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POLICE ACADEMY

INSTITUTE OF SECURITY SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

CHINA'S ENGAGEMENTS IN AFRICA'S SECURITY: THE DILEMMA OF CHINA'S NON-INTERFERENCE POLICY

MASTER'S THESIS

Matthew NCUBE

Supervisor

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Uğur EKINCI

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Bu tez, Çin'in Afrika güvenlik konularına daha aktif bir şekilde dahil olmasındaki motivasyonlarını tartışarak, uluslararası güvenlik alanında Çin'in rolü hakkında devam etmekte olan uluslararası tartışmayı araştırmaktadır. Bu tez, Çin'in ekonomik başarısının "mağduru" olup, Afrika'daki güvenlik tehditlerini ele almaya sürüklendiği düşüncesini sorunsallaştırmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu, çağdaş Çin-Afrika güvenlik ilişkilerini anlamlandırmak için önemli bir başlangıç noktası olmakla birlikte, tez ayrıca Çin'in güvenlik motivasyonları hakkındaki tatışmaların çok kutuplaştığını vurgulamaktadır. Bu "mağduriyet" hipotezinin ötesine geçmek için, realizm, özellikle klasik ve savunmacı realizm tezin temeli olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu durum, jeo-politik faktörler ve Afrika'nın Çin'in askeri diplomasisi için önemini de içeren diğer açıklamaların da incelenmesine izin vermektedir. Bu araştırmada Afrika limanlarına erişim ve / veya kontrol için uluslararası rekabet olgusuna da dikkat çekilmiştir. Burada ele alınan bir diğer önemli konu da Çin'in giderek aktif güvenlik politikası hususundaki müdahale etmeme politikasıdır. Bu tez, Çin'in kendi çıkarlarını ustalıkla takip ederken, Afrika önderliğindeki çok yönlü çabaları desteklediğini savunmaktadır. Çin, müdahale etmeme ilkesinden sapmamak için dikkatle ilerlerken, kıtanın güvenlik gündemini etkilemek için Çin-Afrika Savunma Forumu gibi yeni inisiyatifler de geliştirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çin, Afrika, Güvenlik, Müdahale Etmeme Politikası, Askeri Diplomasi, Motivasyonlar, Geleneksel Olmayan Güvenlik.

ABSTRACT

Police Academy

Institute of Security Sciences

Department of International Security

China's Engagements in Africa's Security: The Dilemma of China's Non-interference Policy (Master's Thesis)

Matthew NCUBE

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Uğur EKINCI

2019 - 113 pages (Excluding appendices)

This thesis delves into an ongoing international debate of China's role in international security by discussing China's motivations in becoming more actively involved in African security matters. The thesis problematizes the notion that China is a 'victim' of its economic success that has compelled it to address security threats in Africa. While this is an important starting point for making sense of contemporary China-Africa security relations, it hinders a holistic evaluation of China's security aims as it makes China a mere reactive actor. The thesis addresses this by treating China as a rational actor whose security policies reflect China's assertiveness and quest to assume a greater role in global security. To move beyond this hypothesis of 'victimhood', the thesis uses Realism as a premise of the thesis. This allows for exploration of other explanations as well, which include geo-political factors and the importance of Africa for China's military diplomacy. A rising phenomenon of international competition for access and/or control of African ports is also given special attention in this research. Another key issue addressed here is China's policy of non-interference in relation to an increasingly active security policy. The thesis argues that China is skilfully pursuing its interests while claiming to be promoting African-led multilateral efforts. While developing new initiatives, such as the China-Africa Defence Forum, to influence the continent's security agenda, China is treading carefully not to deviate from its non-interference principle.

Key Words: China, Africa, Security, Non-interference Policy, Military Diplomacy, Motivations, Non-traditional Security.

CHINA'S ENGAGEMENTS IN AFRICA'S SECURITY: THE DILEMMA OF CHINA'S NON-INTERFERENCE POLICY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	: African Union
CCP	: Chinese Communist Party
FOCAC	**:** Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
SIPRI	: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
PLA	: People's Liberation Army
PLAN	: People's Liberation Army Navy
PRC	: People's Republic of China
UN	: United Nations
UNPKO	: United Nations Peacekeeping Operations / UN Peacekeeping Missions
UNSC	: United Nations Security Council (Security Council)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In just over six decades, China has established strong economic and diplomatic relations with almost all fifty-four African countries. While China-Africa relations date back to the pre-modern states period, the scale and speed at which these relations have grown since the 1990s is unique and unprecedented (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). Central to the ease and speed at which China has managed to establish economic and political relations across Africa is its policy of 'non-interference' in domestic affairs of other states. Theoretically, this policy basically entails the respect of sovereignty of other states and staying out of domestic political issues in pursuit of business (Aidoo & Hess, 2015: 110). However, in recent years, China has become more and more involved in African security affairs in ways that seem to contradict its self-proclaimed non-interference approach. Given that China has for a long time insisted on the non-interference policy, the present thesis seeks to understand how China is adapting to security challenges in Africa. In line with this enquiry, the thesis intends to probe the factors motivating an increased Chinese military presence in Africa. The issue of the factors motivating China to be more assertive in Africa's security is an ongoing and an under-researched topic which this thesis seeks to contribute to.

1.1 Research Question

The present thesis therefore seeks to look at the non-interference policy in relation to China's increasing security presence in Africa. Specifically, the question that this thesis responds to is: What factors motivate China to deepen its military and security activism in Africa while insisting on the non-interference policy rhetoric?

1.2 Background: Non-interference as An International Norm

Since the 1950s, China has insisted on the policy of non-interference in domestic affairs of other nations as a rule of thumb in the conduct of international relations. As a general principle, non-interference is not unique to China, but is an internationally accepted norm, derived from the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648. This policy is also enshrined within the United Nations (UN) as a strong pillar of equality of states and state sovereignty (Korinko & Chelang'a, 2014). It dictates that each state has sovereignty over its territory and has an inalienable right to determine the course of its domestic affairs, hence forbids external powers from determining domestic affairs of another state (Rauschning, Wiesbrock & Lailach, 1997). According to Krasner (1999), the principle of non-interference relies heavily on two aspects of sovereignty, the international legal sovereignty and the Westphalian sovereignty. The first aspect entails mutual recognition of states, while the second one excludes external actors from influencing or determining internal authority structures of another state within its territorial boundaries. These two aspects of sovereignty effectively indicate authority and legitimacy, whereby a state reserves the right to exclude external actors and has the requisite international recognition to enter into international agreements (Krasner, 1999: 10).

The principle of non-interference, sometimes used interchangeably with non-intervention (i.e. non-use of force), has become a global norm. The United Nations (UN) Charter emphasises the respect of state sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of all member states in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security, as detailed in Chapters VI, VII and VIII (Rauschning, et.al, 1997). Although non-interference is generally embraced as a guiding principle in international relations, there are lot of disagreements over its interpretation and practice. This controversy is compounded by the advent of human rights and the responsibility to protect (R2P). While non-interference aims to prevent external involvement in domestic affairs of another state, the R2P principle endorses intervention in limited circumstances where the state is not able or is unwilling to protect the civilian rights of its citizens (Haslett, 2014). However, there is less agreement on what constitutes human rights

violations, and in what circumstances intervention should be legitimate. For instance, in a debate meeting attended by seventy speakers in the UN Security Council in 2016, there was disagreement over the interpretation and relevance of non-interference and state sovereignty as enshrined in the UN Charter. Some speakers argued that these principles were outdated and incongruent with the changing global security threats, while others maintained that these were the founding principles of the UN, which needed to be strictly followed.[1]

Proponents of non-interference, including China, usually express serious misgivings about new principles of human rights-backed intervention. In fact, when one examines the past trends of military intervention within the R2P principle, it emerges that the motives behind intervention and the ways in which it is carried out are mostly related to strategic and economic interests rather than solely humanitarian concerns (Haslett, 2014: 175). Just like the R2P principle, the non-interference doctrine has flaws and its adherence or violation has historically depended on the incentives it brings to the leaders of the day. This is what Krasner (1997: 24) calls "organized hypocrisy" when referring to circumstances where conventional norms are either adhered to or violated based on the resources and support (both material and ideational) rulers gain from taking a decision.

Bearing in mind this phenomenon of "organized hypocrisy", in this thesis, the analysis of China's non-interference policy and its impact on China's conduct or inaction thereof on security matters in Africa, is not to single out Beijing as an evil power. Rather, the intention is to bring out the contradictions and/or inconsistences of China's adherence to this policy both in rhetoric and practice since non-interference remains an official foreign policy for Beijing. The tenets of Chinese non-interference policy are discussed in detail in the upcoming chapters where the thesis takes the reader

[1] Security Council 7621st Meeting, (2016, February 15). Speakers in Security Council Urge Balance between UN Role in State Sovereignty, Human Rights Protection, But Differ over Interpretation of Charter Principles, SC/12241 https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12241.doc.htm

through the history of this policy. This will contextualise the present China-Africa security relations and enable a critical assessment of China's approach.

1.3 Why China-Africa Security Relations?

It has become almost impossible to talk about African issues without including China in the equation. African countries generally view China as an important ally partly due to China's economic and strategic profile as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Konings, 2007). Furthermore, China's claim to be a developing country that shares Africa's concerns makes it easily acceptable among African leaders (Konings, 2007: 342-343). The 21st century has seen an unprecedented rise of China as an important factor in international affairs. China's rise and influence in the international arena in recent years is mainly attributed to its exponential economic growth (Men & Barton, 2011). Indeed, figures cited by the World Economic Forum (2017) indicate that China makes up to 14.8% of the world economy, making it the second largest world economy after the United States (US). Moreover, having recorded 6.7% economic growth against the US' 1.6% growth in 2016, China remains one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

Despite its economic growth, China identifies itself as a developing country. Chiung-Chiu (2012: 9) argues that China portrays itself as a representative of all the Third World countries. Besides, Africa also possesses enormous natural resources, which are instrumental to China's growth (Olivier, 2014). It is within this context that the African continent has found prominence in China's foreign relations. The non-interference policy is central to the strong relations, which China enjoys with its African partners. With its emphasis on respecting sovereignty and equality of all states, this policy has enabled China to invest in any African country regardless of its regime type, attaching no or limited conditions to its aid and investments, except the One-China policy (Konings, 2007).[2] It is this non-interference policy which has paved the way for

[2] The 'one-China' policy refers to China's (People's Republic of China) controversial claim for authority over Taiwan (the Republic of China). Since the end of the Second World War, Taiwan's legal

widening and strengthening China-Africa relations beyond economic engagements to other areas such as politics and security (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012).

This policy seems to be a grand "diplomatic charm" that has worked well for China as it is warmly received by African leaders whose conduct is usually scorned by Western powers (Konings, 2007; Holslag, 2009). As indicated by Zimbabwe's former president Robert Mugabe, sovereignty is one of the core values and principles connecting China and Africa. In Mugabe's view, the two sides believe that meaningful development can be attained through a "fair, just and non-prescriptive world order, based on the principles of the charter of the United Nations" (The Guardian, 2015). However, contrary to such a policy proclamation, there are several indications that China has become more involved in Africa's internal affairs. The most visible example is China's increased role in UN peacekeeping operations, where its stance has changed from a strong opposition "under any circumstances to a permanent commitment" to such missions (Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011: 147). Two recent high-level actions by China also indicate assertive security engagements: initiating and hosting a joint forum on defence and security with top African security practitioners (Xinhua, 2018) and the establishment of a military base in Djibouti in 2017 (Aljazeera, 2017). Moreover, Beijing's active diplomatic role in attempts to resolve conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan also seem to contradict non-intervention (Large, 2008; Alden, 2014). For these reasons, China's policy of non-interference has become a trending topic as scholars and policy makers scrutinize it against its perceived contradictory application.

For some scholars, security challenges in Africa have forced China to rethink its policy (Verhoeven, 2014; Holslag, 2009). Others argue that China is still trying to define and design its role and position in international affairs, commensurate with its growing status of transitioning from being a regional power to a global power (Holsalg, 2009;

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international status remains contentious. China views Taiwan as part of the mainland China, while Taiwan views itself as an autonomous, fully functioning and a legally sovereign nation whose authority extends over China. By insisting on one-China policy in its foreign relations, China argues that this is a domestic issue within its territory and therefore no external power should recognise Taiwan as a sovereign state (Chiang, 2017; Dittmer, 2017).

Kuo, 2012; Wang & Zou, 2014). Shinn (2016) suggests that China is using Africa as a ground for trial and error in its attempts to create comprehensive security policies. Other scholars also debate whether China's behaviour in Africa is a threat to the established international norms of security via democratization (Ambrosio, 2012; Zhao, 2010). For others however, inconsistencies in China's implementation of its non-interference policy reflect various domestic philosophical understandings of China, especially how Chinese scholars and politicians understand China's identity and role in the international arena (Zheng, 2016; Ku, 2012; Chiung-Chiu, 2012).

1.4 Views on China's Role in African Security

While China-Africa economic relations have become the subject for many analysts, the media and the academia, the security aspects of this relationship have not received as much attention. Some scholars justify this trend by observing that political concerns are secondary to China's strategic partnership with Africa (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). In this view, the primary driver of the relationship is Beijing's economic interests, specifically its desire for natural resources and a search for new markets and investment opportunities (Konings, 2007; Du Plessis, 2014). Others however note that China-Africa relations are ever evolving and so pragmatic that Chinese policy makers adjust their policies calculatedly to respond to the situation on the ground (Hanauer & Morris, 2014; Men & Barton, 2011; Naidu, 2007). In any case, it is becoming evident that China can no longer ignore security challenges in its engagement with Africa. In support of this view, Holslag (2009:23) asserts that, "the deeper China ventures into the resource-abundant African continent, the more it stumbles upon various security challenges".

China's ideological emphasis on non-interference in domestic conflicts and upholding of sovereignty is problematic for China when it faces conditions that require it to be actively involved in security matters in Africa (Wheeler, 2011). To begin with, while there is much talk of an increasingly assertive China, there is lack of clarity on which national 'interests' China intends to protect (Zeng, Xiao & Breslin, 2016). A study of 108 articles written by Chinese scholars on the debate of China's role and

capabilities in international politics problematises the much-hyped issue of Chinese 'core-interests', as the concept is elusively and loosely defined, thereby creating diverse interpretations (Zeng, et al. 2016). The vague and diverse interpretation of interests by Chinese scholars effectively results in divergence of views on the level of (in-)security of the said interests (Zeng, et al. 2016: 263). This ambiguity on China's interests, leaves one to rely on interpretive insights as is the case in this thesis.

Alden (2014) predicts three possible scenarios of China's role in African security: as architects, builders or subcontractors. The first scenario of China as an architect of African security implies that China will bring up new norms of international security engagement or seek to revise the current dominant liberal peace-oriented norms. The second scenario of China as a builder predicts a situation where China would strengthen capacity building of Africa in tackling security challenges and allow some interventions supported by the statutes of the AU. The third scenario, which envisions China as a sub-contractor, predicts that China will strive to provide "practical solutions" to "specific" security issues threatening its interests in Africa. In other words, China's security engagements in Africa will be selective and limited to less costly involvements in protection of its interests in Africa. In this case, the main interests will be securing economic interests and pursuing the augmentation of China's international image (Alden, 2014:7).

Taking the debate further, Zheng (2016) describes China as a 'country of multiple identities' whose non-interference policy remains primarily shaped by domestic concerns. Despite China's remarkable economic and growing military power, there are still fears of "divisive and subversive plots sponsored by hostile external actors" (Zheng, 2016: 317). Due to such fears, Chinese scholars and policy makers hold divergent views as to when and how China should intervene in other states' domestic affairs. In a way, this also reflects conflicting views about China's identity: whether it is a developing country or a major power, and thereby the corresponding role it should play in international security (Zheng, 2016). Citing leading Chinese scholars like Zhao Hausheng and Wang Yizhou, Zheng (2016) identifies two competing concepts that seek

to articulate China's appropriate global role and thereby strategies that it should implement. These emerging concepts are 'creative involvement' advanced by Wang and 'constructive involvement' advanced by Zhao (Zheng, 2016: 357). Both perspectives call for the redefinition and adjustment of the non-interference policy, but they differ as to ways and mechanisms of implementation.

Constructive involvement advocates for China's active and voluntary involvement in international affairs, whereby involvement becomes an integral strategy in Chinese diplomacy (Zheng, 2016). However, in order to safeguard its reputation and soft power, China is supposed to shun use of force, utilise multilateral and international institutions to solve international disputes in compliance with international norms. Moreover, China should undertake to promote international peace through cooperating with Western powers (Zheng, 2016). The concept of creative involvement, on the other hand is rather realistic as it is against cooperating with Western powers. Under this view, China is supposed to move away from a narrow understanding of non-interference which marginalises China from active international participation. Instead of keeping a low profile and seeking to hide its strength, China should develop a flexible non-interference strategy which allows it to play an assertive role and have a more say in international affairs. More crucially, this strategy should be used selectively and only be resorted to as a means of protecting China's main interests. Priority areas for implementing creative involvement include global governance and security in the seas and multilateral peacekeeping. China should therefore assertively seek to protect its "hard-defined interests" by forging military and political partnerships (Zheng, 2016: 357, 364). Essentially, analysing China's active security engagements in Africa, as intended in this research should enable us to identify the motivations and implementation methods that China has preferred so far.

Kuo (2012) identifies three theoretical frameworks used by Chinese scholars to analyse and discuss African security. The frameworks include realism, Marxist historical materialism and post-colonialism. From a realist perspective, Africa is not a priority for China's political and security considerations, except for its instrumental value in forging

Third World solidarity. Marxism, on the other hand, blames Africa's insecurity on externally-imposed Western developmental models and institutions that are incompatible with Africa's established superstructure. Finally, the post-colonial perspective invokes China-Africa historical relations within the ambit of Third World solidarity initiated by Mao and based on anti-colonial, anti-imperial and antirevisionist convictions (Kuo, 2012: 30). The current China-Africa relations have thus replaced Third World solidarity with South-South cooperation where China identifies itself as the natural leader. This therefore encapsulates the anti-hegemonic stance mutually shared by China and Africa in their present-day relationships.

In summary, Kuo (2012) reckons that all these three perspectives converge in their agreement on locating African security problems on the legacy of colonialism and the continuation of neo-colonial interference by Western countries. The consequences become evident in Africa's intractable tribal conflicts, which impede nation building and peace. As to the role of China in bringing peace and security into the continent, he argues that China faces the dilemma of a conflicted identity, which comes with two opposing demands that obstruct a clear formulation of a security policy in Africa. The status of being a developing country requires China to be in partnership with African nations. More so, this status is of mutual benefit for both China and Africa as they can conveniently use non-interference as a shield from Western criticism of their questionable human rights records. However, the status of being a great power requires China to rise above the Third World solidarity and assume international responsibility. This may put China at loggerheads with its African partners who consider Beijing as a traditional ally against interference by hegemonic powers. Consequently, China will have to manoeuvre around its conflicted identity for a while by engaging Africa as a great power, while still emphasising traditional friendship and equality (Kuo, 2012: 37). Of course, this kind of reasoning helps us to think conceptually about the non-interference policy. In this view, Africa poses an immense challenge for China's identity.

The preceding analysis is disputed by some scholars who view China's behaviour in Africa as determined more by circumstances and the context of the African country in which it is involved, rather than a vision of what China's role could be in international affairs (Holslag, 2014; Aidoo & Hess, 2015). Hoslag (2014), views China as a 'smart revisionist', whose policies and approaches are not changed by vision but by circumstances. In another paper, Holslag (2011: 18) also calls Chinese strategy a "chameleon strategy" by observing its inconsistent response to coups in Africa. The five coups analysed by Holslag (2011) occurred in the Central African Republic (2003), in Mauritania (2008), in Guinea (2008), in Madagascar (2009), and in Niger (2010). Considering the pattern of China's responses in these five cases, Holslag (2011) therefore concludes that China deliberately takes an inconsistent strategy in African security issues as long as Beijing's geo-economic and political interests are secure.

