CHINA'S ROLE IN AFRICA'S CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACEKEEPING AND PEACE BUILDING

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ABSTRACT

Security and stability are important to Africa because it is ravaged by intra and inter-state conflicts. The region is therefore in need of assistance from donors to provide financial, human and material resources for conflict resolution and peacekeeping activities. China is a relatively new participant in conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa. The main objectives of this article are to understand China's role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa and the related challenges, especially in post conflict societies, an analysis of the factors and underlying motives of China's contribution to conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa, and an assessment of the significance of China's contribution to Africa's security and stability. The article starts with a clarification of the concepts of conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The analysis of China's contribution to, and impact on, conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa is located within the conceptual framework of peacebuilding viewed as conflict prevention, non-recurrence of violent conflict and fostering social justice. China's foreign policy is viewed as an extension of its domestic interests and an emerging world power eager to provide leadership.

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1. Introduction

Africa suffers from intra and inter-state conflicts, despite decades of political independence. The Third Wave democratization process that has swept across the continent since the early 1990s has contributed to post-election violence and conflicts compounding the precarious situation. A typical example is the tense pre- and post-November 2011 elections atmosphere in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a country that finds it difficult to free itself from a cycle of violence and conflict. Africa suggests that (nation-) state building and post conflict reconciliation remain tenuous, undermining stability and security, and development prospects on the continent. The resolution of conflicts, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa require the assistance of major powers to provide the necessary international support, human and financial resources, primarily because most African nations lack the capability to resolve domestic and inter-state conflicts.

For a long time, major Western powers and, to some extent, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), were the most influential players in conflict resolution. This, in essence, meant a spillover of the East-West ideological tensions and struggle for spheres of influence into the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping activities. This means that peacekeeping, an integral part of peacebuilding, has largely been shaped by the liberal values of democracy and market-driven development strategies. China, like Japan, is a relatively new actor in peace activities in Africa. This development has generated a lively debate revolving around questions such as: Why is China interested in contributing to global peace and stability? What is the nature of its role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding? Does China offer a new model of peacekeeping? What is the impact of China's involve-

ment in peacekeeping in the world as a whole and Africa in particular? What are the challenges faced by China?

This article examines China's relatively recent but growing and important role in keeping peace and stability in the African region. The focus of the article is fourfold. It starts with a clarification of the concepts of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict resolution. This is followed by an analysis of the framework of foreign and security policy and the related changes to understand the underlying motives and factors accounting for China's contribution to conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. The next section assesses China's role in peace and security in order to establish whether its participation is through bilateral or multilateral channels. The analysis is also focused on whether China presents a model of peacekeeping different from the traditional model based on the 1648 Westphalian principles and post-World War Two international norms and rules, and whether it is suited to the African region. This is important because of the controversy associated with China's presence in peacekeeping and global politics. The question is, what does China's role bring to the international peacebuilding agenda in general and the United Nations Security Council in particular? Lastly, an assessment of peace and security in the African region is provided. What are the challenges facing China in its role in peace activities, and what must be done to overcome the shortcomings?

2. Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

Peacekeeping, though not explicitly articulated in the United Nations Charter, is a means for resolving intra- and inter-state conflicts and maintaining international peace and security. Peacekeeping has become an integral part of peacebuilding. The Agenda for Peace views peacekeeping as a UN innovation to resolve and prevent conflicts in order to achieve peace, and it symbolizes the flexibility of the UN Charter and adaptation of the collective use of force. Peacekeeping has evolved from the traditional peacekeeping during 1948-1987, to humanitarian relief since 1988, to peace enforcement in the late 1980s to early1990s, and to peacebuilding as of 1992, in tandem with the renewed roles of the United Nations (Adebajo, 2011). Peacekeeping involves

both military (combat) and civilian (non-combat) personnel. In the post-Cold War era, especially with the publication of the Agenda for Peace in 1992, peacebuilding has become prominent on the international, regional and national agenda, primarily in post-conflict societies. The Agenda for Peace conceptualizes peacebuilding as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post conflict reconciliation and reconstruction to achieve sustainable peace and development.   This means that peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are intricately intertwined.

The United Nations, particularly the Security Council, has the primary and exclusive responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and mostly through peacekeeping. Unfortunately, in the 1980s and early 1990s, the UNSC did not readily respond to African conflicts, especially in West Africa, yet Africa suffered from numerous conflicts. The UNSC position changed in the mid 1990s. The failed missions and loss of life by peacekeepers in Somalia and Rwanda in the 1990s dealt a severe blow to the Security Council's deployment of peacekeepers to Africa, especially on the part of the United States. However, the Brahimi Report and New Horizon agenda restored and paved the way for more successful UN peace missions in Africa, as exemplified by experiences in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Adebajo, 2011, p. xiv).

Whereas Sub-Saharan Africa has become relatively peaceful, there are still hotspots where conflicts flare up constantly or continue perpetually. Such instability hinders development prospects on the continent. Yet peace and security are essential pre-requisites for development, especially for a continent saddled with numerous developmental problems and challenges. Africa is home to 300 million of the world's poor, 68 percent of population with HIV in 2010 (UNAIDS, 2011), politically unstable, unattractive to foreign investment and a marginal player in the global economy, despite its rich endowment of natural resources. These factors make most parts of the region a fertile ground for recruitment for criminal activities, including terrorism. Therefore, it is important to understand the causal factors that make some African nations prone to conflicts, and the need for UN peace missions. The African region experiences mostly civil wars due to ethnic, religious, re-

gional, racial, and class conflicts. Leaders tend to mobilize political support on ethnic lines and there exists intolerance of religious differences, especially between Islam and Christianity. Electoral disputes, corruption by the political and business elite, and increase in poverty and inequalities have precipitated tensions and conflicts. Inter-state conflicts have subsided, but the few that occur involve border disputes over territory and areas rich in natural resources, for example, Sudan and South Sudan. Arbitrary borders drawn by former colonial masters are partly responsible for some inter-state conflicts in the region.

3. Evolution and Underlying Motives of China's Foreign and Security Policy

Foreign policy, as an extension of domestic policy, is directed at realizing national interests in the global system (Morgenthau, 1973). For example, China's foreign policy aims to realize political and economic objectives. In general, China seeks to build friendly relations with other states in the world based on sovereign equality of states and non-interference in internal affairs. Therefore, it is not based on the promotion of human rights. In Africa, in particular, the major interests are to have ready access to, and protection of, raw materials, investment areas, and markets for trade, and to create allies critical for support in international forums such as the United Nations.

