BEYOND SILENCING THE GUNS: CHINA AND A NEW METAPHOR FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

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The author presents the tentative results of ongoing research into a new paradigm for peace and security in Africa. The empirical foundation of the research is the result of a triangulation of research methods that involved literature study, reflexive journaling and thematic analysis. The discussion aims to determine how China can contribute to the renewal of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The aim is achieved by discussing and analysing the current APSA, including the challenges experienced, as well as the policy commitments and security activities of China in Africa. The research concludes that China is building a military intervention capacity to protect its interests in Africa. However, a new metaphor is needed that will bring solutions to the peace and security challenges of Africa. In this regard China can play an important role in assisting the APSA to focus on issues such as social transformation, capacity building for socio-economic development, and education aimed at peace and security.

KEY WORDS: PEACE, SECURITY, CHINA, AFRICA, MILITARY INTERVENTION

Introduction

Taking as its point of departure the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, especially its quest of 'silencing the guns', this research will focus on finding solutions to violent conflict in Africa as a complex problem and will postulate that part of the solution is a renewed architecture for peace and security in the continent. Currently, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) as implemented by the African Union (AU) consists of three central instruments: conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding, the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of Africa as well as the Regional Mechanism (RMs) operationalizing the APSA. This arrangement has proved to be unsuccessful in bringing lasting peace to Africa. Therefore, Africa needs a renewed architecture beyond 'silencing the guns' that will ensure not only temporary peace but also long-term peace and security for all who live in Africa.

The researcher, therefore, investigates alternative ways of renewing the APSA. Although the current study is broad and multi-dimensional, it specifically analyses the current and future role of China in the APSA, with the specific aim of determining how China, as a major power in the international arena, can contribute to the renewal of APSA. The research is guided by the following question: "How can China contribute to an integrated continental peace and security architecture that will help end violent conflict in Africa?"

The research concludes that China is building a military intervention capacity to protect its interests in Africa. However, a new metaphor is needed that will bring solutions to the peace and security challenges of Africa. In this regard China can play an important role in assisting the APSA to focus on issues such as social transformation, capacity building for socio-economic development, and education aimed at peace and security.

After explaining the research methodology as well as the philosophical and theoretical framework, I present the main argument by discussing and analysing the current APSA, including the challenges facing it, before analysing China's policy commitments in Africa. The discussion concludes with an analysis of China's current and envisaged peace and security activities in the continent.

The research methodology

Considering both the objectives of theory development and empirical knowledge on the involvement of China in peace and security in Africa, I applied research methodologies that are suitable for addressing the research problem and aim of the article.

My ongoing research into a new paradigm for peace and security in Africa follows a qualitative, transdisciplinary, complementary reflective approach. As a researcher I construct grounded theory through methodical gathering and analysis of data as well as through critical but culturally sensitive complementary reflective dialogue, continuously applying inductive reasoning and asking increasingly focused questions as the research progresses. The theoretical framework of this paper is grounded in a multiplicity of knowledge claims on peace and security in Africa, developed from data collected since 2013 in engagement with several communities and communities of practice mainly in Africa. By applying the methodology, I discovered the lived experiences and consciousness of people in Africa who are involved in violent conflict or recovering from it, which is important to keep in mind when investigating a specific phenomenon such as China in Africa.

The empirical foundation of the research is to apply a triangulation of research methods, which is sufficient for a limited study of this nature, departing from the vast literature articulated through 'cyberspace' and traditional libraries on APSA available in scholarly publications and documents that inform on and criticize the current APSA. The cases, as published in the literature, is complemented by reflexive journaling during attendance of lectures on China-Africa cooperation, the author's own presentations, and focus group discussions with participating practitioners and scholars. I analyse the collected data using thematic analysis, applying the complementary reflexive approach to maintain an 'open mind' on issues such as the involvement of civil society in Africa's peace and security and the support from major powers like China.

