to the Land and Resources ministry. China began building four strategic oil reserve facilities on its east coast this decade, and two of these are now in operation.

China joins exclusive coal-to-liquid club
China’s first coal-to-liquid plant is up and running, according to a new statement from its owner. Shenhua Group’s Inner Mongolia plant apparently started turning coal into fuels and chemicals on December 30. Only South Africa also converts coal to oil. Last year the Chinese government issued a moratorium on new coal to liquid facilities, but allowed the Shenhua Group to build its Inner Mongolia plant and continue a venture with South Africa’s Sasol company. Energy experts Platts say the plant currently produces around a million barrels of oil a year, with plans to ramp up to 20 million over 2012-2015 and 100 million by 2020.

China’s 2008 FDI Rises to US$92.4 Billion
An official from China’s Commerce Ministry announced that the country attracted US$92.4 billion worth of foreign direct investment in 2008, a 23.6% increase from 2007 figures. Commerce Ministry spokesman Yao Jian reported that in December FDI inflows amounted to US$6 billion while the cumulative total for the previous 11 months was US$86.4 billion. December FDI inflow slowed by 5.7% to US$5.98 billion compared to figures from a year earlier.

China well placed to withstand global financial crisis
China is well placed among world emerging economies to weather the global economic downturn that has begun to infect many developing countries, Alex Patelis, head of international economics at Merrill Lynch, told Xinhua News in a recent written interview. With a high level of reserves, room for policy easing, strong savings rate and low leverage, China’s economy is healthy enough to withstand the forthcoming external risks as the world’s emerging economies see a significant plunge in equity and currency markets.

China Passes Germany to Become Third-Biggest Economy
China’s economy overtook Germany’s in 2007 to become the world’s third largest, underscoring the nation’s increasing economic and political clout. Gross domestic product expanded 13% from a year earlier, more than a previous estimate of 11.9%, to US$3.38 trillion, the statistics bureau said on its Web site. That topped Germany’s US$3.32 trillion, using average exchange rates for 2007. “This number is just one more piece of evidence that China is one of the most important players on the global stage,” said Huang Yiping, chief Asia economist at Citigroup Inc. in Hong Kong.

China GDP Growth May Cool to Slowest Pace in 7 Years
China’s economy may have expanded at the slowest pace in seven years in the fourth quarter as exports collapsed, adding to pressure for more stimulus measures and undermining growth across Asia. Gross domestic product grew 6.8% from a year earlier, according to the median estimate of 12 economists surveyed by Bloomberg News, down from 9% in the previous three months.

China tops world in Internet users
China surpassed the United States in 2008 as the world’s top user of the Internet, according to a government-backed research group. Nearly 91% of China’s Internet users are surfing the Web with a broadband connection. The number of Web surfers in the country grew by nearly 42% to 298 million, according to the China Internet Network Information Center’s January report. And there’s plenty of room for growth, as only about 1 in every 4 Chinese has Internet access.

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China Consolidating Position as World No.1 Gold Producer

China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology has released figures for the country's gold output in November showing that production for the year to end-November reached 246.51 tonnes. This is up only 2.14% from the figure for the first 11 months of 2008 - the year in which China's gold production exceeded that of South Africa for the first time, making it the world's top producer.

China to expand its military reach

China has said it plans to step up the modernisation of its armed forces, expanding the military's global reach, but at the same time calling on the incoming US administration to improve military relations between the two countries. A government policy report, released recently, said China's overall security situation had improved but that China's armed forces needed to improve to protect Chinese economic interests around the world.

China cuts fuel prices for first time in two years

China cut domestic fuel prices in January for the first time in almost two years as it revamps its regulated pricing regime, passing along a share of oil's over US$100 slump to help revive flagging economic growth. Crude oil gained moderately after Beijing announced a 14% cut in refinery gate gasoline prices and 18% drop in diesel prices, plus a nearly one-third cut in jet fuel. The cuts were not unexpected after China announced last month that it would push ahead a long-stalled effort to allow its domestic prices to fluctuate in line with the global market.

China-Taiwan start direct transport, postal service

China and Taiwan began direct air, sea transport and postal services, the latest step to further improve the strained ties between the two rivals. The move marks an end to the practice that air and sea transport as well as mail between the mainland and Taiwan had to be rerouted. Direct shipping, transport and postal services across the Taiwan Strait also commenced. This is the first time direct flights have been conducted between the two countries since the Chinese civil war in 1949.

