



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISER ON AFRICA

Briefing by

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to the African Group

**on the “Beijing Summit of the Forum on
China-Africa Cooperation”**

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman of the African Group,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Members of African Delegations:

I am delighted to have this opportunity to provide you with a briefing on the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which was held in Beijing from the 4th to the 5th of this month, November 2006.

I shall also use the opportunity to update you on a couple of other activities within my mandate as the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa.

The Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation

I represented the Secretary-General at the Beijing Summit and the Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which was held in Beijing, People's Republic of China, from the 3rd to the 5th of this month, November.

The timing of the Summit and the Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum coincided, quite appropriately, with the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of diplomatic relations between New China and African countries.

Purpose, agenda and attendance

Mr. Chairman,

As you are aware, the Forum was jointly set up by China and Africa in October 2000 to promote traditional China-Africa friendship and cooperation. The Summit, for the purpose of promoting “friendship, peace, cooperation and development”, reviewed cooperation between China and Africa during the last 50 years, and discussed common goals and the direction of China-Africa cooperation in the new era.

The Summit was attended by Chinese Government officials, led by President Hu Jintao, and 48 African Heads of State and Government – one of the largest gatherings of African leaders in history. Delegations typically consisted of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Commerce and Industry, and Economic Planning and Development.

Statements during the Opening Ceremony were made by Chinese President Hu Jintao, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, in his capacity as Co-Chair of the Forum, and President Denis Sassou N’Guesso of the Republic of the Congo, in his capacity as the Current Chairman of the African Union.

Related meetings

The Summit was preceded by two preparatory meetings:

- a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) (1 to 2 November);
- the Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (3 November).

It was followed by three other meetings:

- a High-level Dialogue between Chinese-African Leaders and Business Communities (4 November);
- the Second Conference of Chinese and African Entrepreneurs (4 November); and
- a Roundtable of Chinese and African Leaders (5 November).

Commitments made by the People’s Republic of China

In his statement during the opening ceremony of the Summit, the Chinese President stated **(and I quote)**:

Without peace and development in China and Africa, there will be no global peace and development. (unquote)

In the context of what the Chinese President as well as Prime Minister Meles and President N’Guesso described as a “strategic partnership”, China identified four fields of cooperation:

- a. Deepening of political relations on the basis of equality and mutual trust;

- b. Broadening of “win-win” economic cooperation;
- c. Expansion of people-to-people exchange for cultural enrichment – in education, science and technology, culture, public health, sports and tourism;
- d. Promotion of balanced and harmonious global development – by enhancing South-South cooperation; promoting North-South dialogue; urging developed countries to honour their promises on market access, aid and debt relief; striving to meet the Millennium Development Goals; and steering economic globalization in the direction of creating prosperity for all.

The Chinese President stated that China would continue to support Africa in implementing NEPAD.

The Chinese Government announced that it would take the following **eight steps** aimed at strengthening cooperation:

1. Double its 2006 assistance to Africa by 2009;
2. Provide US\$3 bn of preferential loans and US\$2 bn of preferential buyer’s credits to Africa in the next three years;
3. Set up a China-Africa development fund which will reach US\$ 5 bn to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa and provide support to them;
4. Build a conference centre for the African Union;
5. Cancel debt in the form of all the interest-free government loans that matured at the end of 2005 owed by the highly indebted poor countries and the least developed countries in Africa that have diplomatic relations with China;

6. 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 LDCs in Africa which have diplomatic relations with China;
7. Establish three to five economic cooperation zones in Africa in the next three years;
8. Over the next three years train 15,000 African professionals; send 100 senior agricultural experts to Africa; set up 10 special agricultural technology demonstration centres in Africa; build 30 hospitals in Africa and provide a grant of RMB 300 million in for providing Artemisinin and building 30 malaria prevention and treatment centres; dispatch 300 youth volunteers to Africa; build 100 rural schools; and increase the number of Chinese government scholarships from the current 2000 per year to 4000 per year by 2009.

The African perspective

The statements by Prime Minister Meles and President N'Guesso underscored the "strategic" nature of the China-Africa relationship. Prime Minister Meles expressed the hope that Sino-African cooperation would focus on three areas of Africa's challenges:

- the fight against poverty and backwardness and the achievement of economic independence;
- the achievement of peace and stability; and
- the promotion of good governance.

