

Cooperation between China and Africa under the One Belt One Road Initiative: China's Benefits and Problems

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Abstract

Since brought up in 2013, the One Belt One Road Initiative has made some great achievements in Africa. With five years of development, the roles of the African countries have become more important and clearer; the impact of the One Belt One Road Initiative on China has increased greatly as well. The cooperation between Africa and China under the One Belt One Road Initiative has benefited both sides and will continue to develop as China's top policy in Africa. Thus it is important to look back at the One Belt One Road Initiative in Africa after five years in order to draw lessons from the past and sum up the experience and advice for future development. This article analyzes the profits that China benefits domestically and internationally from the cooperation and then points out the problems and obstacles lying ahead.

Keywords

The One Belt One Road Initiative, China-Africa Relationship, Economic Trade, Soft Power

1. Introduction

The One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR), aiming at facilitating the development of China together with other countries through cooperation and communication, was brought up by President Xi Jinping during his visit to Kazakhstan and Indonesia in 2013. "The Road" of OBOR refers to the "21st-Century Maritime Silk Road", which provides a connection between Europe and East China crossing Southeast Asia; the maritime road also has an important branch reaching to East Africa. "The Belt" refers to the land "Silk Road Economic Belt", which links Europe to China crossing Central Asia.

OBOR covers a wide range of areas including transportation, infrastructure, energy, industry, investment, trade, education, communications, tourism, and technology. A huge project like OBOR would not completely succeed in all the areas it goes. During these five years in Africa, OBOR has made great successes and also some setbacks. The roles of the African countries have become more important and clearer, and the impact on China is also increasing quickly.

The analysis is divided into two main sections. Section 2 analyzes what is there for China from the domestic view and the international view. Section 3 points out the existing problems and obstacles lying ahead, and proposes some solutions.

2. What Is in There for China

2.1. Domestic Benefits

2.1.1. Trade and Investment

The impact of OBOR is growing dramatically on both the economic trade and the investment between China and Africa. No matter when it comes to trade, investment, infrastructure construction, financing or development assistance, China is always one of the top-four partners of Africa, and no other country can achieve such a deep economic relationship with Africa. China is a major source of development aid funds for African countries, and the capital injection from China continues to increase.

China's foreign direct investment has grown even faster over the past decade, with a breakneck annual growth rate of 40 per cent. If the capital flow through an unofficial channel is taken into account, the flow of funds from China to Africa is about 15 per cent higher than the official data (Sun, 2017). Among those massively growing investments, China's private enterprises have played a vital role as the main force of the Chinese global investors in Africa, which is the opposite of China's investment situation in Asian countries.

What OBOR has provided for China's enterprises is a platform for easier access to the outside world, and a basic plan of investment. It has brought more political, economic and cultural exchanges between China and the countries, providing a good international environment for Chinese enterprises to "go out". Most countries in Africa are emerging economies and developing countries in the period of economic rise. Jointly issued by three ministries in 2015, Promote the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the vision and action of the maritime Silk Road in twenty-first Century points out the main sectors China is going to invest in.

The profitability of Chinese companies investing in Africa is considerable. In a report of a survey conducted by McKinsey & Company in Africa, nearly a quarter of the 1000 companies surveyed said they could recover their initial investment in one year or even less. Nearly one-third of companies have profit margins of more than 20 per cent (Sun, 2017).

There is a huge potential market in Africa and a strong need for infrastruc-

ture, so China has grasped this opportunity to help both Africa and China itself. China is the largest infrastructure financier in Africa. In recent years, almost all of Africa's most important infrastructure projects have been contracted by Chinese investors. As Namibian President Hage Geingob said, "When you set foot on the land of Africa, you will see many projects invested by Chinese enterprises, who are helping African countries build roads, railways, airports, and ports." He said that African countries are witnessing a prosperous infrastructure construction under the support of China (People's Daily, 2018). On April 19, 2018, a section of the Algeria North-South Expressway project, which was built by a Chinese company, was opened to traffic.

