

Briefing on "CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS"**Co-organized by****OSAA and the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China (PRC)****Monday 10 September 2007****ECOSOC CHAMBER – United Nations Headquarters**

Members of Permanent and Observer Missions, officials of the United Nations, the media and representatives of accredited non governmental organizations, among others, met today under the Chairmanship of Mr. Patrick Hayford, Director and Officer-in-Charge, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), to hear a briefing on the relations between China and Africa, as a follow-up to the 2006 Beijing summit held by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). Ambassador LIU Zhenmin, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China introduced the main speaker, Ambassador LIU Guijin, China's Special Representative on African Affairs.

The briefing touched extensively on the salient issues affecting China-Africa's relations and highlighted specific areas requiring further concrete engagement by the two sides in support of Africa's peace, security and development objectives.

In his briefing, Ambassador Guijin stated that China supported the active participation of Africa in international affairs, noting that Africa was an important force in the international arena. He added that China would support Africa in playing a bigger role in international affairs and would strengthen the coordination and cooperation with Africa in a bid to drive the development of the international political, economic, trade and financial systems toward a more equitable and rational direction.

Ambassador Guijin noted that China would also continue as always to support African countries in safeguarding their legitimate rights and interests and make active efforts to draw greater attention and input from the international community to Africa. Ambassador Guijin then elaborated on four main areas, namely: Chinese foreign policy towards Africa; the outcome of the Third Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC summit; China-Africa economic relations; and the Chinese policy on the Darfur issue.

On Chinese foreign policy towards Africa, Ambassador Guijin stated that the People's Republic of China and Africa had a long history of friendship and cooperation, from the days of colonization and the liberation struggle to the days of apartheid. He stated that the two sides had enjoyed good diplomatic relations during the past 51 years, culminating in a tradition of solidarity, sincerity and mutual beneficial cooperation. Furthermore, Ambassador Guijin stated that the two sides shared common development goals and similar interests and therefore enjoyed broad prospects for cooperation and prosperity.

Ambassador Guijin then briefed on the outcome of the Beijing Summit and Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held on 3-5 November 2006. He noted that the idea for the Third Ministerial Conference of FOCAC was suggested by the African side who were pleased and encouraged by the good progress in the delivery of commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Plan (2004-2006) adopted at the Second Ministerial Conference, in which China and Africa had resolved to make joint efforts to advance a new type of strategic partnership of mutual cooperation. Ambassador Guijin informed the meeting that the First Ministerial Conference was held in Beijing in October 2000, in which a mechanism for collective dialogue and cooperation was launched jointly by China and Africa to cope with new challenges and facilitate common development.

Ambassador Guijin stated that Heads of state, government and delegation as well as ministers of foreign affairs and ministers in charge of economic cooperation from China and 48 African countries (43 African presidents) attended the Summit and Third Ministerial Conference respectively. He added that a Beijing Declaration and Action Plan were adopted charting the cooperation course for China and African countries in the next three years. Moreover, Ambassador Guijin clarified that the Action Plan mapped cooperation in politics, economy, international affairs and social development for the 2007-2009 period. Ambassador Guijin stated that at the summit, President Hu Jintao unveiled eight measures of the Chinese government for enhancing a new type of China-Africa strategic partnership, which mainly involved the following areas:

1. To expand aid to Africa by doubling its 2006 assistance to Africa by 2009.
2. To provide 3 billion U.S. dollars of preferential loans and 2 billion U.S. dollars of preferential buyer's credits to Africa in the next three years.
3. To set up a China-Africa Development Fund that will reach 5 billion dollars to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa and provide support to them.
4. To build a conference center for the African Union.
5. To cancel debt in the form of all the interest-free government loans that matured at the end of 2005 owed by the heavily indebted poor countries and the least developed countries in Africa that have diplomatic relations with China.
6. To further open up China's market to Africa by increasing from 190 to over 440 the number of export items to China receiving zero-tariff treatment from the least developed countries in Africa having diplomatic ties with China.
7. To establish three to five trade and economic cooperation zones in Africa in the next three years, and
8. To increase aid in terms of personnel training and public health, including: over the next three years, train 15,000 African professionals; send 100 senior agricultural experts;

setup 10 special agricultural technology demonstration centers; build 30 hospitals and provide 300 million RMB yuan of grant for providing artemisinin and building 30 malaria prevention and treatment centers to fight malaria; dispatch 300 youth volunteers; build 100 rural schools; and increase the number of Chinese government scholarships to African students from the current 2000 per year to 4000 per year by 2009.

