China-Mozambique relations: Support and governance challenges

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Cover Image: Gamesbids
Dear Reader,

The attitude of African states and societies towards counterparts in China varies much in line with the experiences made. This edition of African East-Asian Affairs – The China Monitor takes a closer look at Sino-Mozambican interactions, highlighting different facets of the relationship between China and one of Africa’s 54 states.

Our first contribution is on state-to-state relations between Mozambique and China. The contribution by Jorge Njäl – who currently lives in Jinhua, Zhejiang province of China – is on state-to-state and party-to-party relations that assist in organising big events such as the All Africa Games in 2011. States are not only working for the basic needs of their population; they also want to project an image in order to foster a national identity and to attract attention by investors. Yet, the question will have to be asked if the money was wisely invested in a big event or what else could have been done with it. This is rather a question towards the Mozambican elites, less so towards the Chinese state.

Our second contribution, by Mafalda Piçarra, focuses on the Chinese investments in and trade with agricultural and forestry produce of Mozambique. While particularly the second aspect concerns enterprises and individuals – who should not be mistaken as identical to the Chinese state – the article also indicates challenges coming with illicit activities and high levels of corruption. To use a phrase from climate change negotiations: responsibilities are common, but differentiated. In a globalised world, this is also true for development prospects.

This month of June also sees the Rio+20 conference – or Johannesburg+10, if you want – and thus reminds us of the principle of sustainability in our actions. In the last month, the CCS hosted a workshop in Stellenbosch on environmental sustainability in China and in Africa. Thanks to the experts around the table, we had excellent discussions with Chinese and African colleagues, hoping to also feed into the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), as we highlighted last month. Our mini-series of policy briefings on FOCAC has now been published and with them, we hope to provide useful background to a number of stakeholders.

As per usual, you can also find commentaries by CCS staff in the latter section of this AEAA, spanning a broad range of topics, from (supposedly?) existing tensions between communism and capitalism in China, to labour issues in development that need to be considered in industrialisation. Our third commentary looks into new rules in censorship of China’s internet services.

We hope you enjoy the read!

Sincerely,

Director

Centre for Chinese Studies
Stellenbosch University
The “Chinese connection” in Mozambique’s hosting the 2011 Maputo All-Africa Games

By Jorge Njal
Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University

This is an edited excerpt from a larger research paper. For more details, please contact the author

I. Introduction

Mozambique’s capital Maputo hosted the tenth All-Africa Games (AAG), between 3 and 18 September 2011. Although during the preparation period critics questioned the country’s capacity to host the Games, others congratulated the government “for dignifying” the country. Officially, the total cost of the Games to the Mozambican state summed up to US$ 250 million, used in the rehabilitation of some sports facilities around Maputo, Matola (where taekwondo and chess competition were disputed) and Chidenguele (in Gaza province, where canoeing was held), logistics and other related activities. Considering the time and financial constraints in hosting the Games, the role of China and Portugal was crucial to the Games. China’s direct and indirect financial involvement is estimated at about US$ 156 million, while the Portuguese government loan amounted to US$ 152 million (Mabunda, 2011, “Balanço positivo dos X Jogos Africanos!”, O País Online, 23/9).

China and Portugal both contributed with more than 50% of the total amount for the Games, illustrating the importance of other countries in financing the local government’s budget. The country has been receiving a sizable contribution to its state general budget from the donors, especially after Mozambique adhered to the Breton-Woods institutions policies in 1984 and the subsequent introduction of economic and constitutional reforms in 1987 and 1990, respectively, adoption of multiparty system in 1991 and the end of the internal conflict in 1992. External financial support amounted to more than half of the total budget until 2011. Due to improved tax collection, the government estimates that the country will manage to finance 60% of the state budget in 2012 (Rádio Moçambique, 12/12/2011, “Ajuda externa regista significativo declínio – Manuel Chang”).

China and Portugal both contributed with more than 50% of the total amount for the Games, illustrating the importance of other countries in financing the local government’s budget.

This paper will explore Sino-Mozambican relations. In a first step, it will take a historical perspective of the relationship between the two states and their respective ruling parties. In a second part, it will highlight the importance of the Chinese support for the realisation of the All-Africa Games by pointing out the main Chinese financed infrastructures that directly and indirectly served Maputo during September 2011. This work is a result of a combination of critical analysis of the media reports on the official visit to Maputo and Beijing in the first years of the formal ties, the progress in building the National Stadium, the award of the Games and other related media coverage. Due to the scarcity of scholarly sources, press reports currently fill an important gap in research of some topics of the China-Africa relations in general. Scholars face serious
problems to access important data, for example, the content of the deals between the Chinese and African governments. In the case of Mozambique, this was especially pointed out in an international conference on China in Africa with focus in Mozambique held in Maputo in 2010.

Scholarly research devotes little importance of China in African sports. Yet, for both the 2010 African Cup of Nations and the 2010 World Cup, in Angola and South Africa respectively, China’s role was enormous, especially in the construction of sports facilities (world class football stadiums). In the recently 2012 African Cup jointly hosted by Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, China once again provided its know-how in the construction of the biggest stadium in Gabon (The Sino-Gabonese Friendship Stadium in the country’s capital, Libreville), i.e., exported to Africa Chinese technology which elevates China’s statute across the world. In all three continental and world sport events Chinese engagement resulted in thousands of jobs for local labour and other local businesses. While the political priority for sport events can be questioned, China’s participation in the sports facilities construction was positive for the host countries in terms of political, economic, cultural and social gains.

This research on the role of China in the Games of Maputo includes a very brief outline of the history of the relations between the two countries. The aim is to show the dynamics of the relations which have since early 1960s been shaped by concrete factors.

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II. Sino-Mozambican Relations: A historical overview

Sino-Mozambican ties lack a systematic research especially about the period prior to 2000, despite some more recent studies. Generally, researchers often simply cite briefly that China aided Frelimo in its armed struggle against the Portuguese colonial rule and continued to supply aid in the post-independence period as their background to emphasise a linear continuity of this relationship. Notable exceptions to this scarcity of sources are the works of Steven Jackson (1995), Ian Taylor (2006) and Sergio Chichava (2008). A historical analysis, mostly relying on primary sources, can provide the specificities of this relationship, which had witnessed upheavals, as the Chinese President recently reminded his Mozambican counterpart: “Over the past half a century, China-Mozambique friendship has experienced many trials and tribulations” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People’s Republic of China (MFAPRC), 2011, “Hu Jintao Holds Talks with Mozambican President Guebuza”, 08/10).

1. Earlier Ties

Historically, China-Mozambique ties predate the official diplomatic engagement symbolically occurred on 25 June 1975, the day Mozambique’s independence was formally declared by the leader of Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo, in Portuguese abbreviation), Samora Machel. This was the recognition by Frelimo for the role the People’s Republic of China (PRC) played for the country to defeat the Portuguese colonial regime. In fact, China and some other socialist and few western countries (especially Nordic countries offered non-military aid), provided Frelimo with vital material and diplomatic assistance in its liberation struggle between 1964 and 1974.
The PRC publicly condemned imperialism and colonialism in the “Third World”, including in Africa. Thus, it encouraged African liberation movements to fight colonialism and supported them with weapons and trained some guerrillas both in China and in Africa (particularly in Tanzania, where Frelimo was based and was the main beneficiary of the Chinese military expertise).

At least until 1971, China also provided military aid to smaller Frelimo split-movements in Mozambique. This gesture developed due to the ideological rivalry between China and the Soviet Union (USSR). During different phases of the armed struggle, the Soviets were the main sponsors of “the authentic” liberation movements in Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, South Africa, Angola, Namibia, The Comoros and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Nonetheless, apart from the “unauthentic” movements in these countries, the Chinese aid also found its way towards some of these Soviet-aided movements, Frelimo is a paradigmatic example (Christie, 1988:71-72). In fact, skillfully Frelimo managed to balance the two opponents and militarily benefited from both the PRC and USSR.

2. “Difficult Times” and Normalisation

The post-1975 Sino-Mozambican relations had a very promising prospect but prematurely experienced rocky moments that lasted until 1981 when the two ruling parties established formal ties. Ideological and international issues politically “separated” the two countries.

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Chronologically, China’s support to FNLA (The National Front for the Liberation of Angola)/UNITA (The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) on their fight against the preeminent MPLA (People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in Angola shortly after independence was declared in 1975. China was thus perceived to be siding with the United States and Apartheid South Africa (Shubin and Traikova, 2008:1015). Mozambique adopted the Soviet’s Marxism-Leninism in early 1977 at the III Congress of Frelimo, attended by many socialist invitees, but not the Chinese, who refused to attend on ideological grounds. Subsequently, Mozambique sided with Vietnam when it invaded Cambodia in late 1978, condemned China when it launched a war against Vietnam in the beginning 1979, and supported the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979. Considering the 1978-79 events, in early 1980, the Chinese government recalled its ambassador in Maputo and the medical team (Jackson, 1995:415; Chichava, 2008:7). The first top Chinese diplomat in Mozambique had already unexpectedly returned to Beijing in late 1976, leaving the post vacant for about a year, after it became clear that Mozambique would follow the Soviet model. However, the links between the two countries were not completely severed. In fact, a certain kind of compromise was sustained by three formal economic and technical cooperation agreements signed in July 1975 in Mozambique’s capital, September 1977 and May 1978, both in Beijing. Practically, since 1975, Mozambique continued to benefit from Chinese aid and technical assistance in the sectors of education, agriculture, health, trade, among others. Also, symbolically, the role of China in the liberation of Mozambique, from the Frelimo government’s perspective, was the reason
to continue to maintain ties with this “natural ally” (Jornal Notícias, 1975, “Reafirmada amizade China-Moçambique”, 03/07; 1977, “Assinado protocolo de acordo de cooperação econômica e técnica”, 24/09; 1978. “Moçambique e China assinam acordo de cooperação no domínio econômico e técnico”, 29/05). Considering the economic hardship that Mozambique was experiencing since the late 1970s, Maputo was economically tied to Beijing, especially from 1980, when President Machel told the Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister, Huang Hua that the relationship between the two countries would focus on economic and trade areas, during Hua’s short visit to Maputo after attending Zimbabwe’s independence ceremony (Notícias da Beira, 1980, “Cooperação entre Moçambique e China será ao nível econômico e comercial”, 24/04).