Similarly, Aidoo and Hess (2015) analyse how China applies its non-interference policy in countries with different systems of governance, categorised according to their levels of democracy and institutional capacities. The authors look at four cases- Ghana, Angola, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, where China faced various levels of backlash due to popular dissatisfaction or perceptions of discomfort with China's role in these countries. The authors therefore conclude that in all these diverse cases, China adjusted its non-interference policy by aligning itself with the ruling government, in order to ensure continuous access to natural resources, markets, and guarantee the safety of its citizens, firms and their assets in Africa (Aidoo & Hess, 2015: 131).

In some cases, China spreads its relations across diverse local interest groups, tries to avoid international pressure and uses its "mercantilist policies" on a wide range of actors (Holslag, 2011: 2). Data released recently by an independent China-Africa consultancy organisation, indicates that in the last decade Chinese top leadership made 79 visits to 43 different African countries (Development Re-Imagined, 2018). The profile of the countries visited includes both resource rich and poor countries, probably to dispel concerns that China is merely interested in resource-rich countries. Scholars who view China as a pragmatic actor argue that China is not interested in shaping the

political context in African countries but uses its economic and political advantage in the continent to cooperate with whichever regime is in power (Holslag, 2011). By this logic, China is not motivated to shape the African security context. Yet one wonders if this is tenable given security challenges in Africa.

Chiung-Chiu's (2012) thesis is very instructive in contributing to our understanding of China's responses to international intervention even though the study uses North Korea and Myanmar as case studies to explore China's policy towards international intervention. Contrary to the simplistic assertion that China is after immediate and material interests like natural resources, the author finds that China's position towards international intervention on regimes accused of violating international norms has been very inconsistent and is motivated by complex factors. For example, in refuting the argument that China will always protect the regimes that supply it with natural resources, the author argues that North Korea and Myanmar are in deep crisis caused by poor resource management, an unstable political and economic climate, and long-term international sanctions (Chiung-Chiu, 2012). All these factors not only prevent China from making any meaningful gains from these countries' natural resources, but also ironically burden China to supply them with domestic energy like electricity (Chiung-Chiu, 2012: 179).

China is thus viewed as pragmatic and intends to balance its principles of engagements with reality, while at the same time trying to maintain its national interests and its image in the international community (Chiung-Chiu, 2012: 213). Furthermore, there are unique principles under which China considers intervention legitimate. These include "UN authorisation, host state consent, attitude of the regional community, and scope of the use of coercion" (Chiung-Chiu, 2012: 214). In line with China's respect for sovereignty and equality of states, the most important criterion in determining China's decision towards international intervention is the consent of the state in conflict. Consequently, except on rare occasions like the intervention in Somalia, China always discusses with and seeks the consent of the state in question, before assenting to international intervention.

Ironically, within Africa itself, non-interference is no longer a blanket rule. Intervention in member states in grave circumstances like war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity is endorsed through Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the AU (Dittgen, Lalbahadur, Sidiropoulos & Wu, 2016). According to Sköns and Ismail (2014) since the 1990s, security issues have gained priority over economic interests to become paramount factors propelling Africa's regional cooperation and integration. Outside Africa, the continent's relations with international actors are also centred on security. As Africa faces a range of security challenges from state-based armed conflicts, non-state conflicts, transnational security threats and maritime piracy, the continent increasingly requires the support of external actors (Sköns & Ismail, 2014: 7). It is within this context that China is seen to be receiving pressure from its African counterparts for its assistance in tackling some of these security challenges. As Hanauer and Morris (2014) observe, African leaders' persistent demands for China to increase its role in peacekeeping have forced China to re-evaluate its priorities on the continent by adding security cooperation to its new policy initiatives. This initiative, which remains disguised in the language of multilateralism, indicates "a clear break" from China's categorical opposition to military intervention in Africa (Hanauer & Morris, 2014: 83).

The varying perspectives discussed in this chapter display that China's non-interference policy has become a hotly debated topic. Africa has become prominent in China's policy not only for feeding its economic growth but also due to the increasing importance of African security as an international agenda. It is therefore crucial to conduct a systematic enquiry into China's evolving approach to African security. Given the basic principles that are supposed to guide Chinese engagement with foreign nations, it is also crucial to conduct up to date research on the factors that result in changes in the practice of the relationship. As Olivier (2014) notes, the increasing involvement of China in Africa seems to be going against its policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. Shinn and Eisenman (2012) also predict that China will not keep a low military profile in Africa for long, partly due to pressure that is likely to rise from African leaders' demands for China to take an active role in the continent's security. In

essence, there is a great need to conduct research on the security aspects of China-Africa relations given that security, peace and stability in Africa are increasingly becoming a concern for China.

1.5 Research Problem

China's long-held non-interference policy presents a dilemma for China. While this policy may have been initially successful as a diplomatic charm which enabled China to expand its economic and diplomatic relations across Africa, China's security engagements in the continent seem to require a different approach. The present thesis therefore seeks to critically probe China's policy rhetoric and practice in order to understand the ways in which China is adjusting to the African security context. A major problem with the literature that looks at China-Africa relations is that it primarily focuses on presenting China as self-interested and primarily motivated by its economic interests in Africa. The existing literature largely portrays China's security engagements in Africa as a spill over of its economic interests hence China's security concerns and aims in Africa are viewed as secondary to economic interests in Africa. This limits a holistic analysis of China's security motivations in Africa and almost treats China as a reactive actor. Therefore, there is a need to cover this gap by bringing China-Africa security relations to the forefront especially given that China is getting more involved in security affairs in the continent.

1.6 Aims of The Research

This thesis seeks to explore various aspects of China's security practices in Africa in recent years with the aim of determining Beijing's main security motivations. In order to contextualise China's security policies in Africa, the thesis will also analyse the historically-shaped nature of China-Africa security relations.

1.7 Research Design and Methodology

The methodological orientation of this thesis is interpretive and therefore relies on qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. The primary purpose of the research is to describe the nature of, and explore explanations for, a rising phenomenon of China's active security policy in Africa. Thus, the research relies on scholarly analyses, policy documents and newspapers reporting major policy announcements. Considering that Africa is a diverse continent of fifty-four countries, one might be sceptical of a broad analysis of China's security policy regarding the whole continent. Due to certain characteristics of China's policy principles and approaches in Africa, however, it is still possible to study the issue on a continental basis. First, China's security engagements in Africa have largely been through the African Union (AU) and other regional bodies. China is perhaps the only power that can attract a near universal attendance of its cooperation forums with Africa. So far documents of the outcomes of deliberations from security cooperation forums between the two sides always indicate collective perspectives. Moreover, China's non-interference policy is proclaimed as a blanket policy applicable across all different African countries. Lastly, China disassociates itself from forming security alliances with individual countries (PRC State Council, 2015). Thus, even though China's relations with each African country has its own context and may involve minor differences among each other, there appears to be common principles, motivations, and themes that represent China's interests in the continent.

As the literature indicates, there is no agreement, even within China, on what China's security interests abroad are. Based on a wider reading, the author decided to deduce key themes from China's security involvements in highly visible security areas in Africa. These include UN Peacekeeping missions, anti-piracy operations, recent high-level security events like the establishment of a military base in Djibouti and the ground-breaking launch of a joint forum on security and defence between China and Africa. Justification of these actions both by officials and opinion makers, as well as the historical China-Africa engagements, were also useful in informing this thesis. In formulating the themes discussed in this thesis, hints were taken from the three

speculative scenarios of China's future role in African security predicted by Alden (2014:7) of China as: (1) an architect, (2) builder and/or (3) subcontractor of African security.

In order to make a coherent and comprehensive analysis, the thesis starts off with a historical overview of China-Africa security relations in chapter 2 where the foundations of the non-interference policy are discussed in detail. In chapter 3, the thesis zooms into the tenets of contemporary China's non-interference policy by defining it from the Chinese perspective and giving examples of China's involvement in different aspects of Africa's security. Chapter 4 employs theories of international relations / security, namely Realism and Constructivism (as alternative explanations) to explore China's aims in being involved in African security matters. The last chapter gives conclusions of the thesis.

1.8 Theoretical Approaches and Analytical Themes

In this thesis, China's security engagements are viewed within its broader strategy in international affairs in line with the purpose of the thesis to probe the factors motivating China's active security engagements in Africa. Zakaria (1998: 14) argues that such issues are better tackled by using actor-based theories of foreign policy over structural theories of international politics. Therefore, this analysis assumes that China's security policy and practice in Africa is primarily motivated by its national interests (material and strategic). Realism would be helpful here in helping us to understand how motivations like, self-interest and political opportunism may have pushed China into more security engagements in Africa, which goes against the non-interference rhetoric. Classical, Offensive and Defensive realist arguments, specifically on rising economies and their likelihood to pursue military power, are used as the basis of this thesis. The thesis will discuss alternative theories in the form of Constructivism and argue that Realism is the most relevant approach for the purposes of this thesis. The discussions here are geared towards determining the factors that influence China's security engagements in Africa.

1.9 Significance of the Research

China's security policy and practice in Africa is crucial since China has become a key ally of the African continent. As relations between China and Africa continue to deepen, so does the controversy and dilemmas of the relationship, especially when foundational concepts like the non-interference policy are being challenged by security realities on the ground. This thesis is therefore significant in contributing to this ongoing debate by using recent evidence to improve explanations advanced by key scholars on this topic. Perhaps readers may also use this research to anticipate China's future security decisions in Africa.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented competing analyses of China's non-interference policy in general and more specifically the emerging challenges it faces in Africa. One can observe the dilemma that China faces. On one hand, growing security threats in Africa require it to be actively involved in bringing lasting solutions. This active involvement creates tensions for China's self-proclaimed non-interference foreign policy. On the other hand, there seems to be some utility in maintaining the non-interference approach. This allows China to manoeuvre its way in the security challenges arising in Africa. The issue of the factors motivating China to be more assertive in Africa's security is still an ongoing debate and an under-researched topic. The literature has thus been helpful in identifying the key debates and themes relevant to the present research. Going forward, the next chapters will build conceptual themes based on contributions from key scholars like Alden (2014), Chiung-Chiu, (2012), Kuo, (2012), Zeng, et al. (2016) and Zheng (2016). These scholars' scenarios and predictions regarding China's future security engagements, are useful guidelines for inferring motivational themes applicable to the questions of the present research.

Chapter 2

CHINA AND AFRICA SECURITY RELATIONS: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

"*Black cat or white cat, as long as it catches mice, it's a good cat*"

Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping (Li & Li, 1995: 12).

2.1 Introduction

Understanding contemporary security engagements between China and Africa requires a brief exploration of the history of their relations. This is particularly important for this thesis, as it is the premise on which China has positioned itself and espoused its foreign policy approaches in Africa. As Ncube and Fairbanks (2012) observe, China uses its historical relations with Africa to define itself as a fellow developing nation and a benevolent partner who poses no colonial threats. This narrative works conveniently for China's core foreign policy rhetoric of non-interference in sovereign matters of other states, as well as other approaches like 'mutual benefits' or 'win-win' engagements.

This chapter therefore starts by acknowledging the earlier contacts between China and African communities through trade. Going further, the chapter looks at security links established after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), especially during the African armed struggles against colonialism and the impact of Deng's policies on the present-day China-Africa security relations. The main purpose is to contextualise China's non-interference policy, and how it has been implemented under different historical circumstances. It is interesting to note through examples of Chinese actions in Congo and Burundi in the 1960s, that in some instances China had to tone down or rethink its non-interference policy in order to remain relevant in Africa.

2.1.1 Early Contacts

Some historical accounts of relations between China and Africa go as far back as 618 A.D by emphasising the long-standing and enduring contact between the African people

and their Chinese counterparts. For instance, Ncube and Fairbanks (2012: 21) claim that during the period between 618 A.D and the 15th century, Chinese dynasties from the T'ang (618-907 A.D), Sung (1127-1279) to the Ming emperors (1417-1431), "traded tusks and horns, slaves, and manufactured goods respectively" with East African communities. Since the European conquest and colonisation of Africa, which defined the present-day African borders, only intensified in the 19th century, it is fair to appreciate the significance of the ancient contacts between China and the African people.

Most analysts prefer to emphasise the 15th century as the beginning of China-Africa relations. For instance, Johnson, Paik and Larsen (2011: 110) claim that China's trade relationship with Africa has been ongoing "since at least" the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) when the eunuch admiral Zheng He, embarked on large expeditions to Africa with fleets of treasure ships. Taylor (2007) also refers to archaeological evidence pointing to commercial activities between Zheng He and the local African people in several African countries: Tanzania, Madagascar, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. This historical mission would later become a useful symbolical tool for future Chinese leaders to frame their subsequent engagements with Africa (Taylor, 2007).

Similarly, to emphasise the historical naval interests of China in Africa, Shinn (2008) refers to Zheng He as the first Chinese navigator to arrive at an African coast. Accordingly, given that Zheng He, traversed through some thirty countries in West Asia and East Africa between 1405 and 1433, his voyages preceded European explorers like Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Ferdinand Magellan (Shinn, 2008). In her book, 'When China Ruled the Seas', Levathes (1997) also reinforces that within thirty years Zheng He had established the strongest navy the world had ever seen. This enabled China to extend its political power and influence throughout the Indian Ocean, access foreign goods and medicines, and gain geographical knowledge in an unprecedented manner. Essentially, had China wanted to be a great colonial power, it could have easily done so since "half of the world" was already "in China's grasp" a century before the emergence of the European exploration and expansion (Levathes, 1997). In fact, what history shows is that instead of establishing colonies or a political hegemony, the

Chinese emperor chose mutual and peaceful interactions with the African people in the form of trade (Adem, 2016: 90).

This part of history is often invoked by Chinese authorities to show that China has no intention of colonising, occupying or exploiting any country. This is unlike Europeans whose explorers laid the ground to colonisation of other countries, especially in Asia and Africa. For example, giving a keynote address at the Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College in 2016, the Chinese Ambassador to Ghana, Sun Baohong referred to Zheng He's voyages, emphasising that China engages in fair business and trade transactions in Africa. According to the Ambassador, "the only thing Zheng He took from Africa was a giraffe". Baohong inferred that China's history is clean of any malevolent intentions of manipulation or invasion of other people's lands (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). While such narratives resonate well with the principle of non-interference, the background of non-interference as a foreign policy can be understood better by looking at the post-1949 period, after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Thus, the next section will move on to contextualise the present-day China-Africa security relations.

2.1.2 The Bandung Conference and its Aftermath

The diplomatic relations between China and Africa were redefined and consolidated in new significant ways in the 1950s following the rise of PRC, the rise of decolonisation in Africa and more importantly, after the Bandung Conference in 1955 (e.g El-Khawas, 1973; Ismael, 1971). In April 1955, China-Africa relations experienced a significant turning point at the Bandung Conference, also known as the Asian-African Conference of 1955. This assembly brought together leaders and representatives from twenty-nine countries who met to forge a unified position on the role of developing countries in the international system (Batchelor & Zhang, 2017). Six of these countries were African: Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast (later Ghana), Liberia, Libya and Sudan (Larkin, 1971: 17). The Bandung Conference was a major step where developing countries declared their position towards the Cold War politics, which at that time dominated the international

system. It was also a great milestone towards crafting shared norms and strategies for confronting imperialism, fighting for independence and finding a common cause which would create solidarity between Asia and Africa (Larkin, 1971: 18). To that end, the conference broadly aimed at promoting Afro-Asian economic and cultural cooperation in efforts to oppose any forms of colonialism from imperialist powers; the United States, Europe, and the Soviet Union (George, 2014: 25). According to Taylor (2007: 19-22), before the Bandung Conference, China and Africa had a dormant relationship, as they had little contact or interest in each other. It was only after the conference that China intensely reached out to Africa.

A major concern for the leaders who attended this conference was to speed up the attainment of independence and create the requisite environment for peace and development for the newly independent countries and the rest of the developing countries (George, 2014). These concerns became a rallying point for Asia (specifically for China) and Africa to construct kinship –a fellowship based on a shared history of being oppressed and side-lined from the international system by Western powers. It was upon this basis then, that these countries declared themselves as a 'non-aligned' developing world, paving the way to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961 (Batchelor & Zhang, 2017). According to Tan and Acharya (2008), the Bandung conference gave smaller and weaker states of the Third World tools upon which to build a foreign policy, claim their autonomy and express their solidarity.

While the conference did not create purely new principles per se, it helped "contextualise, uphold and in some cases extend" some universal principles of international relations (Tan & Acharya, 2008: 9). For instance, the Bandung communique declared commitments to general principles of the UN Charter, human rights, equality of all races and nations, and respect for justice in accordance with statutes of international justice (Ibid). Accordingly, the conference managed to reach agreements centred on universal principles like "mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and peaceful co-existence" (Batchelor & Zhang, 2017: 29).

These principles would later prove to be the backbone of China-Africa relations through highlighting and articulating a set of shared values and experiences that set them apart from the imperialist West (Tan & Acharya, 2008). It is in this context that the Bandung Conference is important for understanding China-Africa relations, given that the principles that emerged from this conference became the bedrock of China's foreign policy rhetoric and aid strategies.

China immediately incorporated the principles of the Bandung conference into its foreign policy rhetoric and aid strategies. In a way, "Bandung became a symbol of Afro-Asia as a viable political concept" (Larkin, 1971: 18). This political concept refers to a vision of common identity between Asians and Africans as sharing common political and social tasks which can only be undertaken collectively (Larkin, 1971). Based on this vision, China found a way of advancing its interests in the developing world, especially in Africa, by invoking Afro-Asian common identity to express its solidarity and benign concern for 'fellow' developing countries. According to George (2014:26), China's participation in the conference aimed at expanding the "United Front", promoting national independence movement, and laying the foundational bricks to establish and enhance relations between China and the Afro-Asian countries. The "United Front" refers to a Chinese concept derived from the 1920s revolutionary war that the Communist Party needs to join forces with a wide range of actors sympathetic to the communists' cause if it is to win the revolution (Ismael, 1971: 511). In this case, this meant that China needed to establish relations with a wide range of countries from Asia, Africa, Latin America and other countries, which were opposed to the hegemony of the U.S and European imperial powers (Ibid).

The present-day China-Africa relations therefore officially commenced at the Bandung conference (Batchelor & Zhang, 2017). This became the first platform where China (PRC) began its foreign policy toward the outside world and most notably, established direct contact with some African countries (El-Khawas, 1973). Until the Bandung conference, diplomatic contact between China and Africa is said to have been non-existent, serve for a few ad hoc visits by prominent African figures to China

(Larkin, 1971). For instance, neither had any of the four independent African states- Egypt, Libya, Liberia and South Africa- recognised PRC, nor had any Chinese delegate visited Africa before the conference (Larkin, 1971). El-Khawas (1973), remarks that this lack of interest in establishing diplomatic relations between China and Africa was mainly due to two factors. On one hand, the PRC concentrated on its domestic challenges as it had just taken over power in 1949, while on the other, African countries were preoccupied with fighting for their own independence. Additionally, at that time only a few African countries were independent, and they had no reason to be drawn into the Beijing-Taipei conflict over the rightful representative of the Chinese people and state (El-Khawas, 1973).

Within a few years following the Bandung Conference, China incorporated Mao's Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence[3] with the Bandung "spirit" of Afro-Asian solidarity and cooperation to become a strong advocate of anti-imperialism (Batchelor & Zhang, 2017). The Bandung spirit thus became an advantage for China in its efforts to win new friends, neutralise the international trade embargo on her, and expand access to markets and resources, which she needed to build a strong, self-reliant and independent new China (George, 2014). Just a year after the conference, Egypt became the first African country to test China's Africa initiatives. Firstly, in 1956 China rescued Egypt's economy by buying large quantities of cotton at a time when European countries were trying to cripple cotton prices, which provided Egypt with a major source of revenue (El-Khawas, 1973). Secondly, within the same year, China opened its first embassy in Africa in Egypt. Thirdly, China supported Egypt during the Suez crisis by offering a $5 million loan, and by pledging to send Chinese volunteers to boost Egypt's fight against the Anglo-French-Israel forces (El-Khawas, 1973: 24).