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) provides an institutional setting for dialogue and cooperation on a variety of issues between China and Africa, including peace and security. For example, the 2009 FOCAC stipulates that China will "continue to support and participate in … peacekeeping missions" (Saferworld, 2011 p. vii). The China African Policy of 2006 provides the core principles to guide cooperation with the continent, including peace and security matters. Peace and security represent an extension on, and deepening of, the already thriving economic relations. The African Policy relating to peace and security emphasizes capacity building to enable African military security personnel, at country, sub-regional and regional levels, to resolve their own security problems (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

The relatively late entry of China in peacekeeping in general, and Africa in particular, is attributed to a change in its foreign and security policy, largely a product of domestic and global factors. The Reform and Open Up Policy of Deng Xiaoping's government in the late 1970s had a profound impact on Chinese foreign and security policy, including the active involvement of China in international peacekeeping as a whole (Singh, 2011; Hellstrom, 2009). The Reform and Opening Up Policy ushered in a "more engaged, pragmatic and constructive" (Gill and Huang, 2009, p. 1) foreign policy aimed at pursuing its aspirations as a rising major power and achieving foreign political and economic objectives.

As a corollary, its foreign defense or security policy is premised on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation to achieve common security. The Reform and Opening Up policies have been extended to the defense sector in terms of modernization of the defense forces for two purposes: self-defense and contribution to world peace and stability. These policies capture China's Harmonious World View, which emphasizes durable peace, development and common prosperity in international relations rather than ideological confrontation and reliance on soft power to project an image of a responsible power (Osei-Hwedie, 2011a, p.3; Sicurelli, 2010, p. 7; Hirono, 2011, p.328). China, as the only developing member of the five permanent members of the Security Council, seeks to contribute to the resolution of disputes in conflict-ridden regions, including Africa, UN peacekeeping and anti-piracy operations in Somalia waters (Osei-Hwedie, 2011a, pp. 13, 16). As a result of Deng's Reforms and Opening Up of China's stance towards the UN, the United Nation's peacekeeping changed from an imperialist instrument of great powers in developing countries. China's attitude towards the U.N. peacekeeping activities have been transformed from a period of non participation, indifference and hostility at the time China assumed a permanent seat in the Security Councilin 1971, to casting a vote on, and sharing the costs of UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) in 1981; sending peacekeepers to United Nations missions between 1989-1999; joining the UN Standby Arrangement; and sending non-combat personnel since the 2000s (Singh, 2011; Saferworld, 2011; Hellstrom, 2009).

With respect to the underlying motives for China's remarkable growth in peacekeeping operations, a combination of factors account for the transformation of peacekeeping policy, as analyzed below: The most prominent explanation lies in the changes in China's foreign and security policy which seeks to portray the country as a responsible global actor willing to shoulder international responsibilities; an active participant in, and supporter of, international institutions and multilateral diplomacy; and major contributor to global peace and security. China aims to play an international role that is commensurate with its emerging position in the global political economy as the current second largest economy and, with the acquisition of anti-satellite missile in 2007, a rising nuclear power (Mockli, 2007, p. 1).

China, as a rising major power, seeks to exert influence on the international scene and shape the global agenda, norms, ideas and practices, and to demonstrate that it is an equal to the United States as the hegemon, and challenge Western dominance. Thus, China's increased participation in UN peacekeeping is a "means of projecting power overseas, and to foster its military modernization programs" (Hellstrom, 2009, p.36). Singh (2011, p.800) adds that peacekeeping has been used as a tool for "image building" as an international actor. By engaging in peacekeeping, China hopes to demonstrate to those who are suspicious and apprehensive about its rise, especially the United States, that its rise is peaceful and, therefore, not a threat to other powers. In 2003, Premier Wen Jiabao stated succinctly that China was "a rising power dedicated to peace" (Hellstrom, 2009, p. 37). Gill and Huang (2009 p. 12) have asserted, "China also sees participation in peacekeeping operations as a way to assuage the concerns of its neighbors about the growing military capabilities of the PLA". International studies indicate that the rise of a great power in the international system can either lead to structural transformation or maintenance of the status quo — peaceful rise (Baylis et al, 2008). In addition, China's desire to isolate Taiwan explains its active peacekeeping to assist conflict ridden countries that either broke relations with Taiwan in line with the *One China Policy* or influence countries that still maintain links with Taiwan (Hellstrom, 2009, p. 40).

China, as the only developing country among the five perma-
nent members of the UNSC, and an emerging power, seeks to contrib-
ute to international peace, stability and security through diplomacy and
participation in UN peacekeeping. It is also argued that China sincerely
wants to assist conflict-ridden weak states so that their insecurity prob-
lems do not spill over into neighboring countries, and in turn promote
global peace and security (Huang, 2011; Hellstrom, 2009).

China's growing role in UN peacekeeping is also a reflection of
its appreciation of the need to safeguard common security in an inter-
dependent and globalized world. Indeed, its national economic inter-
ests and export-oriented development are largely dependent on global
peace (Gill and Huang, 2009, p.12) to ensure global economic interac-
tions. Similarly, self-economic interests, the desire to safeguard its in-
vestments and trade in Africa, also explain China's eagerness to con-
tribute to UN peacekeeping in Africa. For example, "Three out of six
African countries where Chinese peacekeepers are deployed" are
among the top 20 investment areas, sources of raw materials and trade
partners, such as Sudan, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo
(Hellstrom, 2009, p. 45).

Furthermore, changes in the United Nations Peacekeeping Op-
erations (UNPKOs**)** brought about by the Brahimi Report of 2000 which
endorsed peace support operations as the newest form of peacekeep-
ing and peace enforcement that condoned the use of force for self-
defense and as a last resort resonated very well with China's model of
peacekeeping (Singh, 2011, p.798; Hellstrom, 2009, p. 35). Similarly,
the appointment of China's first UN Peacekeeping Force Commander of
the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in
August 2007 was a good indicator of China's growing influence in the
UNPKOs (Gill and Huang, 2009: p. 7; Hellstrom, 2009, p.35), and trust in
Chinese capability by the UNDPKOs. Taken together, these develop-
ments encouraged China's rapid involvement in UN peace missions.

