GREAT POWER POLITICS FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF THE EU'S AND CHINA'S COOPERATION WITH THE CONTINENT

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After the African countries got independence, the European Union (formerly the EEC) and China had shown a willingness to contribute to the improvement of socio-economic development of Africa with series of measures for its socio-economic prosperity through a partnership that has evolved for a long time. While the long way of the EU countries position has been challenged by China's unprecedented implication on the continent, African countries have been taking advantage of this situation to improve their economic situation during recent years. This article analyzes this statement by exposing firstly a background introduction to the EU–Africa diverse agreements and conventions, on the one hand, and the present Chinese strategy of cooperating with Africa, on the other, in order to highlight the opportunities offered to the continent through this cooperation. Secondly, the article presents economic implications of these actors' involvement in Africa based on the optimistic approach of the EU's and China's partnership with Africa. It finally concludes with some suggestions to those actors as well as to African countries emphasizing that even though the EU's and China's partnership with Africa does move Africa in the right direction it still has some gaps.

Keywords: *Africa's development, cooperation, Sino-Africa, EU-Africa.*

Introduction

When African countries got independence, the ambition of their liberation movement leaders was to ensure the development of their countries in every sector. Facing with many challenges in the postcolonial era, this ambition was difficult to achieve due to the scarcity of resources. Therefore, the EU and China decided to help African countries and support their emerging economies by making available ways to achieve their goals. The logic led to the signing of agreements and conventions between the EU and the ACP countries[1] and also to various Chinese development programs that are considered to be a good opportunity for Africa to raise its economic level and launch sustainable development programs. Therefore, what are the approaches from both the EU and China to Africa's development agenda? Theoretically, liberalism appropriate with the logic of the arguments developed in this article will be used to understand and get a meaningful explanation to the issues of the article. So, the first part is the inventory of the different steps from the EU and China towards Africa's development. This inventory is important in the context of this paper because it highlights different strategies of the EU and China for the development of Africa especially the financial ways made available to increase the opportunity for development of the continent. The second part is a discussion aimed at differentiating the nature of the EU and China partnership with Africa by showing how each of them contributes to the improvement of Africa's development. Finally, the article concludes by clearly exposing its position and raises some suggestions to both players for a mutually beneficial economic relation with African countries.

Cooperation with Africa: Strategies from the EU and China

Both sides are willing to boost Africa's economic situation through cooperation. On the EU part, strategies take the form of agreements and conventions, while China also has its own way of dealing with Africa.

Introductory Background of Conventions and Agreements between the EU and Africa

The Yaoundé Conventions

After gaining their independence in the early 1960s, some African countries negotiated with the European Community the continuity of their preferential economic relations, ushering the formula of economic partnership between the EU and Africa (Greenidge 1997). The European Community (that later became the European Union) and the group of African countries, joined later by the Caribbean and Pacific countries decided to establish a framework for economic, cultural and political cooperation. The first agreements between European and African countries took shape in Yaoundé[2] where two conventions were held, namely Yaoundé I and II.[3] The goals of the association were the diversification and industrialization of these countries' economy to ensure a better stability and strengthen their independence. The means used were granting financial aid and special customs regimes. In all, there had been Yaoundé I and Yaoundé II.

The Convention of Yaoundé I

Under Yaoundé I, signed in July 1963 (Faber and Orbie 2007), only 18 African countries were signatories. This Convention planned (primarily for the benefit of the AMSA)[4] aid for development (that was called 'technical and financial assistance') and trade preferences. It is interesting to note that the dispositions of Yaoundé related to trade were based on principles of non-reciprocity, thus addressing commercial arrangements of the pre-independence period. To this end, the EDF[5] of Yaoundé I amounted to 730.4 million euro (Morzellec 2001). There were various bodies forming the association: the Association Council, the Association Committee and a Parliamentary Conference (Steen and Danau 2006). Six years after this convention, Yaoundé I was followed by Yaoundé II.

The Convention of Yaoundé II

The Second Yaoundé Convention, signed in July 1969, aimed at increasing the European Development Fund (EDF) resources for development projects, which rose to 887.3 million euro (Morzellec 2001). It is important to note that it was from Yaoundé II that the signatories of agreements between Europe and Africa began to increase, for example, it was under Yaoundé II that countries like Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda decided to join the ACP group (Karingi *et al.* 2005). However, the peak enlargement of signatories of the agreements between Europe and African countries and the strengthening of partnership between both partners started from 1975 through the various Lomé Conventions.