[3] The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence refer to the friendly agreement reached by China and India in 1954 to avoid conflict between the two states. The two countries agreed to conduct their relations based on: 1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, 2. Mutual non-aggression, 3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, 4. Equality and mutual benefits, 5. Peaceful co-existence (Fang, 2015 :76).

These engagements were followed by a "watershed in China's diplomacy" in Africa (George, 2014: 28). Within a short period after the conference, China remarkably increased its contacts in Africa and managed to gain official recognition across a number of African countries (George, 2014). Moreover, China also employed other soft strategies to entice African countries, including participating in trade exhibitions in Morocco and Tunisia, attending independence celebrations for the newly independent countries and signing friendship treaties with countries like Ghana in 1961 and Guinea in 1960 (Ismael, 1971). The frequency of visits between China and Africa also increased sharply. More significantly, the Chinese Premier Zhou embarked on a historic two months trip to ten African countries between December 1963 and February 1964 (George, 2014). The countries Zhou visited were Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Mali, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Guinea. During his trip, Premier Zhou impressed the African leaders by affirming China's support for: Africa's fight against imperialism, the continent's position of non-alignment in pursuit of peace, Africa's own way of realising solidarity and unity, Africa's rights to resolve their issues through peaceful dialogues and the respect of Africa's sovereignty (George, 2014: 29).

China's message of its quest for world peace, its strong opposition to imperialism or colonialism and its support for Africa's sovereignty resonated well with many African leaders whose countries were reeling from the effects of colonialism (George, 2014). Without doubt, this created the foundations of the strong relations we see today between China and Africa. In a similar fashion, later Chinese leaders appeared to be emulating Premier Zhou by choosing Africa as a priority destination for their trips abroad. For instance, President Hu Jintao embarked on an eight-nation tour across the breadth of Africa in 2007, while President Xi Jinping also made his first official overseas trip to Africa in 2013 (George, 2014: 37). In brief, reviewing the historical contacts between China and Africa, especially the impact of the Bandung Conference, reveals important ties without which, present day relations would not make much sense. The next section moves to focus on China-Africa security relations within the context of ties formed during the anti-colonial struggles in the 1950s.

2.2 China and African Liberation Movements

The Bandung conference played an important role in positioning China to take an active role in supporting liberation movements in Africa. Strategically, the sense of 'brotherhood' fostered by the conference was an important geopolitical move that enabled China to position itself against the U.S, the former colonial powers of Europe and the Soviet Union (Tan & Acharya, 2008). By allying itself with African countries, China defined its position in international affairs and increased its own influence to emerge as a leader of the Third World in the fight against colonialism and imperialism (ibid). China is highly regarded in Africa for its historical support for African liberation movements against colonialism dating back to the 1950s during Mao Zedong's doctrine of revolutionary warfare (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). Some of the liberation movements that benefited from China's support include Algeria's Front Liberation Nationale (FLN), rebels from Guinea Bissau and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party. Other countries like Tanzania, Ghana, and Congo-Brazzaville were used as training grounds by freedom fighters being supported by China (ibid). Furthermore, China provided military support to a number of African countries from the 1950s to the 1980s. During this period, China's relationship with Africa was mainly within the context of the Cold War, which was characterised by an ideological contest between the Communist Soviet Union and the Capitalist Western bloc (Taylor, 2010). China was mainly concerned about its rivalry with the Soviet Union over dominating the Communist agenda. Consequently, until the 1970s, China's relationship with Africa was ideologically motivated (Taylor, 2010).

Bo (2011) describes China during Mao's time as a revolutionary state as it viewed hegemonism by two superpowers- the US and the Soviet Union as a threat to world peace. African countries were thus important political allies for China as they helped it to gain its seat in the United Nations and supported its opposition to hegemonism (Bo, 2011: 23). Since its establishment in 1949, and until the pro-Beijing vote in 1971, the Communist-led PRC vehemently attempted, without success, to replace the nationalist China (Taiwan) as the only legitimate Chinese government in the

UN. It was only in October 1971 that the PRC replaced Taiwan in the UN and the UN Security Council after receiving overwhelming support of 76 votes against 35, and 17 abstentions (Taylor, 2007: 40). African countries played a crucial role in this instance, as they constituted a third (26 countries) of the number of supportive majority votes, which resulted in the admittance of China into the UN. Accordingly, without African support, China could never have realised this remarkable success (Taylor, 2007). A Chinese scholar, Wu (2006: 37) reckons that African countries have shown "sincere and unselfish support" to China over the Taiwan question and especially through the 1971 vote, which enabled China to regain her "legal rights in the UN". On this historic day, representatives of African countries burst into celebration through song and dance. Congratulatory and solidarity messages to China were published in various African media: newspapers, radio stations and news agencies to express "warm feeling" for the Chinese people (Ibid).

2.2.1 The Turbulent Years 1960-1969: China Interferes

While both Chinese and African authorities usually refer to their historical relations as cordial and sincere, things have not always been smooth. In respect of the rhetoric of non-interference and upholding of sovereignty, which often invoke historical relations, it is important to point out to some historical inconsistencies thereof. As Ziso (2017) observes, China-Africa relations have never been static, but have evolved over time and therefore need to be understood by looking at their different phases. For the purpose of this research, the author shall not go into the details of all the phases. However, in this session an analysis of a phase that challenged China's non-interference policy in Africa is given.

From the Bandung conference until 1965, the PRC made considerable headway in building relations with the African continent. According to Taylor (2007: 23), during this period China managed to establish diplomatic relations with fourteen newly

independent African countries.[4] During this period several newly independent African states were seeking aid from all corners. They also admired China's development so this increased the chances of strengthening China-Africa relations (Ismael, 1971: 515). Furthermore, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established various "front groups" and people's organisations to spearhead the strengthening of relations with African political and liberation movements (Eisenman, 2018). Examples of such influential groups in the early 1960s include the Chinese-African People's Friendship Association (CAPFA), the China Islamic Association, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and the Asian Solidarity Committee of China. These organisations carried out various tasks including mobilising support for Afro-Asian conferences and providing funds to and hosting various African political parties in China (Eisenman, 2018: 7-8). In a way, these informal organisations complemented efforts of the Chinese central government in speeding up relations with the African continent, hence resulting in the observed remarkable advancement in Sino-Africa relations.

Contrary to the immediate post-Bandung conference where China's main motive was to gain international recognition, the post-1960 period was influenced by China's fallout with the Soviet Union (Larkin, 1971). Following the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev's leadership initiated a policy of "détente", that is peaceful co-existence with the U.S. The Chinese authorities perceived this as a betrayal of the precepts of the communist revolution (Larkin, 1971). The main issue of contention was about finding the best way to deal with the U.S and its Western allies, whereby the Soviet Union opted for peaceful competition while China chose a revolutionary path through encouraging armed struggles against colonialism (Ismael, 1971: 509).

As Ogunsanwo (1974: 12) puts it succinctly, Stalin's death left a vacuum that could only be filled by Mao Tse-tung, "the only giant left in the Communist world" upon whom the Chinese people placed their hopes for the continuation of "ideological guidance to the rest of the Communist world." More so, Khrushchev's open

[4] These were: Ghana, Mali, Somalia –1960, Zaire –1961, Uganda –1962, Burundi, Kenya –1963, Benin, Central Africa Republic, Congo (Brazzaville), Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia –1964 and Mauritania –1965.

denunciation of Stalin in 1956 made China more resolute to part ways with the Soviet Union's compromised policy, which was accommodative to the hegemonic tendencies of the Capitalist world (ibid). Consequently, China abandoned the Bandung 'spirit' of peaceful co-existence and adopted a more militant approach, which marked a major shift in Chinese foreign policy. The radical shift in China's foreign policy was reflected in Mao's speech in 1956 when he declared that China would actively support "national independence and liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America as well as the Peace Movement and righteous struggle in all countries throughout the world" (Ogunsanwo, 1974: 12). In pursuit of this new policy, China also influenced the establishment of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) in 1958, which became a key vehicle for coordinating and financing revolutionary movements in Africa (Larkin, 1971: 18). The overall effect of the new policy, together with growing Sino-Soviet Union tensions, was that the PRC turned its focus to Africa where it ran a bold campaign to lure African countries to its side and away from the Soviet Union (El-Khawas, 1973).

Shinn and Eisenman (2012), emphasise that the rapid wave of decolonisation in Africa where, for example, in 1960 alone seventeen countries attained independence, presented a major opportunity for Chinese diplomacy. Mao thus viewed African independence movements as an embodiment of China's own revolution while he castigated the Soviets as "fascists" and "revisionist" who were giving in to imperialists' dictates (Eisenman, 2018: 10). This created competition for dominance in Africa by these two Communist powers, thereby resulting in the exploitation and sometimes stimulation of instability in the African continent (Ismael, 1971). This competition for dominance and influence would later lead to divergence of tactics in the process disrupting the operations of organisations of the African states. While the Soviet Union tended to favour working through the World Peace Council, China preferred the Afro-Asian mechanisms like the AAPSO (Ismael, 1971: 512).

Moving into the 1960s, the CCP used AAPSO not only to expand contacts with African political organisations, but also to challenge the Soviets' 'revisionist' policy

(Eisenman, 2018). By focusing more on Africa, China aimed at presenting itself as a more radical, revolutionary and authentic Socialist model than the Soviet Union. Consequently, China strongly supported African armed movements against colonialism and racism by, among other ways, providing training to revolutionary groups and also large financial credits and grants to some anti-West African countries like Guinea, Ghana and Mali (El-Khawas, 1973). China also sent experts in guerrilla warfare to train rebels in Guinea-Bissau and to instruct and equip nationalists in training camps in Ghana and Tanzania (Eisenman, 2018). Rebel groups that received military arms and training while based in Tanzania include the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO) of Mozambique and ZANU of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). In Zambia, China helped the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO) rebel group ((Eisenman, 2018: 9). By engaging in such activities, China aimed at replacing the Soviet's aid and support in Africa and positioned itself to become a future leader of the Socialist Third World (Taylor, 2007).

China's support to radical armed movements in Africa had its own pitfalls. Firstly, China faced an ideological challenge since many of the newly independent African states in the 1960s lacked an inclination for revolutions, after having attained their independence largely through peaceful ways (Taylor, 2007). During this period, countries like Niger, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria consistently opposed China's ideology and approach in Africa (Ismail, 1971: 508). More so, soon after their independence, several African countries quickly embraced and maintained institutions left behind by former colonialists. Secondly, China's commitments to the new African governments, while simultaneously supporting rebel groups that threatened the same governments, exposed Beijing's double standards (Taylor, 2007). A prominent example of China's double standards is the crisis in Congo in 1964 (Taylor, 2007; El-Khawas, 1973). In this case China was accused of providing arms and training to a rebel group led by Pierre Mulele. Moreover, China made the situation in Congo more chaotic by supporting other rebel groups operating from Burundi (Gaston Soumialot's group) and Tanzania (El-Khawas, 1973). In essence, China secretly promoted rebellion in Congo while the

Congolese government was fighting to quell rebellion and restore peace. Here, by secretly supporting rebellions whilst reassuring the governments that it posed no threat, China hoped to appeal to two rival audiences, on one hand the revolutionary armed rebels and on the other, the conservative African governments (Taylor, 2007).

Ironically, China opposed a UN intervention in Congo in 1960 claiming that the UN was being used by the United States to overthrow Lumumba and Gizenga's regimes (Ismail, 1971). Unfortunately, for China, its policy in Congo failed after the intervention of the Belgian forces in 1964. According to Taylor (2007: 25), Mao thought Congo would be a success story to be repeated elsewhere in Africa. He claimed that: "if we can take the Congo, we can have all of Africa." Quite the opposite, this created a serious dilemma for China in terms of reconciling dual but incompatible approaches of trying to apply diplomacy whilst wearing a guerrilla's beret (George, 2014: 34). Naturally, after observing China's behaviour in Congo, a number of African leaders became nervous and suspicious of China's intentions in its involvement in internal affairs of African states (Taylor, 2007). A major fear was that China might eventually instigate and support rebellious activities across Africa. The President of Ivory Coast, Houphouet-Boigny raised these concerns by stating that: "the peril that menaces Africa today is the yellow-tinted Communism of Peking" (El-Khawas, 1973: 25).

China's involvement in Burundi in the 1960s reveals how China's actions complicated conflict in Central Africa. In the early 1960s, Burundi was experiencing ethnic conflicts between the elite Tutsis and the majority Hutu peasants (Ismael, 1971). In fact, the ethnic conflict between these ethnic groups had far-reaching implications by igniting instability, which has plagued the Central African region since the 1960s, throughout the 1990s, and to the current era. It has been termed "one of Africa's intractable problems, one of the oldest conflicts" in the post-colonial era (Mwakikagile, 2012: 12). In the years between 1963 and 1965, China, together with the Soviet Union, Cuba and some African countries (Tanzania, Ghana, Egypt, Algeria, Guinea and Mali), was backing the Congolese nationalist rebels and their Rwandan Tutsi allies in the fight against the pro-Western backed Congolese national army (Mwakikagile, 2012). At that

time, Burundi was hosting a large number of Tutsi refugees from Rwanda, causing tensions for an already ethnically polarised society. As soon as China established diplomatic relations with Burundi in 1963, it utilised its embassy to support the Tutsis against the Hutus both within Burundi and across to its neighbours in Congo and Rwanda (Lemarchand, 1996).

By 1964, many Tutsis had received guerrilla training from the Chinese, which facilitated the massacres of Hutus by the Tutsis in Burundi in the following years. Moreover, the Chinese used Burundi as a strategic and operational base to transfer arms and equipment to the rebels in Eastern Congo under Gatson Soumialot's *Armee de Liberation Nationale* (ALN) (Lemarchand, 1996: 68). Burundi was strategic for China and the ALN in the sense that it was the only transit point through which military equipment could be shipped from Dar-as-Salaam to Eastern Congo. For the Tutsi refugees in Burundi, the strong relations between China and the Tutsi-led Burundi government ensured that the Tutsis had a safe haven to launch military operations against their homeland Rwanda (Lemarchand, 1996). In 1965, Burundi's Prime minister, Ngendandumwe, a Hutu, was assassinated shortly after replacing Alban Nyamoya, who was a pro-Chinese Tutsi leader. The assassin was a Rwandan refugee who claimed to have been hired by China for his acts (Ismael, 1971: 517).

Elsewhere in Africa, China's standing with African leaders was tainted by its support for rebel groups at all costs, as long as these groups had prospects of exercising control in their respective countries and later align themselves with China (George, 2014). Notable examples include China's support for Cameroon's armed movement (Union des populations de Cameroun) against Ahidjo's government and the unrest that China caused in Central Africa by fuelling conflict in Burundi and Rwanda (Ismail, 1971). There are also controversial coups where China was suspected to have had a hand, for example in Zanzibar (1964) and Niger (failed coup- 1965) (George, 2014; Taylor, 2007). In Niger, besides the failed coup, there are suspicions that China trained the outlawed Sawaba rebels who carried out nine subversive guerrilla attacks between 1964 and 1965 (El-Khawas, 1973). Upon arrest, the leaders of the Sawaba rebel forces

confessed to having received guerrilla training in China with the aim of overthrowing Hamani Diori's government (El-Khawas, 1973: 25).

In Burundi, China was also suspected of having facilitated the assassination of Prime Minister Pierre Ngendandumwe in 1965 (El-Khawas, 1973). In short, the 1960s saw China providing arms, funds, advisors and guerrilla training for dissident groups, which sought to overthrow incumbent governments in a number of independent African countries. To be sure, the underlying characteristic of the Cold War in Africa was intervention by several foreign powers. Such powers employed various strategies and policies according to their different motivations, largely based on their political and economic circumstances (Schmidt, 2013). Similarly, among many actors, like the U.S and the Soviet Union who had a comparably wider range of activities in Africa, China was also actively involved in African politics, albeit limited compared to other major actors (Lloyd, 2015. Evidently, Chinese activities in Africa in the 1960s reveal that far from being a 'non-interfering' power, China was "pragmatic and opportunistic" (Weinstein & Henriksen, 1980: 156).

As examples of interference in Central Africa have shown, China went to the extent of fomenting a revolutionary climate by playing ethnic groups against each other, or by secretly supporting rebel groups whilst pretending to be a friend of the newly independent African governments (Weinstein & Henriksen, 1980). China was thus conspicuous for causing "disruption and promoting unrest" in Africa as long as that frustrated the ambitions of the U.S and the Soviet Union (Taylor, 2007: 24). In pursuit of its quest to win African countries and to boost its international recognition and legitimacy, China could support any African radical movement (George, 2014). Nevertheless, by the late 1960s, China had suffered major setbacks in terms of losing its credibility and influence in Africa. This was mainly due to its intervention in domestic politics, its insistence on armed revolution by supporting African Communist and revolutionary parties, as well as other subversive activities against established African governments (Ismael, 1971: 522).

Opposition and revolutionary groups that China supported were rarely victorious in their home countries. As a result, China found itself at odds with many African leaders for its "support for radical dissidents" in Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Senegal, Cameroon, Niger, and the Congo (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 164). Many of these countries severed diplomatic relations with China and expelled Chinese officials from their countries while others became suspicious of Chinese involvement (Ibid). In 1966 alone, at least ten countries ousted Chinese diplomats and broke off ties with China, including Niger, Burundi, Kenya and Malawi among many others (El-Khawas, 1973: 25-26). A wave of coups across Africa in the following years, although not directly related to China's influence, did not help matters either as the new military leaders were suspicious of Chinese activities and preferred to curtail its influence in their countries (El-Khawas, 1973).

After suffering such a backlash, China had to rethink its policy and therefore came up with a new approach in 1967. This new approach prioritised state to state relations with established government, abandoning the indiscriminate support for revolutionary groups, except when they were fighting white minority regimes. Moreover, China was forced to limit its activities to a few countries instead of taking a continent-wide approach (Ismael, 1971; El-Khawas, 1973). China turned its focus to support revolutionary Communist parties in Southern Africa, where its radical call for revolutions was well received by the Communist parties fighting white minority imperial and colonial regimes (Ibid). This was the foundation upon which China and African governments revived their friendship and gradually rebuilt significant trust leading to the overwhelming support that China received from Africa in 1971 when it was voted into the UN.

2.2.2 Redefining Military and Security Ties 1970s-early 1990s

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties with Africa in the 1950s, military and security ties have featured as a key strategy for China to establish and strengthen ties with Africa. Supplying arms to African countries is one of the key ways sustaining China-Africa's

security relations today. As Taylor and Wu (2013: 463) observe, China's "diplomacy via weaponry" continues, with signs of efforts to step up arms sales to Africa even further. However, it was the advent of Deng into China's leadership in the 1970s, which brought new reforms that would redefine China's new approach to African security in the 21st century. The late 1970s ushered a turning point in China's engagement with Africa as the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping adopted a moderate Socialist policy, which sought to re-engage with the Western countries (Taylor, 2010). Deng did not totally abandon military support to the African continent, but he significantly scaled down an outright support of African revolutionary groups (George, 2014). Priority shifted to government-to-government military ties with independent African countries while giving support only to revolutionary groups, which were fighting minority colonial rule (George, 2014).

Deng was a pragmatist who was prepared to rescue China out of its economic troubles by whatever means –whether Capitalist or Socialist (Li & Li, 1995). Some years before coming into power, in 1962 Deng is reported to have pronounced his support for a pragmatic approach by saying that; "We don't care if it is a black cat or white cat; as long as it catches mice, it's a good cat" (Li & Li, 1995: 12). Despite facing heavy criticism during Mao's period, Deng's "cat theory" would later be revived to become the cornerstone of bold reforms and open policy he adopted in the late 1970s (Ibid). To that end, under Deng's leadership, China abolished state monopoly over the economy in favour of a 'social market economy' whilst leaving the Communist Party in charge of political life (Grant, 2009). Moreover, the new approach centred on the 'four modernisations'- that is, the need to modernise agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology (Grant, 2009: 38). The ultimate goal was to embrace advanced technology and use methods of capitalism to, among other things, raise agricultural production and end famine and poverty. From the 1970s throughout the 1980s, China concentrated on economic development, opening up to Western ideas of economic development as well as accepting international norms (Bo, 2011). In terms of relations with Africa, Chiung-Chiu (2012: 201) calls this period the "lost decade" as Africa became marginalised in Chinese policy, thereby resulting in a scale down of

relations, especially in terms of security and military support. This must be understood within the broader Chinese domestic and foreign policy under Deng's leadership. Deng was determined to reverse the dire consequences of the chaotic Cultural Revolution of 1966, which had disrupted the Chinese economy and caused significant poverty and suffering for the Chinese populace (Grant, 2009).