The philosophical and conceptual framework

An important part of the reflexive process is to question and attempt to break away from dominant epistemologies, ontologies, and metaphors to consider new ways of thinking about peace and security architecture. Such new thinking can take shape after considering currently accepted philosophies and theoretical postulations by scholars and practitioners, together with alternative voices and a new metaphor on peace and security in Africa.

The epistemological commitment

This part highlights the commitment to the three epistemological branches of peace and conflict studies as proposed by Johan Galtung (1996): empirical peace studies; critical peace studies and constructive peace studies, as well as the two sides of peace: absence of personal violence (negative peace), and absence of structural violence (positive peace) (Galtung, 1969: 183). This categorization is used by many scholars in the field of peace, conflict, and security in Africa, including Jakkie Cilliers (2004: 8), A. Karim Issifu and Joseph Asante Jr. (2016) as well as Joseph Makanda (2019: 145-149).

However, reflexivity allows me to break out of the confinements of the respected ideas of Galtung and philosophical postulations such as 'Foucault's toolbox' (Foucault, 1974: 523-524) that pays too much attention to official endeavours and state-sanctioned initiatives. I am also committed to the epistemological assertions of Heidegger (1962) who emphasises that human beings discover the meaning of phenomena by placing them in the social context. In this commitment, I note the relevance to the theme of this article of Heidegger's (1971: 8) architecture metaphor: 'Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build'.

I also noted that Ricoeur (1978: 143-159) used the architecture metaphor to make us aware of people's emotional need for new knowledge of what happened in the past and the image of a future that reflects the possibility of an improved livelihood. The architecture metaphor is therefore relevant to this article and my view that security is the pursuit of livelihood in safety, through the people-centred, protection and empowerment of individuals, meaning that security is mostly about people and not only the interests of the state.

From these philosophical and theoretical postulations, four questions emerge: What will be the implications of China's involvement for people's security in Africa? How will Beijing's physical presence contribute to peacebuilding in Africa? Will China simply 'dwell' for the business and resource extraction or will it build something substantial such as peace and security beyond physical buildings and roads? As China becomes increasingly involved in the continent, how will it share its knowledge and help meet the emotional needs of the people of Africa who are imagining a new future after so many negative experiences with foreign powers?

Changing the metaphor

Levi-Straus (1978: 12-15) states that people we usually consider as subservient because they try to avoid starving, and who subsists in very harsh material conditions, may have a fundamentally different kind of thought than those who are not in the same situation. As Levi-Straus points out, such people are also capable of unbiased thinking, motivated by the desire to understand the society around them, to proceed by intellectual means, the same as a scientist and philosopher. The late Credo Mutwa (1998) succeeds in articulating the imaginations and emotions of the African people:

"All foreigners must please leave my Africa undefiled by their ideals. Falsehoods and hypocrisies... I do not want to see foreigners turning my fatherland into a soulless copy of their own countries... There is much talk about raising your living standards. But the end

of this is to turn Africa into a vast *ndali* market for the mass rubbish that is manufactured. You are given more so that they can take more from you."

This caution of Mutwa is placed into perspective by the late scholar Dani Nabudere (2002: 13), who suggested that the people in Africa should recognise the meaning and the value that is added to African knowledge by other cultural entities towards self-emancipation, drawing on cultural heritage and taking into account new developments in the world. Nabudere recognises that the African tradition of Ubuntu should be a globally humanising experience involving all people under the enlightenment of "global Ubuntu". It enables Africans to struggle for liberation together with oppressed humanity, to humanize the world, to bring about social transformation in African societies, empower the marginalised to fight for their rights, as well as bringing psychological healing.