In 1981 relations began a process of normalisation, as the Chinese Communist Party and Frelimo established formal ties; a PRC delegation attended the Fourth Congress of Frelimo in 1983. After 15-month, a new ambassador return to Maputo, and by 1984 Mozambique had opened its embassy in Beijing. The general characteristics of the relations between Mozambique and China during the remainder of the decade were cooperation agreements in various areas (trade, technical, agricultural and cultural cooperation) as well as official visits and China’s diplomatic support against South Africa as sponsor of the rebel movement in Mozambique. Beijing encouraged Maputo’s economic reform from the second half of the 1980s, inter alia also supplying low-interest loans to build the National Assembly. Foreign relations policy changes in both states motivated a pragmatic approach towards each other. Mozambique’s economic crisis and security issues in the mid-1980s forced Mozambique to lean to the West and try to engage South African Apartheid’s regime through the non-aggression pact in 1984. China did not speak out against this pact. Since the late 1970s the PRC had begun to adopt new economic and party diplomacy policy (1982), relations with the US had been established in 1979, during this period other Western countries also establish political ties with China and party-to-party links were extended to all non-communist ruling parties and to other political parties. This represented an abandonment of ideology in the search of cooperation with other political parties and to sustain friendly state-to-state ties (Taylor, 2006:100-103; Li 2009).

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3. Post-Cold War Period: Business and Aid

The post-cold war and its aftermath gave an impetus to Sino-Mozambican relations in the 1990s and beyond. Mozambique had adopted the multi-party system in the new constitution framework. In late 1992, Maputo secured a peace agreement with the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo, the Portuguese acronym) which ended the 16 years of internal armed conflict that killed at least one million people. In 1994, a new democratically government was elected; since then, Frelimo has been able to win all general elections and has dominated the national assembly. In its external relations, Mozambique has sought to expand diplomatic ties and has welcomed private investment and reconstruction aid (Roque, 2009:3). Chinese policy towards Africa aimed mainly to combat Taiwan’s diplomatic success in the continent; consequently, the PRC also welcomed the democratic transition across Africa, hoping for socio-political stability for
Chinese investment in the course of Beijing’s deepening of the globalisation process and establishing multi-polarity. In 1992 and 1997 Beijing’s inter-party ties were extended to all parties in power and as well in the opposition, as long they wished to do so (Dai, 2001).

China applauded Mozambique’s constitutional reform and congratulated the government for signing the peace agreement with the former rebel movement. Chinese commitment to peace in Mozambique can be proven by its practical gestures: It urged the international community to aid Mozambique’s post conflict rebuilding, donated money for relief purposes, contributed with military observers to the United Nations Mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) and provided a number of observers to supervise the first multi-party elections in October 1994. According Taylor, prior to the polls a Chinese official had secretly maintained a meeting with the Renamo’s leader, Afonso Dhlakama, whom he asked to engage in peace negotiations. The PRC’s then Vice-Premier, Zhu Rongji, during his visit to Mozambique in mid-1995 highlighted the importance of peaceful environment in Mozambique for the expansion of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries (Taylor, 2006:107; Choedon, 2005:42-43).

Chinese interest in Mozambique’s economic potential has been a constant feature, and began to grow at a very fast pace after the peace agreement. In fact, since the mid-1990s there has been developing a vertical and horizontal expansion of the Chinese presence in the country’s economic sectors: retail, infrastructure construction, mining, agricultural processing, manufactory, telecommunication, banking, etc. The beginning of the 21st century witnessed the expansion of cooperation between the two countries in the field of health, education, public security and defense, culture, professional training, sports, inter-party relations, parliament, relations at municipal and provincial level, etc.

Some observers of Mozambique’s relations with China hint that Frelimo-Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ties in some form catalyse state-to-state relations. In 2008 a 4-year memorandum on cadre training and experience exchange was signed in Maputo between the two parties (Jornal Notícias, 2011, “China-Moçambique: Trocas comerciais com recorde histórico”, 8/8). Under this agreement, Frelimo’s members (some of whom are part of the cabinet) from time to time go to China to learn a set of issues related to party organizations and government functioning. It is not a secret that the Chinese “economic growth miracle” interests the ruling party in Mozambique, as it may also be to other governments around Africa and beyond. The Chinese counterpart’s visits to Mozambique among other activities also include lecturing at the Frelimo’s Central School. The Chinese government and Party senior members have always praised Frelimo for adhering to “One China” policy and for publicly defending China’s human rights record. In different interparty meetings Frelimo members continue to assure the Chinese counterparts of their stance on regard to these issues.

Under education cooperation, presently there are about 200 Mozambicans studying in China for bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees in different specialties including engineering and science and technology. After the opening of the Confucius Institute in 2012 in Maputo, a certain number of Mozambicans will go to China to further their Chinese language and culture studies under the Confucius Scholarship. In the medium and long term this will contribute a great deal, especially in the field of labour, as language continues to be an important barrier for many Chinese businessmen and common
workers to deal with daily issues with the local relevant stakeholders. Culturally, the Mozambican long presence in China also represents an important asset for better understanding and engagement (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2010:87-90). Cultural difference is perceived to be a factor behind reported physical violence by Chinese towards co-workers, according to the PRC’s ambassador to Mozambique (Jornal Notícias, 2011, “China-Moçambique...”, 8/8).

Chinese medical aid is also of great importance to the common Mozambican citizens, especially if considering the national low ratio of doctors per patients and the long distance that many rural inhabitants have to walk to find the nearest health facility. According to the Chinese embassy in Maputo, between 1976 and 2011 eighteen medical teams cured 1.3 million patients and trained more than 2,000 local medical staff. Additionally, Mozambique annually receives medicine to fight malaria (Jornal Notícias, 2011, “China-Moçambique...”, 8/8), one of the main causes of death in the country.

Chinese aid is provided to the country under a wide range of bilateral agreements and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC): by 2007 China had cancelled US$ 52 million of Mozambique’s debt and had funded a Centre for Research and Transfer of Agricultural Technology, which was handed over to the government of Mozambique in 2011 (at the cost of at least US$ 6 million). Since 2007, under the Gaza-Hubei provincial cooperation, Chinese experts help the local farmers to learn skills and techniques to increase their rice productivity. And the army and police regularly receive donations of non-combat equipment (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2010:73-75, 86-87, 92-93; Jornal @Verdade, 2011, “Centro de investigação agrária vai garantir auto-suficiência alimentar”, 5/8).

In terms of trade between the two countries, the volume has skyrocketed to US$ 697 million in 2010 from US$ 13 million in 1998. Mozambique exports mainly wood/timber, mineral resources, agricultural products, cotton and textiles and fisheries. In order to attract more Mozambican products, since 2010 the Chinese government has extended the number of tariff-free goods, this corresponds 60% of all exports to China. Mozambique’s principal imports from China consist of construction material and related machinery, motorcycles, motor vehicles and manufactured goods (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2010:78-80, Jornal Notícias, 2011, “China-Moçambique...”, 8/8).

Aiming to expand the ties even further, in 2011 important technical, social and cultural bilateral agreements were signed between the two governments (Jornal Notícias, 2011, “Moçambique e China juntos em novas áreas”, 22/4; 2011, “China-Moçambique...”, 8/8). As result of these, to foster cultural cooperation, from April 2012 a Confucius Institute began teaching Chinese language and culture to 210 students at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo (The Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Mozambique, 2012, “zhù mōsāngbīkè dāshī huáng sòngfū cānguān mò kōngzǐ xuéyuàn” [Ambassador to Mozambique Huang Songfu visits Mozambique’s Confucius Institute], 12/5), the first in the Portuguese-speaking African countries. Furthermore, China Radio International is expected to start broadcasting in Portuguese in Mozambique.
4. Concerns, Impact and Prospective Developments

In some aspects, namely, wood/timber, fisheries exploration and labour standard violation, the growing impact of the relations between China and Mozambique have been contested by part of the civil society, and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Ministry of Labour has so far obliged a good number of Chinese businesses to pay fines and has revoked work permits of some Chinese workers, thereby expelling them from the country. Chinese and their local associates are accused of plundering and illegally exporting forest and fisheries resources across the country, not least by bribing officials. Violence perpetrated by some Chinese workers is a reportedly common trend in some construction companies. And not least the presence of a considerable number of Chinese workers is subject to criticism amongst civil society, particularly in the construction industry, as the country has a very large number of unemployed adults.

Nonetheless, improvements can be noted. Mozambique’s government was internationally praised for translating the local labour code into Mandarin, and Chinese companies contribute to local communities by building schools or helping farmers to improve their activities. Corporate Social Responsibility is an important debate: In 2011 a prospect mining company in Mozambique (Kingho Group) provided 100 scholarships for a 5-year study in China (Jornal Notícias, 2011, “China-Moçambique …”, 8/8)).

