

**PERSPECTIVES ON CHINA'S RISE IN NAMIBIA:  
THE EFFECTS ON FOREIGN POLICY AND DOMESTIC POLITICS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyses the different levels at which China's presence in Namibia affects Namibia's domestic politics and foreign policy from a constructivist viewpoint. Constructivist theory is used to examine the different perceptions of the Chinese in Namibia and how these inform Namibian politics and Sino-Namibian relations. These perceptions are formed at different levels of society in formal and informal relations, state-to-state, state-to-business, business-to-business and individual-to-group relations. The way in which perceptions of Chinese involvement in Namibia at the grassroots level of society differ from those at the top increasingly has an effect on domestic Namibian politics and, as such, Sino-Namibian relations. This identifies official and non-official perceptions of China's political, economic and social presence to determine the effects of grassroots on China vis-à-vis official perceptions in Namibian politics and the effects of grassroots views on Namibian politics and on official views and state behaviour towards China and China's presence in the country.

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**Abbreviations:**

ANC	African National Congress
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
CAR	China Africa Mining
CIF	Construction Industry Federation
COD	Congress of Democrats
COREMO	Comite Revolucionario de Mozambique
CLA	Caprivi Liberation Army
CPC	Communist Party of China
EU	European Union
ECE	Jiangsu Eastern China Nonferrous Metals Investment
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOCAC	Forum of China-Africa Co-operation
FNLA	Nacional para Libertação de Angola
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IFI	International Finance Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LARRI	Labour Research and Resource Institute
MAG	Monitor Action Group
MANWU	Metal and Allied Namibian Workers Union
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola
NAAR	National Assembly Asset Register
NCCI	Namibia Chamber of Commerce Institute

NDSC	Namibia Democracy Support Centre
NDI	Namibia Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NID	Namibia Institute for Democracy
PAC	Pan-Africanist Congress
PRC	People's Republic of China
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Party
SWANU	South West African National Union
SPYL	SWAPO Youth League
RDP	Rally for Democratic Progress
UN	United Nations
UNITA	Uniao Nacional Para a Independencia Total de Angola
US	The United States Of America
UK	United Kingdom
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

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## **Chapter 1:**

### **Introduction**

#### 1.1 Social Constructivism and the study of International Relations

International Relations theories describe the ideas about the nature of actors in world politics, the nature of the context that surrounds those actors and the nature of the interactions between them (Ba and Hoffman, 2003: 19). Dominant theories in the study of International Relations such as neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism, take state identities and interests as a given. Neo-realism suggests that actors in the international system are “power-seeking, security-conscious states” that exist in an anarchical context where material resources are the most important characteristics of the state (Ba and Hoffman, 2003: 19). This theory ignores human nature and focuses on the effects of the international system consisting of states trying to survive (Walt, 1998: 30). Neo-liberal institutionalism acknowledges the importance of the individual but believes that power and interest are the material bases of the system (Wendt, 1996: 48). This theory also places states in an anarchical context but places larger importance on state and non-state actors, rather than states alone. Co-operation between states is possible in the framework of international organisations that can help states achieve mutual interests (Ba and Hoffman, 2003: 19). This theory suggests that transnational actors such as multinational corporations are gradually “encroaching on the power of states” but that states are the central players in international affairs (Walt, 1998: 32).

Neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism focus on material factors such as power or trade, but do not, however, explain the role of perception as a source of state identity and behaviour in the international system (Walt, 1998: 40). In contrast, social constructivism adopts a more sociological rather than an economic or material approach. (Wendt, 1996: 48) Unlike neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism theories that maintain that actors have a fixed nature

of self-interest and security consciousness or being fixated on economic gain, social constructivism argues that actors in the international system are dynamic and that their interests and identities change across contexts and through different periods of time (Ba and Hoffman, 2003: 20).

