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China and Africa: Mutual assistance to defeat imperialism

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China's Digital Silk Road in Africa

Data centers and Smart City initiatives



“Over the past 65 years, China and Africa have forged unbreakable fraternity in our struggle against imperialism and colonialism, and embarked on a distinct path of cooperation in our journey toward development and revitalization. Together, we have written a splendid chapter of mutual assistance.”

- Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, President of the People's Republic of China

That message was delivered at the [Eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on](#)

China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). These powerful words against colonialism and imperialism were said in 2021, during a time when the COVID-19 pandemic especially affected Africa — a continent victim that has endured colonialism and imperialism, as well as the struggle for access to vaccine production.

While the U.S. and Europe put profits before the needs of the victims of colonialism and imperialism, President Xi chose to put those words of solidarity into action.

In that address, President Xi pledged 1 billion vaccine doses to African countries, planning to achieve a 60% vaccination rate in Africa by 2022. In 2021, the cumulative total population coverage with ≥1 dose ranged by country from 0.3%. Xi announced that 600 million doses were donated and 400 million would be produced by joint production projects with Chinese companies and African countries - allowing a further boost in infrastructure and self-determination on the African continent.

The 2024 FOCAC Summit that ended Sept. 6 remained consistent in direction: “Following the Eighth FOCAC Ministerial Conference in Dakar in 2021, we have worked together to fully implement the nine programs and deliver on other outcomes of the meeting.”

The relationship is also mutual in benefit. Xi thanked the African countries that helped restore China’s lawful seat in the United Nations — last year marked the 50th anniversary of that achievement. China also benefits from Africa’s markets and the need for access to the continent’s lithium, cobalt, and other minerals.

Turn 180 degrees from this relationship of mutual benefit, and you land at the feet of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the imperialist financial institutions demanding austerity cutbacks for loans.

Nigeria is facing the worst economic crisis, with inflation levels not seen in almost

three decades due to the austerity demands to secure IMF financing. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that 26.5 million of Nigeria's 220 million people are food insecure.

The primary architects of the IMF at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944 — the United States and Britain — ensured that African, Latin American, and Asian self-determination would be denied.

At the end of World War II, the Bretton Woods system established U.S. dominance of the world economy, with the U.S. dollar becoming the world's primary reserve currency for international trade and finance. Most world trade is conducted in U.S. dollars, not local currencies.

The IMF does not contribute to the development of essential infrastructure within a country; instead, it focuses on privatization and significantly reducing social spending.

Zambia faced strong-arm pressure from Canada, the IMF, the World Bank, and First Quantum Minerals in the 1980s. The denial of crucial economic aid jeopardized Zambia's survival. Consequently, the country was forced to privatize its nationalized copper mines in 1990, allowing companies like First Quantum to acquire them cheaply. Additionally, Zambia was forced to appoint a former vice president of the Bank of Canada as the governor of the Bank of Zambia. This guaranteed long-term poverty for Zambian workers ... until now.

A turn around pointing upward

"China is ready to use its experience and help Zambia unlock its development potential," said Chinese Ambassador to Zambia Han Jing at a press briefing held Sept. 12 in the Zambian capital of Lusaka after the end of the 2024 FOCAC Summit in Beijing.

Han said China was working with Zambia to make strategic plans for multiple means of power generation, storage, and distribution to help end the current power cuts and make Zambia an electricity exporter.

In 2013, China introduced the [Belt and Road Initiative \(BRI\)](#), aimed at building infrastructure that links land and sea for the economic and social development of the Global South. In Africa, this includes railways in Kenya, an electric railway in Ethiopia, and hydropower stations in Uganda.

While the Belt and Road Initiative focuses on substantial infrastructure development through land and sea projects, the Digital Silk Road is about enhancing digital connectivity and fostering economic growth in a digital landscape for the countries involved.

In 2022, the technology sector in BRI countries saw a remarkable surge in engagement, achieving a staggering 7536% growth compared to the previous year, according to the [Africa-China Center for Policy and Advisory](#).

Many African nations resisted U.S. pressure from the Trump administration against engaging with China, the [Africa Policy Research Institute](#) reported. As of September 2021, approximately 70% of the 4G base stations in Africa were built by the Chinese company Huawei. This is alongside the contributions of other Chinese firms in the development of fiber optics throughout the continent.

Which explains why Huawei was targeted by the U.S. Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou was arrested on Dec. 1, 2018, at Vancouver International Airport by Canadian authorities. She was on a stopover from Hong Kong during a business trip to Mexico City. Meng faced allegations of violating U.S. sanctions that barred trade with Iran and was taken into custody, pending extradition to the United States.

It is not solely the Republicans or Trump who assume a godlike role in their

decision-making. In 1998, President Clinton authorized a missile strike on the Al-Shifa Pharmaceutical Plant in Sudan, resulting in one fatality and injuring others. This action was based on false claims that the facility was manufacturing a VX nerve agent. The plant was crucial for producing essential malaria medication for the African continent. Although Clinton later admitted that the information was incorrect, the U.S. government refused to pay for the devastation caused and did not mind the rising malaria-related fatalities that followed.

At the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in Beijing, China outlined its plans to address malaria. According to the [World Malaria Report 2023](#), Africa accounted for 94% of global malaria cases and 95% percent of malaria-related deaths in 2022.

Chinese scientists have developed solutions that resulted in a significant decrease in malaria cases and infection rates in the pilot regions following treatment. The World Health Organization is now collaborating with the CDC's parasitic disease team to expand malaria projects in Tanzania, Zambia, and Senegal.

The Clinton bombing, which contributed to the spread of malaria in Africa, was answered by China's action. It is important to note that during the 1960s, both the Soviet Union and China facilitated the liberation of 17 African nations from colonial rule by providing military support. In fact, the liberation fighters in former Rhodesia received military assistance from China, and one of the earliest freedom fighters to receive training there is the current President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Mnangagwa. Furthermore, Zimbabwe continues to [receive military aid](#) from China.

Threatening the world with rhetoric about remaining "lethal," as Presidential candidate Kamala Harris stated at the DNC, underscores that it ultimately does not matter whether such threats originate from Republicans or Democrats when they enable racism and genocide. African people, like the Palestinian people, know how to fight back; they are not alone in their struggle for liberation.



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