The Lomé Conventions

Since its first agreement signed in 1975, the Lomé Convention had evolved and the Convention of 1975 was renewed four times. After the expiration of the first convention in 1980, the second Convention took over until 1985. The third one covered the period of 1985–1990 and the last one, the fourth Convention, covered a whole decade, from 1990 to 2000, and has been revised at mid-term. Totally, the successive Lomé Conventions lasted 25 years running from 1975 to 2000. Important amendments have been introduced in the partnership between the EEC and Africa after the expiration of Yaoundé Conventions and the introduction of the first Lomé Convention in February 1975. Since then, the EEC had experienced its first major enlargement including the entrance of the UK in 1973; thus, the adherence of the United Kingdom to the EEC strongly encouraged some Anglophone countries to undertake, too, the privileged partnership with the EEC. The ACP group has since been expanded to 46 members with the participation, for the first time, of the Caribbean and Pacific countries.

The Lomé I Convention

The first Lomé Convention, signed in February 1975, was largely inspired from the Yaoundé II Convention. It was characterized by its contractual nature, its principles of partnership and its various aspects related to aid, trade and politics. Concretely, the EU granted favorable access conditions to its market for ACP countries products, which were not obliged to grant similar concessions to European exporters. The main innovation of this Convention, said Steen and Danau (2006) was to introduce a stabilization system of export income for agricultural products, STABEX[6] and the sugar protocol. The 4th EDF of Lomé I, which was preceded by that of the Association Regime (EDF 1) and the two EDF (EDF 2 and 3) of the Yaoundé Conventions, received a founding budget of more than ECU 3 billion.[7]

The second Lomé Convention (Lomé II)

The second Lomé Convention signed in 1980 was the logic extension of the first Lomé Convention. Obviously, Lomé II also introduced innovations compared to the previous agreement; the most important being the establishment of SYSMIN[8] for countries that rely heavily on mine products and record export losses. Lomé II (1980–1985) also focused on strengthening infrastructure and its funding increased to ECU 4.725 billion.

The third Lomé Convention (Lomé III)

In 1985 the third Lomé Convention occurred. It intervened at the time when there were serious questions on the effectiveness of aid to development. One can see an emergence of the political dimension and the introduction of other dimensions. In this convention, there was also the issue about 'human dignity' since a new fund was created and intended to help refugees and the 6th EDF got a funding of ECU 7.4 billion (Karingi *et al.* 2005) and was directed to development programs especially in the rural sector.

The Lomé IV and Lomé IV bis

The last agreement signed in Lomé under the ACP-EU partnership was the Lomé IV Convention in 1990, which was reviewed in 1995. For the first time, the Lomé Convention took a political aspect and the respect of Human Rights became a fundamental term of ACP-EU cooperation. This Convention strengthened the political dimension and introduced conditions and sanctions. Then, the violation of those principles led to partial or total suspension of development aid. Another innovation of this convention concerned the structural adjustment, debt, role of the private sector, environment, demography and decentralized cooperation. In general, the 7th EDF (under Lomé IV) got 11.583 billion euro and the 8th EDF (under Lomé IV bis) received 13.151 billion euro, which was an envelope of 24.734 billion euro for Lomé IV projects.

The Cotonou Agreement

The signing of the Cotonou Agreement happened within a peculiar context that had significant effects on the content, principles and ideas this agreement contained.

Context of the signing of the Cotonou Agreement

The Cotonou Agreement was signed when important changes had been taking place on the international arena. The fall of the communist bloc and the end of the Cold war introduced major changes in international relations, because the concept of democracy and market economy suddenly became the dominant ideology and many African countries embraced those concepts. Another effect of the fragmentation of the Communist block was the emergence of new states in Eastern Europe having the ambition to join the EU. This group of new countries faced serious problems during their transition to the market economy and to the democratic system, so the EU felt the responsibility to assist them during the transition. It was in this context that aid programs were created to support the development of Central and Eastern European States (Morzellec 2001). At the same time, globalization was gaining ground and the world was becoming increasingly interdependent. But African countries in particular appeared to be the big losers in this process with a decline in international trade, investment and production. Parallel to these events, there was growing a concern on human rights.