Besides Deng's pragmatic approach, the drastic shift in China's Africa policy emanated from two key events: China's admission to the U.N in 1971 and the death of Mao in 1976 (George, 2014: 56). It is important to look at the effect of these events on China-Africa relations. Firstly, becoming a member of the U.N Security Council came with key responsibilities and obligations that prevented China from randomly and unilaterally supporting African guerrilla groups, except in consultation with pro-Western regimes or by working with Western governments (George, 2014). In fact, admission to the U.N fulfilled China's long-held desire of gaining legal legitimacy and international recognition, thereby paving way for normalisation of diplomatic bilateral relations with Western Europe as well as improving relations with the U.S (Ibid). By default, this newly attained status meant that China had to make a strategic shift from supporting militia groups in Africa to establishing government-to-government relations in Africa, even if it meant becoming friends with conservative or pro-Western African governments (George, 2014: 57). To avoid alienation from Africa, China adopted a neutral policy by encouraging cooperation and peaceful resolutions of disagreements between African states. Unlike in previous years, China's new international status limited it from supporting either side of states in conflict as this would have damaged its claims of being a strong supporter of African unity (Ibid: 58).

Secondly, the death of Mao and the subsequent coming into power of Deng was another factor that led to a change of China's attitude towards Africa. Whilst Mao had been preoccupied with 'helping' African forces in their armed struggles, Deng saw Africa not as a continent in need of help but an opportunity for growing China's economy through trade (George, 2014). The availability of cheap raw materials in Africa would provide China with an opportunity to grow its economy, expand access to

markets for its manufactured goods, as well as provide the much-needed foreign currency to address some of the problems created by the Cultural Revolution (George, 2014). In addition, within the broader China-Africa economic relations, Deng's administration drastically cut aid for infrastructure projects in favour of offering loans. The days of China embarking on large-scale projects like building roads, bridges, hospitals and sports stadiums under charity projects were over. Instead, China now demanded African governments to meet all or large parts of the costs (George, 2014: 59). Essentially, large aid flows from China were drastically reduced in preference to trade during Deng's period, as China could not afford further drain to its economic resources.

During Mao's leadership, China used to give free supplies of small and light weapons to regimes and revolutionary groups, which were sympathetic to the ideology of Maoism and the promotion of Chinese interests (Taylor & Wu, 2013). However, Deng abandoned the policy of supplying arms as aid to Africa in favour of commercialised arms sales, whereby arms were transferred as exports 'for-profit' (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). This changed the character of Chinese arms exports by commercialising the transactions, focusing less on political considerations and diversifying the destinations of arms exports (Taylor & Wu, 2013: 463). As China badly needed to earn hard currency from the sale of arms, it expanded its customer base beyond Africa to countries like Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and Thailand. Deng thus effectively abandoned Mao's "government-sponsored gifting of weapons to African governments" (Thrall, 2015: 43).

With more African countries gaining their independence, China's Africa policy prioritised a pragmatic approach by lessening ideological communism and rather shifting to "arms transfers, contracts for military construction, increased training and high-level military exchanges" (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 162). Data cited by Shinn and Eisenman (2012) indicates a steady and consistent increase of Chinese arms transfer to Africa from 1970s to the 1980s. For instance, from 1961-71 Africa received Chinese arms worth $42 million, with a three-fold increase to $142 million worth of arms spread

across fifteen African countries between 1967 and 1976. Between 1980 and 1984, China made arms transfer commitments worth $161 million to Sub-Saharan Africa with the main recipients being countries such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Somalia, the DRC, Nigeria, and Tanzania (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012, p. 165-167). Moreover, by 1990 Chinese arms exports amounted to 8% of the global share of arms market, where Beijing sold more than just small arms but a whole weapons package (Taylor & Wu, 2013).

2.3 Post-Cold War Relations

In attempting to understand today's engagements between China and Africa, scholars often note some continuities and discontinuities in the patterns of historical engagement and try to answer questions as to why changes are occurring. Since the 1990s, China has scaled up relations with Africa, making the continent a crucial part of the Chinese policy agenda. Taylor (2010) attributes this development to two main reasons. First are the 1989 Tiananmen Square events and second, the end of the Cold War. The Tiananmen Square events refer to the heavy-handed military response by the Chinese government to crush protests in June 1989. The protests which were started by University students in April that year, had spread across urban areas involving even ordinary citizens who were unhappy with the government's use of military force to handle the protests (Taylor, 2010). The protestors who occupied Tiananmen Square for seven weeks demanded Western-style democratic reforms including political reforms to the Chinese one-party state system, economic freedom and eradication of corruption (Hay, 2010).

The Chinese government responded by declaring martial law, ruthlessly clearing protestors, and imprisoning many of those who were involved. This attracted international condemnation, especially in the West where China strongly criticised for violating human rights. China blamed the US for interfering in its domestic affairs by inciting and supporting democracy activists to destabilise the country. According to Chiung-Chiu (2012: 201) the strong condemnation of China by the West resulted in an "abrupt end of the honeymoon between the West and China" leaving Beijing with little

choice but to fall back to the African continent and other developing countries for support.

The Tiananmen incidents coincided with the end of the Cold War and China's growing economy. Consequently, China revived its calls for the developing world to oppose imperialism and work together to fight domination by the US and its Western allies (Taylor, 2010). Accordingly, China revived its Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence of 1954 as guidelines to its foreign relations. These principles mainly emphasise that partner countries recognise and respect each other's territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefits, and peaceful co-existence (Taylor, 2010: 71). The solidarity that African countries showed for China during the Tiananmen Square crisis became the foundation for future China-Africa political relations. Instead of harshly criticising China like the Western countries, African countries were either largely silent or openly supported China's position (Shinn, 2011). It seems this became an unwritten rule for both sides to never criticise each other on governance and human rights issues. Today, almost all African governments, including those with respected democratic credentials and good human rights standing, avoid criticizing China's human rights policies or internal politics (Shinn, 2011).

As this chapter has already shown, China's non-interference policy arises from a history of shared experiences with Africa regarding colonialism and mistrust of externally motivated interventions. Thus, China insists on being different from the Western countries and has sought to project itself as a responsible power (Bo, 2011: 29). China therefore seeks to actively participate in shaping the global order, by contributing to world peace and prosperity in its own terms" rather than passively accepting the status quo of the world order as designed by the West. The next chapter will give an in-depth discussion of the contemporary practice of China's non-interference policy with specific examples.

2.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to highlight how the historical engagements between China and Africa have evolved to shape the current policies guiding relations between the two. While the initial link between Africa and China was trade, mainly concentrated in northeast Africa, eastern coastal areas and some African islands, today's relations are diverse and complex. Military and security ties are part of this dynamic relationship, which have taken different shapes since the 1950s. Having noted that China's policy of non-interference evokes rhetoric of a clean history of Chinese friendship with Africa, it is interesting to note, as has been discussed, that China deliberately caused chaos in Africa in pursuit of its interests in the 1960s. Sometimes, however, it seems its activities had the unintended and unexpected effect of drawing Beijing into African conflicts.

Whatever the cause, the historical review reveals the contradictions in China's 'apolitical' approach towards Africa. More so, this also reflects the limitations of China's current interpretation of the Five Principles of Co-existence based on a strict emphasis on non-interference in domestic affairs of other states (Lloyd, 2015:5). Nonetheless, despite the difficulties in their relationship, China and Africa remain enduring partners, whose relationship seems to be profoundly gaining strength year by year. In the context of security relations and bearing in mind the long history of conflict in Africa, it is more compelling to look closely at factors that have caused China to be active in African security in the 21st century.

Chapter 3

CHINA'S NON-INTERFERENCE POLICY AND CONTEMPORARY SECURITY RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

Over the past few years, Africa and China have strengthened and increased their economic and political relations in unprecedented ways, which are set to impact both the international system and Africa's development and stability (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). For instance, Shinn (2011) writes about a "dramatic increase in China-Africa interaction" characterised mainly by high trade which grew from a mere $1 billion in 1980 to $10 billion in 2000. The Economist (2013) also remarks that the value of China-Africa trade has exceeded $166 billion and will continue to grow, as China has become Africa's top business partner. Central to these growing relations is China's non-interference policy. This is a policy based on a long-standing Chinese philosophy of conducting its business with other sovereign states without getting involved in their internal affairs. In respect of this policy, China argues that African governments alone can legitimately focus on and address matters concerning their domestic social, economic or political affairs, including internal conflicts (Mumuni, 2017: 259). With its emphasis on respecting sovereignty and equality of all states, this policy has enabled China to invest in any African country despite its regime type by offering loans, aid and investment agreements with no or limited conditions, except the One-China policy (Konings, 2007).

In the Western eyes however, China's silence and sometimes-indifferent attitude towards African security issues represents a selfish act of 'security free-riding.' By focusing on bilateral relations with individual African countries, while downplaying the 'liberal peace project' of democratising Africa to bring about peace and security, China is said to be undermining international security (Kuo, 2012: 26). The Western liberal

peace project seeks to promote international security through "universal human rights, multiparty democracy, privatization, open and free markets, and good governance". Kuo (2012) views the Western criticism of China as misinformed as it is based on a misunderstanding of the dynamic relationship between China and Africa. In this view, the West is using the liberal democratic template to judge China, which has its own understanding of democracy. To avoid falling into the same trap, this chapter provides an analysis of the precepts of China's non-interference policy using relevant examples in order to be able to analyse it critically.

3.2 The Tenets of China's Non-Interference Policy

Although many states endorse non-interference in international relations, it has a strong emphasis and a longstanding history in China's foreign relations (Verhoeven, 2014). The policy has its roots in the resolutions made by the Indian Prime Minister Nehru and the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1954 seeking to settle border disputes, promote trade and cultural exchanges between the two countries (Aidoo & Hess, 2015). It was then that the two leaders signed the Sino-Indian Treaty committing themselves to Five Principles of Coexistence, which affirmed mutual recognition of equality, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs and peaceful co-existence (Aidoo & Hess, 2015: 110). These principles were supported and endorsed by an international conference of Asian and African countries in Bandung in 1955. According to Iyasu (2013), emphasis on non-interference worked in China's favour as it managed to reach out to non-communist countries in Asia, express solidarity with newly independent African countries and appeal to the Non-Aligned states. During the Cold War, the Five Principles of Coexistence resonated well with efforts by the third world countries to fight for liberation and jealously guard their hard-won independence and resist hegemony and interference of American and Soviet powers (Aidoo & Hess, 2015). Since then, these principles have become the cornerstone of the non-interference policy as Beijing's official foreign policy rhetoric.

The non-interference policy was recently rebranded as a "five-No" approach in China's relations with Africa. This new term was introduced by President Xi in his address to the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in September. In his affirmation of China's love, respect and support for Africa, he declared that:

> We follow a "five-No" approach in our relations with Africa: no interference in African countries' pursuit of development paths that fit their national conditions; no interference in African countries' internal affairs; no imposition of our will on African countries; no attachment of political strings to assistance to Africa; and no seeking of selfish political gains in investment and financing cooperation with Africa.[5]

In the same speech, President Xi also seems to be enunciating that the non-interference policy insulates China-Africa relations from external criticism since it is ultimately upon "the peoples of China and Africa to judge the performance of China-Africa cooperation." While there is nothing new in the 'new' "five-no" approach, it reveals the context and objectives of Chinese policy. According to Sun (2018), the FOCAC Summit is not only an economic gathering but also a political event which often gives clues to China's current priorities in foreign strategy. In this instance, the summit occurred at a critical time when China is facing trade hostilities with the US as well as international scepticism about its relations with Africa. In other words, this summit gave China an opportunity to dispel any international fears and reassure the world of China's benevolence in international leadership.

There are two key policy strategies discernible in this speech. First, China is seriously consolidating Africa's support for its international agenda, and secondly, China is committed to Africa's capacity building as part of its broader soft power agenda of advancing a Chinese model of political and economic development in developing countries. Additionally, the re-emphasis on non-interference at this critical time shows

[5]Chinese President Xi Jinping's Keynote speech at the 2018 FOCAC opening ceremony. http://sl.chineseembassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1591781.htm

the centrality of this policy in China-Africa relations. Furthermore, it also speaks to the importance of Africa in providing China with the necessary "moral, rhetorical, and political support" for its ambitions for global leadership (Sun, 2018).

Elsewhere in the Chinese official documents, the non-interference policy is assertively articulated in the 2011 White Paper which lays out China's foreign policy of pursuing peaceful development (PRC State Council, 2011). The major components of the non-interference policy are reflected in China's declaration of its 'core' interests which encompass "state sovereignty, national security, territorial integrity and national unification" among others. China's commitment to non-interference is repeatedly stated throughout this document. China underscores that its long-term objective and current task is to "uphold world peace and promote common development for a harmonious world" which is only attainable through respecting the principles of non-interference. As a result, all countries despite their size, wealth, and power, need to "respect each other and treat each other as equals" and cooperate to democratise international relations. International law, the UN Charter together with the purposes and principles of the UN should be upheld by all countries in the conduct of international relations. In sum, "the internal affairs of a country should be decided by its own people, international affairs should be decided by all countries through consultation on an equal footing, and every country's right to equally participate in international affairs should be respected and upheld" (PRC State Council, 2011).

China claims to be adhering to the principle of non-interference so much that it expects all other countries to reciprocate this gesture. "The Chinese people adhere to the social system and path of development chosen by themselves and will never allow any external forces to interfere in China's internal affairs." According to this document, China's foreign relations continue to be guided by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (discussed in chapter 2). Thus, China is against forming alliances with any country or group of countries, as well as relations based on a social system or ideology. The irony here is that the non-interference policy itself is a kind of an ideology upon which China-Africa relations are based. Finally, the document also emphasises China's

opposition to the practises of bullying, oppression, hegemonism and power politics played by big powers on small countries. In essence, China's bold declarations of its commitment to the non-interference policy present a picture of a country which respects the will of other countries and therefore deserves a similar treatment. It is usually easier for countries to make declarations than to adhere to them in practice. Similarly, this thesis needs to move beyond the policy documents and analyse the practical side. The following sections will provide an overview of China's current involvements in Africa's security. The final section of this chapter discusses debates on whether China adheres to its self-proclaimed non-interference policy.

3.2.1 Non-Interference Policy and China-Africa Economic Relations

Since the end of the Cold War, China has used non-interference to resist Western hegemonism as well as to leverage its diplomatic engagements with developing countries. To this end, the non-interference policy has meant that China seeks to separate business from politics by avoiding any domestic disputes that may divert it from its quest to differentiate itself from intrusive and interventionist practices of Western countries. To achieve this, China therefore:

> "...emphasises on its role as a fellow member of the South, its history free of imperialism or colonialism in foreign lands, and willingness to provide aid, assistance and economic opportunities based on equality- without paternalistic prescriptions or conditions often demanded by Western donors and international financial institutions" (Aidoo & Hess, 2015: 112).

China's non-interference policy and its general ways of conducting diplomacy with African countries are well received by African leaders. While aid and investments from Western partners come with demands for good governance, fiscal integrity, political and electoral reforms among other conditions, China engages Africa with almost no-strings attached (Konings, 2007: 350). The only 'condition' for China's aid and investments is the demand for its partners to denounce diplomatic ties with Taiwan in line with the One-China policy. Moreover, African authorities see China not only as an alternative

development partner, but also as hope for freedom from Western hegemony as well as a developmental model, which they can follow to lift their people from endemic poverty (Freeman, 2015).

Abdoulaye Wade, the former Senegalese President wrote an article for the Financial Times while he was still in office pronouncing the appreciation of China by African leaders. He praised China for being more responsive and better adapted to urgent African needs for infrastructure, affordable energy, education and rapid economic development. He contrasted this to the "slow and sometimes patronising post-colonial approach" of Western traditional investors and donors. In this article, President Wade also criticised the Western ways of engaging Africa for being too bureaucratic and having unnecessary red tape, which limits efforts by African leaders to address poverty issues (Wade, 2008).

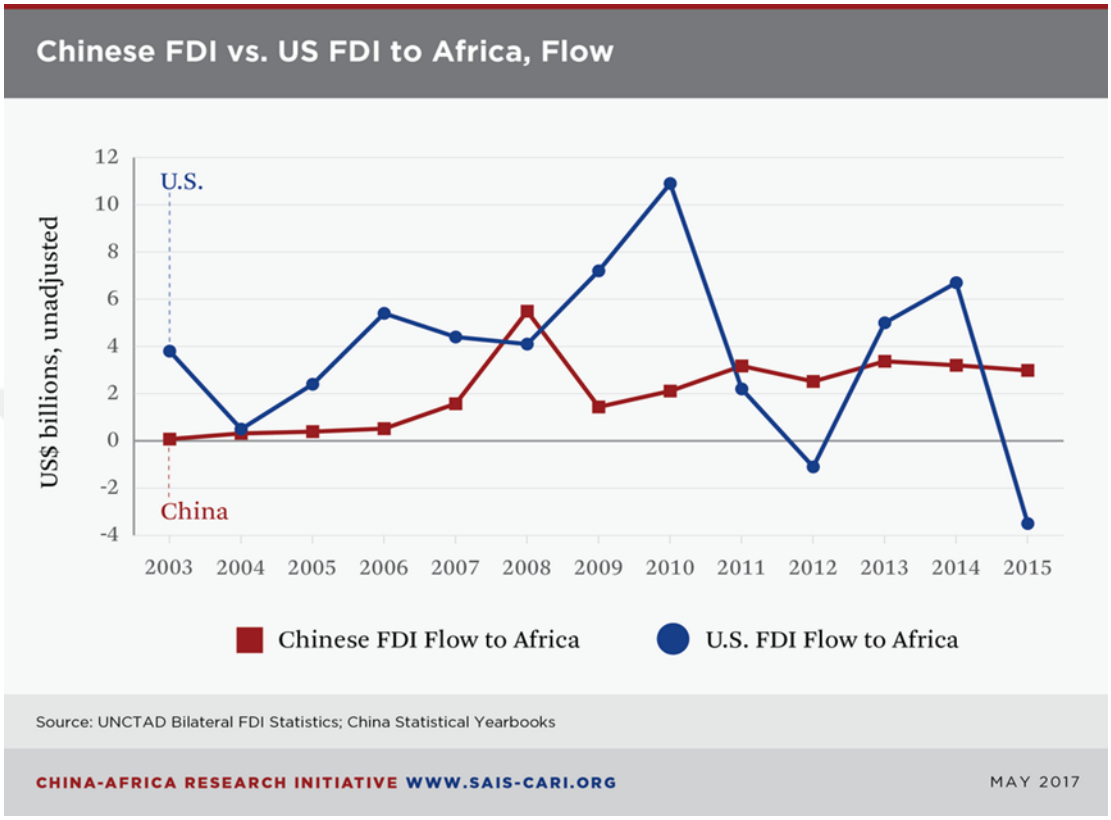
Apart from such sentiments, several symbolical actions testify to the strong relationship between Africa and China. In 2012, China officially handed over to the AU, the keys of a complete $200 million-worth building of the AU's Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (BBC News, 2012). A Chinese representative who spoke at the ceremony reportedly said that this symbolised a stronger friendship between Africa and China, and a testimony of Beijing's "strong resolve to support African development" (BBC News, 2012). Most tellingly, perhaps is China's establishment of its first Permanent Mission to the AU Commission in 2015. The then AU Chairperson Dr Dlamini-Zuma praised this move as a confirmation of the historic partnership between China and Africa as well as an indication that China had finally realised that "the time is now to strengthen the relation between Africa and China", praised this move (Xinhua, 2015). Plans are reportedly underway to establish an AU representational Office in China in the capital city Beijing with the main aim being to "ensure effective and timely follow-up of the China-Africa partnership" (Africa News, 2018).