The link between Ubuntu and liberation philosophy, as affirmed by Nabudere, reminds one of the way China has approached its African counterparts since the 1960s when Chinese support to 'national liberation movements' in Southern Africa meant expansion of a network of friendship from the Indian to Atlantic oceans along 'the tropical waist of Africa' to win the confidence of major 'liberation movements in Southern Africa.' During this time, Beijing's foreign policy was guided by Marxism-Leninism to expedite the 'inevitable world revolution to replace a capitalist system with a socialist system'. The essential characteristics of that course of action were to form alliances with the people (not the urban 'proletariat') and all those willing to fight imperialism, spearheaded by a national liberation army led by communist parties. The three basic themes that would drive this revolution were Asian-Africa unity, self-reliance, self-determination, and African independence achieved through 'armed struggle'. A flexible approach would be followed with 'world revolution' as the final goal, using different instruments, overt, covert, informal, formal, violent, and non-violent. (Republic of China, 1981: 215-219).

During the International Conference: China in Africa and Africa in China on 13 December 2019, Vidgan Pathak and Sandipani Dash offered another ideological perspective they called 'Confucian Communitarianism' that could guide Africa-China relations. The presenters asserted that this ideology is founded on ancient ethics, existing Chinese values and practices. They related it to Ubuntu and called it the 'African variant of humanism'. In both Ubuntu and communitarianism, community interests are above that of the individual and community interests will serve the interests of the individual. In Confucian Communitarianism, the importance of the personal morality of the 'governor', who despises material wealth, crafts and 'trends in state administrations', is more important in comparison to the ability to govern. Comprehensive peace and security is the result of interdependent human behaviour.

Reflecting on the assertions above, it is accepted that the world moved on after the Cold war. However, it is still to be seen how strong Marxism-Leninism and ideology in general remains embedded in the foreign relations practices of China. The question that arises is whether China will show a preference for communist or Marxist-Leninist inspired movements and parties in African countries. What set of 'moral principles' will be applied in relations to states with a culture of violence where the security of the government is more important than the security of individuals? What values will be applied in African coun-

tries where exploitative excavation of resources and elite profiteering is the value founda-
tion of society? From a theory perspective a new metaphor may be needed to depict the
relationships between social communities in Africa and China, differentiate between so-
cial communities and the state or governments, and place entities such as China as part
of African social capital. In applying such a new metaphor, it should be considered that
peace is not only the absence of violence. It is a condition where the causes, dynamics,
and consequences of violent conflict and insecurity have been removed or mitigated so
that people can live, feeling safe, building on a common history of struggles for libera-
tion. For China, it would require maintenance of this emotional feeling of safety and the
opportunity for healing in a spirit of a 'global Ubuntu' characterised by inter-dependency
beyond just 'cultural enrichment'. It will require an effort from China beyond simply
'dwelling' and building infrastructure. In the words of Le Corbusier (1923) "you employ
stone, wood, and concrete, and with these materials, you build houses and palaces: that
is construction. Ingenuity is at work. But suddenly you touch my heart, you do me good.
I am happy and I say: This is beautiful. That is Architecture".

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)

It is against the theoretical and philosophical background that emphasises important
concepts such as Ubuntu, liberation and communitarianism that key ontological ques-
tions emerge such as: what is the form of the APSA and under what realities/hierarchy
does the current APSA exists; and where is the APSA situated concerning global peace
and security architecture of which China forms an important part?

APSA within the context of global peace and security architecture

According to the official webpage of the AU (2012), APSA was established by the Peace
and Security Council (PSC) Protocol, adopted in July 2002, in Durban, South Africa and
entered into force in December 2003. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)
is 'built around structures, objectives, principles and values, as well as decision-making
processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts,
post-conflict reconstruction and development in the continent'.

The PSC is 'the main pillar' of the APSA, supported by The Commission, the Panel of the
Wise, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF)
and the Peace Fund. The African Union (AU) maintains a close relationship with the Re-
gional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Manage-
ment and Resolution (RECs/RMs) as key components of APSA. The PSC interacts with
other AU organs, of which the Pan-African Parliament and the African Commission on
Human and Peoples' Rights are the most prominent. Several civil society organizations
also contribute to the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa. APSA, as part
of the AU, work in partnerships with the United Nations (UN) and 'other relevant inter-
national stakeholders'.