CNOOC to increase crude, gas production

China's top offshore oil and gas producer CNOOC Ltd. plans to lift its 2009 crude and gas production by 16% to 18%, as some significant projects are expected to come online this year. Total production will be 225 million to 231 million barrels of oil equivalent compared with the estimated production of 194 million to 196 million BOE for 2008, the Beijing-based company said in a statement.

Death Sentences in Chinese Milk Case

Chinese courts sentenced two men to death for endangering public safety in a tainted-milk scandal that killed at least six children, according to Chinese state-run news media. Three other defendants, including a top dairy company executive, were sentenced to life in prison. Another defendant received a suspended death sentence, and 15 others were given prison terms from 2 to 15 years. The sentences were the first to be handed down in one of the worst food safety scandals in China in decades. The scandals erupted in September 2008, prompting a global recall of Chinese-made dairy products, shaking consumer confidence and devastating the nation’s dairy industry.

China's energy saving a silver lining to economic gloom

Government data showed that China met an unofficial energy-saving target for the first time in 2008, as a serious economic slowdown succeeded where years of exhortations from the country's leaders failed. The amount of energy used to generate each dollar of national income fell 4.2% last year, accelerating from a 3.7% fall the previous year as factories closed or cut back production across the country's manufacturing heartland. Heavy industrial and manufacturing sectors have been worst hit by the crisis, nudging the country's pattern of growth toward the service and retail sectors in a way that, at least temporarily, dovetails with Beijing's plans for cleaner growth.

China plays maritime chess

China, undergirding its larger geostrategic motives, says it is "seriously considering" adding an aircraft carrier to its navy fleet — a symbol of "a nation's comprehensive power," as a military spokesperson put it. The start of Chinese patrols in the pirate-infested Gulf of Aden is intended to extend China's naval role and presence far from its shores while demonstrating, under United Nations rules of engagement, a capability to conduct complex operations in distant waters.
Taiwan embraces China's gift of 2 pandas

The Chinese government presented the 4-year-old pandas to mark warming ties between the mainland and the island, which split amid civil war in 1949, although opposition politicians and other Taiwanese sceptics have denounced the gift as propaganda. China named the animals Tuan Tuan and Yuan Yuan, which together means “reunion.”

China's US$124 Billion Health-Care Plan Aims to Boost Consumption

China's pledge to spend US$124 billion to revamp its health-care system will spur consumption and help achieve the government's goal of 8% economic growth this year, said a senior government official. The Chinese government introduced the health plan and other polices “to overcome the current difficulties and to also lay the groundwork for long-term development,” Ma Jiantang, head of the National Bureau of Statistics, said at a briefing in Beijing after he announced that China's economy grew at the slowest pace in seven years during the fourth quarter.

Spring Festival marks new beginning for Chinese

Global crisis or not, Chinese retained their enthusiasm for celebrating the Lunar New Year, which officially began at the end of January. More than 68 tonnes of fireworks debris were collected on the eve of the Spring Festival in Beijing alone. Beijingers also went on a US$ 85.2 million shopping spree, spending 13.4% more than last year. Not only did 1.3 billion Chinese bask in the festive atmosphere, some foreign nationals shared their feelings.

China is 'Manipulating' Yuan, Geithner Tells Congress

Timothy Geithner, President Barack Obama's nominee for Treasury secretary, said the new U.S. administration believes China is “manipulating” its currency. The remarks on China's exchange-rate policy may presage a tougher line with the nation that is the biggest foreign investor in U.S. government debt. Former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson preferred diplomacy over confrontation with China to resolve disputes and, in semi-annual reports, refrained from labelling it an illegal “manipulator” of its currency.

China's growth drops as recession hits exports

Growth in manufacturing powerhouse China dropped sharply in the fourth quarter, as the global recession hit factory exports and a domestic property slump stifled construction. Fourth quarter GDP growth dropped to 6.8%, dragging full year growth down to 9%, the National Bureau of Statistics revealed. That represented a sharp fall from last year's 13%, which pushed China up the rankings to the world's third largest economy. Though growth is still faster than other major economies, it has now been slowing for six consecutive quarters, a trend that is worrying its leaders as well as the international community. Major trade partners like the US fear Beijing will further devalue the yuan to help exports, reviving trade friction.