On China-Africa economic relations, Ambassador Guijin stated that China would always be a reliable partner for the realization of development goals in Africa. He added that China would link the cooperation with Africa more closely with China's own development, open the market wider and increase investment, assistance and technology transfer to Africa, especially in the areas of infrastructure, mineral resources and energy. Ambassador Guijin clarified that China's approach was to select development paths and modes that best suited Africa's own national conditions that would improve Africa's own self-development abilities. He however acknowledged the criticisms from the West on China's drive for African natural resources, particularly for oil.

Ambassador Guijin informed the meeting that China imported oil from Sudan, Nigeria, Angola and Guinea Bissau, for a total of 8.7% of all African oil exports to China. On the other hand, he noted that the U.S and EU imported 33% and 36% respectively from Africa, showing that by proportion, China imported less oil from Africa. Ambassador Guijin added that China was in talks with the EU to develop a mutual and transparent arrangement of its dealings with Africa to deter any notion of exploitation of natural resources from the continent. He stressed that China's dealings with Africa were inclusive and transparent, and noted that the partnership was that of political equality and mutual trust, with a win-win economic cooperation. Ambassador Guijin added that the Peoples Republic of China wished to collaborate with any other country that sought to assist in the development of Africa.

Finally, on China's policy on Darfur, Ambassador Guijin reaffirmed that China would always be a reliable partner for the promotion of peace and stability in Africa, noting that peace and stability were the prerequisites for realizing the development and prosperity of Africa. He added that China would continue to provide political, economic and diplomatic support to help Africa achieve peace and stability. Ambassador Guijin stated that China supported the United Nations and the African Union in playing a bigger role in UN peacekeeping missions in Africa. On this note, he applauded the July Security Council resolution 1769, authorizing the deployment of 26,000 multinational peacekeepers to Darfur, jointly run by the United Nations and the African Union.

Furthermore, Ambassador Guijin applauded the progress made by the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, on his recent trip to Sudan, Chad and Libya, and the decision to hold a political negotiation meeting on Darfur in Tripoli, Libya on October 27. He supported the Secretary-General's strategy of a military peacekeeping force (UN-AU Hybrid Force), the need for a political solution (full-fledged peace conference in the near future), the need for a humanitarian response (IDPs and refugees in the region), and a sustained reconstruction and economic development plan for Darfur (solutions that go to the root causes of the conflict). He added that Chinese companies were working on water

provision projects in Darfur. Ambassador Guijin also informed the meeting that China would send a medical team and 315 multi-functioning engineering troops to the Darfur region—the first to be sent to the area.

During the ensuing interactive exchange of views, representatives present congratulated Ambassador LIU Guijin on his role as Special Representative on African issues, in general, and on Darfur, in specific. Pertinent questions and comments emerged from the briefing reflecting some of the critical issues facing China-Africa relations, all of which were subsequently addressed by Ambassador LIU Guijin.

The representative from the AU expressed Africa's appreciation to China, noting that the Chinese government had, as always, fulfilled its commitments to Africa and its people had benefited from China's generosity. She confirmed that, indeed, the African side had suggested the organization of the Third Ministerial Conference.

The representative from the Group of 77 stated that Africa was the only continent not on its way to meeting the MDG goals by 2015. In this regard, he appealed to the international community to commit to their pledges of increasing ODA to Africa to facilitate the implementation of the goals and targets set. He acknowledged that China had made a very significant impact on Africa's development and called for a continued and sustained cooperation between the two sides.

The representative from Zimbabwe, on behalf of the African Group of Ambassadors, stated that Africa wanted to enhance and engage more with China, especially as China was becoming increasingly influential in the world. He requested that a mechanism should be put in place that would allow for continuous dialogue between African Ambassadors and the Chinese Government officials in New York.

The representative from Egypt thanked Ambassador Guijin for the detailed briefing. He requested to know what the expectations were beyond the declaration achieved at the China-Africa Summit. In response, Ambassador Guijin stated that the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations was organizing, in collaboration with the Egyptian Mission to the United Nations, a Sino-Africa Ministerial Meeting in New York.

Ambassador Guijin added that the first annual meeting would be held on 26th September 2007, in Conference Room 4 at 10am. The meeting, he noted, would be attended by foreign ministers, and would discuss political issues affecting both Sino-Africa relations. Ambassador Guijin informed the meeting that issues related to the follow-up to the China-Africa Summit would also be discussed at this meeting. He then informed the meeting that the Fourth FOCAC Summit would be held in Cairo, Egypt.