The Cotonou Agreement and its innovations

On June 23, 2000 in Cotonou[9] there was signed a new partnership agreement within EU-ACP for a period of 20 years to be reviewed each five years. It was at Cotonou that the free trade agreements called ‘Economic Partnership Agreements’ (EPA) emerged, replacing the existing non-reciprocal preference system. It was the end of the asymmetric and joint partnership conventions of Yaoundé and Lomé: preferences became reciprocal. The financial protocol of the Cotonou Agreement had a total budget of 13.8 billion euro for the 9th EDF (EU Council 2000). However, the real resources for the period 2000–2007 amounted to 25.1 billion euro, due to the consolidation of all EDF (residues from previous EDF**)** and some founds of the European Investment Bank (EIB) that can be used for investment purposes (Gahamanyi *et al.* 2004). Finally, the 10th EDF (2008–2013) received a funding of 22.8 billion euro and this was for a five-years' period.[10] Overall, the 9th and 10th EDF in the context of Cotonou Agreement have mobilized a total funding of 36.6 billion euro without the leftovers of previous programs.

Table 1

Summary of the different conventions and agreements

Conventions and Agreements / Characteristics	Yaoundé I	Yaoundé II	Lomé I	Lomé II	Lomé III	Lomé IV and IV bis	Cotonou
Budget	€730.4 millions	€887.3 millions	More than 3 billion Ecu	4.725 billion Ecu	7.4 billion Ecu	€24.734 billion	€36.6 billion (9th and 10th EDF)
Terms	– economic diversification and industrialization of the countries; – operating with various joint bodies; – non-discriminatory trade preferences based on reciprocity	– non-discriminatory reciprocal trade preferences; – membership of three African countries	– massive support from other African countries; – discriminatory non-reciprocal trade agreement; – priority to the construction of roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools; – introduction STABEX; – establishment of the Sugar Protocol; – addition of joint institutions	– the introduction SYSMIN; – expanded areas of intervention	– priority to agriculture and rural development; – issue of 'human dignity'	– political dimension and respect for human rights; – structural adjustment	replaced the existing non-reciprocal preference system

Chinese Strategy of Cooperation with Africa

The cooperation between China and Africa has a long history and evolved through many phases. The shifts in China's African policy are closely interlinked with domestic development strategies as well as international events. Accordingly in modern history China's African policy has passed through roughly three phases.

The Evolution of Sino-African Development Cooperation, 1955–1979

In fact, China started its aid to Africa almost at the same time when the Western aid programmes started – in the early 1950s. To be precise, China's aid to Africa and other developing countries started after the Bandung Conference of 1955 and was guided by *The Five Guiding Principles* of Chinese aid, set out by Premier Zhou Enlai during the India-China bilateral negotiations. But with regard to Africa, these principles included:

- Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- Mutual non-aggression;
- Non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
- Equality and mutual benefits;
- Peaceful coexistence.

China not only supported African liberation movements (Taylor 2006) but also provided a great deal of economic assistance on a grant basis despite the fact that China itself was a struggling developing country with a few resources. Between 1973 and 1979, for example, aid to Africa amounted to 6.92 per cent of China's GDP annually, and forty-four African countries had signed economic and technical cooperation protocols with China. It was during that first phase that China constructed the Tanzania – Zambia railway. Despite the increasing allocation of aid to Africa during that period, China avoided the term 'aid' in its cooperation with Africa; instead Chinese officials preferred to use the language of solidarity and friendship – a situation quite different from the often paternalistic Western aid language of poverty reduction and democratization.

The original *Five Guiding Principles* were later replaced by China's *Eight Principles of Economic and Technical Aid*, which Premier Zhou Enlai announced on January 15, 1964 during his visit to fourteen African countries. The additional guiding principles emphasized that: *Chinese technical assistance should build local capacities, and Chinese experts working in Africa should have the same standard of living as the local experts; economic cooperation should promote self-reliance and not dependency; and respect for the recipient's sovereignty should mean imposing no 'political or economic conditions' on recipient governments.* As a result of these diplomatic efforts, the number of African countries recognizing China grew to thirty-seven by the early 1970s. Between 1970 and 1975, some sixteen African heads of states visited China. At the same time, Chinese aid to Africa grew from $428 million in 1966 to nearly $1.9 billion in 1977.