Castro serenades China's Hu on landmark Cuba visit

Chinese President Hu Jintao made a landmark visit to Cuba in January, bearing millions of US dollars in aid and promises of closer future trade ties. The Chinese leader brought 4.5 tonnes of humanitarian aid for victims of three hurricanes that battered Cuba this year, which was handed over late Monday.
China and Africa
The latest updates on China's involvement on the African continent.

Rwanda: China Donates US$ 100 000 to ICGLR
China has donated US$100,000 to the Executive Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). According to a press statement from the ICGLR secretariat, the funds will be delivered by the Chinese Ambassador on behalf of his government and the money will be used to assist the regional body in its communication activities. Based in the Burundian capital Bujumbura, the ICGLR is a regional organ bringing together 11 countries from the eastern and central Africa with the aim of restoring peace and security in the region. "The funds are a gesture of appreciation by the Chinese people to ICGLR for its commitment to the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region signed in Nairobi, Kenya," reads the statement.

US$ 205 Million Nigerian Chinese Aircraft Deal In Limbo
A dark cloud appeared over the Nigerian government's US$ 205 million deal with a Chinese Firm for the supply of N 17 Aircraft, 12 F7 Aircraft and five other Chinese aircraft for military flying operations by the Nigerian Air Force. The deal was signed with the Chinese firm at the height of former President Olusegun Obasanjo's financial profligacy. Already 85% of the total cost of the deal had been made by Nigeria but the delivery of the aircraft is still shrouded in uncertainty, the House of Representatives heard during Budget 2009 defence session in Abuja. The disclosure was made at a 2008 budget defence session with the House of Representative committee on the Air force saying government urgently needed the aircraft in order to carry out military operations within and outside the country.

Datang Eyes Africa as Domestic Power Use Wanes
China Datang Corp., the Chinese power producer with investments in Laos, Cambodia and Kazakhstan, plans to explore the African market as the global financial crisis slows domestic demand for electricity. China's second-biggest power producer signed an accord with the China-Africa Development Fund, initiated by President Hu Jintao in 2006, to help develop “electricity and relevant industries" on the continent. China Datang said in a statement on its website. The parent of Hong Kong-listed Datang International Power Generation Co. gave no details.

Ghana signs contract for the construction of a General Hospital
The Government of Ghana has signed a contract with the People's Republic of China for the construction of a General Hospital at Teshie in Accra. Briefing the press on the background to this contract, the Head of Capital Investment Management Unit at the Ministry of Health, Mr Jackson G K Abankwah, said, "The Chinese agreed to construct a 100-bed General Hospital with a Malaria Research Centre upon a request by the Ghanaian government." The General Hospital, which is estimated to be completed in 16 months at the cost of US $ 7.28 million, will have facilities such as full medical equipment, out-patient unit, maternity and children unit, accident and emergency unit among others such as an Anti-Malaria Research Unit.

Chinese company drills ten wells in Sudan's Darfur
China and Sudan signed a certificate handing over ten wells drilled by Chinese companies in the arid western Sudanese region of Darfur. Chinese Ambassador to Sudan Li Chengwen and Sudanese Commissioner for the Humanitarian Assistance Affairs Hasbu Mohammed Abdullah signed the document at a ceremony attended by Liu Guijin, the special representative of the Chinese government for Darfur, who is currently visiting Sudan.

China seeks South Africa's UAV technology
Chinese manufacturers have engaged in active discussions with South Africa in hopes of acquiring TV video cameras and second-generation thermal imaging cameras used in Denel's Seeker II unmanned air vehicle surveillance system. China hopes to obtain the technologies to assemble these two UAVs domestically. However, according to a source from the Denel Group, negotiations on the UAV deals have come to a halt.

Africa's largest uranium mine gets the go-ahead
The government of Niger has granted French nuclear giant Areva a permit to mine the Imouraren uranium deposit in what will be the country's largest ever industrial project. Mining is due to begin in 2012. The China
Minmetals to acquire stake in South African chromite mine
China Minmetals Corporation is planning to acquire a 70% share of Vizirama, a South African chromite mining company based in Townlands. Vizirama possesses the exploration rights for the mineral resources in Townlands, therefore, the acquisition will enable Minmetals to secure the leading position in the first phase of exploration. China Minmetals Corporation is a trader as well as an investor for both steel and other metal products. It has long showed interest in South African mineral resources and has taken several actions in the region, such as the US$ 6.5 million acquisition of Naboom ferrochrome mine in 2007.