President N’Guesso, for his part, noted with satisfaction China’s offer to assist Africa:

- in the implementation of NEPAD;
- in meeting the Millennium Development Goals; and
- with the negotiation of the Doha Round with the World Trade Organization.

Declaration and Action Plan of the Beijing Summit

The Beijing Summit adopted a Declaration and an Action Plan for 2007-2009. In addition to the commitments made by China in the arena of China-Africa cooperation already enumerated above, the Summit pronounced itself on several issues at the political level.

- *First*, it decided to enhance the role of the Forum and to rededicate itself to the Forum’s purposes and objectives.
- *Secondly*, it formally recognized the Forum as an “*important platform for collective dialogue and an effective mechanism for pragmatic cooperation*”.
- *Thirdly*, it called for reform of the United Nations and other multilateral international institutions, with a view to increasing the representation and full participation of African countries in the Security Council and other UN agencies.
- And, not least important, it reiterated the one China policy and China’s peaceful reunification; and, for their part, the African countries reiterated their adherence to that policy and expressed their support for the realization of that goal through peaceful means.

Assessment

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to share my personal impressions of the Summit. The Beijing Summit was a successful meeting by any standards. Both the African and the Chinese leaders underscored the “strategic” nature of the relationship between China and African countries, without defining the term “strategic”. The tactical details of the implementation of the Action Plan 2007-2009 will be of critical importance.

For the past six years, China has used the Forum to prove to African countries that it is a serious and credible development partner. In the view of many, the speaker included, the African turn-out was a clear demonstration that China had succeeded in winning the confidence of its African partners.

The Beijing Summit also lent a strong voice, in the form of the Forum, to UN advocacy with the developed countries, and the donor community in particular, with regard to their promises and commitments in several areas. These include market access, aid, debt relief, and support to Africa’s efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The Summit also undertook, through the Forum, to provide support to African countries and to advocate with their partners for the implementation of NEPAD.

Update on recent activities of OSAA

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to devote a few moments to updating you, distinguished colleagues, and other members of the African Delegations on recent activities undertaken by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa.

These activities include:

- monitoring UNGA consideration of the Secretary-General’s reports on “Mobilizing international support for NEPAD” and on the “Causes of conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace in Africa”;
- attendance at a meeting of the African Partnership Forum (APF) in Moscow, 26 to 27 October 2006;
- organizing an Expert Group Meeting on Youth and Development in Africa in Windhoek, Namibia, last week; and
- participation in a Roundtable on “Governance and development in Africa”, organized by the European Commission in Brussels, also last week (15 to 17 November); as part of the commemoration by the EU of the “European Development Days”.

We are most grateful for the renewal of support expressed and guidance provided by the Member States, especially African delegations, during the 61st Session of the General Assembly. It is my intention to ensure that their views continue to inform our work.

African Partnership Forum Meeting

I was represented by the Director of my Office at a meeting of the African Partnership Forum (APF), which was held in Moscow from 26 to 27 October.

The African Partnership Forum is a mechanism created in the context of the G8 discussions on Africa, in which the Personal Representatives of heads of state and government meet and deliberate with their counterparts from the African countries spearheading the NEPAD agenda. The APF has subsequently been expanded to include the main non-G8 development partners of Africa (for example the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries), as well as the NEPAD Secretariat and the UN. It is meant to be an illustration of the mutual accountability which the two sides have previously agreed upon as necessary to sustain a healthy relationship.

The focus at the Moscow meeting was the presentation of progress reports on Agriculture, Infrastructure, and the fight against HIV/AIDS by the newly-created APF Support Office. The assessment indicated that there has been retrogression with regard to agriculture, little progress in the infrastructure sector, and genuine progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS. When most Member States took the floor, it was widely acknowledged by them that the assessment of the prevailing situation in Africa (regarding each of those three sectors) by the African Partnership Forum Support Office was, by and large, accurate.

The Executive Director of the NEPAD Secretariat, Prof. Firmino Mucavele, presented a menu of major sub-regional infrastructure projects (including cost

estimates), which, if implemented, would significantly improve Africa's capacity to accelerate economic growth.

A civil society forum was also held to coincide with this meeting. It issued a statement, *inter alia*, criticizing the three reports presented by the APF Support Office.