The recent discovery of mineral and energy sources, especially natural gas and coking coal, attract other global players (Australia, Brazil, the UK, Portugal, the US, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, and South Africa, among others). Their engagement in Mozambique might constitute a competition for Sino-Mozambican economic ties. Yet, the Mozambican government continues to need major investments in infrastructures, which is likely to sustain the China link. Further inter-party links are expected to teach Frelimo “the secrets” behind the “miracle” of the Chinese rapid economic growth. But if the government fails to make all foreign investors to comply with rules and standards, local criticism not only to the Chinese presence in Mozambique may grow. Also, the ruling political elite will need to address conflicts of interest, as some Frelimo top members and government officials team up with foreign businessmen to exploit the country’s natural resources without benefiting the country and the directly affected local people. This may generate into wide-spread popular contestation, similar to recent events in the coal-rich western province of Tete. In Tete, local people went into strike, blocking the roads and railway which are used to transport the coal to the Port of Beira, demanding a foreign business that explores coking coal to improve settlement conditions in the new area that they were relocated to in 2009 by this same multinational. The protestors complained that their houses were poorly built, and that they had not received agriculture assistance. They also pointed to a lack of social infrastructures: drinking water, schools and hospitals (Mozambique News Reports & Clippings, 193, 2012, “Protests against Vale coal mine relocations”, 1-2). This episode caused an uproar across the country, especially from the local NGOs, as the government was accused of siding with the company at the expense of the local community.
III. Cooperation in the preparation for the All-Africa Games in 2011

As explored above, the All-Africa Games of September 2011 were prepared under tight budgetary conditions in Mozambique. International cooperation, far from least so with China, was thus a key necessity. The realization of this event was possible thanks to the willingness of the Mozambican government but also because of the role played by some of its most important key partners: China and Portugal that provided low-interest loans to build the National Stadium, the Olympic village and the Olympic swimming-pool and to rehabilitate and modernize the international airport.

1. The Award to Host the 2011 All-Africa Games

Although there is no formal agreement between the governments of China and Mozambique for the sole purpose to host the AAG in regard to the construction of the football stadium and enlargement and modernization of the international airport, the timing is, however, important. In December 2008, the Zambian government evoked economic reasons to cancel the organization of the 10th edition of “African Olympiads” in 2011. Mozambique stepped in and was awarded the bid in April 2009 (Lusaka Times, 2009, “Zambia Sparred All-Africa Games Ban”, 12/4). The government’s decision to replace Zambia is directly linked with the work that was then underway, the government knew that the stadium would be finished before September 2011 and the airport would be completed even earlier. Preparation was thus under immense time pressure, but had started before the bid.

The designation of the country to host the 2011 All-Africa Games came three years after Mozambique lost its bid to host 2010 African Cup of Nations in football. At the time, the Mozambican government denounced preference of the CAF for the oil-rich countries (which are in general richer, according to the Mozambican officials). Notably Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Libya and Nigeria passed to the second phase, while bids of Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal and Zimbabwe were excluded early in the process (Jornal Notícias, 2006, “CAN-2010: Moçambique, Namíbia e Zimbábue recorrem da decisao da CAF”, 16/5; 2006, “CAN-2010: Não houve “fair-play” - Altenor Pereira”, 16/5). Eventually, Angola won the 2010 edition while Gabon and Equatorial Guinea jointly were awarded the 2012 tournament.

For the Mozambican leaders, the opportunity to host the AAG in 2011 represented “a consolation” with regard to economic gains and prestige, to elevate the name of the country not only within Africa but beyond. This was envisaged to be carried out with the support of a crucial country: The People’s Republic of China.

2. Example of the “Chinese Role” in The 2011 AAG: The National Football Stadium

Located in one of Maputo’s suburbs, Zimpeto, the modern 42,000-seats Zimpeto National Stadium was the main venue of the AAG. It hosted the opening and the closing ceremonies of the Games and was the site for important football matches and athletics.

By the time Mozambique was officially awarded the organization of the 2011 All-Africa Games, the construction of the National Stadium was underway, exactly a year had passed since the work had begun. When the first agreement was signed in November 2006, between the Mozambican government and the Chinese technical team regarding
the elaboration of the National Stadium project, the construction was set to begin in the second half of 2007 and to be complete by the end of 2009 (Portal do Governo de Moçambique, 2006, “Estádio nacional pronto até 2009”, 18/11). But bureaucratic and technical proceedings permitted the work only to start in April 2008 and the new deadline was set to be July 2010. At the time, the Minister of Youth and Sports wished that the new stadium be used by some national teams qualified for the 2010 Football World Cup in the neighboring South Africa for warm up (Jornal Notícias, 2008, “Estádio Nacional estará pronto até Julho de 2010”, 23/4).

By 2008 the government of Mozambique was engaged in improving sports and tourism infrastructures around the country to what it termed “gain dividends of the 2010 World Cup” in South Africa. An inter-ministerial department was created to coordinate the strategic commitments so that the country could benefit from this sport mega-event in South Africa and ensure that economic, cultural, sporting and social opportunities were identified and developed as a lasting legacy. However, during and after the World Cup, part of the local press denounced the strategy of the government as a fiasco. The main reason for some World Cup qualified national squads for not touring Mozambique was that the sport facilities, namely the National Stadium, were not yet ready.

In 2009, Carlos de Sousa, Mozambique’s Vice-Minister of Youth and Sports, in an interview with the BBC, had mentioned the case of this stadium project to show that Mozambique 29 months later would be ready to hold the AAG:

“We have a sports complex in place, and in November next year the new National Stadium will be ready, for football and athletics. So we only have major refurbishment to do to the infrastructure at the sports complex. We have lodging capacity for the athletes.” (BBC, 2009, “Maputo to host 2011 All Africa Games”, 10/4/).

Yet, this was too late for the World Cup in South Africa. In September 2009, José Pereira, the deputy director of the construction of the National Stadium, confessed that it could only be ready in December 2010, i.e., after the World Cup. Pereira gave some reasons for the delay; he claimed that the construction work had begun late and that the site excavation had surpassed the planned budget (Jornal Desportivo de Moçambique, 2009, “Conclusão do Estádio Nacional só depois do Mundial”, 24/9). Additionally, a series of strikes by Mozambican workers should be taken into account, too. For example, in April 2009 about 700 local workers went on strike due to wage issues, while their 260 Chinese counterparts continued to work (O País Online, 2009, “Obras do estádio nacional paralisadas”, 29/4). Consequently, the work schedule was seriously affected.

Officially, the enormous Zimpeto National Stadium, valued at US$ 65 million, was inaugurated on 23 April 2011. The symbolic importance of the new sport facility was highlighted by the Mozambican President, Armando Guebuza: “With this infrastructure, a new site of development in the city of Maputo was created. Maputo is registering changes. Mozambique is growing. The Mozambican people, […], are defeating poverty, in the countryside and in the city.” (O País Online, 2011, “Festa multicolor!”).
The new stadium to a certain extent contributed to the development of the neighbourhood in which it is located. For the future, it may provide a location for other important continental and worldwide sport events in football or athletics, possibly also in partnership with a neighbouring country. Since independence, Maputo has had a 45,000-seats stadium in good conditions.

3. Other Chinese Support to the 2011 AAG

Another important Chinese-funded infrastructure is the country’s biggest international airport located in Maputo, valued at US$ 80 million. The same Chinese construction company in charge of the Zimpeto National Stadium, Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Corporation (AFECC), carried out the work at the airport. Its expansion and modernisation began in 2008 and it was officially inaugurated in November 2010 (Jornal Notícias, 2010, “Aeroporto de Maputo: Terminal moderna para melhor servir”, 13/11; Centre for Chinese Studies, 2010:81.).

Although the modernisation of the airport was in part planned to facilitate tourism linked to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, it greatly served during the 2011 Maputo AAG; it is one of the most modern airports on the continent.

In November 2010, the Municipal Council of Maputo received from the Chinese government 150 newly built houses close to the Zimpeto National Stadium, as a donation for its staff in the context of the China-Mozambique cooperation, at the cost of about US$ 6 million. Before using the new houses, the Municipal Council handed them to the local Organizing Committee for the All-Africa Games (COJA, the Portuguese acronym) for the purposes of the AAG. From that time until the end of the Games in September 2011, COJA and its sub-commissions used the houses as their headquarters (Portal do Governo de Moçambique, 2010, “Município de Maputo inaugura 150 casas”, 3/11).

In November 2010, the Municipal Council of Maputo received from the Chinese government 150 newly built houses close to the Zimpeto National Stadium.

About two months prior to the opening of the Games, the government of China provided a free of charge aid of 72 yutong new public buses to the Maputo Public Bus Company estimated at US$ 4.6 million (Diário de Moçambique, 2011, “China oferece ao país 72 autocarros avaliados em 4, 6 milhões de dólares”, 15/7). This gesture of China minimised the chronic problem of public transportation in Maputo and in the neighbouring city of Matola. During the AAG a number of these buses were used to carry delegations from the hostels to different sports venues. During the opening and closing ceremonies these and other buses were especially important as they were used to transport thousands of spectators to and from the Zimpeto National Stadium.

The Chinese experience in hosting international mega-events also interested the organisers of the AAG. In March 2011, the Minister of Youth and Sports led a delegation that included the director-general of the Organising Committee for the All-Africa Games to China. In Beijing, the Mozambican delegation wanted to learn from the Chinese counterpart, the General Administration of Sport of China, about the organisation of the opening and closing ceremonies and about recruiting of volunteers (The Chinese Olympic Committee, 2011, “Liu Peng meets Mozambique sports minister P. Caetano”, 16/3).
In summary, we can say that the direct and indirect role of China in the 2011 Maputo All-Africa Games contributed to the political ties between Mozambique and China. Notably, most of the modern public infrastructures built in post-independent Mozambique in and around the capital had a Chinese hand in them: The National Parliament building, the Joaquim Chissano International Conference building (where the II African Union Summit was held in July 2003), the Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Ministry building, the Attorney General’s Offices, the Offices of the anti-corruption watchdog, and the Office of Criminal Investigation, among others.