Indeed, some scholars also appreciate China's role in improving the economies of many African countries, thereby changing the negative image of Africa and making it

attractive to investments from other rising powers (Brautigam, 2010; Du Plessis, 2014; Aidoo & Hess, 2015). Accordingly, due to this rising profile Africa has once again become an important continent of international interest. Aidoo and Hess (2015: 108) take it further by crediting China and other rising Asian powers for helping Africa to realise impressive economic growth and a decrease in political dictatorships, which are being replaced by electoral democracy and civil liberties. China's non-interference policy seems to have worked well for Beijing's relations with Africa as it now has diplomatic ties with almost all the fifty-four African countries, except Swaziland, which still officially maintains relationship with Taiwan (Solomon, 2018).

Moreover, in 2009 China overtook the U.S and became Africa's largest trading partner and is one of Africa's key sources of foreign direct investment and aid (Shinn, 2014). According to Beri, China's presence is evident in almost every African country in different sectors of the economy ranging from oil fields, agriculture to mining (Beri, 2007). Between the years 2000 and 2006, the two-way trade between Africa and China rose from a mere US$10 billion to US$40 billion (Beri, 2007: 297). China has also become a major supplier of foreign direct investment to Africa competing with the U.S according to data from the Johns Hopkins University's China Africa Research Initiative as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Chinese FDI vs. US FDI to Africa, Flow



Source: Johns Hopkins University, (2017).

The main driver for China-Africa closer economic relationship relates to China's needs for energy resources and markets for its manufactured goods on the other hand, and the availability of natural resources in Africa coupled with Africa's needs for new markets and affordable products (Park, Lampert & Robertson, 2016; Zhao, 2014). It is important to clearly state that although the China-Africa economic relations might give a rosy picture and be praised in Africa; it is also marred with controversies. This is mainly due to some criticisms both from within and outside Africa, of China as a 'neo-colonialist predator' (Zhao, 2014) and as a "rapacious superpower plundering the continent's resources and flooding its markets with cheap manufactured products that undermine local production (Park, et al, 2016: 3)." As Zhao (2014) argues, it is impossible to exonerate China from some of the criticisms related to its practices in Africa, especially in its endeavour to be seen as a neutral business partner. What is

undeniable however is that China has identified gaps and used its comparative advantages to gain a solid ground in Africa (Zhao, 2016: 1035). The intention of this section was to give the reader a general overview of how the non-interference policy has worked in China's favour in terms of penetrating the African continent and strengthening diplomatic relations thereof. As the upcoming sections will reveal, China's economic footprint in Africa has resulted in China spreading its arms to other areas of engagement with Africa including security, in a manner that could not have been imagined before.

3.2.2 Non-Interference Policy and China-Africa Security Engagements

The literature on China-Africa security engagements is scant. Benabdallah (2016: 17) observes that peace and security cooperation in China-Africa relations is a new phenomenon which is quickly gaining a lot of attention. Similarly, the usefulness of China's non-interference policy in Africa, where China has investments in some of the most politically unstable and conflict-ridden countries, is increasingly being questioned (Alden, 2014; Verhoeven, 2014; Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011; Holslag, 2009). As Holslag (2009) argues, China's high international profile and presence in Africa means that it inevitably finds itself drawn into the domestic security issues of its partner countries.

Major challenges to China's non-interference policy in Africa stem from disputable legitimacy of some of the African governments, weak administrative institutions, corruption, poor regulatory environments and erratic application of laws (Alden & Large 2015: 2). These conditions have a combined effect of creating fertile ground for instability, which puts China's economic interests under a precarious position. Moreover, as China becomes a global power, her interests are no longer limited to economic cooperation but include the responsibilities and expectations that come with such a status (Verhoeven, 2014). Consequently, China has by default, become more deeply involved in security issues in Africa than ever before.

3.3 China's Development-Security Approach

In defence of its non-interference policy against human rights critics, China usually invokes its developmental approach to security. In China's view, long-term peace and stability hinges on socio-economic development whereby the focus should be on addressing root causes of conflicts like poverty, poor infrastructure, and unemployment (Freeman, 2015; Benabdallah, 2016). The emphasis on economic development is also evident in speeches by Chinese diplomats. For example, addressing AU delegates at an event to celebrate the 67th anniversary of the founding of China (PRC), Ambassador Kuang Weilin praised China's "remarkable economic and social achievements" for having had significant impact beyond China itself through making "great contributions to peace and prosperity of the whole world" (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). Elsewhere, the Chinese ambassador to Ghana, Sun Baohong while addressing delegates at the Ghanaian Armed Forces and Command Staff College, emphasised that China would maintain its approach of peaceful development in pursuit of "win-win" relations with Africa (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). More importantly, the ambassador noted that China respects Africa's independence and right to choose a developmental path suitable to the continent's unique circumstances, whereby each African country has to choose a developmental approach relevant to its national conditions (Ibid.).

In essence, what we can draw from these speeches is that China's non-interference policy propagates the principles of independence, sovereignty and development as essentials of world peace. To begin with, Taylor (2011) observes that China's definition of security and human rights differs from that of the dominant Western perspective. The Western approach to world peace and security is based on the liberal peace project, which is built upon "universal values of individual human rights, multiparty democracy, privatization, open and free markets and good governance" (Kuo, 2012: 26). China's view of security and peace on the other hand prioritises collective rights and social stability underpinned by infrastructure-led economic development, poverty alleviation and stable governance (Kuo, 2012: 36).

In China's view, basic human rights to food, clothing, shelter, economic development and security are only attainable through strengthening the sovereignty of a state, which in turn is a guarantor of these collective rights (Taylor, 2011). Konings (2007) gives examples of cases where China has taken risks to invest in unstable areas, which other foreign investors feared. Examples include the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country that has suffered from civil wars and internal instability since the 1960s, and Sierra Leone, which had just recovered from a civil war when China began to pour its investments (Konings, 2007: 354). Even though some may view this as merely motivated by China's quest for natural resources, one cannot dismiss the possibility of the contribution that Chinese investments may bring in post-conflict reconstruction especially in terms of infrastructure.

The issue of whether development leads to security and stability is as controversial as the chicken and egg dilemma. Development and security are so strongly connected and dependent on each other such that it becomes difficult to determine which one is the prerequisite. Freeman (2015: 263) argues that conflict negatively affects development perhaps in as much as development can influence conflict too. Kofi Annan, a former Secretary-General of the UN once remarked that human beings desired three closely related freedoms: "freedom from want, freedom from war or large-scale violence, and freedom from arbitrary or degrading treatment" (Annan, 2006). Both development and security are essential in order to enjoy the freedoms hence Annan emphasised that long-term security relies on development as much as development relies on security.

The main challenge associated with development as a security policy is that economic growth does not automatically translate to enhanced peace and stability (Benabdallah, 2016). It is questionable whether development is achievable without dealing with the underlying political problems, which may be the source of conflicts (Freeman, 2015: 263). Kabemba (2016) argues that infrastructure development is unsustainable without building state capacity. Discussing the China-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) relations, he argues that given that DRC is a fragile and

dysfunctional state, the infrastructure that China is building there would soon be destroyed as the country got plunged into a violent conflict. Accordingly, the weakness of China's investments is that it promotes the interests of the ruling elites without necessarily uplifting the wellbeing of the masses. In this sense, Chinese investments may fuel exclusion and disgruntlement, which can lead to conflicts. Instead of blindly intensifying investments, China needed to help the DRC to build a functional and responsible state if it was to meaningfully contribute to enhancing peace there (Kabemba, 2016: 83).

3.4 A Shift Towards Military Diplomacy?

There are recent events, which indicate that China is escalating its military presence and active engagements in African security. The year 2017 had two highly significant events related to China's role in Africa's security agenda. Firstly, as the president of the UNSC, a position for presidency that rotates among member states every month, China hosted in July 2017 an important open debate focusing on African security. The topic of the debate was "Peace and Security in Africa: Enhancing African Capacities in the Areas of Peace and Security" (Guterres, 2017). Secondly, in August 2017, China opened its first overseas military base in Djibouti. The launching ceremony, which included the raising of the Chinese flag and a military parade, occurred on the day China was celebrating the 90th anniversary of the foundation of its army, the PLA (Aljazeera, 2017). These two events are very crucial to the extent of indicating a dramatic shift from a detached approach to escalation of China's security engagements in Africa. The high visibility of China in Africa's security affairs raises doubts on the utility of its long-held non-interference policy in its foreign relations.

In mid-2018, China's Ministry of National Defence hosted a two-week ground-breaking China-Africa Defence and Security Forum. According to the Chinese official press agency, Xinhua (2018), the forum was "the first of its kind", attended by officials from fifty African countries along with the AU representatives. The agenda of the forum included taking stock of security situation in Africa and discussing ways of boosting

Africa's independent security capacity. Moreover, China also used the conference to display its land, navy, and air forces to its African visitors (Xinhua, 2018). The hosting of this forum presented an opportunity to elevate military ties by strengthening defence and security cooperation between China and Africa. However, one may also see this as China trying to position itself as a 'powerful' brother, probably whose military capacity Africa should now trust. Simultaneously, the message is probably aimed at other powers like the US and its Western allies to see China as a capable global leader who will bring peace and stability to Africa and the rest of the world.

The events cited above are symbolic and significant in the sense that they perpetuate China's image as a 'representative' of Africa and other developing nations in the international community. As observed by Du Plessis (2014:122), thanks to China, "Africa is no longer muted in international affairs." According to Alden (2014), although it is deep economic relations with the continent that primarily propel China's involvement in Africa, reputational concerns also force China into action. This relates to China's efforts to project itself as a responsible power, the risks it faces on its business interests, and the security of its citizens based in unstable African countries (Alden, 2014:1). It seems Africa is changing China "as much as African actors have been changed by interacting with China" (Verhoeven, 2014:58).

Latest data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) indicates that China is now the world's third largest exporter of major weapons after the U.S and Russia, which are by far the largest global weapons sources. The data also shows a sharp increase of the global Chinese arms exports, which grew by 74% in 2012-2016, compared to 2007-11 (SIPRI, 2017). Concerning Africa, China has become one of the most crucial suppliers of weapons. In 1971, it was the seventh supplier of arms to Africa where the arms market was dominated by the Soviet, France, and the UK (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 165). China has since climbed up the ladder to become the top supplier of arms to Africa along with Russia and Ukraine, which are among Africa's consistent arms sources (SIPRI, 2011).

Besides arms transfers, China also plays a major role in training African military personnel. Between 1955 and 1979, 2720 military personnel from at least thirteen African countries received military training in China, with Tanzania and Congo Brazzaville heading the list (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 167). To date, military exchanges and cooperation have been entrenched in China's Africa policy as evidenced by commitments in both the first (2006) and the second (2015) China's Africa policy documents. In both these documents, China pledges to deepen military cooperation with Africa "through high-level military exchanges, training of military personnel, collaborating in military related technology and conducting joint military training and exercises.[6]" More importantly, China commits itself to help in building and strengthening African countries' national defence security capacity. Zhao (2015: 85) also confirms that China has made unique and comprehensive network with African countries through "active and dynamic" military and security ties. This has been arguably enabled by mutual high-level visits by military officers, military training programs, financial support and joint military exercises.

Without going into debates about the quality and quantity of Chinese arms transfer to Africa, it is undeniable that China has become a key security player in the continent. What is crucial for this thesis however is, on the one hand, the contentious role of China's security conduct in Africa and its claims of 'non-interference' on the other. More specifically, the transfer of arms to Africa, a continent often plagued by armed conflicts and military regimes, has raised many questions about the efficacy of China's non-interference policy (Hanauer & Morris, 2014: 17). Chinese-made weapons have raised controversy for reportedly fuelling conflicts by contravening UN-sanctioned arms embargos and being supplied to conflict-ridden regions, sometimes to rogue elements and repressive regimes (Ibid).

[6] China's African Policy (2006), http://www.focac.org/eng/zt/zgdfzzcwj/ ;
Xinhua, (2015, December 4). Full Text: China's second Africa policy paper, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-12/04/c_134886545.htm

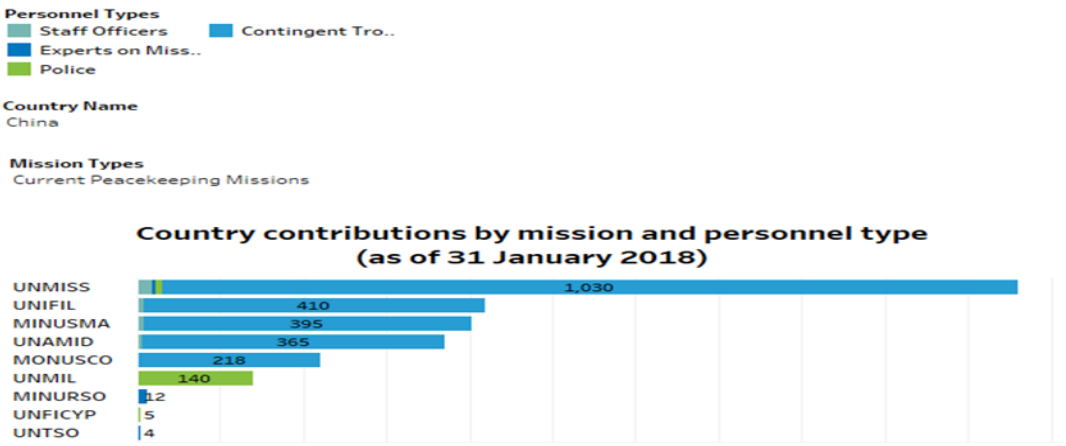
Whether these weapons are obtained directly from China or indirectly through intermediaries, they have been found problematic in Africa. As reported by the SIPRI, arms exports (from whichever source) to Africa create uncertainty as to whether these arms "will help to provoke or pro-long armed conflicts, aggravate inter-and intrastate tensions, or weaken civilian governments" (SIPRI, 2011:1). China's claim of enhancing Africa's capacity to 'self-defence' seems to be controversial too, since self-defence itself is questionable when one considers whose security is being defended (Taylor & Wu, 2013). If the regime receiving the weapons is autocratic or lacks legitimacy, then the arms may cause insecurity for the ordinary people of that particular country. Essentially, when Chinese firms supply arms to an African state, they "effectively and inextricably" take part in the internal matters of that state (Taylor & Wu, 2013: 462).

3.4.1 China in Peacekeeping Missions

Apart from the general military and security ties with Africa, China is playing its military diplomacy in the continent through increasingly participating and financially contributing to UN Peacekeeping missions. China has become the second largest funder of the UN peacekeeping operations after the US (UN Peacekeeping, 2018). This is one of the key avenues, which enable China to assert its political and military footprint in the international arena. Since the late 1990s, more than 2 000 Chinese military personnel have been deployed to different African countries like Liberia, Sudan (Darfur), South Sudan, Mali, and the Democratic Republic of (UN Peacekeeping, 2018). China is thus displaying a gradual change of attitude, albeit an ambivalent one, towards peacekeeping missions. In this regard, China has shifted from strongly resisting peace operations "under any circumstances" to a "permanent commitment" to such missions (Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011: 147). For instance, the number of Chinese military personnel on UN Peacekeeping duties rose drastically from a mere five military observers in Syria in 1990 to 31, 000 in 2017 as a total number of all the 24 peacekeeping missions that China has participated in between 1990 and 2017 (Xinhua, 2017).

Of the five UN Security Council permanent members, China now contributes the highest number of security personnel in UN Peacekeeping missions with three quarters of its military personnel based in Africa (Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011). Data from the UN Peacekeeping website indicates that as of January 2018, the UN was involved in fifteen operations of which eight are in Africa. China contributes personnel to nine out of the fifteen UN peacekeeping missions. As shown in figure 2, besides operations in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Cyprus (UNFICYP), and the Middle East (UNTSO), China's peacekeeping personnel are in six UN operations based in Africa.

Figure 2. Chinese Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa



Source: UN Peacekeeping Data, (2018).

3.4.2 Anti-Piracy Operations

Another key element of China's security engagement in Africa has been its anti-piracy operations off the Somali coast (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). After suffering numerous attacks on its ships, with several numbers seized by pirates in the Gulf of Aden, China

finally decided in 2008 to deploy the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) to join forces with other international anti-piracy and escort (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018). Until then, China had not deployed its naval forces outside its immediate maritime borders; hence, this was a first and an historic move in China's modern history. Since its deployment in 2008, PLAN has made notable strides, escorting more than 5000 Chinese and foreign vessels and rescued at least 50 ships from pirates (Zhao, 2015).

Apart from conducting anti-piracy operations, the PLAN also cooperates with other naval forces and conducts regular visits to other regional ports. For instance, the PLAN has made more than 30 navy calls over a dozen of African countries including Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, Egypt, Morocco, Mozambique, Seychelles and South Africa (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018: 10). It is rumoured that China is negotiating with some of these countries to establish naval bases or at least operational facilities there. While the Chinese authorities often present their anti-piracy operations as a defensive response to security threats, there are indications that this has become a gateway for China to serve its broader security intentions (Erickson & Strange, 2015:24; Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018: 12). Although pirate attacks and threats have become very rare in recent years, China continues to expand its operations in the Gulf of Aden citing piracy threats as a motivation. Thus, such justifications are questionable and point to other security motivations being pursued by China- mainly to improve and consolidate its maritime capabilities (Erickson & Strange, 2015: 24-25).

In the name of anti-piracy operations, the PLAN gets to "project its power far beyond its shores, train its personnel and test equipment in foreign navies, and operate submarines in the sea" (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018: 12). More significantly, these operations provide an excusable rationale for China to establish more naval support facilities and expand its military presence across the Indian Ocean and African shores. Erickson and Strange (2015: 24) argue that the anti-piracy operations are an opportunity for China to improve its international image for providing a 'global good', that is, global and collective security. This probably explains China's increased calls for building African security capacity. In 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged to provide free

military aid of US$ 100 million towards assisting the African Union to establish the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (Xinhua, 2017).

3.5 Non-Interference and Human Rights

The most formidable challenge to China's non-interference policy seems to be on its impact on human rights violations. China has come under immense criticism, especially from the West, the media and from African civil society organisations, for supposedly working with rogue states, which abuse human rights (Condon, 2012). Some critiques have labelled Beijing a "rogue" donor whose non-conditional aid to Africa would have negative repercussions for not only Africa but also China itself (Condon, 2012: 6). This mainly stems from the Chinese model of engagement as it emphasises on respect for state sovereignty and non-interference. This culminates in China dealing with states condemned by the West for violating international laws (Taylor, 2010). Prominent examples of such states are Zimbabwe, Sudan and Angola.

China stands accused of using its seat in the Security Council to prevent resolutions against regimes with questionable human rights record. However, this is a controversial issue since China has its own understanding of human rights linked to its development-security approach as discussed earlier on in this chapter. Besides having a different perspective on security, China is also wary of the hypocrisy of Western-led criticism on human rights record given the West's own tainted history of supporting oppressive regimes in Africa (Kuo, 2012).

3.6 Is China Moving Away from Non-Interference?

Scholars are increasingly questioning the usefulness of China's non-interference policy in Africa, where China has investments in some of the most politically unstable and conflict-ridden countries, (Alden, 2014; Verhoeven, 2014; Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011; Holslag, 2009). As Holslag (2009) argues, China's high international profile and presence in Africa means that it inevitably finds itself drawn into domestic security

issues of its partner countries. Major challenges to China's non-interference policy in Africa stem from disputable legitimacy of some of the African governments, weak administrative institutions, corruption, poor regulatory environments and erratic application of laws (Alden & Large 2015: 2). These conditions have a combined effect of creating fertile ground for instability, which puts China's economic interests under a precarious position. Moreover, as China becomes a global power, her interests are no longer limited to economic cooperation but include the responsibilities and expectations that come with such a status (Verhoeven, 2014). In this view China has, by default, become more deeply involved in security issues in Africa than ever before.