Moreover, with the death of Mao Zedong and the subsequent policy shift towards economic modernization under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China entered a new era in world politics, culminated in the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with the United States in 1979.

China-Africa Relations in the Post-1970s Reform Period

In the early 1980s the policy of modernization and economic reform became the centerpiece of China's Communist Party under Premier Deng (Taylor 2006). This period saw the announcement of the new *Four Principles on Sino-African Economic and Technical Cooperation* in 1983 by Premier Zhao Ziyang (Davies 2007) based on equality, mutual benefit, pursuing practical results by adopting a variety of means, and seeking common development. Within the scope of the Eight Principles, these new adjustments were prompted by the weakening of ideological conditions and increasing attention was given to economic relations and the strengthening of humanitarian aid support.

Following these policy adjustments, China supported more than two hundred infrastructure projects in African countries in the 1980s. The overall number of projects in Africa and West Asia exceeded 2,600, amounting to US$5.6 billion.

In fact, between 1970 and 1976, China committed US$1,815 million aid to Africa (Taylor 2006).

The Post-1990 Reforms

In the 1990s, African countries accelerated the process of multiparty democracy and the liberalization of the economy under the watchful eyes of the IMF and the World Bank. With the trend towards liberalization and privatization in full swing, the Chinese government realized that it would no longer be possible to insist on traditional cooperation between governments, that development aid should be directed towards invigorating private sector development in Africa and that the new policy should also enroll the participation of Chinese enterprise in African markets. The new approach then was consistent with China's broad economic trade strategy of exploiting the opportunities made possible by the process of economic globalization (Lin 1996: 33–36).

The second important reform was the decision to grant interest-free loans and subsidized export credits to African countries in order to promote Chinese trade and investment in Africa. The results of these reforms are numerous.

According to Weston *et al.* (2011: 7), Chinese government's pledges and announcements of bank loans and deals indicate that China's assistance to Africa is growing rapidly, especially since the 1990s. Accordingly, China's April 2011 Foreign Aid White Paper reported that Africa was the destination for 45.7 per cent of Chinese aid in 2009. The New York University Wagner School (*Ibid.*) reported Chinese investment projects and aid in Africa to be $10 million in 2002, $838 million in 2003, $2.3 billion in 2004, $4 billion in 2005, $9 billion in 2006, and $18 billion in 2007. Deborah Brautigam, a scholar of China-Africa relations, reported that Export-Import Bank of China pledged $20 billion in loans from 2007–2009 (cited in Weston *et al.* 2011: 7). She noted that, commercial deals and loans aside, China's ODA to Africa was $1.4 billion in 2007. Since then, Premier Wen Jiabao has pledged an additional $10 billion in low-interest loans to African states in 2009–2012.

Also, some 585 Chinese enterprises received approval by the Chinese authorities to invest in Africa in 2002. South Africa had 98 approvals, amounting to $119 million in value. Other important Chinese FDI destinations in Africa include Tanzania, Ghana, and Senegal (Broadman 2007). By the end of 2000, the Chinese had established 499 companies in Africa with a total contractual investment of $990 million, of which $680 million was Chinese capital (Taylor 2006).

Impact of the EU's and China's Cooperation on Africa

The EU's and China's presence in Africa is highly admired both as an opportunity that Africa should grasp to get a place into the international economy and also as a chance to improve its development. Some cases are selected to analyze the effects of the EU partnership with Africa, followed by the Chinese effects on Africa.

The EU Case

First of all, one should mention that for the only year of 2007 (under the 9th EDF), Africa received the funding of 2.694 billion euro from a total sum of 3.4 billion (*i.e.* 79.24 per cent) (see Fig. 1). This investment has funded several projects on the continent. This means that Africa got the bulk of projects to be financially supported by the EU.