Moreover, the presence in peacekeeping activities has given
the People's Liberation Army (PLA) the opportunity to train, build ca-
pacity, acquire international experience from foreign armies in mobiliz-
ing and deploying forces abroad (Huang, 2011, p. 260; Hirono, 2011, p.
330), and learn modern techniques, including riot control. Such controls

would be useful in riot prone regions such as Tibet and Xinjiang (Singh, 2011, pp. 802-3). There is a belief, primarily among U.S. scholars, that China's rapid engagement in peace activities in general, and African peacekeeping in particular, is designed to change the negative perceptions and criticisms of China's actions in the world and Africa (Hellstrom, 2009, p.36). In support of this view, Hirono (2011, p.329) posits that China's entry into peacekeeping is a tool to offset and transform a negative local image as an arms supplier and supporter of repressive governments. Lastly, China's role in peacekeeping is derived from the need to defend and promote its own cherished principles and norms of sovereignty and non-interference which underline the traditional, Westphalian peacekeeping. China insists that peacekeeping should be based on consent of the target state, UN authorization, and use of force as the last option when all other means have failed (Hellstrom, 2009, p.48). The insistence on sovereignty and non-interference is a self-interested stance to dissuade other powers from interfering in China's domestic affairs, to project China as a responsible and legitimate leader in global security affairs, and to protect weak, developing countries.

4. China's Role in Africa's Peace and Stability

China became actively involved in African peacekeeping in the post-Cold War era when intra-state conflicts became common and the main threat to international peace and stability. Before then, in 1988, for the first time in Africa, China sent 20 civilian observers to the UN Namibia Transitional Period Aid Group (UNTAG) to monitor general elections (Karlsson, 2011, p.7; Hellstrom, 2009, p. 19; Saferworld, 2011, p. 25). Since 1991, and especially the 2000s, China has steadily intensified its contribution to UN peacekeeping in Africa. In 2003, it sent 175 personnel to the UN peacekeeping to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 3,975 to Liberia and Sudan. In 2006 a total of 4,300 Chinese personnel went to Africa, and in 2009 Chinese soldiers were in UN peace missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan (Pengtao, 2009, pp. 289-390; Singh, 2011, p. 811). The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), UN Organization Stabilization Mis-

sion in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), UN in Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), UN Operations in Burundi (ONUB), UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), African/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (Sudan) (UNAMID), and UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) remain the most important recipients of Chinese peacekeepers (Singh, 2011, p. 811).

There are multifaceted ways in which China is engaged in peacekeeping in Africa. It offers both bilateral and multilateral assistance to Africa directly and indirectly, and at national, regional and international levels. The bias is towards multilateral assistance, particularly through the UN as a symbol of multilateralism. Contrary to criticisms by the West, China has been able to use its soft power —diplomacy, dialogue and persuasion —to influence individual African countries in a bid to resolve domestic and sometimes inter-state conflict. Through bilateral diplomacy, China has been instrumental in supporting and protecting the Sudanese government from UN sanctions, using its influence to persuade Sudan to accept UN peacekeepers in Darfur, and find a comprehensive political solution to the Darfur crisis for sustainable peace in 2006 (Pengtao, 2009; Saferworld, 2011, p. ii). To facilitate this process, China appointed a Special Representative for African Affairs in May 2007 (Kohli, 2009). Also, China ensured that UN peacekeepers were deployed to South Sudan in 2005 and to Darfur in 2007. In 2008, China urged the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, which supported rebel groups, to resolve the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo amicably (Saferworld, 2011, p. ii). Currently, China is cajoling both Sudan and South Sudan to resolve border disputes through dialogue rather than military means.

It is through its contribution to multilateral peacekeeping that China has made the most impact. It has allowed China to exert significant influence on global security in the UNSC and on its allies in Africa. China has been instrumental in availing diplomatic support and financial aid to African regional organizations responsible for peace and security in the continent. Diplomatic support for sub-regional and regional organizations is most notable in international forums such as the

UNSC. China has urged the other permanent members to respect the positions and roles of regional organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and African Union (AU) on African issues, and that of sub-and regional organizations largely shapes China's stance on African issues in the UNSC. It has also used its veto power to protect African issues, positions and countries, especially conflict prone countries. For example, upholding African sub-regional and regional organizations' positions, it has shielded countries such as Eritrea, Ivory Coast, Somalia, Sudan and Zimbabwe against UN sanctions. China also opposed criminal indictments of the Sudanese President, Al Bashir in 2009. In contrast, on the issue of how to resolve a crisis, including the question of greater UN interference in a domestic crisis and imposition of enforcement measures under chapter 7 of the UN Charter, Africa's firm and united stance influenced China to change its original position in order to support the UN actions advocated by the African Union. For example, China supported arms embargo against Ivory Coast in 2004 and Eritrea in 2009; accepted handover of African Union peacekeeping in Darfur to the UN in 2006; and UN intervention in Somalia. This meant that China was the only UNSC member pushing for the UN involvement in Somalia, while the remaining members were not eager to send UN peacekeepers (Van Hoeymissen, 2010 p. 12).

Additionally, China offers financial assistance to Africa sub-regional and regional organizations as grants to institutions, capacity building and mediation, or peacekeeping efforts. To date the biggest recipient of Chinese aid include the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) with a total of US$1.8 million by 2008, and the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with US$700,000 in 2009. However, its financial support is significantly less than that provided by the European Union (EU) and the United States, which availed the balance of US$444 million to AMIS in 2006, and the EU gave 35.5 million Euros to the African Peace Facility for AMISOM (Van Hoeymissen, 2010, p. 13). Before then, in 2005, China gave US$400,000 to the AU for continental peacekeeping activities. In 2006, China provided a total of US$3.5 million to the African peacekeeping mission in Sudan's Darfur region as budgetary support and humanitarian emergency aid. Of this amount, US$2.5 million went to humanitar-

ian emergency, primarily for refugees, and US$1million for budgetary support of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) (Kagwanja, 2009, pp. 6, 9).