Chinese investments in Kenya's infrastructure continue
The Chinese government has granted Kenya US$ 9.47 million to help construct a hospital in Nairobi and a maize-flour processing factory, according to local press reports. Finance Minister John Michuki was quoted as saying the grant would also be used to maintain Kenya's Moi International Sports Centre, which was constructed with Chinese support in 1987. China has given Kenya about US$ 373 million in grants in the last few years, with infrastructure development one of the main beneficiaries.

Chinese FM meets Rwandan president on ties
Rwandan President Paul Kagame met with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi in Kigali regarding improving bilateral ties. Kagame appreciated China's support and help for Rwanda's development, saying relations between China and Rwanda have developed smoothly. The president hoped that the two countries would continue to strengthen cooperation in such fields as agriculture, trade, infrastructure and education. The minister said China attaches great importance to the friendly and cooperative relations with African countries, adding that China will cooperate closely with African countries, fully fulfil the agreements reached at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and further promote China-Africa relations.

Beninese president lays stone for China-funded hospital
A China-funded university hospital in Benin has broken ground north of the West African country's capital Cotonou, with President Boni Yayi laying the first stone for the friendship project, the Benin Press Agency (ABP) reported. Situated in Parakou, 425 km north of Cotonou, with a capacity of 100 beds, the hospital of US$ 8 million is expected to open in a year and a half for research work and teaching, with consultation, technical, radiology, operation and in-patient departments.

Oil-rich Angola has become China's largest trade partner in Africa
Angola is the biggest source of China's oil imports. Bilateral trade between the two countries reached an all time high of US$ 25.3 billion last year. Beijing has offered the country at least US$ 5 billion in oil-backed loans after the economy was destroyed by a 27-year civil war which ended in 2002. Commerce Minister Chen Deming said the Chinese government had exempted US$ 9, 7 million in debts owed by Angola to help rehabilitate the economy.

Ghana's VP Reiterates Commitment to One-China Policy
Ghana will continue adhering to the one-China policy, the West African country's Vice President John Dramani Mahama said in Accra while meeting Chinese Ambassador Yu Wenzhe. Mahama made the remarks when the Chinese ambassador to Ghana paid a visit to greet his victory as vice president of Ghana in the general election held last December. Mahama said his country would work side by side with China to boost bilateral relationship and promote political and economic ties between the two countries.

Tanzanian president appeals for China aid on farmers bank
Tanzanian president Jakaya Kikwete has asked the Chinese government to assist in the setting up of an agricultural bank as a joint venture between the two
President Kikwete made the appeal at the State House in Dar es Salaam when he met the Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, Mr Liu Xinsheng. He said the bank would play a vital role in revolutionizing agriculture, regarded as the backbone of Tanzania’s economy.

China confirmed its navy will fight Somali pirates
The Chinese government confirmed that it would send naval ships to the Gulf of Aden to help in the fight against piracy there. The mission, which is expected to begin in about two weeks, would be first modern deployment of Chinese warships outside the Pacific. The announcement came as the captain of a Chinese cargo ship that was attacked in the gulf said his crew had used beer bottles, fire hoses and homemade incendiary bombs to battle a gang of pirates that had boarded his vessel.

China, Kenya mark 45th anniversary of diplomatic ties
Chinese President Hu Jintao and Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki exchanged congratulatory messages on Sunday to mark the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. The two countries have always been supportive of each other on issues concerning their vital interests and have cooperated closely in the fields of trade, culture, education, health care and tourism.

Angola seeks new Chinese loans as oil tumbles
Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos visited China in January to seek new loans, as tumbling world oil prices threaten the African country’s plans for a big increase in spending on infrastructure next year. Angola’s secretary of state for water, Filipe da Silva, said he hoped new credit lines from China would allow more investment in the sector. Newspaper Semanario Angolense said Angola could seek up to US$1 billion for infrastructure and homes for the poor over the next four years.