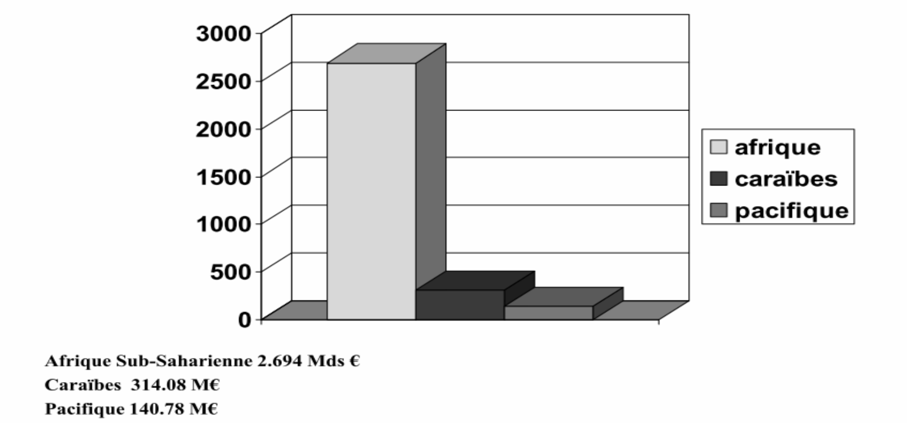

Fig. 1. The commitments for 2007, Geographical Distribution

Source: Delcoustal 2008: 6.

Of a total of 184 projects for funding consideration by the EU, Africa had 150 projects (Delcoustal 2008) corresponding to 81.52 per cent regionally divided as follows: West Africa – 70; East Africa – 20; Central Africa – 37; Southern Africa – 23.

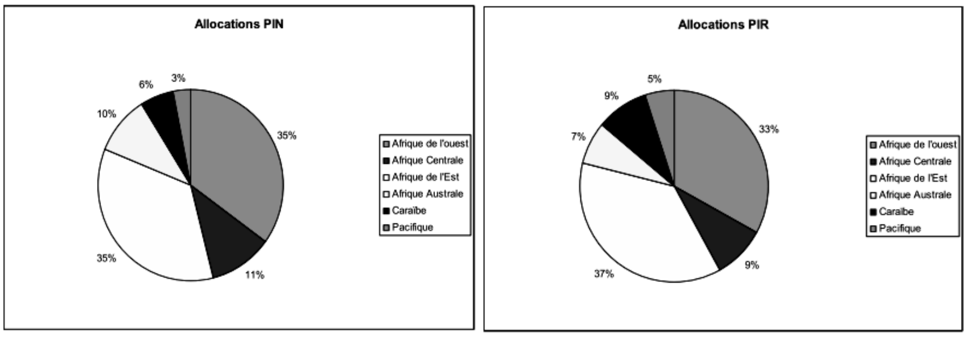

Fig. 2. Budgetary allocations for regional and national programs for ACP countries

Source: Delcoustal 2008: 23.

One of the considerations of the Cotonou Agreement (under the 10th FED) is to allow greater regional integration through the formation of trading blocs. Supporting the existing sub-regional institutions, the EU has placed special emphasis on strengthening these institutions as a relay and a tool for its policy of assistance to Africa. Indeed, the objectives of strengthening regional blocs are multiple. It could allow many of these countries to overcome the obstacles posed by their relatively small domestic market; then at the regional level, it provides institutional capacity and human resources to adjust their technical and administrative insufficiencies. And finally, the regional approach may allow African countries to pursue their interests with more confidence and strength. Moreover, the terms and obligations of membership of an ambitious program of reforms within a regional organization also facilitate the task for national leaders to implement politically difficult measures, such as reducing rates of protection or the establishment of large-scale reform of regulatory and judicial systems. In addition, monitoring at a regional level a dialogue among partners helps to reduce the risk of slipping to macroeconomic terms.

In this perceptive, these institutions have an ability to negotiate and receive funding for implementation of projects for countries in the region. This article explores the case of ECOWAS and the effect of agreements on the development of this region.

The Case Study of West Africa

Even if ECOWAS is a minor trading partner for the EU (about 2 per cent of its trade), the EU is a privileged trading area of ECOWAS countries. About half of imports and exports of ECOWAS member countries in fact concern the EU. Agricultural and food products represent a significant proportion of total of ECOWAS exports to the EU (28 per cent), and the imports of the ECOWAS from the EU (16 per cent). Among the ECOWAS countries, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria produce 83 per cent of food exports from the region to the EU.

The following Table 1 presents the inventory of the EU–ECOWAS trade in 2002 and shows that such a scale of trade increases competitiveness, the flow of European direct investment, intra-regional flows and increased trade volume.