China emerges as a firm supporter of multilateralism, as it has sent more peacekeeping personnel to the UN peacekeeping and Africa than other permanent members of the Security Council since the late 1990s. The bulk of its contribution to African peacekeeping is channeled through the UN rather than directly to African sub-regional and regional organizations (Van Hoeymissen, 2010, p. 13). The use of the multilateral channel allows China to exert more influence and to be more effective rather than through bilateral or sub-regional and regional channels. China has made the most significant contribution to the UN peacekeeping operation by accounting for three-quarters of the peacekeepers stationed in Africa. These include civilian police, military observers, engineering battalions, medical units and transport companies (Gill and Huang, 2009, p. 1). By December 2010, there were 1,955 People's Liberation Army (PLA) officials in nine United Nations missions. Of these 94 were military observers and staff officers, 175 engineering troops and 43 medical personnel for the UNMONUC; 275 engineering troops, 240 transportation troops and 43 medical personnel for the UNMIL; 275 engineering troops, 100 transportation troops and 60 medical personnel for the UNMIS; and 315 engineering troops for UNAMID (Information Office of the State Council, 2011, p. 39). Karlsson (2011, pp. 9-10) has higher data of 2,039 for the same period. Of these 230 were engineering and medical personnel for the UNMONUC since April 2003; 600 engineering, medical and transport personnel for the UNMIL since April 2004; 475 engineering, transportation, and medical personnel for the UNMIS from June 2006 to July 2011; and 325 engineering troops for UNAMID since July 2008. These were the largest recipients of Chinese peacekeepers in the 2000s.

5. A Chinese Model of Peacekeeping?

China's participation in peace and stability in Africa gained momentum at an opportune time when African conflicts were no longer a priority to the West; and most Western members of UN Security

Council were pre-occupied with other conflicts such as Afghanistan and Iraq following September 11, 2001 terrorists attacks on the U.S. There was, therefore, a decline in their participation in international peacekeeping. Additionally, human, material and financial resources were difficult to mobilize; and demand for peacekeeping operations was high due a spiral in intra-state conflicts. However, the West's financial and personnel contributions still outstrip China's. As a rising major power with enormous financial, human and material resources, and eager to provide leadership to the Global South, China found it imperative to assume a role in peacekeeping befitting its status as an emerging global power and a permanent member in the UNSC. Thus, China's main approach to African peacekeeping is through active participation in UN peacekeeping to resolve domestic conflicts. In contrast, Western powers withdrew from active participation following the Somalia and Rwanda debacle in the 1990s, preferring instead to provide logistical and financial support to resolve Africa's conflicts (Van Hoeymissen, 2010, p. 13). Subsequently, however, in the mid 1990s and especially the 2000s, the West re-activated its interventions in African conflicts, including the involvement of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led operations in Libya in 2011 as part of the UNSC sanctioned No Fly Zone to protect civilians. Another is the United States military participation in the pursuit of Ugandan rebel leader Joseph Kony of the Lord's Resistance Army, since 2011, albeit outside the multilateral framework of the United Nations.

On the surface, it seems that China has opted to 'bandwagon' and "accept global norms," thereby "strengthen global peace operations, contribute to peace and security in Africa and other developing regions and expand its multilateral military cooperation … and make "China to become even more integrated into the international community and a responsible power" (Huang, 2011, p. 257). In this context, its role does not challenge international institutions and norms (United Nations) for promoting peace and stability based on a post-World War Two liberal order. However, in spite of the assertion that China embraces existing multilateral norms, practices, and institutions of peacekeeping, China offers a different and alternative model of peacekeeping to that of the West, reminiscent of 'Eastphalia' versus post-

Westphalia (Sicurelli, 2010, p. 12), or soft power versus hard power. To begin with, China primarily subscribes to the traditional conception of peacekeeping relative to impartiality, voluntary consent of contending parties, and use of minimum force to adhere to the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs (Karlsson, 2011; Sicurelli, 2010). In contrast, the West, especially the EU, extols the "norm of pooled sovereignty as a peacekeeping tool" to allow for intervention without consent of a host state (Sicurelli, 2010, p. 10), while the U.S. has increasingly turned to unilateralism, since the presidency of George W. Bush and currently in Uganda against the rebel group led by Kony.

In contrast to Western interventions, the Chinese model of peacekeeping is limited, selective, comprehensive, and less militaristic designed to present a picture of a responsible power that adheres to international laws and targeted at peacekeeping with peacebuilding activities that respond to human security needs of communities experiencing conflict. Chinese peace missions consists primarily of non-combats, engineering, medical, transport and police personnel; and they focus on repairing roads, rebuilding bridges and schools, and providing medical services to local societies (Huang, 2011, p. 265; Karlsson, 2011, p. 12). This means that China refrains from contributing combat troops to UN peace missions (Saferworld, 2011, p. vii). What is most remarkable and admirable is that departing Chinese peacekeepers have acquired the reputation of donating their salaries for peacebuilding projects (Karlsson, 2011, p. 12). The preference for non-combat troop contribution by China contrasts sharply with the contribution of combat troops to the UN by Western powers. The UN and West rely on the military framework of multinational and peacekeeping forces supplemented by the political framework, preventive diplomacy, disarmament and mediation to restore order and stability in conflict-ridden societies.

China prefers to engage in political and comprehensive missions (Pengtao, 2009), which seek the consent of conflicting parties and a political solution to the conflict, as a means to achieve sustainable peace and stability in intra-state conflicts. The emphasis is on durable reconciliation, not merely securing a ceasefire. Thus, unlike Western powers' and the United Nation's militaristic approach to peacekeeping

to solving conflicts in Africa, China opts for a strongly political approach, with respect for sovereignty and non-interference. The option for comprehensive missions helps us to understand China's unwillingness to participate in ceasefire monitoring and disengaging or disarming combatants. The Chinese approach to peacekeeping is aimed at striking a balance between the principles of sovereignty and none interference, on one hand, and its active participation in international institutions, multilateral peacekeeping, and contribution to global peace and security, on the other hand (Pengtao, 2009, pp. 391-2). The West and the UN have moved away from strict adherence to sovereignty and non-interference, especially since the 1990s with the elevation of universal human rights and social justice in international relations supported by the Responsibility to Protect (Karlsson, 2011; Sicurelli, 2010). These have legitimized major Western powers' and the United Nation's intervention in domestic conflicts on humanitarian grounds.

Additionally, unlike Western powers which tend to undertake peacekeeping in preferred African countries, China's approach is comprehensive because it has been involved in all parts of Africa wherever there is a need for a mission without discrimination, including Ethiopia, Eritrea and Burundi in the East; Sudan in the North-east; Western Sahara, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia in the West; the Democratic Republic of Congo in the Center, and Mozambique in the South (Pengtao, 2009, p. 391). Moreover, in the case of China, human rights and peacebuilding are not prominent, as opposed to the West and the UN, which prioritize human rights, especially with the Responsibility to Protect, and peacebuilding activities as part of human security. Peacebuilding is still a new concept for China, and its contribution is relatively little. However, judging by the nature of its contributions to peacekeeping of non-combat personnel, it could be argued that it has made some contribution to peacebuilding through building physical and social infrastructure and provision of medical care.