The case of a financial package of about US$ 500 million to build the 4km Maputo-Catembe bridge and a 120km-road from Catembe into the touristic area of Ponta de Ouro is an example that shows that the Mozambican government relies on the support of China. Originally, the former Portuguese government had promised to finance these constructions but the subsequent new Portuguese government cancelled them due to the financial constraints that Portugal faces at the present time. President Armando Guebuza sought aid from China to carry out these socio-economic infrastructures, while he visited China in August 2011. Negotiations, however, take time. As of late December 2011, the negotiations on this issue were still underway between the Mozambican government and the relevant Chinese partners (Instituto de Promoção do Comércio e do Investimento de Macau, 2011, “Moçambique negocia financiamento para ponte Maputo-Catembe com banco chinês”, 23/12). However, another Chinese financed infrastructure is due to begin in June 2012. In fact, the 74km-highway linking Maputo to Matola when it is concluded in 2014 will greatly alleviate the suffocating heavy traffic in the country’s capital city. In this project China contributes with US$ 300 million while Mozambique participates with US$ 15 million. The work will be carried out by China Road and Bridge Corporation (Jornal Notícias, 2012, “Saída para o intenso tráfego do Maputo: Estrada circular pronta em 2014”, 8/3.). It is believed that more than 2,000 posts of employment for the locals will be generated. It is so far the biggest single loan that Mozambique benefits from China’s Exim Bank.

“While China was not the sole partner that contributed to the realisation of the Games, this article aimed at highlighting the special importance of China to the Games.”

IV. Final Remarks

This article argues that the Chinese role in the organisation of the 2011 All-Africa Games in Maputo was crucial; without it, the government of Mozambique would probably not have been able to host the Games. The cooperation built on a long tradition of the relationship that both countries enjoy since the early 1960s, long before Mozambique’s independence in 1975.

The financing of the National Stadium permitted the Mozambican government to look into sports in general, as a mean of modernising sports facilities around the capital as well revitalizing the practice of sports in the country, not least in the hope for economic gains. While China was not the sole partner that contributed to the realisation of the Games, this article aimed at highlighting the special importance of China to the Games. Other countries also provided support in different ways, both in the preparation and by providing technical and medical aid.

Symbolically, Mozambique may have gained in reputation around the continent and
China may also have gained “face” by displaying its hi-tech in infrastructure construction to the whole continent from Maputo. Mozambique was a step in China’s “stadium diplomacy”. Economically, however, the wisdom of hosting the Maputo Games was questionable. It should be emphasized that the Zambian government preferred to invest in social infrastructures rather than to go for a big sports event a year of general elections in Zambia. Either the government of Mozambique lacked advice from experts about the gains and losses of such kind of events, or blindly assumed that this mega-event would generate huge profits. The private sector should have played a more important role from the start, when the country was attributed the organization of the Games.

**End Notes**


2 In the scope of the economic opening-up, the 12th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, held in 1982, established that inter-party relations were to be based on Independence; Equality; Mutual respect; and Non-interference in others’ internal affairs. See: International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) (2007), “The Principles of the Party-to-Party Relations of the CPC.” Available at <http://www.idcpc.org.cn/english/inlrelations/principles.htm>, accessed 17/10/2011.

3 In recent years state and private Chinese investors have become very active in Mozambique. For example, since 2007, China has been part of the top 10 in the ranking of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country. In 2010 with about US$ 35 million China became the 5th foreign investor; in 2008 it had been the 2nd largest investor (US$ 76.8 million), behind South Africa (US$ 136 million). From 1990 (when China began investing in Mozambique) to 2008, about 11 412 jobs were created and by that year the total Chinese investments reached US$ 148 million. See: Centre for Chinese Studies (2010). *Evaluating China’s FOCAC commitments to Africa and mapping the way ahead*. Cape Town: University of Stellenbosch, pp. 70-83; Ilhéu, F. (2011), “The role of China in the Portuguese speaking African countries: The case of Mozambique (Part II).” *Economia Global e Gestão*, 16,1, pp. 50-53; *Jornal Notícias*, 8/8/2011, “China-Moçambique: Trocas comerciais com recorde histórico.” Available at <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/pls/notimz2/getxml/plt/contentx/1265372/20110808>, accessed 15/10/2011.

4 Especially, from 2010 after the new Minister of Youth and Sports (Pedrito Caetano) was appointed, various government officials and members of the national organizing committee constantly visited the site to inspect the process of the construction and also to encourage the workers.

5 According to the Finance Minister (Manuel Chang) of Mozambique, present at the officially ceremony of the contract for the construction of the national stadium between the representatives of the two countries in March 2008, the process of the building of the national stadium dates back to September 2005 when the presidents of Mozambique and China, Armando Guebuza and Hu Jintao respectively, met in New York on the
sideline of the United Nations World Summit celebrating the 50th anniversary of this global organization and also in line with the new policy of the Mozambican government to revitalize sports in the country (by then the government had passed the Sports Strategy and Mozambique’s bid to hold the 2010 African Cup of Nations was underway). It was agreed that China would provide a loan to set-up a new stadium in Maputo. The proper work was officially launched by the local country’s Minister of Youth and Sports (David Simango) in April 2008. See: Jornal Notícias, 29/3/2008, “Estádio Nacional: Obras iniciam próximo mês.” Available at <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/pls/notimz2/getxml/pt/contentx/145867/20080329>, accessed 15/9/2011; Jornal Notícias, 23/4/2008, “ Estádio Nacional estará pronto até Julho de 2010.” Available at <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/pls/notimz2/getxml/pt/contentx/159692/20080423>, accessed 15/9/2011.


8 This was a culmination of a saga. First the Mozambican government had previously announced that the stadium inauguration would take place in early December 2010, but as work was not yet finished it was postponed to be on December 27th 2010, but the date was inexplicably changed again, at the site there were some ministers and many journalists to witness the symbolic ceremony handover to the government of Mozambique, however, no one from the Chinese side (both the constructor and the ambassador), after the handover on January 17th, 2011 speculations were dissipated. The stadium was considered ready after the corrections, regarding security and parking issues and football pitch dimensions, detected by the inspectors of International Federation of Association Football (commonly known as FIFA, the French acronym), were undertaken. See: Jornal @Verdade, 27/1/2011, “Estádio Nacional do Zimpeto chumba em Inspeção da FIFA.” Available at <http://www.verdade.co.mz/arquivo/17045-estadio-nacional-do-zimpeto-chumba-em-inspeccao-da-fifa>, accessed 15/10/2011.


Jornal Notícias, 29/05/1978. “Moçambique e China assinam acordo de cooperação no domínio económico e técnico.”


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Revisiting Sino-Mozambican Cooperation: China’s Inroads into the Agriculture and Forestry Sectors

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This article is a shortened version of a CCS discussion paper in preparation.

Introduction

Since Mozambique became an independent state in 1975, its development trajectory has been shaped by international and internal events (Alden, 2001:8). In the first decade after independence, the Government of Mozambique (GoM) implemented a Marxist-oriented programme, which did not produce the expected outcomes (Latham, 1981:69; Abrahamsen and Nilsson, 1995: 28-30). In addition, Mozambique’s colonial past, governance inexperience, insufficient capital, poor infrastructure and unskilled population have limited the state’s capacity to develop strong governmental institutions, a solid national economy, and a cohesive national identity. Also, the internal conflict started by the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo) rebel movement against the Liberation Front of Mozambique government (Frelimo) lasted for sixteen years and destroyed much of the infrastructure left from the colonial period (Hall and Young, 1997: 115-137). To support a declining economic, political and social structure, the government was left with no alternative but to turn to Western states and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) for support by the mid-1980s (Manning, 2002: 55-6; Pitcher, 2002:103-114; Hanlon, 1991: 28-9; Hanlon, 1996: 16). The transition from a phase in which Mozambique had relative autonomy to one in which international organisations became deeply involved in the state’s development has had innumerable implications (Ottaway, 1988: 222; Manning, 2002: 123-132).

On the one hand, financial and technical assistance of donors and IFIs has interfered with the government’s development programmes, the allocation and uses of its funds, and the objectives it has to meet (Plank, 1993: 441; Batley, 2005; Arndt et al. 2007). This has constrained the state’s room for manoeuvre (Newitt, 2002: 227). On the other hand, the availability of financial resources which were almost inexistent until the mid-1980s has facilitated the promotion of patrimonial ties and the prioritisation of personal economic and political interests over national welfare.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the rise of China in Africa brought sub-Saharan African states into the spotlight, showed China’s potential for becoming a driver of change in the development of sub-Saharan African states, and exposed a new dynamics in international affairs. The implications of China’s involvement in sub-Saharan African states development have been intensively debated (Broadman, 2006; Gomes, 2007; Manji and Marks, 2007; Mawdsley, 2008; Bräutigam, 2009; ‘The Chinese Are Coming’ by the BBC, 2011; Oxford University China Africa Network...
Mozambique has also been benefiting from stronger economic and diplomatic relations with China. As China seeks to secure access to natural, mineral, agricultural and energy resources, it uses a range of development and financial assistance instruments to promote development in countries like Mozambique and to cement ties. Mozambique's choice of development partners can sustain the GoM with alternative sources of aid, trade and investment, and with increasing economic opportunities and benefits. However, Mozambique's ruling elite can also use these new external resources to pursue elite projects, to sustain clientelistic networks, and to promote self-aggrandisement. Moreover, China can create new dependency linkages or impose conditions by linking aid to trade, investments and joint ventures with Mainland China (Taylor, 2011: 51-2).

This article seeks to discuss and shed light into China's interests and impact on sectors relevant for Mozambique's development. It also seeks to examine how China's growing involvement in Mozambique's agriculture and forestry sectors collude or clash with Mozambican development policies. Finally, it seeks to analyse the role the Mozambican ruling elite plays in shaping Sino-Mozambican cooperation.