While there seems to be a general recognition that China no longer strictly adheres to its non-interference policy, the degree and impact of this change remains highly contested. Three strands of literature are identifiable on this question. First, there are those that see a great departure from the policy. Second, there are those that interpret the changes as rather an evolution of China's foreign policy without necessarily losing grip on the fundamentals of the policy. The bulk of the available literature seems to be taking this cautious position. The third category of literature in this debate suggests that China has maintained its non-interference policy throughout its engagements with African countries and hence no changes should be expected. By grouping the literature into these three categories, this thesis has made a risk of categorising relatively fluid arguments, in an attempt to make a coherent analysis of the literature as best as one can. Otherwise, some scholars run across the three categories in their analysis and conclusions. Below is a brief look at the arguments advanced by these three perspectives.

The question as to whether China still maintains its non-interference policy in Africa, and the motivations and significance thereof, raises lot of arguments. On one extreme, there are those who see a great change towards interference, such that the policy is deemed inconsistent with practice, except only as a discursive tool (Large, 2008; Holslag, 2009; Verhoeven, 2014). Large (2008: 98) puts it succinctly that non-interference is "conveyed as rhetoric masking the pursuit of hard, realist interests" where

business is pursued "as a form of applied politics." Pursuing business as applied politics in this sense means that the non-interference policy is applicable as far as it allows China to navigate the political environments where it operates (Large, 2008). This effectively implies that as China's economic interests in Africa deepen, China will also simultaneously work on expanding its political influence in Africa, a process that includes informal but crucial political manoeuvring.

Verhoeven (2014) and Holslag (2009) view China as a pragmatic actor whose policies are not carefully planned but rather a logical response to practical challenges. Holslag (2009: 34) specifically argues that in the face of security challenges in Africa, China can no longer manipulate its long-held dual identity of being a developing country and its identity as a global power. Of course, being a developing country and having shared experiences with Africa for fighting imperialism are factors that resonate with many African countries. However, China's status of being a global power, with a powerful economy, as well as being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, creates expectations among its partners- some of which China might not be capable to fulfil yet (Holslag, 2009). Precisely, "African partners do not attach much value to China's diplomatic schizophrenia and complex image of an economic giant, political dwarf, and minor military player in projects. When mayhem erupts, China automatically ends up on the frontline, finding itself hounded by African governments asking it to exercise its leverage" (Holslag, 2009: 34).

One of the most cited examples of evidence for challenges to China's non-interference policy is China's role in conflicts in Sudan, and later in South Sudan. Large (2008: 101) argues that international criticism by humanitarian organisations against China's support for Sudanese government in the Darfur War posed a threat to China's international credibility. Initially, Chinese oil companies tried to pursue oil investments, while the Chinese government was supplying arms and preventing a UN resolution for a peacekeeping mission in Sudan. As international pressure increased, and other African leaders voiced their discontent with China's behaviour, China finally took an active role and negotiated with Sudan's authorities to allow a UN peacekeeping mission in 2006

(Large, 2008: 100). Through brokering and putting indirect pressure on Sudanese authorities, China successfully managed to balance the inconsistency between its economic interests and the principle of non-interference on one hand, with Western pressure for intervention in Darfur and the necessity for a long-term stability on the other hand (Holslag, 2009: 30).

Due to experiences from the Darfur crisis, China is thus increasingly embracing collective security, especially through multilateral security mechanisms provided by international institutions like the UN and the African Union (AU). A report by the International Crisis Group (2017) also emphasises that the war between Sudan and South Sudan has provided the most visible case of contradictions and inconsistences of the non-interference policy. According to the report, having learnt a hard lesson in the Libya crisis of 2011, where it was forced to evacuate 35 000 citizens within ten days, China has become more careful on the boundaries of non-interference (International Crisis Group, 2017). When civil clashes broke out in South Sudan in 2013, Chinese authorities had to decide between leaving behind their oil fields and other investments in South Sudan, as they had done in Libya, or to face the crisis by using their economic and political advantage to influence a peaceful outcome. Accordingly, in South Sudan, China's non-interference policy was brought to a "real-world laboratory test" (International Crisis Group, 2017: 9).

A Chinese ambassador interviewed by Verhoeven (2014: 56), admits that Africa has stretched China's non-interference policy as he says; "Of course we are increasingly involved in the politics of African countries, we are being pulled in, we have no choice". Ratner (2011) supports this view by arguing that China's human and economic investment, its increasing reliance on Africa for natural resources and diversification of markets, cause China to rely heavily on stability in Africa. However, these areas of engagement face emerging security threats including political instability, hostile regimes, piracy, climate change and transnational terrorism (Ratner, 2011: 39). It is these threats, according to Ratner's prediction, that will determine China's international behaviour in the future.

The second view in the literature that probes China's departure from its non-interference policy in its security relations with Africa is that it is too early to tell with certainty if the observed changes mark a departure from China's traditional foreign policy. Rather, the shifts may indicate adjustments which China is going through as it is trying to align its policy with its attempts to develop unique norms of international engagement (Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011; Alden, 2014; Korinko & Chelang'a, 2014; Thrall, 2015; Benabdallah, 2016). Zhengyu and Taylor (2011: 147) admit that China "has had international leadership pushed upon it" due to its rising profile in international affairs. This rise has led to rising expectations on China to assume a greater role in international affairs. However, this in itself is not an indication of a departure from the non-interference policy since China remains wary of Western countries' propensity to use military interventions to propel their hegemonic agendas. Conversely, non-interference helps China to define the terms and limits of sovereignty in ways that protect its interests (Zhengyu & Taylor, 2011).

According to Thrall (2015), China's security policy in Africa is still at its infancy as China is yet to define its security practices, missions and presence in the continent. In this view, China's exponential economic interests, assets, and increasing number of citizens in Africa have occurred too rapidly, bringing with them security challenges that in turn create security interests, which are yet to be fully comprehended (Thrall, 2015: 17). Closely related to this view, Alden (2014) argues that China is still trying to find its feet in the global governance structures, therefore it still needs to develop the necessary capacity in order to live up to the roles expected of a major power. This argument is supported by Wheeler (2011: 113) who notes that China is still hesitant to assume high leadership positions in multilateral initiatives due to its lack of capacity, resources and experience in dealing with overseas conflict issues. Logically, therefore the non-interference policy seems to be giving China some room to manoeuvre the multi-lateral governance system, while trying to define its position and role in international affairs on one hand and gathering the requisite capacity to live up to the expectations of its partners on the other.

The third strand of literature related to China's non-interference policy in Africa looks at the impact of China's domestic policy in driving its foreign and security policy (Bhalla, 2005; Wang, 2018). The logic behind interpreting China's international behaviour using the lens of its domestic policy is that "the redefinition of interests, identities, agendas and processes of interaction in the domestic arena should logically find some resonance in international affairs as well (Bhalla, 2005: 206)." In other words, the political and socio-economic changes within China are manifested in international affairs whereby China is pushed to seek solutions to these concerns at regional and global levels. More important to these changes has been the rise of a new political culture in China where the state and society concur on three broad issues which are; the need for "stability of the state and its relations with society, the problem of political reform and globalization and economic growth (Bhalla, 2005: 207)." This political culture has been enabled by a change in the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party, the emergence of a new crop of elites and the impact of policies for economic growth.

A new political culture among Chinese ruling elites emphasises "flexibility, pragmatism, pluralism and cooperative approaches" and therefore shapes China's foreign policy as seen through its calls for international stability, institutional reforms, redistribution of global power, and the need for comprehensive and cooperative security (Bhalla, 2005: 215). At the centre of this new political culture is China's quest for political stability and economic growth, and the need to create a peaceful environment where China's economic growth can thrive. As Wang (2018) argues, China's historical experience of using economic development to tackle poverty and maintain national order and stability has inspired its 'development first' policy which it is promoting as the answer for peace and stability in Africa.

There are four key domestic experiences shaping China's approach to African security (Wang, 2018: 70-72). These are, firstly, the positive legacy of Deng's economic development initiatives in promoting stability, a path that was followed by successive Chinese governments who also regarded economic development as the key to all problems. Secondly, China's approach to democracy differs from the West, which sees

democracy as the source of national stability. On the contrary, China views democracy as subordinate to national stability and as a gradual outcome of national stability. Thirdly, China believes in a "strong state-weak society" approach whereby state is supposed to dominate over independent social forces like independent organisations or non-governmental organisations (Wang, 2018: 71). Fourthly, having suffered a history of imperialism, China is adamant on protecting its territory and preventing fragmentation of the nation, therefore it insists on upholding state sovereignty as key to state security. In view of the four historical experiences discussed above, as they relate to factors shaping Chinese international behaviour, it is then difficult to see China doing away with its non-interference policy anytime soon (Wang, 2018). Rather what should be expected are adjustments that would somehow maintain its foundational principles.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of the status of China-Africa security relations. There is evidence of security activities that seem to contradict the Chinese traditional claim of non-interference. More significantly, while the larger part of literature still presents economic interests as the major motivation behind China's increased security engagements in Africa, there are emerging voices acknowledging the diversity and complexity of this issue. We need to embrace other explanations by using different scholarly views to explore the various areas of China's security activities in Africa in order to understand China's security motivations beyond its economic interests in the continent. The next chapter shall endeavour to make such an analysis focusing on China's increasing military presence in Africa.

Chapter 4

MOTIVATIONS FOR CHINA'S SECURITY INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

The rise of China, especially through its massive economic success has raised substantial interest among scholars, policy makers and other interested groups. A fundamental question being asked by scholars is whether China will convert its economic success into military power to exert political influence beyond its borders (Weitz, 2013). This question also relates to whether China, in its transition to be a great power, like other rising powers in the past, will challenge the international system leading to major wars (Weitz, 2013:3). A historical analysis of the rise of major powers indicates that in most cases, the emergence of a new great power has always resulted in global instability and war (Zakaria, 1998, Mearsheimer, 2013:83). The main reason behind this phenomenon is that once states gain significant growth in their material resources (economic growth), they tend to redefine and expand their political interests abroad thereby threatening the existing power (s) in the international system.

Signs of expansion of political interests include increasing military budgets, initiating wars, acquiring new territories, posting of soldiers and diplomats abroad, and taking part in great power-decision-making (Zakaria, 1998: 1). While having large militaries and gaining new territories are conventionally considered as the main or concrete indicators of expansion, Zakaria (1998:18) adds other 'less formal' methods that include "protectorates, military bases, spheres of influence, and most commonly, an activist diplomacy". In this view, a typical expansionist power pursues an active foreign policy, which is characterised by attention to international events, increase in diplomatic and military apparatus and involvement in great-power diplomacy (Ibid). Similarly, Weitz (2013: vii) claims that just like earlier rising powers in history, China is treading the same path of "converting its economic potential into military strength". Surely,

China has not started any wars since 1949, neither has it made any aggressive attempt to acquire territories. However, as previous chapters have shown, China's active diplomacy and security engagements in Africa have become too evident to downplay. While Weitz's (2013) study is looking specifically at whether China will be the next rival power against the US, the present research is interested in exploring the motivations behind China's increased military presence and role in African security. Could China's security activities in Africa be an indicator for "China as an expansionist military power"? The next section discusses the theoretical underpinnings of this debate, followed by a discussion of the motivations of China's security engagements in Africa.

4.1.1 Realist Explanations

Zakaria (1998: 14) recommends the use of a theory of foreign policy in the analysis of the motivations behind a state's assertive foreign policy. He reasons that a theory of foreign policy clarifies the factors motivating a state's active foreign policy without necessarily seeking to account for the impact of a state's actions. For the purposes of this thesis, Realism is discussed. The main strands of Realism relevant to this thesis are Classical, Offensive and Defensive Realism. Realism is a fundamental school of thought in International Relations and remains vital to understanding international security. There are, however, different variants of Realism, which express divergent views about security. Accordingly, Williams (2012) advises against making too generalised remarks about the realist tradition. Nonetheless, some of the key themes advanced by realists include amongst other notions, that states are central actors in international politics, that state behaviour is shaped by leaders flawed human nature (egoism) and that states operate in an anarchic international system (anarchy)- absence of international governance, which requires each state to seek its own security (Williams, 2012: 16).

According to the realists, there are always prospects of war (or conflict) since any state may resort to use of force for egoistic reasons. A conflict may also arise out of mistrust and lack of information about other state's motives (Wohlforth, 2012). It is within this context that the intentions and motives of a state pursuing security interests in

the international arena ought to reassure other states that the state in question is genuinely seeking security. Should the rival state(s) become unsure of the other state's intentions, or misinterpret the state's actions, as being pushed by greed rather than security, there would be increased levels of mistrust, which will in turn reduce the state's own security (Frankel, 1996: 141). In the same manner, the emergence of a new great power always raises suspicion. Examples from scholarly works expressing fears of a "stronger China", the "China threat", "a rising hegemony" which will destabilise the Asia-Pacific region are abundant (Roy, 1994). Some analysts are also asking whether and/or how China and the US will avoid a 'catastrophic clash', i.e., the 'Thucydides trap' (The Economist, 2017).

One of the questions that Realism asks is why and when states pursue an active foreign policy, especially as it relates to actions taken by a state for its survival. Classical, Offensive and Defensive realism form a central part of this debate as they seek to answer questions of whether states pursue more power as they gain more resources (capability) or whether their actions are in response to insecurities and threats they face (Genest, 1994; Zakaria, 1998). Zakaria (1998: 14) is of the view that analysts seeking to answer such questions should resort to a theory of foreign policy as it "explains why different states or the same state at different historical moments, have different intentions, goals and preferences toward the outside world". Basically, while a structural theory of international politics account for world events and their impact on state actors, an actor-based theory of foreign policy clarifies the factors motivating a state's active foreign policy without necessarily seeking to account for the impact of a state's actions.

In this context, a key contribution of Classical Realists is that states expand their political interests to the outside world when they gain material resources (economic and military) to do so (Zakaria, 1998). Put in simple words, once a state gains the capacity to expand, its intentions also change to match this newly acquired capacity. Thucydides, an ancient Greek historian who influenced the Realist theory of International Relations, captured the importance of capability by asserting that; "the strong do what they have the power to do", while the "weak endure the consequences" (Zakaria, 1998: 18).

According to the Realists, the underlying factors behind this are power, human nature (selfishness), and the anarchy that characterises the international system.

Prominent Realist scholars like Hans Morgenthau and Robert Gilpin have underscored that the main goal of states is seeking to maximise power through the expansion of their political interests in line with their relative material resources (Genest, 1994). For Morgenthau, "the struggle for power" is essentially the heart of international politics, as it is power that enables a state to realise its national interest (D'Anieri, 2010: 45). Gilpin on the other hand emphasises the role played by rising hegemonic powers in trying to transform the international system to suit their own national interests (Genest, 1994). Here, it is a combination of national interest, the abilities of the state and its resources that explains and determines the actions of a state in its foreign policy (Genest, 1994:74). Overall, a Classical Realist's analysis of a state's security approaches will predict that as the wealth of a state increases, so does its active involvement in international security matters.

Offensive and Defensive Realism view the anarchic nature of the international system as the main cause for insecurity as each state is compelled to provide its own security (Chen, 2012). In an anarchic system "all states are insecure one way or the other" albeit facing differing degrees of insecurity (Tang, 2009: 613). The consequences of perpetual pursuit of security creates a 'security dilemma', a situation where the increase of a security of one state decreases the security of other states who in turn are pushed into security-seeking behaviour which may lead to conflicts (insecurity) (Tang, 2009). For Offensive Realists, states are constantly seeking to amass power, to exploit opportunities that benefit them over other states, with the ultimate 'prize' being hegemony, which guarantees the survival of the state (Mearsheimer, 2013: 83, 88). Practically, being a global hegemon is rare to accomplish, but states can show their hegemonic power in their regions by dominating their own geographical areas. When there is fierce and tense competition for regional hegemony, wars are likely to follow as shown by historical examples of the two World Wars which resulted from the attempts

by Imperial Germany, Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany to gain regional hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2013: 83).

Contrary to the Offensive Realists' view, Defensive Realists expect states to seek power only when they feel insecure. Defensive Realism emphasises the external security threats posed by relative power of other states as the main motivation for a state to seek security (Zakaria, 1998). Thus, unlike power-maximising offensive states, who are considered to be power-mongering and thus having malign intentions, defensive states are security-seeking and thus benign (Tang, 2009: 608). According to Defensive Realists, states are likely to seek security through coexistence and engage in cooperative actions with other states in order to mitigate the security dilemma prevalent in an anarchic system (Mearsheimer, 2013: 89). In this view, China is expected to reasonably exercise caution, display a limited appetite for power instead of recklessly trying to maximise its share of world power (Mearsheimer, 2013: 89). Pu (2017) supports this view by observing that China is currently exhibiting more regional activism than pursuing global leadership in fear of additional responsibilities and risks that come with a higher global status. Indeed, China is increasingly promulgating the concept of 'Community of Common Destiny' in which it declares that it will not challenge the status quo of international affairs, expresses the need for cooperation, but also demands that developed countries should accord equal respect to emerging powers in global governance (Zhang, 2018: 198). In other words, China is applying a multifaceted foreign policy which allows it to champion international cooperation while simultaneously acting more proactively and asserting itself in some situations (Zhang 2018: 202).

Tang (2010: 96) claims that today's world has "firmly evolved from an Offensive Realism world in which almost every state was a predator into a Defensive Realism world in which states are sheep". Although defensive states may not be predators, they are under constant pressure to pursue power and compete for it due to feelings of insecurity, which arise from mutual suspicion and mutual fear (Zakaria, 1998). Consequently, in this view, international security in the 21st century is likely to be unsettled by a 'security dilemma', a situation which arises when genuine security

interests of a defensive state are misinterpreted by other states as being ill-intentioned (Tang, 2010: 96). In a detailed analysis of the concept of 'security dilemma', Tang (2009:608) observes that there is a thin line between an offensive and a defensive state as it is difficult to determine whether a genuine security dilemma exists between security seeking powers. More so, "primarily defensive capability" will always have some elements of "offensive capability" due to the prevailing mistrust between states (Tang, 2009: 594). This is an important observation which requires caution and careful analysis of state's security practices against their official claims of being defensive powers.

4.1.2 Alternative Explanations

The issue of China's security activities and the general debate about the rise of China has attracted competing theoretical and conceptual explanations, some of which deserve to be acknowledged here. Specifically, scholars closely aligned to Constructivism have been influential by analysing the impact of China's rise on international norms. Chan (2013) and Fung (2018) explore the innovations that China is bringing to international norms in its diplomatic practice. For Chan (2013: 106, 118) China's actions in its pursuit of national interests abroad have generated new rules and norms of International Relations that challenge conventional ones. Consequently, this has in turn motivated other states to modify their (non) adherence to these conventional norms and rules in order to please China. Accordingly, China has displayed a preference for soft power (diplomacy and negotiations) over hard power (military force) in settling international disputes as shown in its engagements in four issue areas, that is, increased participation in UN Peacekeeping, hosting of the Six-Party talks concerning North Korea's nuclear crisis, approaches to maritime security and developmental model (Chan, 2013).

Fung (2018), on the other hand argues that China has successfully used the Syrian crisis to shape the boundaries of intervention and specifically the concept of R2P. For instance, in October 2011 China blocked and denounced Western attempts to impose sanctions and allow military intervention against Syria branding such moves as unacceptable efforts to implement an illegitimate regime change (Fung, 2018: 8). By

doing so, China reframed what had been previously viewed as a positive goal and made it look like an "illegitimate activity of powerful states against a weaker party" (Fung, 2018: 8). Here, China essentially demarcated a line between intervention and regime change. While this appears to be a logical and strong argument, Lee and Chan (2016) present empirical evidence that disputes the notion that China is primarily concerned about preventing regime change.