While Western powers and the UN uphold the liberal democratic peace thesis that advances democracy and capitalism as the ultimate outcomes of the peacekeeping agenda to promote development, China views justice and dialogue as the facilitators of peace and development (Osei-Hwedie, 2011a, p. 13), and that economic growth and develop-

ment are the cornerstone of durable peace and security (Saferworld, 2011; Sicurelli, 2010). Therefore, while the West promotes democracy and capitalism as the basis of development and security, China sees a direct causal relation between underdevelopment, on one hand, and conflict and insecurity, on the other hand. Thus, economic development is seen as a pre-condition for peace (Sicurelli, 2010 p. 1). Furthermore, whereas China, the West and UN might support the building of strong and effective states, and development in post-conflict societies (in Africa), China is strongly opposed to the idea of peacebuilding that prioritizes democracy (Saferworld, 2011, p. vii), capitalism, human rights or conditionalities.

Finally, China has a different conception of security from that of the West, more of a challenge to the predominant values and norms and an attempt to chart new ways of global interaction. This might be indicative of the shift in gravity to the East with the economic power and accompanying clout coalescing in Asia. China is seen as "promoting a new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation and shaping an international environment favorable for common development" (Wenping, 2009, p. 4). This is the basis of a 'win-win' formula and upholding of collective security in the international system consistent with the provisions of the UN Charter. This contrasts sharply with Western powers' distrust of other major powers including China and Russia, the propensity to be the self-styled leaders of the world, acceptance of inevitable inequalities and uneven development of the neo-liberal global order, and the tendency to unilateralism, especially the United States and NATO.

An interesting scenario has emerged from the Chinese model versus Western model of peacekeeping: while the West is apprehensive of China, African states and organizations have embraced the Chinese peacekeeping model because they still cling to their sovereignty, are wary of western intervention in their countries shielded by international humanitarian law, and find the Chinese idea that economic development is a precondition for peace most appealing and relevant to their situation. Even the AU is lukewarm towards intervention in internal affairs, which is permissible only in 'grave circumstances', which are subject to interpretation and not invoked, to date. The African Union

insists that justice should not be realized at the expense of peace. This ultimately prioritizes peace. Sicurelli (2010, pp. 15, 22) sums up the situation thus: "the Chinese model of peacekeeping appears increasingly attractive for African governments and regional organizations … China is emerging as a competing norm promoter on African states and regional organizations, which provides the latter with an alternative model of peacekeeping".

However, there are some shortcomings associated with China's model of peacekeeping based on consent, non-interference, political solutions and reliance on non-combatants. This is particularly true in the case of African conflicts, characterized by violence and with no government from which to seek consent. These require peace enforcement to restore stability. For example, Darfur with suspected genocide, or Somalia with no viable government and currently characterized by a cycle of war between Al Shabab fighters and the government. Recent examples include the Libyan revolution as part of the Arab Spring or Uprising of 2011 and Mali following the 2012 coup and declaration of AZAWAD independence by Tuareg rebels who captured cities in the North. Indeed, African civil wars, caused primarily by ethnicity, dating back to pre- and colonial era, require a combined strategy of military (peacekeeping and peace enforcement) and political (dialogue and negotiation) means to resolve and reconcile contending groups. The DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan demonstrate the necessity of both.

6. Impact, Challenges and Trends

It is important to understand the impact of Chinese participation in UN peacekeeping on peace and security in Africa, challenges that are discernable and prospects for the future. China's UN peacekeeping activities have benefited both the UN and Africa enormously. Its financial and personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping as a whole, and to African peace and security have helped to bring peace to Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, DRC, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Western Sahara. However, in some of these countries, such as the DRC, Somalia and Sudan, peace remains fragile. Chi-

na's diplomatic support in international forums, including the UN, has been important in terms of safeguarding African interests and positions whenever sanctions or any punitive measures and peacekeeping are suggested by the Western powers in the UN Security Council. It should be appreciated, however, that its adherence to traditional peacekeeping based on sovereignty, none interference and UN authorization, limited financial assistance, none provision of combat troops for UN peace missions, and contradictory role of a peacekeeper and supplier of arms to Africa raise questions about its credibility as a responsible global leader.

In general, China's participation in UN peacekeeping has contributed to improved legitimacy and image of the UN due to the professionalism, disciplined and scandal-free behavior of Chinese peacekeepers (Pengtao, 2009, p. 394; Gill and Huang, 2009, p. 31; Huang, 2011, p. 263). The United Nation's reputation was dented following allegations of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, corruption and plunder of resources by its peacekeepers (Huang, 2011, p. 263; Gill and Huang, 2009, p. 26; Pengtao, 2009, p. 394). For example, 60 to 70 percent of Liberian women were subjected to physical or sexual violence by combatants, international peacekeepers and humanitarian workers, ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring and Observer Group (ECOMOG) and the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). In the DRC, 140 cases of alleged sexual abuse were reported between December 2004 and August 2006. Also, peacekeepers in the UN operation in Somalia (UNSOM II), Mozambique and Sierra Leone were implicated in rape of civilian women and creating illegal sex industries in these countries (Nkechi, 2007, p. 19). Moreover, participation of "Chinese peacekeepers sends a reassuring message and helps the mission to project an image of being inclusive, impartial and genuinely multilateral" (Gill and Huang, 2009, 2009, p. 27). As a developing state, its involvement makes UN peace activities more acceptable to other developing countries (Saferworld, 2011, p. 76).

