

Africa after the Africa Commission:

What priorities for
the German G8?

China, Africa and the G8

John Humphrey, IDS

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**“China seems to have a strategy for Africa,
but Africa does not seem to have a strategy
for China”**

(Roundtable: IDS Nairobi and IDS Sussex, June 2006)

**“China knows what it wants from Africa and
will probably get it. The converse isn't true”**

(The Economist, 29 October 2006)



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Main messages

1. China is a challenge for OECD development policy in Africa
 - Different approach to aid, accountability, etc.
 - Is quite cheap and effective, and also quite appreciated by African governments
 - There is resentment about the OECD aid stance
2. China is still feeling its way in Africa, and some problems
3. China is sensitive to African opinion, and possibly to Western opinion as well.
4. View China-Africa in the context of triangular China-Africa-OECD relationships



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China's interests in Africa

- Economic, more recent
 - Search for resources (oil, etc.)
 - Export market
 - China third largest trading partner for Africa and trade growing fast
- Political/diplomatic, long term
 - Long-term, "One China" and support in UN
 - UN support
 - A counterweight to Western pressure



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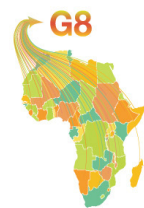
China's development posture

- China a developing country – not imperialist and not imposing conditions
- Bandung Principles:
 - respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; peaceful coexistence
- Conditionality : Taiwan, China's human rights, tied aid, including labour
- China has a right to operate bilaterally without external criticism or sanction



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Thanks China, now go home: buy-up of Zambia revives old colonial fears

Backlash as cheap Chinese labour and products follow
investment from Beijing

Chris McGreal in Lusaka
Monday February 5, 2007

[The Guardian](#)



Members of Zambia's Chinese community
wait to greet Hu Jintao, at Lusaka airport.



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“With the strengthening of China’s national profile, China has accelerated its integration with the world. China urgently needs a spirit of internationalism (responsibility towards international society) to melt away the suspicion toward China from the outside world, so as to enhance its trust towards China’s development.”

Guo Xuetang, Tongji University, Global Times,
09/03/2005



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“It's also about China's image in the West. The Chinese clearly wants to be seen as international law-observing people. They don't want to be regarded as the galumphing elephant trampling on people's rights.”

Richard Dowden, Royal African Society, February 2007



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Africa's perceptions of China: issues for China

- assumption that trade must be good being questioned – the bottom line is that China needs resources
- concerns about some Chinese firms – construction, the Kampala riots
- pressure for more engagement in multilateral fora
- Darfur: pressure and bad press



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OECD strategy: The “taming” perspective

Bring China into line with Western practice

- Involvement with the DAC
- Involvement with donor groups in developing countries
- China as the development hooligan – “rogue aid”



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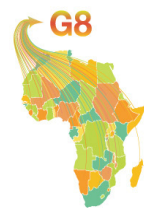
China's view

- treated like a “little brother”: entry into fora where the rules have been set by Western countries – DAC, donor committees
- hypocrisy of the West
- over-confidence in western solutions
- should work through UN, not the DAC
- The US and EU also have collaboration problems



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Africa has to break the impasse

- China is feeling its way (for the time being at least), policy China is changing: and can be influenced.
- “Africa needs China. China needs Africa more”, Li Anshan, Beijing University, 2006.
- China will find it harder to ignore Africa
- All we need is a clear African message (!)



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The African Voice

- Africa is diverse
 - Economically, winners and losers with China
 - Diverse range of opinions on China
- A common voice will strengthen interaction with China: NEPAD, African Union
- G8 should support these institutions and the development of an African view on aid and trade from all sources