The Government of the Russian Federation, current G8 Chair and host of the meeting, also made a strong statement of its continuing commitment to Africa.

European Development Days

At the invitation of the European Commission, I attended the first edition of the “European Development Days”, which took place in Brussels from the 14th to the 17th of November, 2006.

The initiative symbolizes the European Commission’s determination to take action on two pressing matters:

- enhancing public awareness about development cooperation issues; and
- strengthening the effectiveness of the European Union’s development assistance, with a view to timely and effective implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

The event, which is expected to take place annually, is part of a follow-up to the new “European Consensus” on development, which emphasized the common

values, principles and commitments of the European Union in favour of poverty eradication. This first event marks the beginning of a process which will contribute to the work Europeans need to undertake towards a harmonized, and therefore more effective, approach to the delivery of official development assistance.

This year's edition of the "European Development Days" dealt with the issue of governance. A three-day forum on this theme targeted at development professionals was attended by about 17 African heads of state and government. In addition to the African leaders, high-level officials of various UN agencies, the World Bank, the European Commission, the African Union Commission, western European countries, and civil society organizations also participated in the forum.

The forum provided an opportunity to the participants to confront the different understandings of governance and to identify the challenges faced by both African and European countries in implementing governance policies and programmes. The event was also an opportunity for a real dialogue between Africans and Europeans on how to increase cooperation in order to improve governance for development purposes.

One of the main messages emanating from this gathering is that Europe considers Africa as a real partner, and that it is designing a 'new development paradigm', with a view to delivering more aid more effectively and developing a strategic alliance with Africa.

Korea-Africa Forum 7-9 Nov. 2006

This took place in Seoul, Republic of Korea (ROK) as part of the ROK's initiatives to increase economic and other exchanges with Africa.

Five African Heads of State participated (Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Tanzania, and the Republic of Congo) and 27 Cabinet-level officials from 25 African countries. A Seoul Declaration on the Korea Africa-Forum was adopted, inter-alia, expressing appreciation of Korea's initiatives for Africa's development as declared by President Roh Moo-hyun during his visit to African countries in March 2006 and the Korean Government's announcement to increase its aide budget including the tripling of Official Development Assistance for African countries by 2008.

The Declaration also welcomes the Korean government's commitment to assist the African countries in human resource development by inviting 1000 trainees within the following three years and share its development experience with Africa.

Expert Group Meeting on Youth, Peace and Development in Africa (

As part of our mandated regular budget activities OSAA, in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, organized an Expert Group Meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, on the subject of "Participation of Youth as Partners in Peace and Development in Post-Conflict Countries in Africa". The meeting was opened by Prime Minister Nahas Angula, and was attended by

12 youth leaders from seven African countries as well as other substantive experts and Ministers.

The experts and youth leaders agreed on recommendations and related strategies for generating employment and job opportunities as well as for improving social and political integration of various categories of young people (including combatants and ex-combatants) into their communities. Step-by-step strategies were developed for identifying the needs of young people, creating integrated learning strategies, improving matching of skills with actual labor needs, and promoting small and medium enterprise development.

The proceedings and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting will be published shortly to assist policy makers and practitioners in their efforts to reintegrate youth in the lives of their communities in a productive manner that minimizes chances of their re-involvement in conflict dynamics.

African Development Forum V

The fifth African Development Forum was held in Addis Ababa from 16 to 18 November 2006 on the theme “Youth and Leadership in the 21st Century”. It provided an opportunity for leaders and policy makers as well as civil society activists, together with representatives of African youth, to assess the current situation of young people on the continent and how their abundant energies and creativity can be effectively harnessed in support of Africa’s development. A number of important policy decisions were taken. Prominent among them was the decision to mainstream the youth agenda in the policies of all African governments, African inter-governmental organizations and regional bodies.

Farewell for the UN Secretary-General

In Addis Ababa, the African Union, in coordination with the ECA, organized a very moving farewell for outgoing UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Among those who paid eloquent tribute to Mr. Annan were Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, AU Commission Chairman Alpha Konare, ECA Executive Secretary Abdoulie Jannah, and a number of African youth leaders.

Mr. Chairman,

This briefing is being provided in keeping with my determination to keep the African Group informed about the activities of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, with a view to ensuring that the Office has your continued support.

I thank you.