Another important example is the Addis Ababa Djibouti Railway in Ethiopia, which is jointly built by China Railway 2 and China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation. As the first modern electrified railway in Africa, it provides passenger and cargo transportation between Ethiopia and the neighboring country Djibouti through a 752.7-kilometer railway line. The Addis Ababa Djibouti Railway is the first fully "going out" railway for Chinese companies to build overseas, which is to say, Chinese companies are responsible for the whole industry chain according to the Chinese standard: from financing, design, construction, and equipment, to the operations after opening to traffic. Since the official opening of commercial operations on January 1, 2018, the Addis Ababa Djibouti Railway has received 116 passenger cars, 176 trucks, 4 special trains, and passenger traffic of about 35,000 passengers (Xinhua News, 2018a).

By the year 2017, both of the railways and the highways built and financed by China for African countries have exceeded 5000 kilometers; China has trained more than 160,000 talents for Africa (Xinhua News, 2018b).

China now is also Africa's largest trading partner. The statistics of the Ministry of Commerce of China show that in 2016, China-Africa trade volume reached USD149.2 billion, and China became Africa's largest trading partner for the eighth consecutive year (Ministry of Commerce of China, Department of Western Asian and African Affairs, 2017). Apart from that, in 2016, China's non-financial direct investment flows to Africa were USD3.3 billion, up 14 per cent year-on-year, covering construction, leasing and business services, mining, manufacturing, wholesale and retail sectors (Ministry of Commerce of China, Department of Western Asian and African Affairs, 2017). Africa's economy is rising rapidly with the trade and investment from China, and China will soon be benefiting from its investment in Africa.

Africa has become one of China's most important sources of imports, the second largest overseas engineering contracting market, and the fourth largest investment destination.

Apart from the construction of infrastructure, China's investment and trade with Africa also lies in other domains such as 1) information and communication technology; 2) the construction, operation, and service of African national information networks and manufacture; 3) the promotion of the development of African culture; 4) the domestic and international logistics industry in African

countries; 5) the promotion of the development of local financial industry in Africa; 6) corporate finance; 7) culture and tourism industry; and 8) acquisitions and M&A transactions, etc.. By the end of 2017, China's investment in various types of investment in Africa exceeded USD100 billion, covering almost every country in Africa, covering science and technology, geological exploration, real estate, finance, wholesale and retail, and agriculture (Ministry of Commerce of China, Department of Outward Investment and Economic Cooperation, 2017).

There are several economic and trade zones which are developing very well under OBOR in Africa. Built in 2008, China-Egypt TEDA Suez economic and trade cooperation zone has become an important fulcrum of OBOR in Egypt and in Africa after 11 years of development. By the end of 2016, the investment of the 1.34-square kilometers start-up area had reached a total of USD105 million and the assets were valued at USD153 million. The five major industrial parks were built, which cover major industries such as manufacturing, logistics, bonded, technology development, commerce, and modern service industries.

2.1.2. Energy and Natural Resources

OBOR has facilitated the cooperation on energy and natural resources between China and Africa; the cooperation on energy and natural resources also helps accelerate the development of transportation, infrastructure, trade and other domains between China and Africa. With a land area of 30.29 million square kilometers, Africa has the world's most important 53 kinds of minerals and some rare strategic resources while the development and utilization rate of arable land is only 27 per cent (Major mineral resources and their distribution in Africa, 2014). Thus China could profit a lot from the cooperation on resources in Africa.

In 2017, China surpassed the United States to become the world's largest crude oil importer; in 2018, China overtook Japan to become the world's largest natural gas importer (Beiwaxinshijue, 2019). In 2018, China imported 462 million tons of crude oil and 90.385 million tons of natural gas (Zhongguoshiyou, 2019). These imports have a direct link to Africa. As for the crude oil, in 2017, the top five source countries for China's crude oil imports were Russia, Saudi Arabia, Angola, Iraq, and Iran, with imports accounting for 14.24 per cent, 12.43 per cent, 11.11 per cent, 8.78 per cent, and 7.42 per cent respectively (Yiniucaijing, 2018); while in 2018, Angola became the first crude oil source country for China. In 2018, China's cumulative crude oil imports from Angola reached 49.28 million tons, with Angola's import percentage increased from 11.11 per cent to 19.2 per cent (Zhongyanwang, 2019).