Table 1

Structure of trade between the EU and ECOWAS in 2002

(in millions US $ and percentage)

Category of products	**EU exports to ECOWAS ($ million)**	**In %**	**EU imports from the ECOWAS ($ million)**	**In %**
Agricultural products	1,864	17.0	2,902	31.3
Raw materials	806	7.3	5,231	56.4
Manufactured products	8,301	75.7	1,147	12.3
Total	**10,971**	**100.0**	**9,280**	**100.0**

Source: Steen and Danau 2006: 51.

Individually and in some key sectors, the economy of some West African countries has improved through the implementation of the regional agreements within the EU–Africa partnership. For example, in Senegal, fishing became the first sector of the economy from years of drought and the farm crisis (Gahamanyi *et al.* 2005). Indeed, fishing helps both to reduce the deficit balance of payments and unemployment as well as to supply the population's needs in protein. For a total turnover of 300 billion FCFA,[11] fishing generates an estimated value of 100 billion FCFA, or 11 per cent of total GDP and 2.3 per cent of primary total GDP. Moreover, the authorities pay special attention to the fisheries sector to restore the trade balance, chronically in deficit. Since 1986, the fisheries sector ranks first in exports exceeding peanut products and phosphates handsets by providing nearly a third of the value of overseas sales. Fishery now generates nearly 100,000 direct jobs for nationals and over 90 per cent by artisanal fishing. It also creates many related jobs and occupies nearly 15 per cent of the labor force in Senegal, which is about 600,000 people.

We should note that the whole Africa has had roughly the same pattern in cooperating with the EU as in the case of West Africa. Figs 1 and 2 have shown it. The funds allocated to Africa are spread across the continent according to the level of development of the economic blocs as stipulated by the Cotonou Agreements.

The Chinese Case

Chinese presence in Africa is notable in various areas such as trade, social, infrastructure building, peacemaking and peace building. But here, few cases will be selected, namely trade, infrastructure building and a new developmental model based on Chinese Special Economic Zones experience to illustrate the impact of Chinese involvement on Africa.

Chinese Trade with Africa

With its status as a 'latecomer' in investment in Africa, China does not seem to be handicapped by this. Contrary to all expectations, it becomes Africa's third largest trading partner after the USA and France (Alden 2007). Two-way trade, which stood at less than US$10 billion in 2000, surged to over US$50 billion by the end of 2006 (see Fig. 3). Within the same period China's share of Africa's exports jumped from 2.6 to over 9.3 per cent and it has become the leading trading partner for several countries of the continent's commodity-based economies.

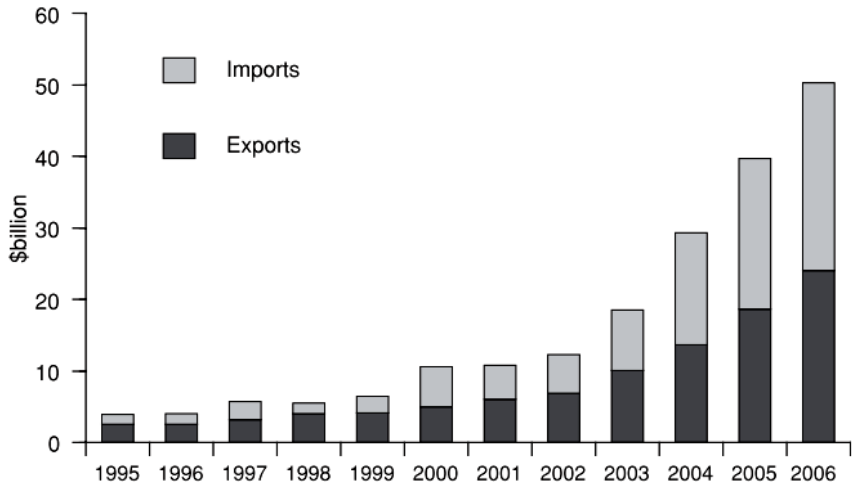

Fig. 3. China's trade with Africa, 1995–2006

Source: Alden 2007: 18.

As shown in Fig. 3, China's trade with Africa has been growing from the mid-1990s to 2006. It also shows that for the same period the trading value increased from approximately US$4.5 billion to US$10 billion in 2006, meaning the Chinese partnership with Africa produced good result in the trading sector.