Chinese peacekeeping efforts have proved valuable to some countries, and sub- and regional organizations, in bringing an end to some wars, providing much needed medical and transport services to both combatants and local communities, and rebuilding physical infra-

structures. In 2008, for example, China persuaded the DRC and Rwanda to resolve the conflict in Eastern DRC where Rwanda-supported rebel groups caused havoc (Saferworld, 2011, pp. ii). The end of hostilities in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and substantive reduction in violence in Darfur and the DRC, can be attributed to UN peace missions in which China has participated. Chinese, as UN peacekeepers, have displayed exemplary behavior compared to "Belgian, Canadian, Italian and Pakistan peacekeepers" who "were implicated in egregious acts against civilians, including torture, murder and rape" in the DRC, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Somalia (Nkechi, 2007, p. 19). Beyond this, China has given Africa a voice in the UN forums, the UNSC and DPKOs. Evidence suggests that China has consistently used its veto power to promote its ideological goals and Africa interests since it joined the UNSC in 1971. Furthermore, China's voting behavior is not significantly different from the other permanent members of the UNSC as there has been both convergence and divergence with the West. Through abstention, China has shown tact and indirectly supported resolutions it opposed on ideological grounds or to counterbalance U.S. hegemony. For example, China abstained from the vote on sanctions against Libya in 1992 and 1993; and Ethiopia and Sudan in 1996. It abstained on the United States-led United Task Force (UNITAF) for Somalia in 1992 and United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1994, both of which entailed peace enforcement through the use of force, and participation of pivotal/big states. However, it affirmed the resolution on the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) and MINURCA in 1997 and 1999, respectively, as peacekeeping missions.

China also endorsed resolutions for UNAMSIL in 1999 and 2000, MONUC in 2000, UNMIL in 2003, UNOCI in 2004, ONUB in 2004 and UNMIS in 2005, all as peace support operations (limited use of force for defense only). It voted for peace enforcement in 2003 by both Economic Community of West African Force (ECOFORCE) in Cote d'Ivoire and Economic Community of West African States Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) (Staehle, 2006, pp. 101-103; Wuthnow, 2011, pp. 50-51) From 2004 to 2007, "China consistently abstained from or weakened resolutions on Darfur" relating to sanctions and deployment of UN peace-

keepers. However, in 2007, China voted for deployment of a joint UN-AU in Darfur following consent by Khartoum, solicited through Chinese pressure (Saferworld, 2011, pp. v-vi, 11). In 2008, China vetoed a UNSC resolution targeting sanctions on Zimbabwe. In 2011, China abstained from the vote on No-Fly Zone in Libya (Wuthnow, 2011, pp. 1, 227, 283). These examples demonstrate that the Chinese vote is contingent upon a number of factors including threat to its national interests, need to build relations with the West in the 1990s, and the imperative of unity among the permanent members of the UNSC in the face of pressure for reform of the UNSC in the 2000s (Wuthnow, 2011). In order to promote mutual interests, Chinese and African delegates at the UN established a consultation mechanism in 2007 (Saferworld, 2011, pp. v-vi, 11, 58).

Africa, in general, feels that it now has a firm ally in China to articulate African views and positions; place African conflicts on the UNSC agenda; use its veto to safeguard African interests; and push for, and support, deployment of peacekeepers to Africa. Favorable public utterances have been voiced by top officials of the AU Commission, the President of Zimbabwe, former President of Nigeria, South African Minister, the Vice President of Ghana, and the Ugandan Embassy in China (Sicurelli, 2010, pp. 19-22). Therefore, Africa believes that its conflicts will receive priority or their due attention with China championing African concerns and problems at the UNSC. This is different from the situation in the 1990s when the UNSC members, primarily the U.S., neglected peacekeeping needs of the continent following the loss of American soldiers involved in peace mission in Somalia. There is evidence that China is playing the anticipated role as it committed itself "to bring African conflicts to the attention of the international community. In this regard China has played a generally positive role, for example, in pushing for action on Somalia" (Saferworld, 2011, p. v). China was instrumental in the passage of UNSC Resolution 1725 and establishment of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Peace Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM) (Gill and Huang, 2009, p. 15). Other UNSC members were unwilling to send UN peacekeepers to Somalia following the failure in the early 1990s and the perpetual violence in the country. Furthermore, China has urged the UNSC and the international community as a whole to support Africa's resolve to deal with its own conflicts and

insecurity consistent with the rhetoric of 'African solutions for African problems'. Saferworld (2011, p. v) argues, "China has played a constructive role in encouraging the international community to support African regional and sub-regional actors in tackling security threats". Thus, while Western members of the UN Security Council, especially the U.S. and United Kingdom, have readily introduced resolutions directed at imposing sanctions on African countries including Libya, Sudan and Zimbabwe, China (and Russia) has consistently questioned the effectiveness of sanctions and coercion (Saferworld, 2011, p. v). African security organizations have also been reluctant to support sanctions because ordinary people suffer the most than the intended targets, the leadership.

The assistance given to African security organizations and armies involved in peacekeeping in Africa has had a profound impact in improving their capabilities. China has sold its equipment to African governments to boost African peacekeeping capabilities. For example, in September 2008, the President of Ghana signed a US$160 million agreement with the Chinese government which re-equipped the Ghana Armed Forces and enhanced Ghanaian multilateral peacekeeping abilities. Likewise, Zambian troops relied on Chinese-manufactured WZ-551 armored carriers in their peace support operations in Sudan. China has also availed landmine detection equipment to Egypt and mine clearance training courses for engineers from Angola, Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Mozambique, among others (Gill and Huang, 2009, p.29). Furthermore, ECOWAS received electronic equipment worth US$120,000 from China in 2004 (Kagwanja, 2009, p. 9) to strengthen its peacekeeping capabilities, especially in communications. In short, China has provided training and financial assistance for military infrastructures, de-mining support and training of African armed forces.

Positive contributions, notwithstanding, there are inherent contradictions and challenges facing China in UN peacekeeping activities. Although the majority of Chinese UN peace missions are in Africa, and China has extended assistance to African sub- and regional organizations, peace and security remain tenuous in several Africa countries, especially in Sudan, Darfur, Cote d'Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Liberia could be said to be progressing relatively well. These

examples suggest that achievement of sustainable peace, stability and security seem to be faced with challenges. Conflicts continue to smolder in countries that have hosted or are hosts to peacekeeping contingents. These point to problems of implementing peacekeeping operations and cooperation between local governments, local communities, and international peacekeepers, specifically the Chinese. The complexities of conflicts in Africa also suggest that it cannot be assumed that the presence of China in peacekeeping missions alone can bring about peace and security in Africa.

The biggest challenges rest with the practice of principles of peacekeeping, the nature of China's contributions, the relationship between the target state and China, and the complexity of conflicts. The basic problem is to adhere to the requirements of a neutral and impartial peacekeeper in civil conflicts involving a government that is an ally of China and opposing rebel groups. This is particularly evident in countries with enormous Chinese investments and sources of raw materials for the Chinese economy, such as Al-Bashir's Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Darfur since 2003. Even more demanding is the challenge of delicately balancing its bilateral military ties with African recipients of peacekeeping missions, peacekeeping role and commercial interests so that they complement each other; and promote sustainable peace, stability and development in Africa (Huang, 2011, p.265; Gill and Huang, 2009).