China Sinoma cuts Nigeria cement projects
China’s Sinoma International said this week it had reached agreement with a Nigerian partner to suspend a cement project worth US$ 1.45 billion and cut the size of another by nearly two-thirds - both in the African country. Sinoma and Nigeria’s Dangote Group had agreed to suspend one project involving six cement assembly lines, and cut the size of another project involving seven lines to $689.54 million equivalent from US$ 1.81 billion, it said in a statement. Sinoma said the adjustments would not have a big impact on its 2008 earnings as Dangote agreed to pay some compensation.

China encourages firms to open shops in Nigeria
In order to assist in creating more job opportunities in the country, the Chinese government has revealed that it is currently encouraging domestic companies to focus more on setting up businesses in Nigeria than exporting into the country alone. This was disclosed by Xu Jianguo, Chinese ambassador to Nigeria, while donating US$100,000 to the peace fund of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja.

Chinese company to replace Nigeria’s failed satellite
The Chinese Great Wall Industry Corporation has signed an agreement with the Nigerian Communications Satellite Limited to replace the nation’s first communications satellite, NigComSat-1, which failed in November 2008. The agreement covers the construction of a new spacecraft, the procurement of a launch vehicle as well as rendering of other launch services at no cost to Nigeria. The agreement forecloses the possibility of repairing the failed satellite. However, the construction of a new satellite to be dubbed, NigComSat-1R, cannot begin until President Umaru Yar’Adua gives the go-ahead for a fresh contract with the Chinese firm, which constructed the failed satellite.

Nigeria’s Dangote Suspends Investment in New Plants
The Federal Government’s decision to open up the flood gates to the importation of bulk and bagged cement is taking its toll on local manufacturing, following the announcement by a Chinese firm, Sinoma International, that it has reached an agreement with the Dangote Group to suspend the latter’s US$ 3.3 billion expansion programme in Nigeria. Confirming the development, the president of the Group, Alhaji Aliko Dangote said that his company took the decision to cut back on its expansion plans at three of its plants because of the colossal losses it would have incurred as a result of the importation regime being pursued by the Federal Government.

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The China Forum - Recent Events

Visit from Zhejiang Academy of Chinese Culture, 8th December 2008
The Centre for Chinese Studies welcomed a delegation from Zhejiang Normal University in Hangzhou, China on 8 December. They met with Christopher Burke, CCS Research Fellow; Johanna Jansson, CCS Senior Analyst and Liu Zhongwei, CCS Visiting Scholar.

3rd Confucius Institute Conference - December 9th-11th 2008
Ms Hayley Herman, CCS Research Manager, attended the 3rd Annual Confucius Institute Conference held in Beijing from 9th-11th December 2008. The conference brought together representatives from Confucius Institutes worldwide to discuss best practices in the operation of Confucius Institutes and explore ideas on sustainable development of the Institutes.

IPRCC visits the CCS – 15th December 2008
On 15th December, Mr. Zhang Lei, the Director-General of the Department of International Cooperation and Social Mobilization, State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China (LGOP) was accompanied by other colleagues from the IPRCC. The visiting group discussed international cooperation, as well as training and applied research of IPRCC.

The CCS welcomes Mr Hao Guangfeng to South Africa – 8th January 2009
A welcoming ceremony was held on Thursday 8th January 2009, at the Raddisson Hotel in Cape Town. Mr Hao is the new Consul-General for the People’s Republic of China in Cape Town. Tracy Hon and Carine Kiala, both of the CCS, were there to welcome the new Consul-General to the Mother City.

The African Development Bank visits the CCS – 19th January 2009
On the 19th January the Centre for Chinese Studies hosted Professor Leonce Ndikumana, Director, Development Research Department and Dr Richard Schiere, Senior Economist, Research Department of the African Development Bank. The visiting delegation and CCS staff discussed the work of the Centre and future avenues of cooperation between the two institutions.

African Agricultural Technology Foundation visits the CCS – 22nd January 2009
On 22nd January the Centre for Chinese Studies hosted a visiting delegation from the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), based in Nairobi, Kenya. Mr George Marechera, Agribusiness Specialist and Ms Stella Simiyu-Wafukho, Programme Officer visited the CCS to discuss China’s agricultural cooperation with Africa.

CCS Executive Director to consult on OECD Report.
Dr Martyn Davies, the Executive Director of the CCS, has been appointed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as a non-resident advisor to its Global Development Outlook program. On the 26th January, the advisory group met at the OECD in Paris to discuss and plan the publication of preliminary working papers that will be designed to feed into policy when finalised.