However, this figure is not equally distributed on the continent. In Africa, there are countries that have deeper trading relations with China than others as the following Fig. 4 shows.

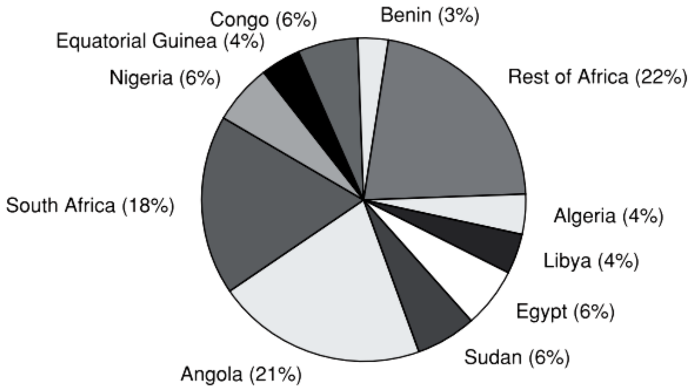

Fig. 4. China's top ten trade partners in Africa, 2006

Source: Alden 2007: 20.

This clearly shows the proportion of Chinese trading partners in Africa in 2006, Angola being the first and Benin Republic the tenth. And this top ten accumulated 78 per cent of the whole Chinese trade with Africa. According to Rotberg (2008) another group of seven countries (Angola, Egypt, Congo, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda), which the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited in the summer of 2006, had a combined trade volume of over $38 billion with China, or 52.2 per cent of total Chinese-African trade in 2007.

Infrastructure Building

The renovation and extension of infrastructure were sorely neglected throughout the continent during the final decades of the twentieth century, when trade and aid to Africa were dominated by Euro-American partners. However, China has committed to participate in the refurbishment, the building and extension of the infrastructure networks throughout the African continent.

In this respect, Chinese (re)development of roads, railroads, ports, and airports are also Chinese priorities by cooperating with Africa. To take but one example, the colonial construction and contemporary Chinese reconstruction of the Benguela rail line in Angola, which runs from the Angolan coast directly eastwards toward the rich mining zones of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia illustrates such large-scale Chinese projects in Africa (Rotberg 2008). As part of its massive effort to redevelop Angolan infrastructure that was devastated by the decades-long civil war, in 2004 China extended $2 billion in soft loans to Angola.

Special Economic Zones

The Chinese Special Economic Zones (SEZs) originated at the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit held in Beijing in November 2006, which was attended by over forty African heads of state. By deciding to export its experience of Special Economic Zones to Africa, China believes these zones will provide the liberalized investment environments focused on strategic industries to attract foreign companies. The model of special geographical zones where investing companies enjoy preferential economic policies is by no means unique. Numerous African governments have established or are establishing such zones in their countries in an attempt to attract foreign direct investment (FDI), especially in labor-intensive manufacturing industries. Kenya, Egypt, and Mauritius are the most proactive on the continent with respect to such an activity. These zones are positioned on the continent in order to become Africa's new economic growth nodes. Chinese-initiated SEZs in Africa require large amounts of investment in infrastructure, both within the zones and linking them to ports and regional markets. If completed as planned, the infrastructural corridors will provide the essential linkages between fragmented African markets and will have a positive impact upon regional economic integration.

The terms of these zones are being negotiated between Beijing and targeted African governments that are willing to offer the required policy concessions in order to receive committed Chinese investment. Beijing has strategically selected some key African economies in which it will apply its SEZ model. These designated countries reflect China's commercial priorities in Africa, they are geographically dispersed over the continent, and have had long-term close political relations with the PRC. For a total of five, these zones are: Zambian Mining Hub, Indian Ocean Rim Trading Hub; Tanzanian SEZ: A Logistics Hub, Nigeria as a Gateway to West Africa, Manufacturing Hub in Egypt.

Conclusion

From the above-said, it is clear that the interaction between the EU and China with Africa produced satisfactory results on the continent. For proof, Africa's trade with the EU and China takes unprecedented proportions, and increases productivity on the continent. So Africa can be proud of contributing to the international trading system, even if its position in the system is still rather modest. Although the investments of different actors in Africa help the continent to revive its economy after decades of stagnation, the global players' policy with respect to Africa's development still has some gaps.