"Agriculture and forestry are priority sectors in Mozambique’s development policies and are key to boosting sustainable development and reducing poverty."

Analysing China’s inroads into Mozambique’s economy in two sectors

Agriculture and forestry are priority sectors in Mozambique’s development policies and are key to boosting sustainable development and reducing poverty. Both cases highlight issues such as the state’s capacity to enhance economic growth and economic diversification, to develop a national economy, to increase the efficiency and accountability of government institutions, and to create opportunities for social development. Often the GoM’s rhetoric and policies are not consistent with what is executed in practice. The most relevant agriculture and forestry sectors policies which are meant to promote a sustainable development and growth are often relegated to the second place as the ruling elite prioritises the development of large-scale projects, neglects breaches to the law, and grants privileges to a few of its constituents. Thus, the impact of China’s cooperation with Mozambique in these sectors is key to examine the advantages and disadvantages of bilateral engagements and to examine the role Chinese and Mozambican actors’ play in shaping outcomes.

A brief note on data collection and analysis: The data used for each case derives from online newspaper articles, published research, official documents and policies, and reports from governmental and non-governmental bodies. The data used for each case is explanatory in nature and relies on the analysis of secondary material. The information provided by different sources was cross-checked to examine whether there were significant differences in the information published, whether any methodological issues arose from the way in which information was produced and circulated, and whether there were any issues concerning the reliability of information sources (Myers et al. 1996: 23-4; Robison, 2004: 384; Mawdsley, 2008; Bräutigam, 2009: 258-9; Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2009: 696-7; Bräutigam, 2010: 19).
China's inroads into Mozambique's agriculture sector

In the late 1970s, China put a significant emphasis on agriculture reform and development, and on taking peasants out of poverty. At the same time, China aimed “to create the food security, rural stability, surplus income, and labour supply to drive broader industrial development” (Davis and Woetzel, 2011). Priorities and objectives that led to successful agricultural development in China included: agriculture policy reforms, macroeconomic reforms, pro-poor policies, multi-sectoral rural development projects, institutional capacity development, infrastructure construction, technological investment, gradual market liberalisation, credit and finance, internal market integration, micro-level smallholder programmes, and rural industrialisation (Ravallion, 2009: 307-310; Sandrey and Edinger, 2009; Fan et al. 2010: 4-6). In a few decades, China managed to ensure the nation's food security, to improve the nutrition levels of the population, and to reduce the undernourishment and poverty rates (Xiaoyun, no date).

Despite the achievements made in Chinese agriculture, China’s experiment has also encountered significant shortcomings or drawbacks. The most important concern environmental degradation, soil erosion, a rise in social and economic inequalities and the continued prevalence of considerable poverty rates in rural areas (Ravallion, 2009: 306; Fan et al. 2010: 3) Furthermore, the decrease of arable land in China has increased the pressure on agricultural land. Similarly, the growing population and rising levels of agricultural imports have forced China to rethink its own food security strategy (Ekman, no date: 15-22; Sandrey and Edinger, 2009: 9). As a result, the possibility of China practicing ‘overseas farming’ in countries with extensive arable land has been raised. However, this possibility has at times been confused and enmeshed with China’s intent to promote agricultural projects abroad, to enhance its ‘Going Global’ strategy and agriculture-related ventures, and to ensure its own food security (Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2009; Hairong and Sautman, 2010).

Since China engaged with sub-Saharan African states, agricultural cooperation has been a priority (FOCAC, 2006; FOCAC, 2010). On the one hand, the development of agricultural aid projects or partnerships generates the possibility for mutual cooperation, technology transfer and for lessons to be learnt from China’s expertise (Hairong and Sautman, 2010: 320-1). At the same time, they set opportunities for Chinese agricultural companies and entrepreneurs to expand their businesses abroad (Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2009: 692-3; Fan et al. 2010: 10-2). On the other hand, Chinese investments in agriculture overseas raise concerns over China’s potential ‘land grab’, when considering the wider economic and social implications of land lease for host countries, and the risk of “increasing the vulnerability of traditional subsistence farmers and smallholders” (Bräutigam and Xiaoang, 2009: 687).

As elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, the increasing Sino-Mozambican agricultural cooperation has been developed according to objectives set by China at the FOCAC ministerial meetings and in China’s Africa Policy (FOCAC, 2006; Anon. 2007; FOCAC, 2010). In particular, China’s commitment to establishing agricultural demonstration centres, enhancing technology and knowledge transfer, financing infrastructure construction, sending technical experts, and promoting technical training programmes
in “crop seed selection, [and] farming” (Taylor, 2011: 49). Agricultural aid projects have been financed by the Chinese Government, the CADFund, and the Exim Bank of China (Sandrey and Edinger, 2009: 37-9). More specifically, China’s agricultural cooperation with Mozambique has been promoted by the following means:

- Chinese government officials and entrepreneurs have visited Mozambique and expressed their interest in promoting agricultural engagements.
- The Chinese Government and Chinese companies have been financing some agriculture projects in Mozambique.
- China has been funding the development of agricultural demonstration centres.
- China has been promoting the transfer of skills and technology and providing technical assistance.
- Chinese experts have been promoting research on new seeds varieties in Mozambique.
- China has granted agricultural machinery to Mozambique.
- Mozambique has promoted the export of agricultural products to China.

Sino-Mozambican agricultural cooperation involves a combination of private initiatives and state promoted agricultural aid projects and agriculture-related partnerships.

China’s Impact in Mozambique’s Agriculture Sector

Sino-Mozambican agricultural cooperation involves a combination of private initiatives and state promoted agricultural aid projects and agriculture-related partnerships. In practice, Chinese investments in Mozambique’s agriculture sector are still insignificant if compared to investments in and imports of other natural and extractive resources (Hon et al. 2010: 79). Agriculture represented 1% of Chinese FDI to Mozambique in 2007 and an estimated 12% of Mozambique’s total exports to China in 2008 (Chichava, 2010b: 3; Hon et al. 2010: 79). Nonetheless, the potential for China and Mozambique to deepen cooperation in producing cash crops that represent significant agricultural imports for China, such as soybeans, cotton or tobacco, is considerable (Sandrey and Edinger, 2009: 52). Similarly, the potential for Mozambique to draw lessons from China’s policymaking practices, agriculture and rural growth policies, farming technologies, institutional capacity building, and to benefit from Chinese investment and financial assistance is significant (Roque, 2009: 11; Sandrey and Edinger, 2009; Ravallion, 2009: 311; Fan et al. 2010: 11-2).

Considering the scale and scope of Sino-Mozambican agricultural cooperation, significant challenges still constrain the potential for Mozambique to benefit from more aid and investment from China (Ekman, no date: 38-40; Kamphuis, 2009: 9). The lack of capacity of the Mozambican state to implement policies and laws effectively, to improve governance quality, to advance institutional capacity, to articulate agricultural policies with rural development, to enhance poverty reduction and to empower smallholders has had substantial negative impact on agricultural development (Ekman, no date; Ravallion, 2009: 311; Savana, 2011b). At the economic level, the lack of much needed state support in policymaking, in infrastructure construction, in
credit provision, in improving investment conditions and in developing processing facilities, has negatively impacted on the potential of the agricultural sector and discouraged Chinese investment (Alvarenga, 2008: 66; Roque, 2009: 11; Rubinstein, 2009). Poor infrastructure and high shipping costs have been two of the factors identified by Chinese entrepreneurs not to invest in Mozambique: “companies are afraid just to make up a total loss” (Chicha, 2010b: 6).

Simultaneously, the expansion of China’s agricultural projects in Mozambique exerts some economic and social implications. In 2008, Loro Horta (somewhat polemically) suggested that China’s ‘land grab’ in the Zambeze valley would turn Mozambique into its ‘first agricultural colony’ (Horta, 2008). Despite the lack of accuracy in the news, some implications of China’s interests in developing and investing in Mozambique’s agricultural sector were disclosed (Ekman, no date: 28; Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2009: 696-8 and 705-6; Chichava, 2010b: 6-7). Horta’s (2008) article raised awareness of the fact that: agreements set at the government level often disregard the interests and rights of local populations; that large land leases can increase cash-crop exports to China when Mozambique still needs food assistance and depends on food imports; and that China’s agricultural interests can imply the settlement of Chinese workers in rural areas directly impacting on the livelihoods of local communities. Longer-term issues are also implicated: competition between Mozambican and Chinese producers in local markets; increase of cash-crop production at the expense of food-crop production for local consumption; abandonment of food-crop production for seasonal work in cash crops causing a gap in food-crop production; and a conflict between men and women roles in the division of labour (Bräutigam and Xiaoyang, 2009: 706).

To conclude, Mozambique is faced with the possibility of Chinese investments bringing capital, know-how, technology and market access which can significantly impact on agriculture (Alvarenga, 2008: 67) Simultaneously, it is faced with the possibility of Chinese led agriculture projects or land leases putting the food security and livelihoods of rural communities at risk and infringing traditional land rights. Nonetheless, the evidence shows that China’s role in Mozambique’s agriculture is comparatively insignificant and that other external actors exert a more significant impact on it without the implications of their practices always being considered (Ekman, no date: 31; Franco et al. 2010; AgroNoticias, 2011).

**China’s Inroads into Mozambique’s Forestry Sector**

China is the world’s leading importer of unprocessed forest products and exporter of processed woods, furniture and other processed wood materials. China’s wood industry grew mainly out of the manufacture of Chinese products for the Chinese and international markets. China’s economic boom in the 1990s increased its demand for wood, but the logging ban imposed in the Chuanxi Forest area in 1998 forced Chinese companies to look abroad for their supply of wood products. Hence, China turned to countries like Russia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Vietnam and Gabon to import various wood species (Xiufang and Canby, 2011).