The comprehensive agenda for peace and security in Africa includes early warning and
conflict prevention; peace-making, peace support operations, peace-building and post-
conflict reconstruction and development; promotion of democratic practices, good gov-

ernance and respect for human rights; and humanitarian action and disaster management.

Focus groups and conference discussions earlier confirmed that since these good intentions were published in 2012, APSA cannot be described as a successful venture. Instead, violent conflict continues in, for instance, South Sudan, Somalia, Eastern DRC, and the Lake Chad basin. More than 80 000 peacekeepers were deployed in Africa without lasting impact on violent conflicts. Although the perpetuation of violence cannot be blamed on APSA, the layers of 'peace infrastructure' seems not to bring lasting solutions because participating governments are part of the problem. The frequent failure of peace deals shows that African governments do not have sufficient political will or capacity to implement agreements. Furthermore, the dependence on external funding (mostly European Union), compels the AU to follow models as prescribed by funders. These models cannot be applied to all situations in Africa, because the causes, dynamics, and consequences of violent conflict vary according to the contexts.

Current literature suggests that the AU has a sufficient legal mandate for conflict resolution between and among countries but the implementation of this mandate is still a 'work in progress'. The Sudan crisis of 2019 showed that the AU needs to develop a tangible strategy for dealing with continuing violence while peace negotiations are taking place. Although the Constitutive Act of the AU gives the APSA the power to directly intervene in member states where there is a serious threat to the legitimate order, by deploying peacekeeping forces, it appears that the AU still lacks sufficient capacity to intervene if required. Furthermore, according to the Lomé Declaration of 2000, the AU can suspend countries where political change takes place through a coups d'état. However, AU responses to military takeovers in Burkina Faso in 2014, Zimbabwe in 2017, and Sudan in 2019 showed a tolerance for military coups that support of popular uprisings, provided that transitions to civilian rule take place over time. The AU thus became 'creative' and flexible in their approach, prioritising engagement over confrontation.

An analysis of these data shows a dire need for a renewed APSA to adjust the current model to incorporate the will of all African societies in various contexts, breaking away from central manipulation by autocratic governments. Furthermore, there is a need for an intervention capacity to keep or restore peace before reaching peaceful settlements. In general, there is a need for the practices of Ubuntu, such as interconnectedness, mutual respect and dignity for all people to be foundational to the institutions constructed as part of the APSA, and not rule by regimes with doubtful democratic credentials with a narrow focus on economic self-interest and not security of all people in the state.

China in Africa

In this part, I will discuss the policy commitments as expressed officially by China's leadership with an emphasis on peace and security commitments with examples of how policy implementation manifests in Africa.

Policy commitments

In his book, Xi Jinping (2014: 145), announces energy cooperation as a high priority for foreign involvement, to take place through the 'One Belt and One Road" initiative and expansion of oil and gas cooperation with countries in Central Asia, the Middle East, the Americas, and Africa. Xi Jinping motivates interactions with Africa and other parts of the world as 'exchange and mutual learning to make civilizations richer and more colourful', citing the expeditions of the ocean navigator Zheng He who had 'friendly exchanges' with Kenya during the 15th century (Xi Jinping, 2014: 285). He claims that China and Africa shares 'a strong empathy' bound by not only 'traditional friendship' and closely-linked interests but also by 'the dreams we have'. 'China and Africa should enhance unity, cooperation and mutual support and mutual assistance to fulfil our dreams'. The Chinese dream is that of a national renewal, while the African dream is strength through unity and achieving development and rejuvenation, and both work with the international community to realize the 'global dream' of enduring peace and common prosperity (Xi Jinping, 2014: 333-341). During a keynote speech at the Fifth BRICS Leaders Meeting in Durban South Africa on 27 March 2013, Xi Jinping claims the mutual goals of 'promoting democracy in international relations' and 'advancing the peace and development of mankind' and 'mutual beneficial cooperation' as a 'common aspiration.' He emphasized the values of 'international fairness and justice' world peace and stability as common values. During her presentation on 13 December 2019 at the International Conference in Ghent on China in Africa and Africa in China, Helena Moradi addressed the 'policy of non-interference' as proclaimed by China, implying respect for the sovereignty of African states and not interfering in the internal affairs of these states. The intention is to play no active role in the internal conflicts of African countries. However, during the same conference, Abdou Rahim Lema points out China's growing focus on peace and security, which indicates a change of approach and the intention not to abandon a long-term foreign policy stance with traditional partners. China strives to participate in peace-building while maintaining non-interference in state Affairs. As a keynote speaker at the same conference, Chris Alden pointed out the proliferation of over 10 000 Chinese businesses and more than a million immigrants in Africa and question how China can protect their businesses and citizens with limited capacity.