Social Constructivism describes the dynamic, contingent and culturally based condition of the social world by stressing the reciprocal relationship between nature and human knowledge (Adler, 2003: 96). The roles of ideas, identities, and norms offer a way of explaining change in world politics. It looks at the “power of ideas, the interplay between actors and their social context, the notion that actors’ words, deeds and interactions shape the kind of world in which they exist and that the world shapes who actors are and what they want” (Ba and Hoffman, 2003: 15). It focuses on the idea that the world is not a given and that ideas and interests are socially constructed by the particular way actors interact with each other. Identities and interests do not exist independently from the social situations to which they are attached (Sterling-Folker, 2006: 116).

In terms of international politics, Wendt claims that states are the principal actors in the international system, that the key structures in the state systems are intersubjective rather than material (1996: 48). In other words, state systems are based on the “beliefs held by individual agents about each other” (Wendt, 1999: 160-161) and that state identities and interests are constructed by these structures rather than exogenously by human nature or domestic politics. Wendt argues that constructivist theory problematises state identity and thus structural change within the international community (1996: 48). Constructivism therefore encourages us to look at structures of human association and how they are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces and how identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than being taken as given (Wendt, 1999: 1). Norms and ideas play an important role in defining state identities. It is therefore important to

consider where national interests come from, and how these interests are constructed through the process of social interaction (Checkel, 2008: 74). The social world is made up of intersubjective understandings, subjective knowledge and material objects. Social facts therefore become facts as a result of human agreement because their existence depends on the attachment of collective knowledge to physical reality and material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of the shared knowledge in which they are embedded (Adler, 2003:100).

As such, Sterling-Folker states that “what we take as immutable structures in International Relations are actually embedded social relationships that are contingent to a large extent on how nation-states think about and interact with one another” (2006: 118). The social world is made up of human consciousness of thoughts, beliefs, ideas and concepts, and it is meaningful to the people who made it and live in it (Jackson and Sorenson, 2007: 165). Social constructivism focuses on the prevailing discourse in society because this discourse “reflects and shapes beliefs and interests and establishes accepted norms of behaviour” (Walt, 1998: 40-41). When looking at the structure of bilateral relations between China and Namibia it is therefore important to look at what informs individuals and how this information helps to construct their views and perceptions. With the dramatic expansion of Chinese relations with Africa, perceptions of what to make of China’s presence, its engagement with the world and how to respond to this engagement has therefore become of preoccupation. Social Constructivism therefore helps one analyse Sino-Namibian relations in the context of international relations.

Social Constructivism can assist in examining changing perceptions of the Chinese in Namibia and how these views inform Namibian politics and ultimately affect Sino-Namibian relations. The role of ideas, identities and norms can be used to describe how perceptions are being formed about Chinese presence at different levels in Namibia and how these

perceptions are affecting foreign policy and domestic politics in the state. It is important to note that there are different perceptions of China, specifically between how the West and Africa views China. Dominant Western perceptions of China are not necessarily linked to the formulation of African ones but both Western and African interpretations play an important role in determining official and non-official African perceptions of China's presence on the continent.

### 1.2 Western Interpretations of China in Africa

Daniel Large makes reference to the fact that the West has portrayed China as a “monolithic Chinese dragon in an unvariegated African bush stripped of historical and political context” (2006: 45). It is this perception that has contributed to the fear of China's steady rise in Africa from a Western perspective in recent years. The West has always had the perception that Africa is in its ‘sphere of influence’ and therefore regards China as an outsider on the continent (Anshan, 2007: 83).

China's increased engagement with the African continent is significant for the West because it challenges Western political and economic predominance in Africa. China's strategic foreign policy to strengthen diplomatic ties with African states is helping China become an important player in the international system. China's rise in Africa can therefore be perceived as a threat by the West because it fears a change in the world order and its position in it.

It is for these reasons that Western academics have been trying to determine what China's ultimate goal in Africa is. European perceptions of China have been predominantly negative. The media, politicians and civil society's negative stance on China has become part of the standard rhetoric to describe China in Africa (Tull, 2008: 4). Economically, China is seen to be exploiting Africa's natural resources. It argues that Sino-African relations are unequal and

that China is deterring economic development growth in Africa. Politically, European rhetoric suggests that China's principle of non-interference undermines human rights and democracy in Africa and hinders the ability of European states to spread these ideals in Africa (Tull, 2008: 4).