By imposing little or no tax on imported raw logs but significant tax on processed
woods, the government promoted the import of unprocessed logs and secured the sustainability of the national logging industry. China’s massive processing capacity did however create disequilibrium in the international market which also, in some less democratic countries, increased illegal logging activities. By importing logs in large quantities and with few taxes, the processing and sale of wood products to the national and international market became relatively cheap (Bossel and Norfolk, 2007; Feijó, 2010). As a result of this trend, China’s wood industry reached the highest levels of import, production and export in 2009, importing 113 million m³ of forest products and exporting wood products to a total value of US$25 billion (Xiufang and Canby, 2011). Such fast dynamics have however raised concerns over the sustainability of logging activities and over the economic, social, and environmental impact of this activity in supplier countries like Mozambique (Mol, 2011).

"Even though Mozambique represents less than 1% of China’s total imports of wood per annum, China is its main export partner for wood."

Even though Mozambique represents less than 1% of China's total imports of wood per annum, China is its main export partner for wood (Bossel and Norfolk, 2007). Mozambique has been exporting wood to China since at least 1997 but the real quantity and value of exports is indeterminate (Table 2).

**Table 2 Mozambique’s Forest Products Exports to China, 1997-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FAOSTAT Quantity Total (m³)</th>
<th>Global Timber Quantity Total (m³)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>28,196 (includes round, sawn and plywood, and other wood products)</td>
<td>not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>15,709</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>38,137</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>76,214</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>65,541</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>79,685</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>70,195</td>
<td>81,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>70,155</td>
<td>81,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>331,065</td>
<td>111,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>34,563</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13,188</td>
<td>219,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>70,294</td>
<td>197,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>79,425</td>
<td>155,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>219,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAOSTAT Forestry (2011); Global Timber (2011)
Various practices are endorsed by both Chinese and Mozambican actors which undermine the potential of the forestry sector in Mozambique. In 2007, China’s Forestry Administration and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce issued the Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management by Chinese Companies Operating Outside China, which have reportedly had a positive impact on Chinese activity in countries like Cameroon, but despite efforts to improve Chinese logging activity abroad the practices of Chinese operators in Mozambique are below the legal requirements (Ceruti et al. 2011). Infringements in the forestry sector are not one-sided; Mozambican elites also contribute to the deterioration of conditions for logging activity (Chichava, 2010a: 344-6). In 2006, Catherine Mackenzie’s report exposed illegal logging activities carried out by Chinese and Mozambicans in Zambezia province, which has increased significantly. Involvement extends throughout the sector: from simple licence holders to industrial forestry concession holders, from timber buyers to export companies, and includes village leaders, local wood loggers, truck owners, shipping companies, government authorities, customs officers and the police (Mackenzie, 2006: 13-9).

Mackenzie (2006) shows that a patron-client relation is often established between Chinese financiers and small operators. Whilst the former often end up controlling the commodity chain, the latter often become entrapped into debt and have to secure logs supply to Chinese traders to repay their debts. Small operators use the underpaid workforce in local communities to cut and transport the logs to the ports. They pay bribes to provincial authorities for the acquisition of simple licences, but also to forest officers, village leaders and checkpoint controllers, police and customs officers to under-report and under-invoice over-cutting, mislabel tree species and facilitate the transport of logs from the forests to the ports. On a larger scale, forest concession holders are national investors. They are politically related to Frelimo, therefore to local and provincial government authorities which, in partnership with Chinese operators, harvest and export mostly unprocessed logs to China. At this level, circumventing the law becomes easier.

Government officials’ involvement in corrupt practices in the timber industry makes the government’s rhetoric significantly distinct from the reality.

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Government officials’ involvement in corrupt practices in the timber industry makes the government’s rhetoric significantly distinct from the reality. From the information collected, Mackenzie observes that in 2003 the largest timber export companies in Quelimane were all Chinese: Madeiras Alman, Green Timber, Peter Yu, Timberworld (Chen Kee Meng). Many had local partners connected to the Frelimo party and the Chissano family. As a result of various stakeholders’ involvement in the forestry sector and of widespread illegal logging activity, Mackenzie (2006: 17) demonstrates that: a) Chinese timber buyers and operators “have no interest in the sustainable development of the sector” – when the conditions are no longer favourable they will move to other countries; and b) forestry governance laws are often not applied by Mozambican authorities. The political elites put into “direct conflict public responsibilities and private interests” (Mackenzie, 2006: vi). Rather than seeking to move Mozambique up in the value chain, to obtain income from the processing and
export of processed wood, and to create jobs, the government and Mozambican operators are promoting corrupt practices\(^1\).

The impact of Mackenzie’s report on the Mozambican media, NGOs, and civil society was significant and led to an unofficial national campaign against illegal logging. Criticisms have been widely expressed in the civil-society weblog Diario de um Sociólogo about the illegal practices (Feijó, 2010). The concerns expressed in civil society resulted in the writing of two open letters to Mozambique’s president by the academic Carlos Serra and the journalist Marcelo Mosse and the composition of the lyrics for a song about China’s illegal extraction of timber by the writer Mia Couto (Feijó, 2010: 6-7). The NGO Justiça Ambiental and the movement Amigos da Floresta have since 2007 researched and discussed the environmental, social and economic impact of illegal logging activity in the central and northern regions of Mozambique, and have examined how these directly relate to governance issues.

\[\text{The overall appraisal, the environmental and social impact, of forest management, processing and export remain poor. Sustainable forest management plans are not implemented.}\]

In 2007, a report published by Bossel and Norfolk drew attention to the practices in the province of Cabo Delgado. As with the cases in Zambezia province, Chinese operators are involved in financing and buying timber from simple licence holders. Chinese transport companies, for instance Mogid, Mico and Heyne, and shipping companies are involved in transporting timber to the ports and exporting it to China. Of nine companies with approved forest concession licences in 2006, at least one was Chinese, Mofid, and the others export most of the timber harvested to China. From 2000 to 2005, 85% of the timber harvested in Cabo Delgado had China as its final destination. The overall appraisal, the environmental and social impact, of forest management, processing and export remain poor. Sustainable forest management plans are not implemented. Bribery and corruption facilitate illegal logging which represents significant financial losses to the economy and the state. Deforestation is increasing the negative impact on local livelihoods and on the environment.

The Mozambican media has also investigated and exposed illegal logging activities.

- In February 2007, Mozambican newspapers reported that 50 timber containers were held in the port of Pemba, Cabo Delgado, which belonged to the Chinese company Mofid. A fine of 276,745 Meticais (approximately US$10,482) was applied and the wood was stored to be re-sold in public auction (Noticias Lusófonas, 2007). In 2004, Mofid had already been found guilty of fraud for issuing false documents (Noticias Lusófonas, 2007).

- In September 2007, in the province of Nampula, the port of Nacala director and two customs officers were suspended for involvement in the falsification of forged export permits for unprocessed logs (Noticias, 2007b).

- In November 2007, an investigation enhanced by a multi-disciplinary team found that Aristides Muhate, Director of the Forestry and Wildlife Department in Nampula and son of the Minister of Agriculture, was involved in facilitating business with Chinese companies involved in the illegal export of timber to China. Muhate was forced to leave his post but no charges were made against him (Wamphula Fax, 2007).
In December 2007, 543 timber containers were held at Nacala for the attempt to export unprocessed logs illegally. Eight Chinese companies were found guilty, the China HK Development Group among them, and a fine of 13,503,240 Meticais (approximately US$511,486) was issued (Noticias, 2007c).

In October 2008, 53 timber containers with 5,400 round logs were held in the port of Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado, for the illegal export of unprocessed wood. The containers belonged to the Chinese companies MT International and Alman, who were charged with a fine of 486 million Meticais (US$1.8 million) (Araujo, 2008).

In July 2011, 561 timber containers were held at Nacala with round wood logs of unprocessed pau-preto, pau-rosa, and sandalo. The containers belonged to Chinese companies: Casa Bonita International, Zheng Long International, Mozambique Trading Ltd, Yizhou, Tong Fa Ltd, Chanate Ltd, Senyu and Verdura Ltd. As a result, the Regional Customs Director of Nacala was dismissed, but no other sanctions were applied (Savana, 2011a).

In sum, the forestry sector has raised numerous issues; from compliance with forest law to environmental concerns, sustainable extraction of logs, and the development of wood processing industry. Furthermore, despite the media, local groups and NGOs disclosing cases of non-transparent logging activity, illegal timber export, and detention of timber containers at Mozambican ports, it is not always clear that companies that infringe the law pay the fines and no major follow ups are made by the government. The measures taken to contravene illegal logging are superficial and have no major consequences for the perpetrators.

"In sum, the forestry sector has raised numerous issues; from compliance with forest law to environmental concerns, sustainable extraction of logs, and the development of wood processing industry."

Conclusion

In the recent decades, the GoM has adopted policies to develop the agriculture and forestry sectors. Traditional donors have disbursed substantial sums of aid, provided technical advice and imposed conditions in the attempt to enhance development. In both cases it was observed that policies still need to be effectively implemented for real progress to be made.

