

CHAFRICA

Sino-African Relations

by Quentin Strathclyde

Quote of the Month

Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently." - Henry Ford

"I find it rather easy to portray a businessman. Being bland, rather cruel, and incompetent comes naturally to me." - John Cleese

CD track 24 - Western Englishman

China and Africa go back further than you may think. Back in February 1967, Julius Nyerere, the founding president of Tanzania, travelled to China to see what could be learned from Chairman Mao. He returned home with a programme of "Ujamaa" (African Socialism), a policy of self-reliance and collective farming. Chairman Mao was delighted with his new African friend's ideas, and sent several Chinese 'experts' to aid the construction of the Tanzania-Zambia railway and speed up the export of Zambian copper. Since then, China has shown increasing interest in African affairs.

Fast-forward to the present day and Chinese officials are predicting that by 2010 annual trade between China and Africa will total \$100 billion. Jealous Westerners are now starting to question just how fair the relationship between China and Africa is. Is China abusing its power to extract precious natural resources such as oil and metals to aid the infamous "peaceful rise" of the Chinese economy?

On the face of it, the numbers suggest that African countries are benefiting from the partnership. At a recent summit, China was talking serious dollars: \$3 billion of preferential loans, \$2 billion in export credits, deals to build aluminium and copper production centres in Egypt and Zambia worth \$500 million, and a \$300 million upgrade of a Nigerian motorway.

China's generosity is not confined to investment: they're also training 15,000 African doctors and other professionals, and setting up a development fund for schools and hospitals. Crucially, China has offered to supply anti-retroviral drugs to treat AIDS at prices way below what Western pharmaceutical companies charge. You can see why many African nations are queuing up to do business with China.

However, many African manufacturers resent the fact that the Chinese charge such low prices for their products. They say they cannot compete with such prices. African traders are growing angry at the Chinese tactic of 'dumping' end of line stock on African markets.

These goods are then sold for less than the cost of the materials used to manufacture them, thereby avoiding customs and import duties.

Sino-pretix to do with China
to go back exp inform to have been friends for an extended period of time
self-reliance n a political idea based on a country not needing help from others
collective farming n a communist system where farmers are paid with a share of the farm's products
to be delighted exp to be very pleased
to aid vb to help
to predict vb to estimate
to abuse vb to use something in a dishonest way for your own benefit
precious adj very very valuable (\$)

natural resources pl n e.g. oil, gas, coal, wood, iron, water
infamous adj famous for something considered bad
peaceful rise n a term used to describe China's economic and military growth not being a threat to world peace
on the face of it exp inf at first
preferential loan n a loan which has preference over other loans
copper n a reddish brown metal used for making (mainly) wire and coins
motorway UK n a very long, straight, wide road on which many cars can travel at the same time

not confined to exp includes more than just
anti-retroviral adj drugs to fight infection of AIDS
pharmaceutical adj drugs and medicine
to resent vb to not like at all
to compete vb to try to be more financially successful than another business
to dump vb inform to get rid of something that you don't want
end of line stock exp low-quality goods
customs duty n a tax on the import and export of goods
mine n a hole in the ground where coal etc is brought out

to sign up to phr vb to agree to
alleged adj if something is 'alleged', some people think it happened, but it's not definite
atrocities n when someone does something terrible and shocking
to commit vb to do
weapons decommissioning exp to destroy weapons
hypocrisy n e.g. criticising someone for something you yourself do / have done
to ensure vb make sure of
global superpower n one of the most powerful countries in the world

GLOSSARY

power.

rise to a global super-

Africa to ensure their country's reasons for a close relationship with Africa are, of Western hypocrisy. However, whatever China's real

Many say that criticism of China is yet another example

decommissioning of these very weapons.

China's relationship with Sudan has proved to be highly controversial. Compared to other governments, China has done very little to criticise the alleged atrocities committed by the Sudanese government in the Darfur region. Indeed, China has supplied many of the weapons involved in the dispute: the UN wants China to help with

China's largest mining companies have requested that China sign up to an international contract to create fairer practice in the mining, oil, and gas industry. At present, China and Sudan (where China is a major oil buyer) have refused to sign up.

Many people also worry about the harsh treatment of workers at