After major international powers abused the UNSC Resolution 1973, which China had seconded, and militarily intervened in Libya in 2011, surely a logical response would be for China to vehemently oppose subsequent interventions. However, China together with India accepted or at least never opposed subsequent interventions in Mali, and Cote d'Ivore, but on the other hand opposed intervention in Syria (Lee & Chan, 2016). Ultimately, the explanation lies elsewhere. According to Lee and Chan (2016: 182), China and India's acceptance of intervention in these African countries while opposing intervention in Syria are a result of "mutually penetrating norms and interests". In short, China and India's shared historical experience of humiliation by colonial powers and their opposition to hegemonic power and practices of the United States made them oppose intervention where the US was directly involved while accepting intervention where non-US powers and regional blocks were involved (Lee & Chan, 2016: 198). This shows that China's fears of hegemonism determine its security policies in Africa, especially if it serves countering the US's dominance in the continent. In any case, China maintains that it will always "oppose hegemonism and power politics in all forms" (PRC State Council, 2015).

A thesis by Johanson (2017: 11) uses the concept of 'international socialisation' to argue that China is not changing international rules and norms per se but has come to increasingly accept and adapt to existing ones. Looking at China's relations with Sudan, Iran and North Korea, states which have been labelled as 'rogue' by the West, Johanson (2017) evaluates how China has applied international standards pertaining to issues of international security with a specific focus on sovereignty or non-interference, terrorism and nuclear non-proliferation. Accordingly, the author reaches a conclusion that China

has utilised the rules of the present international system and has worked within rather than challenged the system (Johanson, 2017: 14). It is therefore evident that there are competing approaches that can be useful in understanding China's foreign policy. One has to make a tough decision of choosing an approach relevant to explaining security and in particular increased military diplomacy as is intended in this thesis.

4.2 Categorisation of China's Aims

The analysis of China's non-interference policy and security engagements in Africa reveals that most literature still views China's economic (and trade) interests as the sole motivation for China's active diplomacy in the continent. In fact, some scholars have emphasised that China is a victim of its vast economic investments in Africa, which have exposed it to security problems in the continent (Holslag, 2009; Large, 2008; Thrall, 2015). While this may be true, taking this as the only explanation of China's security motives in Africa will be too simplistic. Looking at the general motivations for China in Africa, Hanauer and Morris (2014) observe that although economic interests are the primary drivers of the Sino-Africa relationship, China engages its African partners on a wide range of political, economic and military-related activities to enhance mutual interests.

China's 2015 Military Strategy White Paper provides cues to China's new security aims expressed as the "Chinese Dream" of reviving China through building a strong national defence and a powerful armed force (PRC State Council, 2015). The Chinese Dream entails modernizing China's military to match new threats in a changed global security environment so as to "resolutely safeguard China's sovereignty, security and development interests". As to the role of Chinese armed forces and their strategic task of safeguarding foreign interests, China declares that it seeks to safeguard its:

> "security interests in new domains and overseas, maintain strategic deterrence and carry out nuclear counterattack, to participate in regional and international security cooperation and maintain regional and world peace." Moreover, it will "perform such tasks as emergency rescue and disaster relief,

rights and interest's protection, guard duties, and support for national economic and social development" (PRC State Council, 2015).

The new military strategy is so strongly worded that it leaves the reader wondering if China will continue its non-interference path. China calls its new military strategy an "active defence" necessitated by "the new situation" of "security threats from different directions." In line with this strategy, China endeavours to exercise flexibility, mobility and self-dependence and insists that this will be done through adhering to the principle of not attacking when not attacked but counterattacking when attacked (PRC State Council, 2015). Overall, China's new military strategy gives hints to China's readiness to expand its military influence, secure its interests abroad and perhaps show its power and military capability as a means of deterrence. For this reason, the following sections will examine China's aims in its engagements in African security to come up with a holistic analysis.

4.2.1 Protecting and Expanding Economic Interests

The African continent is strategically important for China's economic prosperity such that China regards security and stability of the continent as vital to a productive China-Africa relationship (Hanauer & Morris, 2014). Moreover, promoting a secure and stable Africa will secure China's investments and sustain its commercial activities on the continent. This is also reflected in the Chinese military strategy which acknowledges that China's prosperity and destiny is inextricably tied to a prosperous and peaceful world. Accordingly, China stands to benefit from a stable international environment in as much as the world will benefit from opportunities created by China's peaceful development (PRC State Council, 2015). From a surface level, this seems to be a benevolent intention meant to benefit China and its African partners. Hanauer and Morris (2014: 8) note that the idea of mutual and equal benefits is evident in references to common "prosperity," "peace", and "security" in recent Chinese white papers on Africa.

On the other hand, however, China's security activities in Africa aim towards facilitating both the protection (of existing investments) and expansion of economic interests including access to new markets for Chinese exports. Indeed, some have described China as "the largest driver of resource demand" whose consequences for international politics and security are already underway, albeit occurring gradually (Economy & Levi, 2014: 200). If other rising powers join China in the 'new scramble' for access to African resources, then the influence and effect of Western economic sanctions in Africa will be curtailed. Moreover, an increased international activity in Africa can result in the introduction of new norms and practices in international security cooperation, thereby redefining patterns of resources trade and political attitudes of developing countries (Economy & Levy, 2014: 188).

According to Alden, Alao, Chun, and Barber (2017), the protection of China's overseas interest is a hallmark of the second transition in China-Africa's economic relations. The first transitionary phase started with promoting Chinese interests globally since the inauguration of the "going global" economic policy in the 1990s. This policy has resulted in a rapid expansion of China's economic interests in Africa at the same time exposing China to global and African uncertainties, especially in the areas of energy security, civilian protection and investment safety (Alden, et al. 2017). As argued by Dollar (2016), China's recent rapid economic growth has relied on an 'investment-intensive' economy, which has in turn pushed China into a 'resource-intensive' growth model. Since the 2000s, and especially after the 2008 global economic crisis, China has intensified domestic investments in heavy infrastructure like railways, roads, transportation, power and water supplies. This propelled a housing boom that promoted the construction industry (Dollar, 2016: 12). All these activities tend to generate a demand for energy and require a constant supply of natural resources that include iron, copper and other metals. Given Africa's endowment with a variety of natural resources compared to a 'resource-poor' China, Africa has naturally gained more importance to China for the supply of these much-needed natural resources (Dollar, 2016).

Having maintained an impressive economic growth of 10% GDP per annum until 2010, China has been under pressure to sustain its economic growth by importing large quantities of iron, copper and zinc, among other materials from Africa (Dollar, 2016: 14). Besides heavily relying on Africa for its investment-heavy growth model, China has also rapidly increased its oil and gas imports from Africa. Chinese oil companies have increased their presence in different African countries since 2014, unlike in the early 2000s where they were only concentrated in Sudan (Alessi & Xu, 2017). This has resulted in Africa becoming the second major supplier of oil to China after the Middle East region whereby, Africa accounts for 22 percent of China's oil, at 1.4 million barrels per day (Alessi & Xu, 2017).

Although access to Africa's natural resources remains important, Dollar (2016) observes that it is gradually giving in to the quest to secure markets for China's manufactured products. This is caused by, partly the realisation among Chinese policy makers that China needs to adopt a more sustainable growth model apart from the resource-intensive one. In the face of a declining heavy-investment based economic growth, most Chinese companies are turning to Africa for new sources of economic growth (Plessis, 2016). According to Mei Xinyu, a researcher at the Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, an institution affiliated with China's Ministry of Commerce, overseas investment has become inevitable for China since it is the "only way to maintain the speed of economic growth and use of excess production capacity" (Nan & Chun, 2014). As a result, Chinese construction companies are eager to engage in construction projects in Africa in order to uplift African economies, which in turn will create further demand for Chinese goods and services.

Logically, for Chinese companies to prosper in Africa there is a need for a secure and stable environment, a factor that may explain China's increased interest in Africa's security. For instance, when China deployed its first and largest military battalion to UN Peacekeeping mission in South Sudan in 2014, there were reports that China wanted its forces to be deployed to areas with oil fields where Chinese oil companies and workers were operating from (The Wall Street Journal, 2014). Although many countries

including the US, France, UK, India and Malaysia also had vested stakes and supported the deployment of UN Peacekeeping troops to protect the oil infrastructure in South Sudan, China reportedly had much at stake. According to Lynch (2014) and The Wall Street Journal (2014), a Chinese major oil company, China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) had made huge financial investments in South Sudanese oil infrastructure. By that time, it controlled 40% of the oil fields and also had a long pipeline stretching 1600 kilometres that carried crude oil to the Red Sea via Port Sudan. Indeed, the government of South Sudan is still struggling to protect key oil installations in the oil rich regions of Unity and Upper Nile states. The Sudan Tribune (2017) reports that oil companies operating in these areas have constantly raised alarm over fears of attacks, kidnapping or sabotage by armed rebels in the region.

4.2.2 Protecting Citizens Abroad

Related to the protection and expansion of economic interest in Africa, another imperative for China's active security approach in the continent is the need to protect millions of its citizens living overseas. In 2016, China reportedly started building aircraft carrier battlegroups that the defence ministry claimed arose out of the need to secure the East and South China seas as means of preserving China's sovereignty. Beyond that, this would also build up China's capacity to protect its interests abroad, chief among them being the growing number of "nationals travelling or living abroad and its direct investments" (South China Morning Post, 2016). There is lack of official, systematic and reliable information on the number of Chinese based in Africa. However, various estimates indicate that a range of between half a million and two million Chinese nationals are now found in Africa (Tsuruoka, 2017; Park 2016). The growing number of Chinese migrants in Africa has also raised a lot of interest in the academic discourse as demonstrated by French's (2015) book, whose title 'Chinese Second Continent" claims that a million Chinese have penetrated all aspects of the African continent and are building a new empire. Citing "common statistics", French (2014) claims that within a decade, at least one million Chinese have settled in Africa, rapidly occupying all sectors

of life including farming, small to medium businesses, professional trades in medicine, teaching, to informal trades like smuggling and prostitution.

In some African countries, it seems the Chinese community has become so established that governments are willing to incorporate them into domestic security institutions. For instance, in December 2017, Zambia enlisted eight Chinese from the 'Zambian based Chinese community' into the police reserve to assist with maintaining law and order and to conduct community policing duties (BBC News, 2017; Lusaka Times, 2017). Although this decision was subsequently reversed after a backlash from Zambian citizens, it illustrates that the number of Chinese in Africa has become so significant that it can no longer be ignored. As Park (2016) argues, "a million Chinese in Africa, spread across fifty-four countries, working as temporary labour migrants or simply seeking better economic opportunities and exploring their options are undoubtedly starting to make their presence felt."

It is important not to overemphasise the number of Chinese migrants in Africa. Figures from the International Migration Report (2017: 9-12) indicate a general trend of the increasing number of Chinese nationals living in different parts of the world, especially in Europe and North America. Of the 258 million international migrants worldwide, 10 million are Chinese, making China the fourth largest sender of migrants after India, Mexico and the Russian Federation respectively. Based on these figures, Africa does not really account for a significant number of Chinese abroad. Moreover, Tsuruoka (2017) cites figures indicating that countries hosting a huge number of Chinese are generally stable countries like South Africa, Angola, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Algeria. These figures should also be understood within the context of a lot of missing data and a general lack of transparency in many African governments. A simplified interactive map by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI, 2017), which tabulates UN migration data to give a general overview of international migration, only has data from a very few African countries making it difficult to confirm with certainty the number and distribution of Chinese across Africa.

Despite the absence of reliable data, the task of protecting citizens abroad can not be trivialised, given China's vast investments in Africa, a continent with some of the most unstable countries in the world. This has often exposed Chinese expatriates in Africa to security threats in the continent as they have become soft targets of terrorists and victims during political crises (Ratner, 2011; Zerba, 2014). Since China adopted its policy of expanding its economic presence abroad, there has been a dramatic increase of Chinese travellers and expatriates domiciled in different countries across the globe (Heath, 2018). Some of them live in volatile regions where they are likely to confront precarious situations such as being robbed, harassed, and kidnapped or being killed. Cases of kidnappings and killings of Chinese nationals have occurred since 2004 in African countries like Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Chad, Mali and other non-African fragile states like Afghanistan and Pakistan (Zerba, 2014: 1094). In 2015, China's Foreign minister allegedly vowed to fight extremism and strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation with Africa after three senior personnel of a Chinese railway company were murdered at a hotel in Bamako, Mali (Large, 2016). In any case, China had previously sent 300 peacekeepers to Mali in 2013 to protect Chinese engineers working at the construction of a UN camp (The Wall Street Journal, 2014).

The Libyan case, in 2011, where China was forced to evacuate 35 000 citizens in less than two weeks, following the outbreak of a civil war in Libya, is viewed as a turning point in China's global security approach. China seems not to have anticipated the scale and magnitude of the impending impact of the Libyan crisis, especially on the vulnerability of its citizens. However, there are indications that it had already started building up mechanisms to protect its nationals overseas. Examples date back to 2006 and 2007 where the Chinese authority decided to 'put people first' by creating a consular protection division which will later be known as the Centre for Consular Assistance and Protection (Zerba, 2014: 1094). The mandate of the centre was to provide consular protection and assistance for Chinese citizens as well as raising awareness through relevant security information. To this end, contingency plans were also set up to respond to any imminent threats to citizens. However, these measures proved to be inadequate to

avert a large-scale crisis like the one that happened in Libya. The Libyan crisis also created domestic pressure in China as citizens expected and demanded decisive action from their government. Due to this domestic pressure and the need for Chinese authority to demonstrate ability to provide security for their citizens, China has adopted a new diplomatic drive that entails developing its diplomatic and military capabilities (Zerba, 2014: 1095).

A major challenge facing China in Africa is that it still relies heavily on host countries to guarantee security of its investments and citizens (Zerba, 2014: 1110). Some Chinese scholars insist that this is a justifiable approach, given that most of the security problems emanate from local dynamics. For instance, Xinyu singles out Africa and Latin America for having deeply rooted cultural and social traditions that create tensions when Chinse companies implement their projects there (Nan & Chun, 2014). These challenges are complicated further by turbulent political and social circumstances, which threaten investor interests. It follows then that the host nations have a greater responsibility of creating a safe environment for foreign investments and nationals. However, this is problematic since some African states are so weak that they lack proper governance and security institutions to protect their own citizens, not to mention foreign businesses and citizens (Zerba, 2014: 1110).

Its non-interference policy limits China is in demanding improved governance and quality security services from its African partners. To avoid confronting its African partners over issues of governance and security, China seems to be slowly resorting to the deployment of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and other state security organs to protect its interests abroad (Zerba, 2014). Unlike European powers which unilaterally intervene in other countries, China is deploying its military resources in Africa under the guise of international duty- be it under the UN peacekeeping missions or anti-piracy mission endorsed by the UNSC (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018). In essence, China's energy dependency, overseas nationals, and investments abroad have urged China into a more assertive role in international security (Heath, 2018). As these overseas interests grow so will China's vulnerabilities and demand for security.

The impetus to protect Chinese nationals domiciled abroad is transforming China by pushing it to be more proactive rather than reactive in its approach to international security (Zerba, 2014). It is better for China to be involved in African security than to wait to respond to costly emergency rescue missions. Besides, to save its political credibility and drum up domestic support, China has to display its capability to manage security crises both at home and abroad (Zerba, 2014: 1096). The increasing involvement of the PLA in security abroad marks an evolution of China's security approaches, a development that is likely to push back China's long-standing 'low-profile' non-interventionist policies (Heath, 2018).

Heath (2018) cautions however, that in its bid to protect its citizens, China is not likely to follow aggressive military approaches that imperial powers and the US have employed throughout history. Rather, China is expected to implement its own distinctive approach which will encompass an overlapping combination of "PLA's troops, paramilitary forces, civilian contractors, and local security forces provided by nations hosting major Chinese assets" (Heath, 2018: x). Another source of support is likely to come from State Owned Companies, whose role will be to provide the needed ports and bases as well as logistical and maintenance support.

4.2.3 Political Interest: International Influence and Legitimacy

Economic motivations, specifically China's pursuit of natural resources and raw materials for its economic growth remain the most common and prevailing explanations for China's active security policy in Africa. Wang and Zou (2014) observe that there is a ubiquitous tendency by analysts to evoke 'energy diplomacy' and 'oil diplomacy' as determinants of China's policies in Africa. In other words, economic motivations ultimately feed into China's political motivations of seeking international influence and promoting legitimacy for its policies like the non-interference policy, "South-South" solidarity and "One-China" policy (Hanauer & Morris, 2014:5). Although economic motivations may provide a useful starting point of this analysis, it is also important to look beyond economic motivations to grasp China's security presence in Africa. From

the onset, China's history reveals that economic objectives have seldom been pursued outside other political and strategic considerations (Wang & Zou, 2014). Politically, since the Cold War, Africa remains a key partner for supporting China in international forums like the UN and boosting the legitimacy of China's "One China" policy and its other foreign policy objectives (Sun, 2014). The 2006 China's Africa policy reflects on the common challenges shared by China and Africa and how both sides have always 'sympathised with and supported each other' throughout the struggles for independence.[7] Moreover, the policy also emphasises that solidarity and cooperation with African countries remains the backbone of China's independent foreign policy of peace.

The two sides also share similar concerns on the transformation of the international economic and political order. Breslin (2013) views China's partnership with Africa as a reflection of its broader agenda of forming alliances with the 'dissatisfied others'. Considering that China identifies itself as sharing some key commonalities with Africa- ranging from socio-economic problems to a history of colonization and oppression by western Great Powers- Africa provides a platform for articulating dissatisfaction and advancing the transformation agenda (Breslin, 2013). Moreover, Chinese policy makers are apparently aware that the traditional world powers will not facilitate the smooth rise of China and its expanding interests. Thus, the only way for China to penetrate the international system is for China to champion "multipolar alternatives through skilful diplomacy alliance building and even Chinese leadership" (Breslin, 2013: 626). China is thus, pursuing 'reformation through participation' albeit with caution not to shoulder burdens beyond its capacities and interests.

China seeks to use its presence in Africa to promote calls for multilateral security solutions, in which it could also have an opportunity to act as the champion of the developing world (Alden & Large, 2015). Exactly two decades ago, the Chairman of America's National Intelligence Council, Gannon gave insightful comments on this

[7] China's African Policy (2006, Jan 12). http://www.mfa.gov.cn/zflt/eng/zt/zgdfzzcwj/t230479.htm

matter. He described China as a power that seeks respect and an inclusive change in the international system (Gannon, 1998). Accordingly, China wants to be involved "in the making of rules of international engagement (Gannon, 1998)." Therefore, China's security policies in Africa should be viewed within China's broader political agenda of seeking international influence. Sun (2018) observes that China ties Africa into its narrative of a "new model of international relations", or "the democratisation of the international relations" as part of its long-held quest to build a strong foundation to shape a new international order. Africa therefore provides a favourable environment by positively accepting China's messages due to the "closely connected fate of China and Africa as emerging economies markets and developing countries" (Sun, 2018).

In essence, by actively participating in security matters in Africa China seeks to boost its international reputation by assuming international responsibility meant to contribute to peace and security in Africa (Large, 2016). This also gives Beijing an opportunity to advance its preferred security approaches, including sustaining the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence derived from the Bandung Conference, and the emphasis on promoting peace through dialogue and consultation instead of using military force. This is reflected in a speech by President Xi in 2014 where he criticised the pursuit of "absolute security" and encouraged the international community to seek "common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and ensure every country's security."[8] In such instances, China is arguably promoting a 'China-model' of international security, a factor that advances its ideological interests in Africa. The success of a 'China-model' in non-democratic countries would indirectly strengthen Beijing's political ideologies and challenge the dominant Western model of democratisation as a way of creating a peaceful world (Sun, 2014).

China has emerged as a game changer in international politics as it has weakened and shifted the global focus on the liberal peace agenda by advocating for greater inter-

[8] Xi's speech at 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence' anniversary: Carry forward the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence to build a better world through win-win cooperation. (2014, July 7). http://www.china.org.cn/world/2014-07/07/content_32876905.htm

governmental cooperation and multilateralism with the support of developing countries (Swain, 2013). Thus, China's increased active security presence in Africa gives Beijing an opportunity to indirectly challenge and, in some instances, curb the influence of Western norms. However, it is important not to overemphasise China's dissatisfaction with the current global order. As Breslin (2013) argues, although China is dissatisfied with the global distribution of power and Western dominance, it has benefited from the current world system, especially in the Security Council where it holds a privilege as a permanent member with veto powers. As a recent example, there are speculations that China acted as a guarantor to Zimbabwe's November 2017 coup since Beijing has previously blocked many UNSC resolutions seeking to sanction and put arms embargo on Zimbabwe's ruling elites. Due to Zimbabwe's heavy dependence on China and Beijing's veto power in the UNSC, it is speculated that Zimbabwe's then army chief, General Chiwenga travelled to Beijing a week before the coup to seek China's greenlight and assurance of protection against international sanctions (Tisdall, 2017).