More recently, Mozambique has had the opportunity of benefiting from Chinese aid, trade and investment. Agriculture and forestry are two areas in which China has become increasingly involved. In the case of agriculture, China's aid and investment offer a practical approach to agricultural development. China's assistance has focused on: promoting technology and knowledge transfer through the agricultural demonstration centres it builds, increasing cereal production by researching and testing new seed varieties, and expanding Mozambique's processing capacity and infrastructure. The current pattern of Chinese involvement could promote mechanisms to combat poverty and enhance development but the overall level of Chinese investment in agriculture is still insignificant. Notwithstanding, whether China does or does not increase its agricultural investments, the GoM is liable for determining and
enforcing national policies and for relegating personal interests to the bottom of its priorities. In the case of forestry, logging is largely beyond the control of state authority. The weak state apparatus enables Mozambican economic and political elites alongside Chinese entrepreneurs to participate illegally in this activity and to benefit from it. This is possibly the most problematic issue of Sino-Mozambican cooperation. The differences between the laws, regulations, strategies and development objectives set by the GoM and what occurs in practice are evident. The GoM does little to prevent its elites at the national and local level, as well as Chinese operators, from appropriating state resources illegally. The interests of government officials involved in the timber industry clash directly with their official obligations and with government policies and strategies. Government controls become ineffective as a result of personal interests and corruption subverting the state machinery. On the whole, Mozambique’s weak forest governance, the weak performance of political and institutional actors, the lack of strategic thinking in promoting sustainable forestry management, in developing the processing industry, creating jobs and extending social welfare, negatively impact on development. Forestry sector policies are subverted by China’s policies, by Chinese operators’ modus operandi, by the personal interests of Mozambican elites and by petty corruption promoted by local government officials.

To conclude, asymmetries in bilateral cooperation show that relations do not challenge inefficient and corrupt government structures. China exerts very limited interference in the internal affairs of Mozambique and the ruling elite sustains a form of governance that both undermines the rule of law and disregards means to increase national cohesion and state legitimacy. The GoM undertakes businesses that do not directly benefit local communities or allow them to participate in negotiations. This provides ruling elites with the means to sustain patron-client networks; it maintains the exploration of the few natural resources but often diverts revenue away from socio-economic reinvestment.

End Notes

1 In 2009, Mackenzie’s 2006 report was revised. In the new report, Mackenzie and Ribeiro (2009) observe no improvements in any of the key areas for sustainable management of forest resources and development of the processing industry. They note that the number of simple licences issued decreased from 863 in 2004 to 113 in 2007, but illegal licensing increased and unlicensed logging and overcutting remain common practices. The number of forest concession contracts has increased from 2 in 2004 to 32 in 2008 and the quality of concession management plans remains poor. The cutting cycle plans are too short and reforestation plans are poorly implemented. From 2001 to 2007, only 25 nurseries were created to grow native species covering an estimated area of 123 hectares. Records with cumulative and geographically referenced information of species and volumes cut are not systematically reported. There is a relative increase in the number of checkpoints, however the number of staff has decreased and more checkpoints do not translate as more law enforcement but as further rent-seeking behaviour. The existent sawmills have not been upgraded and continue to produce only rough sawn planks. On the whole, “corruption, arrogance and mismanagement continue and are seriously undermining the rule of law, accountability of government and future of the forest sector” (Mackenzie and Ribeiro, 2009: 27).
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**Mafalda Ferreira Piçarra** recently finished an MPhil in Politics at the University of Bristol. The MPhil research concerned the analysis of China’s increasing involvement in Mozambique’s agriculture, forestry and energy sectors, and the examination of the ways in which China impacts on different elements of Mozambique’s empirical sovereignty.
The non-contradiction of contemporary China

By Dr. Ross Anthony
Research Fellow, Centre for Chinese Studies

A common way of describing China in today’s media is to claim that it is an “authoritarian, communist regime”; another frequent phrase is that it is “a thriving capitalist country, which is communist only in name”. Common sense tells us that both of these statements cannot be true. Surely it is impossible to have a country which is at once highly centralized and committed to socialist principles while simultaneously embracing the free market? It may be one of these things pretending to be the other, but surely not both at the same time? If, however, we are to get a grasp on how the Chinese system works today, we need to embrace this contradiction and think of China as socialist and capitalist in the same instance.

An important aspect of China’s Maoist period was the development of what was referred to as the “mass line” – the organizational and leadership structure of the party which permeated virtually every level of society from urban work units and agricultural communes to unions and youth organizations. Crucial to the functioning of this organizational form was the sustained dissemination of party propaganda promoting discipline and self-sacrifice. Thus, while the mass line was a top-down bureaucratic structure, it was not, in any stereotypical sense, cold and faceless; rather, it mobilized citizens through a highly emotive campaign in which selfless labour and correct ideological thinking served as a vehicle for striving toward socialist utopia.

On the cover of a June 2001 edition of The Economist magazine is a photograph of three young Chinese men, smoking, one with long, bleached blonde hair and another with a red Mohican. One of the young men wears a T-shirt with Mao Zedong on the front, another with a picture of Argentinean Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara. The cover caption, “As China Changes”, suggests that the revolutionary zeal of the earlier socialist period has now been reduced to a fashion accessory, subordinate to the far more serious business of hedonistic consumption. Certainly, the ironic and sometimes humorous distancing from the old days of Marxist-Leninist stoicism is a prevalent theme within urban China today: I was once told by a man in Chengdu that the large statue of Mao in the city centre, with its fingers stretched out toward the masses, is the Great Helmsman’s plea for citizens to drink five beers a day.

But to suggest that such anecdotal evidence supports the “socialism only in name” theory would be to only grasp half the picture. For the T-shirts that the young men are wearing and the cigarettes that they are smoking, come from highly organized assembly lines of laborers who work according to principles not that distant from those of the Mass Line some thirty years prior. The quasi-militarized organization of “the world’s workshop”, in which uniforms distinguish roles and ranks and where bathroom visits require permits, seems a world away from the Mickey Mouse and Barbie Dolls being assembled. And yet it is not merely the organizational principles of the earlier socialist period which persist within Chinese factories: there is also a continuity of the
affective dimension of socialism, in which employees express their allegiance to the factory collective through morning group exercises and transform themselves into higher quality workers through self-criticism sessions. David Davies has even written of a Chinese Walmart manager who actively draws on the works of Mao Zedong to positively motivate his employees. The logic of the socialist cell extends into the booming realm of middle and upper class gated communities, in which Romanesque and Mediterranean-themed villas are run by self-organized neighbourhood communities who keep a vigilant eye on the comings and goings of inhabitants.

The urge to understand Chinese society as either a capitalist one or a socialist one, but never both, is perhaps an impediment to grasping how the region functions today. If indeed “capitalism with Chinese characteristics” is a model unique to a particular revolutionary historical experience of the Chinese people, then what might it mean to transpose such a model to the developing world? Would it even make sense to do so, and if so, might it work better in countries with their own histories of African Socialism (say, Tanzania or Ethiopia’s Derg, with its brand of African Stalinism)? Whatever the case, when we think of new political and economic models attempting to describe China, we need to be able to think, at least by western (Cold War influenced) standards, in terms of analytical contradictions. But more importantly, we need to try and imagine it from the Chinese perspective, in which it is not a contradiction at all but simply the nature of contemporary reality.
Considering labour in industrialisation: It is for people – not for the statistics!

By Yejoo Kim
Research Analyst, Centre for Chinese Studies

Industrialisation is regarded as key for economic growth in developing countries. Many African countries are pushing towards industrialisation, moving away from resource extractive economies and aiming at economic diversification. To this end, emerging investors' engagements have been regarded as fresh opportunities for Africa and have been welcomed in the continent. However, the reverse side of the relationship should be revisited. The emerging investors, including China, mostly operate in the textile or light machinery sectors, i.e. in labour-intensive sectors. While this creates jobs, it is also in a low-pay segment, and consequently, labour related issues have often arisen to trouble the waters. The goal of industrialisation should not be achieved by regarding the country’s own workforce purely as productive factors; development is engineered by people, not simply engineered with them. Sustainability of investments is a key factor to consider.

A case in point is Namibia’s experience with a multinational company, Ramatex. Even though the incident occurred several years ago, there are still lessons to be learnt from it. The Malaysian-owned multinational textile company, Ramatex, started its operation in Namibia in 2001. The Namibian government, faced with unemployment reaching a record high of 31% in 2001, was eager to attract the company. The Namibian government provided unprecedented concessions including infrastructure support, and tax exemptions among others. In turn, Ramatex promised to create 8 000 jobs and this was expected to be a cornerstone of Namibia’s industrial development. However, this bright optimism soon wore off. Besides environmental issues with long-term costs involved, such as the pollution of Windhoek’s water resources, the company met with increasing resentment from locals. Strikes broke out due to the company’s ill-treatment of labour and its use of migrant workers from Bangladesh instead of local workers. Finally Ramatex completely closed down the operation in Namibia in 2008 and left the state of Namibia with long-term costs.

Past mistakes

A lesson to be learnt from this incident is that development should be pursued for the sake of citizens, not in order to get statistics right. The implications reach beyond the fate of an individual enterprise and the consequences were not limited to only the company’s shutdown. The government’s initial and subsequent investment did not pay off. This foreign investor’s sudden shutdown brought about a significant economic setback; after the shutdown of the company, thousands were left jobless. After the closure of Ramatex, the Namibian government accused labour of causing trouble and driving the investors away. Trade unions criticised the non-adherence of Ramatex to Namibia’s labour regulations. There was common ground between the Namibian government and the trade unions to try and get compensation from the company; yet, this came to nothing and the Namibian government (and ultimately: Namibians) had to shoulder all the damages at their own costs.
**Labour questions are important for development – but not just the costs**

Labour needs to be a point in the consideration of development. Also in China, the government is now following a more inward-looking approach, highlighting the lessons from inequality underlying its remarkable economic growth through economic reforms. The increasing spark up of labour unrest in China shows that keeping the price of labour low can no longer be a viable pathway for development in China. Of course, work ethics and productivity are a topic – but that actually means investments in labour skills and training. Without the improvement of the quality of labour, many developing countries will remain suppliers of mostly un-skilled labour. In fact, decent wages and a prosperous new middle class’s demands can be the economic engine for further growth. Domestic consumption will be reinvested domestically, and through this process, it will be possible to step out of the vicious cycle of poverty.