The West believes that China's economic and strategic interests in Africa could have negative political and economic effects for the continent. The United States and its allies have criticised China for its conduct in Africa, arguing that China supports authoritarian regimes at the expense of democracy and human rights so that they can secure oil supplies and other natural resources (Anshan, 2007: 83).

China's involvement in Darfur and Zimbabwe are such examples of China and the West's divergent policies with regard to oppressive regimes. Brookes and Hye Shin argue that China supports oppressive dictatorships by legitimizing their policies and offers them diplomatic recognition and financial assistance in the form of financial aid and development infrastructure. This support exacerbates the forced removals of populations and abets massive human rights violations (2006: 1). China's support for economic and political repression in these countries counteracts the democratic aspirations of Western states in Africa to promote good governance and regional security and stability. The United States wants to encourage democratic process, economic freedom and respect for human rights but this has been made difficult by China's influence in African states (Brookes and Hye, 2006: 2).

China's refusal to condemn Sudanese actions on the basis of Sudan's right to govern its own internal affairs, despite a purported genocide taking place, helped Khartoum evade international pressure. China's opposition to sanctions was a contributing factor for the ineffectiveness of the United Nations resolutions (Rogers, 2007: 25). China also opposed UN action against Zimbabwe for the abuse of members of the opposition and preventing free and

fair elections in 2008 (Rotberg, 2008: 13) therefore allowing Zimbabwe to resist Western pressure for change.

China's behaviour in these circumstances is perceived by the West as being problematic in terms of how effectively Western states and the UN can deal with African humanitarian problems. Kurlantzick argues that China's support for dictators negatively affects American interests and that countries, like Zimbabwe, are proving to be the world's test of whether or not the Western world can help transform autocratic regimes through the values of democracy and human rights (2007: 222-223). The United States has always believed that the creation of strong civil societies and democratic systems in developing countries is the only way to achieve security, instability and terror (Kurlantzick, 2007: 217). China's support of Sudan and Zimbabwe make the West appear weak and relieves Western pressure on authoritative regimes. Therefore, China's continued engagement with these states may be viewed by the West as being threatening behaviour because it undermines its influence in the region.

The United States and China have fundamentally different perceptions of how diplomacy and international affairs should be conducted. Kurlantzick argues that it is difficult for the West to convince China to act against the Khartoum government or Robert Mugabe, because policies have no direct effect or impact on China (2007: 218). China itself does not have the identity of being a democratic state and has its own problems with human rights and corruption. This means that it has no right to criticise or condemn authoritarian regimes (Anshan, 2007: 74).

The West also has the perception that the Chinese government is actively advocating a Chinese-style economic development model for African states to follow based on a "restricted market system constrained by the overarching priority of maintaining a single-

party, totalitarian government” (Brooke and Hye Shin, 2006: 6). One could, however argue that China has proved to be very determined to stay out of the internal affairs of other countries. Its principles of non-interference and respect for sovereignty means that it is not concerned with what type of political system a nation has and therefore one can argue that it does not seem to be particularly promoting single-party, totalitarian governments in Africa.

China’s foreign policy aspirations to gain raw materials and energy to sustain its economic growth and its search for new markets is being scrutinised and is receiving much attention from Western policy makers. Most of the attention falls on China’s interest in Africa’s oil markets (Taylor, 2007: 2). Western countries are concerned with the fact that China’s top ten trading partners in Africa, with the exclusion of South Africa, are oil producing countries (Taylor, 2007: 3). It is, therefore, Western policy makers’ concern and view that China is trying to monopolise oil markets in Africa. Academics have argued that China, in addition to its short term goal of securing oil to help fuel its growing domestic demands at home, has a long term goal of positioning itself as a “global player in the international oil market” (Taylor, 2007: 3). The West, therefore, fears that it will have little or no access to African oil markets and other raw materials in the future as China pursues these resources with its aggressive political policy (Brooke and Hye Shin, 2006: 2-3).