An analysis by Julia C. Strauss (2020: 45) noticed changes in China's official rhetoric and activities in Africa since the mid-1950s. In the analysis of statements she identifies a transition from China's self-proclaimed role as supporter of national liberation movements in Africa and the principle of non-interference, towards a new narrative claiming 'win–win' collaboration and 'common development'. China did not substitute the structure of narratives created during the Maoist period, but adapted its strategy on Africa by adding additional frames and layers. For instance, the strategy evolved to include continental and regional organizations as direct counterparts.

Georg Lammich (2020: 59-60) argues that, although support for African peacebuilding has remained low in comparison to traditional Western support for African-led peace-keeping missions, China perceives the AU as an ally in establishing alternative international peacebuilding norms to the dominant 'liberal model' that originated from the

West. Such a model involves collaboration with the AU in conflict resolution and peace-building as an instrument for creating a better milieu for Chinese investments, securing a stable and peaceful environment for their own activities by contributing to local security initiatives. The Chinese approach to security in Africa is a combination of reactive and adaptive measures to protect Chinese interests in Africa while shaping future norms for international conflict resolution. While China continues with bilateral relationships with nearly all African states, it now prioritizes multilateral activities. A double-track strategy emerges where regional organizations are gaining importance as political partners in Africa. However, because of insufficient institutional capacities at the AU, as well as the preference of African states for national solutions, China is still concerned that the AU may not be able to live up to its mandate for regional leadership to coordinate the implementation of regional projects. However the AU, because China gives the AU leverage to extend its influence and establish itself as a representative for Africa's external relations, seeks to expand its cooperation with China in several areas.

An assessment by Nele Noesselt (2020: 27-29) on the new strategy of China for Africa indicates that China is seeking to strengthen its soft power capacities through cultural exchange, language classes, and scholarships for African students to study in China, and by financing stadiums, libraries, and schools. Although not officially announced and not demanding compliance, a 'Chinese Model' is offered as a potential blueprint for modernization of transformation of African economies, including 'going global' to contribute to multilateral solutions to reduce costs and share development burdens. It is also in China's interest to secure long-term stable investment environments and therefore China may be willing to promote transparent, accountable, and rule-based governance in African states. Noesselt suggests that the growing economic and financial interdependencies could finally imply that China sets up checks-and-balances as well as transparent governance structures to secure its large-scale infrastructure projects in Africa and to create a stable and safe environment for Chinese investment, through its own peace, security, and stability design away from Western views on of good governance.

Peace and security commitments

During the First China-Africa Peace and Security Forum Beijing in July 2019 the leadership of China and African countries decided to devise security approaches within and outside the APSA institutional framework. The central tasks will be peace and development with security and 'stability' the primary objectives. Development is seen as the master key to solving security issues. The idea is to establish a 'brand new security concept in an evolutionary landscape'.

According to the 'Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021) on peace and security cooperation, China will support the operationalization of the APSA military, police and anti-terrorism activities, provide military assistance to the tune of 100 million dollars in support of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC). A China-Africa peace and security fund on peace, security, peacekeeping, and law and order will be established. Specific mention of military aid to the AU includes support to countries in the Sahel region, the Gulf of Aden,

and the Gulf of Guinea to uphold security and combat terrorism and piracy. Defence co-operation will be in the form of intelligence exchange, military personnel training, and regular China-Africa peace and security forums. China will act on UN Security Council resolutions, participate in UN peacekeeping operations and law enforcement in Africa and protect nationals and institutions.