The scarcity of skilled labour has repeatedly been pointed out as one of the biggest problems on the continent. In retrospect, in the newly industrialising countries (NICs) of East Asia, labour was treated as an asset. Even though the success of the economy was due to cheap labour, there existed at the same time an endeavour on the part of governments to invest in and further develop human resources. Nowadays, the first generation NICs such as Singapore and South Korea as well as Southeast Asian NICs like Malaysia still attract investment. These countries nowadays do not provide cheap labour, but they guarantee high productivity based on high quality labour.

Many African governments highlight the significance of the inflow of investment, and try hard to provide incentives for investors. This is right. Yet, the fundamental goal of industrialisation - national development – should be considered before taking the first step. Demanding hard work is clearly in the interest of the economy. But developing skills should feature at least as high on the agenda!

In the developing world, host governments are likely to be put under double pressure. On the one hand, countries need foreign investment which will be conducive to job-creation and technology transfer, therefore, they have to provide substantial incentives to encourage investment. On the other hand, they are under pressure from local trade unions that advocate a decent work environment. Considering the nature of investors that look for cheap labour, African governments aspire to offer abundant and cheap labour. This has become one of the attractive incentives to lure capital – well, it has, to a large extent, been the Chinese way to foster investments, and create growth. However, in many cases, host governments do not consider the long-term effects of the foreign businesses, thinking only of short-term gain. Long-term effects do include social sustainability of business models. Business is unlikely to comply with standards spontaneously if there is no regulation. Government authorities are arguably the only actors able to effectively guide them and need to advocate for the public good, and sustainable development cannot happen at the expense of people. Particularly not, as the pathway to make labour cheap means an immediate race to the bottom with the giant labour reserve China. That is a race that no African country can win.
China’s Weibo: Censorship getting sophisticated?

By Matthew McDonald
Research Analyst, Centre for Chinese Studies

Chinese users of online Twitter-alike Sina Weibo can expect extra restrictions to the service in the wake of allegations of several authorities that users were publishing “false rumours” on the site. These “rumours” include politically sensitive recent domestic political scandals involving deposed Chongqing mayor Bo Xilai and the escape from house arrest of activist Chen Guangcheng, as well as stories regarding the change of leadership in neighbouring North Korea. This new wave of restrictions is but one of many the CCP designs to keep the flow of information in China controlled. But is censorship winning the fight?

The new restrictions to Weibo will see a “points system” introduced that acts very much like the drivers licence management system employed by many countries, including South Africa. Users will start off with a total 80 points, and each recorded infraction will lead to point deductions from the user’s account. Once a user has reached 60 points, a “low credit” warning appears on his or her microblog, which restricts certain features. This can be undone after a two month probation period, after which the full 80 points can be restored for good behaviour. If there are more infractions during the probation period, the user faces expulsion from the site, perhaps permanently.

The topics that will incur points deductions are strikingly familiar to anyone with experience of China’s information and content restrictions, namely, users should not: spread rumours; publish untrue information; attack others with personal insults or libellous comments; oppose the basic principles of China’s constitution; reveal national secrets; threaten China’s honour; promote cults or superstitions; call for illegal protests or mass gatherings. Some of the points would be familiar to users elsewhere; for instance, spreading hate speech is illegal in South Africa, too. Yet, the shades of grey with e.g. ‘threaten China’s honour’ (what exactly does censorship understand by this, anything that does not follow the official line?) or the restriction on religious freedom are obvious tools to limit freedom of speech.

Weibo’s parent company, Sina Corp, reports that the service has somewhere over 300 million users, which is a somewhat intimidating figure – apparently also to the Chinese government. Chinese web users have long been subjected to very strict information control mechanisms tooled by the central government to restrict access to certain information groups and topics. This control extends across censorship of media content, restriction of search protocols online, and also increasingly to the blossoming communities of micro-bloggers that have sprung up across the country.

Sina, and its competitors were recently mandated by the government to make known the identities of every user that employs their respective services, though there was a slow uptake on this from Sina Corp in particular, leading to criticism from the government. The service providers were also ordered to suspend comment functions on several sites to prevent the further spread of gossip with regard to contentious topics. Several search engines suspended topics like “Bo Xilai” from search results, in an effort to control online activity.
But analysts consider these new restrictions will pose few problems to China’s numerous net mavericks that regularly thumb their noses at central government’s censorship. One commentator, Kerry Brown from London’s Chatham House think tank says many users will simply adopt coded references for contentious topics, that will evade the censorship software that Weibo administrators will use to trawl the information streams for users’ abusing the rules. Censorship thereby complicates internet use and forces users to avoid certain keywords or create ‘proxy terms’, but it is unlikely to fully stop online discussions on politically contentious issues.

While the Chinese public’s reactions to events of recent months, such as Bo Xilai’s disgrace and Chen Guangcheng’s escape, have posed challenges to China’s censorship, the upcoming transition of leadership in the CCP will create more discussions on the choppy, messy and murky waters of the capital’s political community. Politicians – and their censors – will have to confront the imperatives of projecting the party as a unified force both within China’s borders, and outside. Even the party’s number two, prime minister Wen Jiabao, was subjected to censorship several times in the past few years, most recently in a letter he published in a party journal with the ironic title Seeking Truth. His letter addressed party concerns with stamping out government corruption, but was edited heavily before publication. Premier Wen has also been censored by the state propaganda machinery when he has spoken out on the need to reform the political system, such as a high profile interview on America’s CNN which was cut from the Chinese broadcast. Chinese media consumers were not provided with these statements, indicating an inner-party strive about ‘the right way’.

As China modernises, the official control of information becomes an increasingly difficult task to manage by the party, both from the side of an increasingly tech-savvy population who will find means both technological and semantic to circumvent Beijing’s restrictions, and also from the side of the political elites, whose all the more public attempts to shut down conversations about sensitive topics increasingly cast them in a bad light. For some high-ranking cadres, recent high profile scandals like the Bo Xilai saga seem to demand further tightening of the political grip, while reformers such as Wen Jiabao demand more transparency, even if only to thwart corrupt forces within government.

China’s domestic politics is a steam cooker as it moves to a new party leadership structure at the end of this year and party careers are at stake, and the heat is steadily rising. Demands from China’s online communities (as part of the growing middle class) for access to spaces for political dialogue are heating up at the same time. The ability of this system to deflect China’s growing political discourse will increasingly be tested – and it is going to be interesting to see which strategy will prevail: to embrace the will to open dialogue, even if it is critical, or to carry on snuffing out channels where Chinese vent their feelings on their political leaders.

Recent Events at the CCS

American University Business Education Professors visit CCS – 11 May 2012

A delegation of American professors and academics in business education visited the CCS on Friday, 11 May as part of a trip to South Africa organised by CIBER, the Centre for International Business Education and Research at the Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina. CIBER has outlets at many US tertiary institutions. The CCS presented on aspects of its research activities and engaged in discussions with the visitors.

CCS China Forum with Professor LI Wanxin – 21 May 2012

Subsequent to the CCS workshop “Greening China-Africa relations” held in Stellenbosch on 17 and 18 May 2012, Professor LI Wanxin from City University Hong Kong. Professor Li presented a paper entitled “Environmental information transparency and implications for green growth in China” at the workshop and kindly agreed to present a public lecture for the CCS on her work. The seminar was held at Stellenbosch University on 21 May 2012, and was attended by CCS personnel, colleagues and members of the public.

Presentation at Africa Trade & Export Conference – 22-23 May 2012

On 22 May, CCS research fellow Dr Daouda Cissé presented at the 3rd Annual Africa Trade and Export Conference organised by Global Prospectus in Johannesburg. His talk was on "the Impacts of China’s accession to the WTO on Sino-African trade". The conference brought together analysts and decision-makers in trade, such as trade officers, business development managers, export officers, and economists.
Recent Events at the CCS

CCS opens 2nd leg of Phandulwazi nge China Visiting Scholars Programme

Phandulwazi nge China (Xhosa for Understanding China) scholarships offer opportunities for African researchers to spend research time at the Centre for Chinese Studies (CCS) in order to advance mutual learning and a better exchange on interpretations of political, economic or environmental impact of Chinese engagement in Africa. The Phandulwazi nge China scholarship targets citizens of African states from Academia or the broader civil society with a proven research interest in China-Africa relations.

For more information, please consult the CCS website under Visiting Research Scholars, or contact us directly. Applications close 30 June 2012 for a scholarship in the second half of 2012.

The CCS welcomes REN Peiqiang from Xiamen University as visiting scholar.

REN Peiqiang joins the CCS as a visiting scholar for three months via a scholarship from the graduate school at Xiamen University, China, which was launched in May this year. Peiqiang is a PhD student on World Economy at the Economics School, Xiamen University. His PhD thesis is about the effect of Chinese investment on African countries. During his stay at CCS, he will be working on the employment effect of Chinese investment in South Africa, thereby exploring its impact on socio-economic development in South Africa. His previous research was international service trade and Chinese foreign aid management systems.

CCS Personnel in China in June

Research Fellow, Dr. Daouda Cissé is visiting Zheijiang Normal University as part of an institutional exchange the CCS maintains with the Institute for African Studies. Dr. Cissé's research project focuses on Chinese small traders in Africa and African small traders in China, thereby scrutinising the so-called ‘globalisation from below’, researching not least so Yiwu market in Zhejiang province.

Phandulwazi nge China programme visiting scholar, Hannane Ferdjani is travelling to Beijing for the first half of June to conduct fieldwork on African students in China and Sino-African cooperation in higher education. She will be based on the Peking University campus during her research trip.