China is becoming a powerful actor on the international stage but the United States does, however, remain the superpower of the international system. The US is still the number one military power in the world (Kurlantzick, 2007: 226). It also remains the world’s largest economic power and American investment dominates Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in developing countries. China is still a developing country (Kurlantzick, 2007: 228) and has a long way to go before it can reach superpower status. Anshan, however, argues that China needs to have the courage to withstand Westerns criticism of its foreign policy in Africa. It also needs to re-assure the West that Chinese engagement in Africa will not contradict their

interests. The development of mutual trust and dialogue is the best way to prevent conflict between China and the West over Africa (Anshan, 2007: 85). Sterling-Folker suggests that the way states interact with each other is what determines their relations (2003: 116). China's relationship with the West will therefore be determined and shaped by Western perceptions of China's presence and engagement with Africa and also possibly by how in turn, the West responds to African perceptions of China.

### 1.3 African Interpretations of China

The debate on African perceptions on China's rise in Africa is dominated by two opposite views. On the one side, there is the view that China's rise in Africa is negative and its increasing influence on the continent is resented by African people. On the other hand, there are positive African perceptions that China's rise is contributing positively to African countries as it provides soft loans, infrastructure programmes, low-cost goods, and provides an alternative to Western dominance (Horto, 2009).

China's foreign policy ideology of respect of sovereignty, non-interference, mutual understanding and co-development is what makes China an attractive partner to Africa. China presents itself as an ally and partner that has never colonised any part of Africa (Foerstel, 2008: 3). Because of its imperialist past and the humiliation following the Opium Wars<sup>1</sup>, China has become extremely sensitive to the notions of sovereignty and equality among nations (Anshan, 2007: 74). Violations of its own sovereignty by major powers and the interference of outside nations in its internal affairs has made non-interference a very important part of China's foreign policy in Africa. China's principle of non-interference

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<sup>1</sup> In the late 1830s China tried to stop the illegal trade of opium of British traders by shutting down the foreign smuggling operations and destroying a massive stockpile. Britain retaliated by sending fleets to the east coast of China and captured several cities and blockaded waterways (Roy, 1998: 8). By August 1842, under the Treaty on Nanjing, China had to pay the British US\$ 21 million as compensation, cede Hong Kong Island to Britain and open five Chinese cities to residency by British traders (Roy, 1998: 9).

regards sovereignty as the one concept that should protect all nations. Therefore, no country bears the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another country. China regards this notion highly because it is a safeguard to its own sovereign rights (Anshan, 2007: 74). China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and respects African countries' independent choice of the road of development (People's Republic of China, 2006).

China and other developing nations insist that sovereignty is supreme, and issues such as human right violations do not give other countries the right to intervene in domestic affairs. The principle of non-intervention held by China ensures its own sovereignty but also helps them gain the trust of African countries because of their shared past experiences with Western powers. The shared past of colonialism and imperialism has therefore become the basis of equality among Africa and China (Anshan, 2007: 74). African leaders view China as an ally against the West's interference in the domestic affairs of developing countries.

The current structure of the international system favours more powerful nations. The United Nations Security Council, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are dominated by the interests of powerful nations and their decisions often have had a negative and severe impact on poorer nations. Western intervention in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the 1980s and 1990s and conditional aid, did not and do not respect sovereignty and widen inequalities. Efforts to promote transparency, participation, democracy and good governance in Africa are considered to be invasive and ultimately result in the loss of national sovereignty and autonomy. The West has helped development in Africa but structural adjustment programmes, budget cuts, northern protectionism and trade inequalities make Western claims to humanitarianism, justice and equality seem dishonest (Mawdsley, 2007: 414-415).

China has taken a different approach to the West in dealing with Africa as it seems to offer more practical advice for the developing world. Chinese notions of co-operation, partnership and development are narrowing the gap between Africa and other parts of the “global South” and helping to reshape Africa’s relations with the global economy (Mohan and Power, 2009: 25). The West has, therefore, become a relatively unattractive development partner because it does not respect sovereignty and is not able to effectively deal with Africa’s pressing economic development needs the way China seemingly does.