At the end of 2016, China invested USD10.41 billion in the mining industry in Africa, accounting for 26.1 per cent of the total investment (Zhongyanwang, 2019). One of the two parks in China-Zambia Economic and Trade Zone: Chambishi Park, is mainly dedicated in the mining, processing, warehousing and the logistics of non-ferrous metal resources such as copper ore. China-Zambia Economic and Trade Zone is the first economic and trade zone es-

tablished by the Chinese government in Africa, and is developed and operated by the largest Chinese-funded company in Zambia, China Nonferrous Metal Mining (Group) Company. Another trade zone, the Lekki Free Trade Zone, which is mainly engaged in oil and gas storage.

Another example could be that, in 2016, Petro-China and Mozambique's National Petroleum Corporation signed the "Framework Agreement for Cooperation between China National Petroleum Corporation and Mozambique National Oil Company", which is meant to fully promote cooperation in oil and gas exploration and development, and natural gas processing and sales.

2.1.3. Issues Surrounding Taiwan Strait

OBOR has helped Beijing address some issues surrounding Taiwan. In mainland China, to help cooperate with the OBOR Initiative, Beijing has planned to build some new railways, which are referred to as the "Eight Vertical and Eight Horizontal High-speed Railways". These railways are supposed to be completely open to traffic by 2030. One of the eight vertical railways, Beijing-Kowloon (Taiwan) High-Speed Railway, which is planned to start from Beijing, passing Hefei; the final destination of a branch has been planned to be Taipei. Beijing is smartly planning solutions by avoiding the straight political confrontation with Taiwan and is possibly going to solve the problems surrounding the Taiwan Strait through other ways such as economic trade.

Since the bringing up of OBOR, there are three countries in Africa who have broken diplomatic relations with Taiwan and established diplomatic relations with China: the Gambia in 2013, Sao Tome and Principe in 2016, and Burkina Faso in 2018. The Gambian Embassy in China, Ma Liam, said at the 2018 Belt and Road International Forum that the Gambia has reached out to other parts of Africa through OBOR. She also stressed that the Gambia is very willing to cooperate with China under the framework of OBOR. The Gambia has already signed several trade agreements with China (Liu, 2018).

OBOR has greatly strengthened the connection between China and African countries through so many ways like economic trade; this certainly means that the influence of Taiwan in Africa is continuing to decrease dramatically. There leaves only one country in Africa who has not broken diplomatic relations with Taiwan yet, but to remain the current situation Taiwan certainly needs to "donate" more money to Swaziland. With its own local government short of financial support, to pay more money to try to remain its diplomatic situation would only drag Taiwan into a worse situation. Moreover, even Taiwan tries to give more help to its "diplomatic allies", the situation may not go well; the three countries above who broke their diplomatic relations with Taiwan are the real examples.

2.2. International Benefits

2.2.1. Increase of China's Soft Power in Africa

The term "soft power" is defined by Cambridge Dictionary as "the use of a

country's cultural and economic influence to persuade other countries to do something, rather than the use of military power" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). With five years' development of OBOR in Africa, China's soft power is increasing as a marginal result, which means that China is getting more attention from the African countries. Compared with other countries such as the United States, China's soft power seems to be more attractive. China's provision of economic assistance is never accompanied by any political conditions and China never resorts to military force to resolve disputes. China's soft power is carried out in a smooth and silent way. In Africa, there are three major sources of the increase of China's soft power: the Chinese standard, China's development patterns, and the overseas students.

Firstly, when China's enterprises "go out" and invest in Africa, they are also exporting the Chinese standard, Chinese products, and the Chinese value. For example, when it comes to infrastructure, the Chinese investors and workers are designing and constructing the infrastructure according to their experience and standard in China. Apart from that, China's workers are also helping with the teaching and training of the local workers. These and other supporting cooperation, such as the construction of people flow and logistics, among which the Chinese standards and Chinese values are running through, is also one of the directions for future cooperation between China and Africa.

Secondly, there are two Chinese development patterns that are helping increase its soft power in Africa.