Regarding the EU, despite the Africans' enthusiasm with respect to the benefits of the EU–Africa partnership, many think this partnership could not reverse the economic decline of Africa. Thus, their argumentation is that the cooperation does nothing more than a financial lifeline to Africa, or worse, a ‘pension’ or automatic allocations to less credible political regimes, without a clear relation with their performance. So we can say that the EU–Africa partnership is far from being an opportunity for Africa. In addition, the Lomé and Cotonou Conventions focused on the free access of some European products to the African market and vice-versa. Unfortunately, most of the African countries heavily depend on customs revenue. Thus, the application of this principle had serious implications in many African countries' budgets. For example, Côte d'Ivoire lowered 40 per cent of its tariffs in 1986 and this resulted in very significant layoffs in the chemical industries, textiles, footwear, and in automotive assembly plants. In Senegal there was a loss of ⅓ jobs in manufacturing between 1985 and 1990, following a reduction of tariffs from 65 per cent to 90 per cent during the same period. A report of the Institute of International Economics[12] stated that the loss of revenue in 1990–1995 from imported duties could range from 1.6 million euro in Guinea Bissau to 352 million euro in Nigeria; the same report indicated that Cape Verde could expect a drop in revenue of up to 80 per cent.

On the other hand, sometimes critics are also raised about China's efforts to improve socioeconomic conditions in Africa. It would be valuable if China issues some rigorous regulations on how to grant aid and any kind of investment to African countries, especially clauses and guarantees from African countries on the management of these funds, because sometimes such invested funds do not reach their destined goals. Communities that are located in regions where China undertakes its extractive, industrial, or commercial pursuits often do not see direct benefits from the Chinese presence.

Finally, the African countries should know not only what they want and how to obtain it but also how to manage their relationships with these partners in order to maximize profits. It is true that much remains to be done in Africa, but it is also good to start with good management and progress towards effective takeoff of the African economy.

NOTES

[1] Africa-Caribbean-Pacific.

[2] Name of Cameroon capital where these agreements were signed.

[3] It is important to note here that the Yaoundé Conventions were preceded by what is called the association regime. Indeed, countries that signed the Treaty of Rome (1957) had expressed their solidarity on this occasion with colonies, countries and overseas territories and undertook to contribute to their prosperity. Thus, the fourth part of this treaty considered the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF) to grant technical and financial assistance to those colonies and overseas territories which had historical links with the European countries. It was called at that time Regime of Association. But this article does not focus on that Treaty for two reasons. First, at that period it was only a treaty between European countries without participation of any African colonies; second, African colonies had not yet attained their sovereignty, at least the major part, while this paper focuses on the independent African countries. In this sense, it is unnecessary to develop the association regime here.

[4] African and Malagasy States Associated.

[5] EDF: European Development Fund. In general, the EDF funding are divided as follows:

1. First EDF: 1959–1964;
2. Second EDF: 1964–1970 (Yaoundé I Convention);
3. Third EDF: 1970–1975 (Yaoundé II Convention);
4. Fourth EDF: 1975–1980 (Lomé I);
5. Fifth EDF: 1980–1985 (Lomé II);
6. Sixth EDF: 1985–1990 (Lomé III);
7. Seventh EDF: 1990–1995 (Lomé IV);
8. Eighth EDF: 1995–2000 (Lomé IV bis);
9. Ninth EDF: 2000–2007 (Cotonou Agreement);
10. Tenth EDF: 2008–2013(Cotonou Agreement).

See Cooperation ACP / European Commission, Financing Instruments European Development Fund, URL: http://www.confedmali.gov.ml/acpue_fed.php, accessed 8 December 2010.

[6] STABEX: Stabilization System of Export Earnings from Agricultural Products.

[7] ECU: European Currency Unit is the predecessor of the Euro. It was equivalent to 3 pounds and (in France) from 1960 1 ECU = 5 silver francs.

[8] SYSMIN: System of Stabilization of Export Earnings from Mining Products.

[9] Economic capital of Benin Republic.

[10] EU Country & Regional Programming to ACP countries. URL: http//:www.acp-programming.eu/wcm/; accessed 22 December 2010.

[11] The CFA Franc (FCFA) is the currency of several African countries that constitutes the franc zone.

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