More so, at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held recently in September 2018, in Beijing, African leaders reportedly praised China for enabling a 'new world order' (Withnall, 2018). Among those who lauded China is Zimbabwe's new President, Mnangagwa, who stated that there was a transition to a new world order, which only the blind could ignore. The South African President, Ramaphosa, also weighed in saying that China was facilitating Africa's vision of an "integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa". Rwanda's President, Kagame, praised China-Africa relations as balanced, in pursuit of a shared well-being "based on equality and mutual respect" (Withnall, 2018). Such positive feedback from African countries indicate the increasing importance of China in shaping security matters in Africa.

4.2.4 New Security Challenges, Military Competition and the 'Battle' for bases

In the 21st century, there is a myriad of new challenges threatening world peace and security. While traditional interstate and military threats remain important, the agenda of security has expanded to include numerous concerns such as economic security, cyber

security, terrorism, civil wars and human security among many sub-listings (Saier & Trevors, 2010). The main characteristic of these challenges is that their effects transcend national borders; they are borderless threats and create pressure for states to seek cooperative strategies through regional and global security governance. The UN High Level Panel report on Threats Challenges and Change (2004:) notes that today's security threats are so complex and interconnected that they need to be addressed collectively. The report specifically states, "No state no matter how powerful can by its own efforts alone make itself invulnerable to today's threats" (p. 11). In a similar way, China has not been spared from these emergent security challenges in Africa.

According to Ratner (2011), the trajectory of China's rise will be indispensably linked to how it will address new security challenges that it will be forced to confront. Chief among these potential challenges are "international terrorism; foreign instability and state failure overseas; and overtly anti-Chinese regimes" (Ratner, 2011: 29). While subsequent events in Africa over the years have confirmed Ratner's first two predictions, there is little evidence to support the last one. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth as African countries have been cutting diplomatic ties with Taiwan, in favour of Beijing. The Kingdom of Swaziland is the only African country that still defies the One-China principle by maintaining relations with Taiwan (Solomon, 2018). In just less than two years since 2016, at least three African countries- Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Sao Tome and Principe have renounced their formal ties with Taiwan and joined the wave of world countries establishing diplomatic relations with Beijing (Solomon, 2018).

China's diplomatic drive to isolate Taiwan is paying off significantly in Africa. As noted by Thrall (2015), the few cases of criticism of China by African governments is often short-lived and does not result in any major policy changes. Even African opposition leaders who were once the fiercest critics of China's behaviour in Africa, have been quick to shift goal posts in favour of China once they assume leadership (Hodzi, 2018). One such example is the former Zambian president Michael Sata, who rose to the presidency mainly by waging an anti-Chinese campaign, especially by denouncing Chinese labour practices in Zambia. Like many African leaders, probably

realised the inescapable dependency of his country on China, and immediately sought mediation to make amends with China (Hodzi, 2018). The lesson here is that China has been able to avert hostility from African regimes by skilfully making itself a crucial partner to political elites and rival actors in Africa.

Some of the emerging security threats facing China in Africa emanate from foreign dissatisfaction with Chinese domestic repressive policies on religious minorities, especially on the Muslims living in China. As has already been discussed, Chinese human and economic assets have come under threats of terrorism and local conflicts in various African countries. Terrorist groups like Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb and the ISIS are on record vowing to attack Chinese businesses and assets in Africa, the Middle East and anywhere in the world (Ratner, 2011; Gramer, 2017). Consequently, far from being a result of carefully designed and executed strategy, it is the imperative to respond to a collection of wider security challenges that will draw China into the international stage (Ratner, 2011).

The official position in Beijing also acknowledges the complex challenges brought by non-traditional security threats. The 2014 White Paper on National Defence acknowledges the unprecedented changes in the current global security environment, which presents complex challenges to national security. To that end, the Chinese armed forces pledge to respond to the changing global threats by constantly exploring "new fields, new contents and new models of cooperation with other militaries, so as to jointly deal with a diverse range of security threats and challenges" (PRC National Defence White Paper, 2014). To achieve global peace, the White Paper underscores the indispensable need to join cooperative and collective international security efforts in response to new security challenges. More importantly, the White Paper presents China's military intentions as defensive as it states that China will pursue common security by adopting a pragmatic military cooperation approach, through "non-aligned, non-confrontational military-military relations not targeting any third party" (PRC National Defence White Paper, 2014). In the same document, China pronounces its intention to continue expanding its military and security cooperation, deepening its

military diplomacy with its neighbours, major world powers and in the developing world (PRC National Defence White Paper, 2014).

In its recent military strategy document, China states the "world revolution in military affairs (RMA)" as a major motivating factor necessitating an urgent adjustment to its security policies. RMA entails the rapid development of sophisticated and technologically controlled weapons, a change from traditional competition for command over physical war spaces to virtual ones like cyber spaces, and a general move towards information war. Moreover, China claims to be under pressure to match other world powers who are constantly and "actively adjusting their national security strategies and defence policies and speeding up their military transformation and force restructuring" (PRC State Council, 2015). Logically then, Africa should also be placed in this context in order to comprehend China's increased military presence in Africa. Addressing top military officials and regional delegates from Africa at the China-Africa Defence and Security Forum held in China recently, Chinese military authorities pledged to continue working with their African counterparts to tackle a range of security challenges including piracy and epidemics, through peacekeeping, disaster relief, humanitarian aid and escort missions (Zhihao, 2018). According to Senior Colonel Wang Yang, China continues to demonstrate its commitment to international military exchanges and cooperation to address global security challenges, as demonstrated by its total contribution of 37, 000 peacekeepers to the UNPKO since 1990 (China Daily, 2018). Moreover, between 2008 and 2018, China's navy sent 29 escort groups with 88 vessels and about 23, 000 soldiers, to the Gulf of Aden and off the Coast of Somalia to conduct escort operations.

A joint statement issued by African countries and China after the 2018 FOCAC Summit, in section 6 which deals with 'Peace and Security Cooperation', also details security achievements, commitments and action plans for 2019-2021 for the two sides. According to the statement, Africa is grateful for China's contribution to the continent's security through "the operationalisation of the Africa Peace and Security Architecture, the deployment of its first helicopter squad to UNPKO in Africa, the channelling of

funds to the UNPKO in Africa through the China-UN Peace and Development Fund, and support for navy escorts (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). As a result, Africa encourages China to continue its support for African security and expects increased efforts on anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Guinea and more cooperation with China to safeguard sea lanes and maintain regional peace and stability. China lays out extensive plans to boost its security cooperation with Africa. These plans include increasing military aid to Africa, releasing 100 million US dollars to capacitate the African Standby Force in order to enhance Africa's readiness to carry out immediate response to crisis. China also promises to launch 50 security assistance programs to boost its cooperation with Africa. China will also work with Africa to amplify the voice and influence of developing countries in the UN peacekeeping missions (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). Chinese authorities insist that China's security activities are a fulfilment of "responsibilities and duties commensurate with China's international status" (China Daily, 2018). As discussed in the previous chapters, China is not yet clear on what this 'status' entails given its conflicted identity of being a global power and a developing country.

Another possible explanation for China's increasing military presence in Africa relates to international competition to control strategic ports and maritime routes in Africa; a phenomenon Lons (2018) calls the 'battle of the ports.' Elsewhere, Brewster (2018) calls this phenomenon a 'base race' referring to the competition between emerging rivalries in the Middle East to secure rights to build naval and military bases across the Horn of Africa. A quick survey of foreign bases across Africa shows that the US has bases or runs military operations in ten African countries, while France also has a significant number of operational bases in four African countries (IRIN, 2017). This conservative number could be higher as a lobby organisation called World Beyond War (2018) claims that the US has, "bases, compounds, port facilities and fuel bunkers in thirty-four African countries".

A number of other foreign powers including the UK, Germany, India, Japan, Turkey, China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have so far

established at least one military or naval base in Africa (IRIN, 2017). This is specifically evident in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, regions that house powerful African countries like Kenya, Ethiopia and Algeria. A number of regional competitors are seeking to enhance their maritime security and establish spheres of influence in Africa, just like traditional international players like the US and other European powers (Lons, 2018). The majority of foreign naval and military forces are in Djibouti, which currently hosts France, the US, China, Japan, Italy, and Saudi Arabia, which finalised its deal with Djibouti recently (Brewster, 2018). As a result, this trend is changing the strategic order in the Horn of Africa. This would have a replica effect in the Indian Ocean by driving more powers to strengthen their independent maritime security (Lons, 2018; Brewster, 2018).

As for China, it is noteworthy that it had initially avoided establishing any military bases outside its borders. In 2010, in a White Paper on defence, China insisted that no matter how its economy develops, "it will never seek hegemony, nor will it adopt the approach of military expansion now or in the near future" (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 162). Yet, in just eight years after firmly insisting on lack of appetite for foreign military bases, China now has a military base in Djibouti and has recently organised a joint forum on security and defence with Africa. Shinn and Eisenman (2012: 162) however predicted that China would eventually spread its naval reach into the Indian Ocean and the east coast of Africa to safeguard its sea-lanes, and most importantly to diminish its reliance on the US for maritime security.

The realists' perspective of 'self-help' in international security seems to hold in the scenario that China finds itself in. In an anarchic world, the military presence of other powers, especially China's rival powers- the US, Japan and India, is a threat to China's future access to the sea- in case other players block access as a coercive measure against China (Holslag, 2009: 26). The Horn of Africa is particularly a challenging region epitomising both Africa's economic and strategic value to foreign players on one side, and complex security on the other. De Waal (2015) describes this region as a 'laboratory of conflicts'- conspicuous for violence and destruction which have led to

"international military interventions and maritime piracy; genocidal massacres and non-violent popular uprisings". This bleak reality runs parallel to the strategic value and location of this region. Erickson and Strange (2015: 24) describe this region as a "crucial global maritime commercial artery" for trade between Europe, Africa the Middle East and Asia.

The official explanation for China's initial military venture of deploying its naval forces to the Somalian coast in 2008 and their subsequent stay there is justified on carrying out international obligations to secure ships carrying humanitarian relief aid and to bring peace and stability to Africa (Ratner, 2011). However, a closer observation reveals a diversity of interlinked motives that encompass economic, political and military interests. China's military base in Djibouti is strategically positioned in a country that is conveniently located on the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, along crucial shipping routes linking the Mediterranean Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean and Asian markets (Orion, 2016). Having a military base in such a strategic location means that China can easily access and protect its 'lifeline' routes for economic interests including transporting vital amounts of energy and commodities to China, exports of its manufactured goods, and investments and infrastructure projects in Africa (Erickson & Strange, 2015; Orion, 2016). This is also an important location as it is the route of transporting petroleum supplies from the Arabian Peninsula to China (Orion, 2016). At the same time, this serves as part of China's Maritime Silk Road Strategy, which compels China to build commercial ports in countries along the Northern and Western rim of coasts of the Indian Ocean (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2018).

Economic interests go hand in hand with other important motivations. Erickson and Strange (2015: 41-42) identify four main motives to explain China's involvement in anti-piracy missions and its subsequent increased military presence in the Horn of Africa. These motivations are summarised as meant to:

1. Prevent piracy from disturbing Chinese trade and ensuring the safety of Chinese nationals. These escort operations would also ensure a forward presence of China in readiness for any contingencies, which would require military operations.
2. Enhance China's international image as a responsible and cooperative power thereby dispelling any fears of a "China Threat."
3. Conduct military diplomacy by carrying out joint military operations with other foreign forces and visiting foreign ports to improve escort efficiency and learn from experienced foreign counterparts.
4. Achieve a long-term military goal of modernising the Chinese Navy forces to be able to respond to realistic conditions in real time through practical experiences gained from basic sea operations.

All in all, these four motivations point to the interconnectedness of economic, political and military imperatives driving China's security presence in Africa. Moreover, they also feed into China's broader agenda of developing its military forces through "diversifying operational portfolio to reflect the complex, perpetually shifting security environments inside and outside of China" (Erickson & Strange, 2015: 42).

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has explored different aims of China's increased involvement in African security. The latest evidence indicates that the argument of protecting economic interests is now inadequate to provide a comprehensive explanation. While economic aims remain a valuable gateway into Africa, recent Chinese foreign and security policy documents are explicitly pointing to China's quest for international influence and a recognisable global power status. China is concerned about matching military technology and capability of other global powers which it argues have modernised their security apparatuses and national defence methods. Within this context, the African continent plays a crucial role in providing an alliance that China needs in its rise to be a global power. It is in Africa that China also seeks to display its leadership and advance its preferred security policies.

Considering the evident gradual shift towards consolidating military power, the insights drawn from Realism are applicable to shed more light into China's security motivations in Africa. As Kay (2015) argues, historically, states have organised resources necessary to either, provide for defence or to project state power. More specifically, China has the propensity to translate its economic power into military capabilities due to its size, location and population (Kay, 2015: 125). Arguably, this process would result in China adopting an outward-looking national security approach. Due to lack of enough evidence to outrightly declare China as an expansionist power, seeking to project its power, it is safer to view China as a relatively defensive state. Chen (2012: 62-63) also advances more reasons why a defensive realist approach may be helpful in understating China's foreign policy behaviour. First, compared to Classical and Offensive realism, Defensive realism is altogether more "nuanced" in its evaluation of China's rise (Ibid, 63). Secondly, and more importantly for this thesis, defensive realists consider a variety of variables in their analysis of China's rise. Some of these variables are information about intentions, technology, geography, and offensive-defence rations (Chen, 2012: 63). While these variables are not the focus of this thesis, the idea of bringing different variables into the analysis of China's security motivations in African is crucial here.

It remains to be seen how China will avoid interfering in African security, especially in terms of setting the security agenda, determining security priorities and allowing the African continent to exercise independence over its security. China is already setting parallel defence forums with Africa even though it continues to work within the African security institutions. In the long run, there are possibilities of China undermining African established security mechanisms. Protection of citizens in Africa is another plausible explanation for China's increased security in Africa. The thesis however finds this as a weak explanation given lack of accurate statistics on the Chinese population in Africa. The available data indicates that most Chinese are based in relatively stable African countries. China's quest for international influence, new

security challenges and international security competition are more convincing aims than economic ones.

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis delved into an ongoing topic of great importance in the academic circles and, more so within the context of international security. Although China's security relations with Africa have historical roots in Africa's liberation wars, the 21st century relations have been mostly in economic and commercial areas. For this reason, there is generally more focus on researching the economic relations than the security engagements. However, as evidence collated and discussed in this thesis show, China has been gradually getting more and more involved in security affairs in Africa. For a country that has always proclaimed adherence to a non-interference policy in domestic affairs of other countries, this appears problematic for many analysts. Starting on the premise of the non-interference policy with Chinese characteristics, this thesis sought to juxtapose this policy with China's security motivations in Africa.

To begin with, discussions of China's security motivations are much polarised. The simplistic explanation that many scholars resort to is to treat China as a victim of its economic growth. According to this view, economic expansion inevitably puts China in the firing line of security dynamics in Africa. This thesis has problematized this view by bringing various debates from key Chinese scholars as to how Chinese authorities and scholars understand China's new role in international affairs. It emerges that there is a lot of disagreement within China on the envisioned role Beijing should play in the international community. As a result, confining its motivations to economic victimhood is inadequate. To address this inadequacy, the thesis borrowed the Realists' perspectives on the behaviour of rising powers. This allowed the thesis to treat China as a rational actor in its security policies.

There is no strong evidence to view China as a purely expansionist actor seeking to maximise military power in accordance with the lenses of Classical Realism. China has not shown overt aggression or unilateral deployment of its military forces in Africa or anywhere in the world as does Western powers. At least all Chinese military deployments in Africa have been under the international security mechanisms. It may be

tempting to conclude that China's security activities in Africa are purely defensive in nature considering that it only has one military (naval) base outside its borders, established recently in Djibouti. But how would one explain the large number of Chinese military troops seconded to UN peacekeeping assignments in Africa? And how would then one account for the continued naval troops in the Gulf of Aden despite the decrease in piracy threats?

Security threats in Africa have provided China with a platform to manoeuvre its way as a rising power. Given the historical ties established during the liberation struggle, Africa and China seem to trust each other and find common causes in being cautious about the West which has a tainted history of oppressing the rest of the world. This is an opportunity for China to display its security diplomacy as a different power. Moreover, there is an emerging 'scramble' to control or at least secure access to key ports in Africa and the Middle East. In addition to this scramble, China is also concerned about the general global security environment which is now characterised by sophisticated weapons, modernised and technologically backed defence capabilities of rival powers like the US. In the meantime, however, China still needs to assure other rival powers that it is not a threat to world order. So, Africa offers a unique platform for China to send a message to different key audiences.

It is also possible that China is also keen to improve its security capabilities and display to its African partners that it is now a force to reckon with. This could be related to the ever-rising African dissatisfaction with prescriptive Western practices and recent events where the USA under Donald Trump's presidency seems to be ostracising Africa and other developing countries and showing willingness to apply economic sanctions willy-nilly as a display of power. This positions China as a strong security partner for Africa. Readers should link this to the historical chapter of this thesis which discusses how China and Africa have stood side by side in international fora and the struggle against imperialism. Interestingly, there have been predictions that China's support to 'rogue' or 'undemocratic' African governments could create negative reactions among opposition groups and this could raise serious security threats in Africa. This thesis has

also responded to such predictions with up to-date evidence, on how China has been able to skilfully avert negative perceptions from both incumbent governments and opposition parties.

It is more likely that China wants to maintain its historical role as a 'leader' of the developing world by projecting its power (economic and military) in Africa. The unique relations of 'brotherhood' between China and Africa limits China from a malign pursuit of military power in the manner predicted by Offensive Realists. Moreover, as Pu (2017) argues, China tends to avoid global leadership in fear of the obligations that come with such a responsibility. Instead, China's security activities in Africa display a mixture of being a defensive state and an international norms moderator. As Defensive Realism predicts, the pursuit of security and survival is unavoidable in an anarchical international system. China's investments and economic interests in Africa, together with a rising international interest in securing key ports and trade roots in Africa require China to strengthen its position in the continent. Perhaps this explains why China is moving in quickly to establish formal security cooperation structures with the African continent, in addition to the international fora where it already has a large military presence in Africa. Although China does not seek to overturn the existing international norms, it is taking a moderative role in redefining those norms that clash with its interests. Careful interpretation of international intervention forms a larger part of such concerns and resonates well with China-Africa security relations.

Finally, the thesis has also responded to the question as to whether the non-interference policy, which has been a distinguishing pillar of China-Africa relations and China's global image, has lost its relevance. It is a pertinent question in relation to the motivations behind China's shift from its low-profile approach to become more active in its security engagements. So far, most arguments have advanced the view that China manipulates this policy rhetoric for its economic interests, which are mainly driven by its need for Africa's raw materials and natural resources. In other words, China is only protecting its interests and otherwise it would not be really concerned about Africa's security. The thesis acknowledges the ambiguity of the non-interference policy and the

flexibility it gives China in practice. After all, China has always inconsistently applied this policy under specific contexts. This rises from the ambiguity of what entails interference, when interference is justified, and, as currently being debated in China, which role China should ideally play in the international community. More importantly, this shows that in practice China's non-interference policy does not mean indifference but entails flexibility in response to interests at stake as well as international and /or domestic pressure China faces. Thus, the flexibility of this policy also allows China to pursue a wide range of interests beyond purely economic ones, to include security and strategic interests which have been discussed in this thesis. This policy is likely to endure even during growing security involvements of China in Africa. If China manages to avert fears of being viewed as an intervening power, its security practices will continue to be endorsed in Africa.

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