African leaders and elites have positive perceptions of China because its involvement with the continent allows for African governments to have access to economic assistance, develop their infrastructure, expand agriculture and strengthen their security apparatus (Horto, 2009). Chinese aid to African states in the form of loans and project assistance that focuses on physical infrastructure projects, has improved Africa’s ability to develop itself (Pehnelt, 2007: 3) In 2007, for example, China gave the Democratic Republic of Congo a US\$ 5 billion package for infrastructure rehabilitation in the country and for the development of the Katanga, Itri and Kivus mines (Alden, Large and de Oliveira, 2008: 23). In the same year, China offered to build a sugar processing facility, hydroelectric power generating plants, and a solid minerals processing and exploration operation in Nigeria (Obiorah, Kew and Tanko, 2008: 278). African governments therefore feel that they are greatly benefitting from China’s ‘no-strings attached’ loans which support initiatives by African states to address development issues that are seemingly not being solved by Western investment (Adisu, 2010: 4). The development and economic benefits are positive aspects of China’s engagement with Africa and drive positive African perceptions of China’s presence on the continent.

The “China model” is attractive to African leaders because China is seen as being a developing country with an advanced economy. It is a development model that African states want to emulate (Large, 2008: 49). The work of Emmanuel Hevi suggests that China

“enchants” African leaders to the point that they want to model themselves on China (Large, 2008: 49). China is a symbol of a poor agrarian economy that has managed, under regulated conditions, to pursue economic reforms and has maintained state control of the economy while being able to resist Western pressure for rapid democratization. China, therefore, represents a reliable and alternative development model for African leaders to follow (Lewis, 2007: 2) which may help them reach their own development goals.

Unofficial African perceptions of the Chinese, however, differ across the continent. Some African locals view China’s presence in a positive light while others are opposed to the growing number of Chinese people and businesses in their respective countries. These feelings result from the different ways in which China enters and interacts with different sectors of African societies and how they are viewed by the local population (Horto, 2009).

Some African populations have positive perceptions about the Chinese in terms of respecting their simple and disciplined lifestyle. Chinese immigrants in Africa appear to not flaunt their wealth or live extravagant lives as opposed to Western immigrants. Locals also appreciate the excellent work ethic of Chinese workers and entrepreneurs who work long hours with very little complaint (Rupp, 2008: 77). In Cape Verde, the majority of the population believes that the Chinese contribute positively to the economy (Carling and Haugen, 2008: 319). Cape Verdeans have positive perceptions of the Chinese because there are no evident negative consequences of Chinese immigration for the local population. Local traders are not affected by Chinese imports because of Cape Verde’s small manufacturing sector (Carling and Haugen, 2008: 329). Chinese low-cost goods are welcomed by the population because they can afford goods that they could not previously afford from European retailers (Carling and Haugen, 2008: 328). Low-cost Chinese goods, that range from electronics to consumable household items, gives lower-income African locals more access to items that they could previously not afford (Rupp, 2008: 69).

There are, however, African locals who have negative perceptions of the Chinese in Africa based on economic and racial grounds. Discourse suggests that most locals are suspicious of China's intentions in Africa. This sentiment is fuelled by the limited social interaction between Africans and Chinese immigrants (Rupp, 2008: 69). Language barriers and the nature of Chinese immigrants to remain in isolated communities results in a lack of communication further exacerbating the ability for locals to understand or relate to the Chinese.

Locals also resent Chinese companies that do not employ locals but rather import labour from China. In Angola, Chinese companies bring in between 70% to 80% of its labour from China. Chinese oil companies in the country employ fewer than 15% Angolan labour and they usually receive less pay (Horto, 2009). These migrant Chinese workers further alienate themselves from the locals, instead preferring to form their own isolated communities (Foerstel, 2008: 6). This isolation and distance from the rest of the community and co-workers can contribute to feelings of xenophobia within the locals because they cannot relate to the Chinese and therefore fear their presence and view them as strangers.