One development model is the combination of land power and sea power. Brought up by Halford Mackinder in his paper entitled "The Geographical Pivot of History" in 1904, the Heartland theory analyzes the political and economic success of the world's regions by geography. According to the theory, the core of global influence lies in what is known as the Heartland, a region of the world situated in Eurasia due to its sheer size, a wealth of resources, and a high population (Worldatlas, 2019).

The term "sea power" refers to the power exerted by a state through its capacity to use the sea for both military and civilian purposes (Oxford Research Encyclopedias, 2019). Considering sea power as the most important factor in the formation of world domination, Alfred Mahan, the founder of the term "sea power", came to the conclusion that "the one who owns the sea possesses all" (Mahan, Alfred Thayer, 1980).

However, OBOR has clearly made a shift in the theory of sea power by connecting China to other land countries through railways and highways. "The Belt" of OBOR refers to the land "Silk Road Economic Belt", which links Europe to China crossing Central Asia; while the "21st-Century Maritime Silk Road" offers China the connection with Europe, Southeast Asia, and East Africa. With China's high-speed train technology, transporting goods by railway could even be more efficient than transporting by sea. The "Silk Road Economic Belt" on the land and the "21st-Century Maritime Silk Road" on the sea have shaped a new development pattern: the combination of land power and sea power. This smart

development pattern has proved its efficiency. Even without the five routes of OBOR all coming into service and with setbacks in some particular areas, China has already achieved great economic success within these five years. This development pattern would definitely attract African countries to worship, and could even draw the attention of other countries around the world.

The other development pattern, Beijing's way of governing, would attract Africa more, for most of the countries on this continent are developing countries confronted with different kinds of developing problems. As a great power in the developing rank, China's economy has been going extremely well during these decades; in only about 50 years China managed to develop from one of the poorest countries in the world to the world's second-largest economy. As Nye said in his book *Soft Power* (2004), hard power and soft power are closely related to each other in many cases, and thus, strictly differentiating the two is very difficult in the actual process of exercising power (Nye, 2004). China's rapid and decades-lasting development of its economy has transformed to one of its greatest soft powers today: Beijing's way of governing, which could be China's political system, China's policies and so on. When the financial crisis in 2008 proved the Washington Consensus as a failure, China stood out with its successful survival with the application of the Beijing Consensus. Since this paper's subject is OBOR in Africa, the specific content of the Washington Consensus and the Beijing Consensus will not be explained here. After the financial crisis, Beijing's way of governing has been gaining more attention from the developing countries who need the experience to help boost their economy.

Although President Xi Jinping has declared in 2018 that China would not interfere with African countries to explore a development path in line with national conditions, would not interfere in Africa's internal affairs, and would not impose China's will on other countries (Zhonghuawang, 2018), that does not mean that African countries would not be attracted on their own will to China's way of developing; that is exactly the practical definition of "soft power".

Thirdly, OBOR is attracting more and more students from Africa and other parts of the world to be interested in Chinese culture. Under OBOR, the number of overseas students from Africa has increased dramatically: in 2016, there were 61,594 international students from Africa studying in China with an increase of 23.7 per cent over the same period of the year before; the number of students from the African continent is the fastest growing among all the continents (Zhongshangqingbao, 2017). According to the statistics of UNESCO, the United States and the United Kingdom receive approximately 40,000 African students each year. China surpassed this figure in 2014 and became the second largest destination for African students studying abroad, second to France (Zhongguoxinwen, 2017).

Chinese value, Chinese society, and Chinese habits have an impact on international students in China every day. Most of the overseas students studying in China have to be able to understand and speak Chinese. They watch TV series, watch Chinese news, surf on the Internet, talk to Chinese friends and taste Chi-

nese food every day, so they are influenced by Chinese social value every day. They drink Chinese tea, play Chinese kungfu, study Chinese poems and Chinese culture.