The quest to protect Chinese citizen in the world will define Chinese foreign policy in the foreseeable future. Like many other countries China will feel compelled to send special envoys, police or military personnel to safeguard the activities of expanding Chinese national companies. With Chinese citizens at risk and its own interests at stake, China is likely to lend stronger support for multilateral interventions. In the case of UNSC-backed peacekeeping, China will be able to shape international response and make greater contributions to peacekeeping missions where Chinese presence has reached a critical mass. China is looking pragmatically at international conflict resolution, and incremental military involvement is foreseen with China deploying naval, air-force or special-forces personnel when a critical mass of Chinese lives are at risk. The increased commitment to protecting citizens also means that the Chinese government has to deal with kidnappings, hostages and evacuations and thus improve the capacity to provide such protection'. In these cases it means that China will have to break away from its past practice of non-interference (Parello-Plesner & Duchatel, 2015: 2756-2891).

Haifang Liu (2020: 79) found that the "vulnerable, Chinese presence in Africa" prompts China to readjust the traditional concept of security based on national interest, to a human centred perspective in association with community grown agency, as well as innovative networking to enable mutual assistance. China needs to engage with institutionalised mechanisms of local society to address security challenges in a spirit of benevolence.

Chinese peace and security activities

The perspective from the United States is that the diplomatic, economic, and security engagements of China with Africa have 'deepened' in the 21st century. In addition to economic involvement of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the engagement with African countries and regional institutions are characterised by 'a growing military footprint'. Arms sales are the most noticeable aspect of China's security and military profile. China is now the main supplier of weapons to sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 27 per cent of the region's imports between 2013 and 2017.

Three new mechanisms, the China Africa Defence Forum, the China Africa Law Enforcement and Security Forum, and the China Africa Peace and Security Forum provide avenues for regular consultation between Chinese and African security sector leaders. Since 2018, about fifty new security assistance programs have been established, to build local capacity of security partners in Africa and to address security risks to Chinese investments and people (McDonald & Burgoyne, 2019: 33).

With regard to military intervention, China has allocated US$10 billion over 10 years to the UN Peacekeeping Development Fund; provided $100 million over five years to the African Union Standby Force (ASF) as well as creating a fairly well-armed 8 000-strong standby Police Force that would be available to UN Peacekeeping on request. In February 2018, the fund paid USD25 million to the ASF's logistics base in Cameroon and a further

USD30 million was donated to the Chinese-funded military training centre in Tanzania which is expected to build capacity for the East African Standby Force (McDonald & Burgoyne, 2019: 38).

Without claiming completeness, examples of current Chinese involvement in Africa reveals a diversion from the initial 'non-interference' policy to military intervention:

— In Djibouti, a military base with the capacity to accommodate 10,000, was opened with an initial 400 staff and troops to secure maritime routes as part of the Belt and Road Initiative. In Djibouti, China and Western powers such as the US, Japan and European militaries are learning how to cohabit in the security domain (ISS, 2017).

— In Mali, China participates in the United Nation's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for the PLA to gain experience in UN peacekeeping in a French-speaking country, interact with local populations, and to strengthen cooperation with local militaries. They are assuming responsibilities in medical, engineering, security and other fields, but remain risk-averse, leaving the leading role in counterterrorism to French forces (Cabestan, 2018: 1).

— In Somalia, China is contributing millions of dollars of peacekeeping equipment to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (Williams, 2017).

— In South Sudan, China contributed more than 1,000 Chinese peacekeepers, including 25 women peacekeepers, to UNMISS and funded the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for its mediation in South Sudan (Xuequan, 2019).

— In the Great Lakes, China remains committed to strengthening regional peace-building, actively participating in UN peacekeeping operations in the region, providing military assistance, and supporting regional countries in advancing the peace process. (Zhang Jun, 2019).