For example, China interacts solely with Al-Bashir's government at the exclusion of rebel groups in Darfur such as the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (Hirono, 2011, pp. 329-30). This has seriously challenged its neutrality and impartiality, and created mistrust with the local populace. China has to learn lessons from the civil wars in Cambodia (1955-75) and Sudan (1983-2005) where it cultivated 'dual political support', through links with both the government and the rebels — King Father Sihanouk and Khmer Rouge; and in Sudan, with Al-Bashir's government in the North and the semi-autonomous government in South Sudan since 2008, respectively (Hirono, 2011, pp. 332, 335). This is reminiscent of 'walking on two legs,' which transformed negative public attitudes into positive ones.

Two eminent dangers could be discerned: (1) China's peace-keeping role in Africa could be undermined by negative public perceptions of the Chinese government as a result of its support for incumbent despotic governments; (2) and its businesses with poor labor and environmental practices. There is also the possibility that its commercial interests in countries with Chinese peacekeepers might take precedence over peacekeeping goals. It should be remembered that one of the major reasons China took up peacekeeping duties in Africa was to protect its investments and access to strategic raw materials.

Even more problematic is the double-edged role of a peacekeeper and builder of capacities of African armies, on one hand, and as an arms supplier, on the other hand. These are contradictory roles as China simultaneously builds peace and capacity while undermining peace and security. As an arms supplier of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) to its allies in Africa, it contributes to and causes conflict and insecurity, thereby perpetuating civil wars. Arms sales to African governments undermine domestic stability as Chinese weapons are sometimes captured by rebel groups and used against citizens. In essence, arms supplies constitute interference in the internal affairs of recipient countries. These actions run contrary to China's efforts at portraying an image of a responsible global leader and its intention of assisting African countries to control the spread and trade in SALWs. For example, in Sudan, Chinese weapons have been used to violate human rights and international humanitarian law by government forces, militias and rebel groups, especially in Darfur. In Guinea, Chinese trained commandos killed 150 protesters in 2009; Chinese trained armed forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo have allegedly violated international humanitarian law (Saferworld, 2011, p. iii, iv, v); and the Zimbabwean army, equipped with Chinese weapons, has been used to quell urban protests to contain disorder.

In 2004, China sold weapons and equipment totaling US$200 million, in spite of the United States and EU arms embargo against Zimbabwe (Kagwanja, 2009, p. 10). Also, China sold arms worth US$1billion to both Ethiopia and Eritrea which contributed to a prolonged war from 1998 to 2000. The arms were sold to the two countries in contravention of the UN arms embargo. Moreover, in 2005, Ethiopia

and China signed military agreements that facilitated arms sales and assistance for peacekeeping missions (Kagwanja, 2009, p. 9). Similarly, China supplies arms to Sudan in violation of the UN arms embargo on Darfur. The worst scandal occurred in April 2008 when a Chinese ship with arms bound for Zimbabwe was exposed when coastal countries such as Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa refused to grant it permission to dock (Saferworld, 2011, pp. 51, 53). However, China is not the only UN Security Council member that is also an arms supplier since the United States and France also trained African soldiers who form part of the Guinean army accused of killing protesters in 2009, and rebels use their weapons in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Therefore, like China, the United States and France help some African governments violate international humanitarian law and human rights (Saferworld, 2011, p. iii), and contribute to instability.

Another most obvious challenge has to do with China's troop and financial contributions. China contributes relatively little to troops, approximately two percent of the total contingent, far below that of other major powers. It also provides less financial contribution, approximately three percent, and well below the contributions of other UNSC members, such as the United States, which accounts for 25 percent of the total UN peacekeeping operations (Singh, 2011, p.799; Huang, 2011, p. 264; Hellstrom, 2009, p. 12). Most problematic is the haphazard, ad hoc and informal manner of flows of funds to African security organizations, mostly through donations. This gives rise to uncertainty and it negatively affects the planning of peace operations of fund-strapped African sub- and regional organizations. China's mode of fund disbursement contrasts with formalized and systematic arrangements followed by the United States and EU through the Global Peace Operation and African Peace Facility, respectively (Van Hoeymissen, 2010, p. 12). Given its stature as a global leader, UNSC member, resource endowment, and with the largest conventional army in the world, China needs to assume its full share of responsibility. This is significant given the growing demand for peacekeepers which currently outstrips supply. Therefore, China has to avail combat troops, which it does not provide currently, and increase numbers of non-combat personnel. Also, it has to improve its financial contributions and logistical support to the UN,

and African regional and sub-regional organizations tasked with peace and security.

Closely related is the challenge posed by the lack of congruence, albeit contradiction, between norms and principles of sovereignty and non-interference, on one hand, and the principles of peacekeeping; sovereignty and human rights as well as justice and global stability and security and state sovereignty (Huang, 2011, p. 259). For example, sovereignty and non-interference versus human rights and the responsibility to protect human rights prevented China from calling 'a spade, a spade' when it refused to label the 1994 Rwandan massacre a genocide, and abstained from voting for use of forceful intervention in Rwanda (Hellstrom, 2009, p. 10), which could have saved lives. There is the need to examine sensitive but critical norms and practices. Similarly, the Chinese peacekeeping model places China in a quandary because the traditional peacekeeping, while commendable due to support of core international law of sovereignty and non-interference, has proved to be a hindrance to effective peacekeeping in countries whose consent has not been readily given and negates the protection of human rights, rendering of humanitarian assistance by the international community, and responsibility to protect ineffective (Saferworld, 2011, p.vi). This indicates selective and partial support for international norms critical to international peacekeeping.

The other challenge is due to the newness of China to international peacekeeping which means that it does not have peacekeeping skills and capability. Therefore, China has to learn and train its peacekeepers to improve their performance. As a sign of commitment to providing quality and effective peacekeeping, China has built and expanded its peacekeeping training facilities for pre-deployment training of military peacekeepers and the Civilian Peacekeeping Police Training Centre since the 2000s (Gill and Huang, 2009, p.6).