In 2018, students from the countries along OBOR accounted for 64.85 per cent of the total number of international students in China with an increase of 11.58 per cent over the year before; of all of these countries, African countries have always been the focus of attention of the Chinese government. Many universities have already opened new institutes relating to OBOR which are named “Silk Road Institute”, “One Belt One Road Institute” and so on. In addition, the Chinese government is also giving special scholarships only to African students. In 2012, China provided 18,000 government scholarships to African countries, and in 2018 the number has increased to 50,000 (Jiemodui, 2018). With support from the Chinese government increasing, more and more African students will come to China to study. Apart from the scholarships from the central government, local governments and even universities themselves are offering more and more scholarships to African students every year.

Apart from the institutes inside China, there are Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms all over the world. By December 31, 2018, 548 Confucius Institutes and 1193 Confucius Classrooms had been established in 154 countries and regions around the world. There are 548 Confucius Institutes in 147 countries (regions), including 59 in 43 countries in Africa. As for the number of Confucius Classrooms, there are a total of 1193 in 83 countries (regions), of which 41 are in 18 countries in Africa. The Confucius Institutes are dedicated to communication, exchanges, and cooperation in Chinese language teaching and Chinese and foreign education and culture. The services provided include: teaching Chinese; training Chinese teachers, providing Chinese teaching resources; conducting Chinese exams and providing Chinese teacher qualification certification; providing information on Chinese education, culture, etc. (Confucius Institute/Classroom). They are important for the increase in China’s soft power.

2.2.2. Internationalization of Renminbi

At the current time during the recovery of the global economy, development financing is strongly needed in Africa. OBOR has grasped this chance to internationalize the renminbi while internationalizing China’s enterprises. In 2013, South Africa became the first country in Africa ever to invest in renminbi bonds. Since then, eight African countries, including African major economies such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya, have included the renminbi in their foreign exchange reserves. In 2016, the use of renminbi payments in South Africa increased by 65 per cent. Zimbabwe and Angola also recognize the renminbi as a legal tender (Zhongyanwang, 2019).

During recent years, central banks of different African countries have started to show strong interest in using the renminbi to invest and finance in occasions like Central Bank Summit. In 2018, the official website of Forum on Chi-

na-Africa Cooperation quoted foreign media as saying that because of China's growing economic influence in Africa, the central bank of Zimbabwe recommended that the southern and eastern countries of Africa use the renminbi as a reserve currency (Zhongyanwang, 2019). From May 29th to 30th of the same year, the Eastern and Southern African Institute of Macroeconomics and Financial Management (MEFMI) held a seminar about "National Foreign Exchange Reserve Management" in Harare, Zimbabwe. At the meeting, central bank and finance officials from 14 African countries including Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia, Namibia, Rwanda, and Botswana discussed the feasibility of using the renminbi as a reserve currency in the regions. This means that more African countries will include the renminbi in foreign exchange reserves in the short term.

MEFMI spokesperson Gladys Sivela-Jada Valley said that most countries in MEFMI have loans or donations from China, so it is economically meaningful for them to use renminbi to pay off debts (Zhongyanwang, 2019).

One thing worth noting is that in these 14 countries of MEFMI, there is Swaziland which has not established diplomatic relations with China; this obviously shows the important status of the renminbi in Africa.

In addition, under OBOR the internationalization of China's enterprises will reach to a new level. Some African countries like Nigeria have already begun to use the renminbi to settle with Chinese companies in their business activities. At present, because the scale of the cooperation between China and Africa is increasing rapidly, China is injecting more and more renminbi by offering loans, investing in Africa and trading with Africa, etc. Thus the involved African countries have already deposited quite a portion of renminbi in their own financial systems and the demand for renminbi in these African countries will certainly be increasing. There is no doubt that more African countries will include the renminbi as a reserve currency in the future.

2.2.3. Bigger Role in Global Governance

As a part of the global agenda, OBOR has attracted widespread attention. Its influence has greatly surpassed the trade and economic fields and extended to the environmental, cultural, and social levels, to a comprehensive plan.

The current world order was determined by the western industrial countries led by the United States after the Second World War. Quick development, great changes, and big adjustments are happening in the world while changing the international dynamics every day, yet the conservative great powers like the United States are still indulging themselves in old stereotypes such as hegemonism, unilateralism, interventionism, and protectionism. They have too many concerns and are immersed in interfering other countries' affairs, which has made it difficult and even impossible for the western developed countries to adapt to and maintain the trend of peace. However, OBOR could declare itself as a better way of development with cooperation between countries without interference, which may form a new form of global governance system. Among developing countries, a win-win situation without hegemonism seems more appealing.