The representative from Sudan also thanked Ambassador Guijin for the comprehensive briefing. He stated that his government deeply appreciated all the support from China economically, stressing that their economies had enjoyed a win-win economic cooperation. He also thanked the Peoples Republic of China for their efforts on

the Darfur issue. He appealed to other countries to assist in a similar vein, showing mutual respect, trust and understanding of the cultural differences. In response, Ambassador Guijin noted that it was evident that Sudan was ready to cooperate with the international community, and with the UN, in particular. He added that China would actively participate in the meeting on Darfur to be held in Tripoli, Libya on 27 October, 2007.

The representative from Japan stated that his Government had a similar foreign policy towards Africa as China did. This, he noted was that of mutual respect, mutual trust and mutual partnership. He extended his appreciation to the Chinese Government for their work on the Darfur issue and appealed to other nations to assist in a similar manner. He went on to inform the meeting that Japan hosted a similar forum for Africa's development called the Tokyo International Conference for Africa's Development (TICAD), noting that the next meeting would convene on 28 May 2008.

The representative from Japan stated that, in addition to the African countries, the donor community and the Asian countries were all invited to participate in TICAD IV. He emphasized that it was very important to create synergy between development partners as this would facilitate effective and coordinated development assistance to Africa. He also asked about the follow-up to the China-Africa Summit. Ambassador Guijin praised the TICAD initiative and concurred that effective coordination between development partners was essential for effective aid delivery to Africa.

Furthermore, Ambassadors Guijin stated that it was incumbent on the EU and OECD countries to come up with concrete ideas and recommendations on how to further encourage tripartite cooperation between partners of Africa. He alluded to the EU meeting held in mid July where various issues such as health and agriculture were discussed. On the follow-up to the China-Africa Summit, he stated that the focus at this time was to implement the commitments made. He assured the delegates present that there was progress being made.

The representative from Germany stated that development progress in Africa had been slow. He noted that Germany, as president of the G8 last year, had made Africa the focus of attention during last years meeting. He also added that Germany had pledged 300 euros towards development assistance for Africa. He then requested Ambassador Guijin to provide more details on the actual figures (\$ amounts) that China would provide to Africa between 2006 and 2009. In response, Ambassador Guijin stated that it was difficult to give exact figures due to exchange rate fluctuations. He however added that China had the political will to double ODA to Africa by the year 2009, from the 2006 figures.

The representative from the Netherlands joined in applauding China's historic economic progress. He stated that the experience China had attained in sustaining economic growth and reducing poverty could be replicated in other developing countries, including in some African countries. In this regard, he recognized the positive contribution that the Chinese government had made to Africa, through the China-Africa

Summit. Ambassador Guijin welcomed the positive comments and stated that it was important for the UN to also focus more on development and the achievement of the MDGs in Africa. He added that conflict prevention and mediation efforts (spearheaded by the UN) were less costly than peacekeeping missions, which were of the tune of some \$ 2.5 billion annually.

The representative from UNDP (South-South Cooperation) added that China and Africa had always spoken with one voice for common aims of development and economic progress. He viewed the China-Africa summit as advancing South-South cooperation. He noted that the collaboration between the two sides had reached a new level which had to be nurtured and strengthened. He stated that the challenge was to learn how to manage the new type of strategic partnership, noting that African countries should take the necessary steps to build the competencies required to solve the challenges facing Africa.

The representative from UNDP also appealed to other countries to follow China's example and exchange ideas and experiences with African countries through South-South cooperation. In response, Ambassador Guijin stated that South-South cooperation was very important for sharing best practices between developing countries. He noted that China was making a great contribution through the FOCAC. The representative from DESA added that DESA was also exploring ways to enhance South-South cooperation in their daily work. He stressed the importance of distinguishing between North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, noting that each modality was distinct and should not be substituted for one another.

Mr. Hayford asked about China's role in UN peacekeeping in Africa. In response, Ambassador Guijin stated that China had about 1700 troops in Africa, with 415 troops stationed in the southern part of Sudan. He reiterated China's firm commitment to supporting the UN-AU efforts in Africa. Ambassador LIU Zhenmin added that China would work to enhance the China-Africa cooperation with mutual benefits for both sides. He stated that China had currently 48 embassies in Africa, adding that it was the hope of the Chinese government to maintain regular contacts with their African counterparts. He informed the meeting that the Chinese mission to the UN was prepared to share any information requested by member states on progress in the implementation of the China-Africa Action Plan.

To conclude, Mr. Hayford thanked Ambassador Guijin for the substantive presentation and thanked the Chinese mission for working with OSAA in organizing the briefing. He stated that the underlying principle between China-Africa cooperation was that of mutual trust, mutual benefit and mutual partnership between the two sides.

Mr. Hayford added that OSAA would continue to shed light on emerging issues affecting Africa, through briefings, panel discussions and expert group meetings.

He thanked all for attending and declared the meeting adjourned.