China has to take into account and adjust to the changing and complex nature of UN peacekeeping which has extended to peacebuilding and post-Westphalian elements. Currently, China undertakes relatively little peacebuilding activities in post conflict societies. For example, from 2007-2009, China contributed US$3million to the UN Peacebuilding Fund. It has also supported peace enforcement and post-

conflict reconstruction in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Southern Sudan and Cote d'Ivoire (Huang, 2011, p. 264). Currently, China performs a peripheral role in peacebuilding as part of its peacekeeping responsibilities. However, its impact has been positive. For example, from 2003 to 2007, Chinese peacekeepers repaired roads and bridges and destroyed guns and bullets in the DRC. China is also reported to have promised US$35million to Liberia's post-conflict reconstruction (Kagwanja, 2009, p. 8, 9). In 2010, Liberian President applauded Chinese peacekeepers for their contribution to "post-war reconstruction and development and helping build infrastructure and providing medical treatment to local communities" (Saferworld, 2011, p. 77). China also contributed US$3million to the UN Peacebuilding from 2007-2009 (Huang, 2011, p. 264). Again, here the task for China is to acquire skills for effective peacebuilding, contribute sufficient finances to, and embrace the role of global civil society in peacebuilding. The biggest problem for China is the reluctance to accept Western conception of peacebuilding which is based on liberal democracy as the basis of good governance and market capitalism to propel economic development (Selby, 2008, p. 13; Osei-Hwedie, 2011b, p. 88). Both China and the West agree on the importance of strong state-building and economic development in African post-conflict societies. However, China emphasizes good government led by a selected leadership and capacity building of a state as the most effective means to deliver economic development (Saferworld, 2011, p.vii, 81). China's participation in (liberal) peacekeeping and questioning of liberal peacebuilding, while advancing its own conceptualizations, presents a puzzle that has to be resolved by China to pave the way for effective involvement.

China's affinity to recipients of peacekeeping mission poses another problem of cooperating with other major powers for effective peacekeeping in Africa. China seems unwilling to collaborate with other major (Western) powers such as the EU and the United States engaged in peacekeeping in Africa because they are viewed with suspicion by its African allies (Saferworld, 2011, p. vi). Its propensity to shield African partners with poor governance record through the power of veto, strategic economic interests in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia, where it has the largest stake; and the scramble

for Africa by big powers seem to be the biggest obstacles. Therefore, power politics among the permanent members of the UN Security Council greatly influence UN peace and security operations.

China's peacekeeping operations are in the process of integration. The future might produce a different scenario of Chinese peacekeeping, especially as it matures, gains experience, appreciates the global realities, and consolidates its international leadership and associated responsibilities. Indeed, pressures of a global actor might be a sufficient incentive to adopt more flexible, realist and pragmatic positions. Already there have been positive developments that point to the possibility that China might eventually overcome some of the challenges by exercising some flexibility and realism, even on a case-by-case basis. As Huang (2011, p. 260) argues, "China does not want to be seen as a global outlier and wants to be recognized as a contributor to, or at least not an inhibitor of, global peace and stability". With regard to the use of military force, it has been reported that since 1999, Chinese officials have been softening their stand by appreciating the necessity to intervene "earlier, faster and more forcefully". These remarks are attributed to the Chinese Ambassador to the UN, who in 2003, was commenting on the increased "instability in the DRC and Liberia" (Huang, 2011, p. 265; Saferworld, 2011, p. vii, 11). Hellstrom (2009, p. 35) adds that in the 2000s, China's own experiences with peace support operations convinced its policy makers that it would be necessary in specific cases to use military force to protect peacekeeping forces. Gill and Huang (2009, p. 14) note "China's increasing responsiveness to international expectations". In the case of Sudan, China turned to shuttle diplomacy to exert pressure on Sudan to allow AU/UN hybrid peacekeeping force into Darfur, in response to international criticisms.

There is also the acknowledgement that "China has … supported increases in authorized troop strengths … because its peacekeepers are active there and are directly aware of the needs of the mission. … deploy combat troops to UN missions … and is likely to do so in the future if asked by the DPKO." (Gill and Huang, 2009, p.27). In general, there are indications that China would support strengthening UN peacekeeping regime (Hellstrom, 2009, p.11). For example, it has promised to increase finances and personnel to UNPKO (Hellstrom,

2009, p.54). Similarly, President Hu Jintao asserted in 2005 that China would pursue a "comprehensive strategy featuring prevention, peace restoration, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction" (Huang, 2011, p.259). However, Hirono (2011, p. 336) professes that China's peacekeeping policy has taken "a more flexible stance in relation to the notion of sovereignty". He, quoted in Hellstrom (2009, p. 54), argues that it is unlikely to drastically abandon its Westphalian conception of peacekeeping.

7. Conclusion

China's active involvement in peacekeeping can be traced to a changed foreign and security policy which paved the way for its contribution to the UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, where most of its peacekeepers are stationed. China has utilized bilateral and multilateral channels to contribute mostly non-combat troops and finances, with a bias towards the UN. Sub-regional and regional organizations have received both diplomatic and financial support and equipment. The Chinese model of peacekeeping seems to be an alternative to that of the West, and it is aimed at exporting new international norms and principles which have been embraced by Africa while the West remain apprehensive, especially with the traditional peacekeeping principles and the underlying motives. Through abstentions, China has tactically endorsed peace enforcement in conflict situations with humanitarian crisis and where consent of the target government is lacking. However, it remains steadfast in its respect for sovereignty and multilateralism and its opposition to the use of force and involvement of pivotal or big state. It does not embrace the prevailing notion of peacebuilding that advocates for liberal democracy and capitalism. This partly explains its indirect or little role in peacebuilding activities in Africa; yet such activities are critical to stability, reconstruction and development. Adherence to the traditional Westphalian principles, though in line with African preferences, constrains the flexibility of the UN to respond to emergency situations characterized by violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Moreover, the dual roles of a peacekeeper and arms supplier to despotic regimes in order to safeguard its

strategic economic interests run counter to its efforts to portray an image of a responsible global leader, defender of African interests, and promoter of multilateral objectives. These raise questions relating to the credibility of its peacekeeping role as it simultaneously causes, perpetuates or escalates inter- and intra-state wars in Africa, such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan-South Sudan. Its contradictory role gives the impression that China is primarily concerned with advancing its national interests. Undoubtedly, China's peacekeeping efforts have been able to ameliorate some conflicts in Africa, such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia. However, conflicts continue to rage on the continent, including the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and between Sudan and South Sudan. This has implications for future approaches to peacekeeping which ought to address the challenges in order to contribute most effectively to the promotion of durable peace and security in Africa.

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