Although China is faced with the threats and distraction made by the western countries every day, as a developing country China has managed to find out its own way of development and finally risen to the rank of great powers. While gradually getting stronger and having a bigger role in the international order, China seems to have been trying to prove itself different from the western developed great powers and to help other developing countries while taking the opportunity to make profits for itself, and most importantly, China promises not to interfere in any other country's internal affairs. This new type of win-win relationship and global governance model is the opposite of hegemonism and power politics, which lets the rest of the developing countries trust China with its help.

OBOR not only involves economic cooperation but through economic cooperation improves the world economic development model, making globalization more healthy. OBOR seems to be in line with the common interests and expectations for the development of every country; it helps advertise the value of multilateralism. After these five years' development, it has become a platform for exploring new global governance models.

3. Problems and Solutions

3.1. China's Enterprises' "Going Out"

There are more than 10,000 Chinese companies "going out" and investing in Africa. Many great achievements and much development have been realized, but there are still setbacks and problems. About 90 per cent of these companies are private companies with different scales and diversified businesses, and one-third of them are manufacturing companies. However, the profitability between Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and Chinese private enterprises varies greatly. The overall performance level of SOEs' international operations, taking financial incremental performance and non-financial incremental performance into account, is significantly behind that of private enterprises. Few Chinese SOEs have a profit margin of more than 20 per cent, and even a quarter of them are at a loss every year (Sun, 2017).

There is still room for improvement of management and performance. Deloitte indicates in a report that, if to learn from past experience, China's SOEs must do more than simply increase in scope and size, they need to concentrate on delivering better management. With the broader stage and strong support provided by OBOR, improving internal management capabilities and truly becoming large enterprises with international competitiveness will be both feasible and a priority for China's SOEs.

The lack of clear strategic planning and deployment, and of thorough research may be one of the reasons for the failure of the SOEs. Some of China's SOEs did not make the evaluation of investment markets before conducting international operations, which in turn affected the preservation and growth of state-owned capital.

However, these are very strong and experienced enterprises which have a good performance in China, what is the reason that they were so reckless and careless that some of them did not do enough research or planning? One answer may be that, with the steady advancement of OBOR, the SOEs blindly increased the amount of foreign investment in order to expand their business scale and the international market share of enterprises, hoping to grasp the opportunity to make the first move. The problem is that the SOEs face too many problems and risks because of their lack of practical experience. As a result, many SOEs are blindly indulged in investing new projects with the absence of feasibility studies and investment risk assessments of the international market. Moreover, due to their scattered investment areas, unreasonable investment structure and inadequate external supervision, the risk of SOEs' foreign investment increase rapidly, which results in a low return or even losses on their investment.

The direct reason lies in the strategic misjudgment of OBOR by some SOEs. Many of them regarded it as a “political behavior” and simply thought of expanding the scale as the primary strategic goal of “going out”. This problem has not only hindered the marginal production efficiency growth of the enterprises but has also caused an increase in management costs.

Other obstacles are not very important, but they also cause small trouble in daily life. An example could be the differences between Chinese and local law system. It takes work to differentiate and master the complex legal systems in different areas, for Africa is a continent that combines the civil law system, the common law system, and the Arab law system. Apart from that, there are also various local customs and culture that are different from those in China. In addition, African languages are also very diverse, for each ethnic group could have their own language, which makes it difficult for Chinese workers to communicate in the local area.

Since “going out” seems the only way for China's SOEs to expand their scales and increase their strength, these enterprises need to stop investing without thinking and stop viewing OBOR as a purely scale-expansion project. They are encouraged to do detailed and thorough researches before making a move and set up specific teams who are responsible for the “going out” process. This solution applies to all the China's enterprises “going out”. A professional team responsible for investment planning and implement, monitoring during the process and adjusting the plan, should be established in every global enterprise. Stepping into an unfamiliar market, China's enterprises in Africa will be exposed to obstacles and risks. They should take the most effective way to avoid the problems and obstacles by trying to look for strong local partners with an international perspective to help them and avoiding extremely concentrated investments.