— China also entered the private security domain. People's Liberation Army soldiers as private security guards to protect some of its larger commercial interests (ISS, 2017).

China still prefers the developmental post-conflict peacebuilding model, over the Western liberal peacebuilding model, which emphasised democracy as the foundation for societal recovery (ISS, 2017).

The available data on the peace and security activities of China makes compelling case for a new peace and security concept characterised by military capacity building by China in response to the emotional appeal by Africans for alternative models to what has been offered by the Western world, with African expectations that China will not involve itself in state affairs. The new concept is publicly promoted by promising that peace and security activities will take place as part of international multilateral arrangements and a developmental approach. However, indications are that the modus operandi of China is not dissimilar from former and current international interventions by other major powers that focus on the capacity building of armed forces in Africa as part of bilateral arrangements with willing parties in Africa. In this scenario, the armed forces of these countries can serve as proxy forces to 'stabilise' situations that threaten resources such as the flow of oil from Africa that is vital for China. It is unclear whether military stabilisation would also mean the protection of citizens against for instance state terrorism by autocratic govern-

ments that originates from former Marxist-Leninist liberation movements. Maintaining a policy of non-interference is unlikely when the economic interests of China are challenged by popular uprisings against regimes that may bring Chinese interests in conflict with the pragmatic approach of the AU.

Conclusions and recommendations

This article departed from the aim to determine how China, as a major power in the international arena, can contribute to the renewal of the APSA. The aim was achieved by presenting the research methodology as well as the philosophical and theoretical framework that underpins the discussion. I presented the main argument by discussing and analysing the current APSA, including the challenges facing it, followed by the policy commitments of China in Africa. The discussion concludes with an analysis of China's current and planned peace and security activities in Africa.

It was found that China is already making an important contribution to the peace and security objectives of the AU, especially in terms of military assistance to enhance the military intervention capacity of the AU, using the extensive knowledge of the PLA. However, a new theoretical concept that shows concern for the expectations of the African people on lasting peace and security still has to emerge. An APSA can no longer be the symbol of the political power of the ruler, the ruling elite, or the state. The foundation of a progressive APSA is a recognition of the views, cultural practices, and aspirations of African people, involving social society in all its aspects including safety and security. Moreover, it is vital for an APSA to further develop a flexible response approach to peace and security and cease to follow models prescribed by major powers from outside Africa. A new model for APSA cannot be one prescriptive 'model' but a paradigm or concept that allows for an adaptive redesign in different situations where solutions are knowledge-driven, not pre-prescribed and accommodate different perspectives/knowledge claims. Broadening the network of global collaborative social capital to build peace and security in Africa is necessary, especially for entities such as China that claim a long-term commitment to end violence in Africa, not just time-bound projects and programs that are not sustainable. To achieve a broadened network, it would be required from a renewed APSA to maintain and expand national, Africa-continental and global connections with civil society, relevant think tanks and academic institutions, building bridges between communities and communities of practice and the rest of societies beyond statist diplomacy, and freely sharing information.

In a new progressive APSA, civil society should be equal partners, and African countries should uphold their sovereignty in policy and decision-making, pursuing a course of action that is in the best interests of all citizens. This will not be easily attained in the case of China, one of the most powerful nations on earth. A renewed APSA should express the positive values that African societies have in common with rest of humanity (including the good people of China) e.g. respect for the identity and dignity of all people and peaceful relationships as the foundation of a peaceful and secure society. A renewed APSA should focus on youth development, the promotion of democratic practices, restorative justice and personal healing with the emphasis on social transformation, capacity build-

ing for socio-economic development, teaching responsible citizenship, and keeping in mind the special needs of women and 'children of violence' (women and children who have experienced and survived violent conflict) in the aftermath of violent conflict. Youth education for peace and security, with support from China, may just be the drop of olive oil on a lake that is part of a cascading peace and security landscape, as a new metaphor that depicts lasting peace beyond simply 'silencing the guns'.

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