3.2. Political Interference

Firstly, there are some political conflicts and turbulence from inside Africa dur-

ing these recent years. In 2011, during the war in Libya, China's company, State Construction Engineering Corporation had to withdraw more than 10,000 employees within three days, leaving its local enterprises to be seriously destroyed. In the same year, when the revolution broke out in Egypt, CHINA JUSHI was just starting its construction of a fiberglass production line. With the long-ruling Mubarak government overthrown, the raw materials, quality, and cost of the enterprise's production process were all affected.

Secondly, outside Africa, western governments led by the United States are preaching their suspicious theories against China, such as the "China threat theory", "China's New Hegemony", "China's debt-trap policy", etc.. Washington has always seen China as its enemy and made every effort to slow down the rise of China. With China's OBOR coming out, China's impact will increase in Eurasia and Africa, which means the dominant role of the United States in these areas is being challenged. Thus Washington has come up with many policies against China's rise, even including launching a trade war at China.

However, some African countries will not be manipulated. Akinwumi A. Adesina, president of the African Development Bank, said in an interview that there is no so-called debt crisis or debt trap in Africa and Africa is not in debt crisis at all. According to the estimates of the African Development Bank, more than 70 per cent of African country debt is invested in infrastructure. Thus there is no need at all to worry about the "debt-trap policy", for infrastructure will bring economic growth to repay the debt in the future. What's more, although Africa's debt-to-GDP ratio has increased, the proportion is much lower than that of developed countries and other emerging economies.

Nuha Bakir, Professor of International Relations at American University in Cairo, Egypt, said that OBOR promoted economic development along the region, provided the necessary economic foundation for the reform of the global governance system, boosted the social vitality along the line and also promoted cultural exchanges between countries, and that other big powers should work together with China to reform today's global governance system (*Xinhua News*, 2018c).

As China becomes the world's second-largest economy and continues to rise in other domains, the voice of the "China threat theory" in the international society would never end. The construction of OBOR could be used as China's declaration of a peaceful rise to the world and interpretation of "a Community of Shared Future for Mankind". China could also use its peace-loving history to distinguish itself from the powers in Europe in order to show the world that its rise should be confirmed as peaceful rather than threatening. OBOR is in the common interest of most countries and could reflect that China is taking international responsibility.

4. Conclusion

Africa plays a crucial part in the development of OBOR. The relationship be-

tween China and Africa has always been going well and may continue. OBOR has made China Africa's largest trading partner and China's impact on Africa is growing stronger day by day; China's role as a great power in the world order is also getting bigger. China needs to strengthen its communication and link with Africa by making full use of opportunities like the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, for there lacks enough exchange of information, such as communication between Chinese banks and African governments. Since China's enterprises are the main force to move forward OBOR, China should provide more platforms and opportunities for them by building some connections between the enterprises and local governments.

China needs to keep its image as a peaceful rising power and remain the attitude of cooperating with African countries through sincere friendship and equal treatment. China shall never break the "five nos" principle and keep claiming the intention of "Building Sino-African Community with a Shared Future".

Meanwhile, China needs to pay more attention to its relationship with the United States; Beijing shall not make the relationship worse and shall always reach to Washington for peace. For one, China is still behind the United States in many domains such as technology, it will not be worth the candle if Washington imposes sanctions on China in certain domains because OBOR challenges the hegemonic status of the United States. For another, Beijing should be aware of Washington playing the "Taiwan card" to contain mainland China.

The success of China's enterprises' "going out" would be the key factor in the success of OBOR in Africa. They should learn from the past and find a sustainable way of cooperation with its counterparties in Africa.

There are also other profits that this article does not discuss, such as the benefits in information and technology sector, and other obstacles such as the problems existing in African economic structure and the inefficiency of some African governments are also holding back the development of OBOR. It is certain that OBOR will meet setbacks because it is a project of the participation of two sides, and there will be risks and challenges. Chinese enterprises should make full use of the successful Sino-African cooperation projects to promote their stories, in order to attract more attention from local companies.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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