Poor labour relations at Chinese companies have also become an issue for African workers. There are trends of poor labour relations across the continent at Chinese companies which include hostile attitudes by Chinese employers towards trade unions, violations of worker's rights, poor working conditions and unfair labour practices. Workers' basic rights within local labour laws, such as paid vacation time, sick leave, and maternity leave are often ignored. Most workers comply with their employers demands because they fear that they will be dismissed (Jauch, 2011: 52-53). There has, however, been a rise in strike action from disgruntled employees. In 2009, Mozambican workers employed by "China Henan International Cooperation Group" to build a new water supply system downed tools in protest of a lack of overtime payments, unwritten employment contracts and arbitrary pay cuts. Some

workers even went as far as to wear badges with the word *escravo*, meaning slave (Otieno, Turana and Mayanja, 2010).

Negative perceptions of the Chinese are also held by the small local business people. There have been reports of fighting and riots in street markets between Chinese immigrant traders and local traders in various countries (Foerstel, 2008: 6). In Uganda for instance, frustrated local traders are competing with Chinese traders who import and sell the same items that Ugandan traders buy from China, but at a lower price (Lee, 2007: 26). Negative perceptions are also formed by the consumers of Chinese products who complain that these goods are of poor quality. Some believe that the goods that are sent to Africa are of lower quality than those intended for European or American markets (Rupp, 2008: 70).

The growing number of Chinese construction companies in Africa is also negatively perceived by the corporate sector. By 2005, the accumulated value of construction contracts undertaken by Chinese companies in Africa reached US\$ 34 billion (Gill and Reilly, 2007: 41). Big state-owned Chinese construction companies have become a source of serious competition to local construction companies. Chinese companies are very competitive, especially in gaining large scale public construction projects in Africa. Competing Chinese construction companies try to undercut each other while bidding for public projects. This competition adversely affects local companies in Sub-Saharan Africa who cannot compete with the high efficiency and low costs of Chinese construction companies (Gill and Reilly, 2007: 41). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that Chinese companies are always trying to find ways to cut costs which results in the reduction of workers' wages and working conditions (Gill and Reilly, 2007: 46) which in turn results in poor labour relations.

Local populations in African countries are not the only ones with negative perceptions of the Chinese. The Chinese presence is also affecting African politics. In 2006, former Zambian

opposition leader Michael Sata prominently used the Chinese presence in Zambia and its control of the copper mines, in his presidential campaign. If elected, he threatened to cut all diplomatic ties with China and instead recognise Taiwan's independence ambitions. Even though Sata lost the elections that year, his political party won a considerable amount of seats in the copper mining regions (Foerstel, 2008: 4). In 2005, an explosion at a Chinese-owned copper mine in Zambia that killed at least forty-six workers brought up debates about poor environmental practices and working conditions. During Chinese President Hu Jintao's twelve day tour of Africa in 2007, Zambian threats of protests forced him to cancel his visit to the Copper belt. Hu Jintao's visit was also marred by former South African President Thabo Mbeki's warnings that Africa and China's import and export relationship threatened to become a "replication of that colonial relationship between Europe and its African possessions a century ago" (Wines, 2007). These views give China the identity of being a new type of coloniser in Africa and could possibly have the effect of changing the way African leaders engage with China.

The large number of Chinese migrants in Africa, most of whom reside in the countries illegally, is having the effect of causing severe damage to China's image as a great power in the eyes of African people (Horto, 2009). Local Africans have the perception that the Chinese people that they encounter on a social level are a threat to their livelihoods. These interactions may have a detrimental effect for the future of Sino-African relations if these negative grassroots perceptions do not change. Horto argues that if left unaddressed, the resentment of local populations may result in violent incidents that may undermine a potentially mutual relationship between Africa and China (2009). Negative perceptions of China at a local level may also have an effect on politics as this could put pressure on African governments to re-think their foreign policies with China and their future relations.

#### 1.4 Namibian Interpretations of China in Africa

China's presence in Namibia has led to the formation of official and non-official perceptions of China in Namibia. Changing perceptions on China structure Sino-Namibian relations at different levels of the state, economy and society. Constructivist theory can assist in assessing the different perceptions of the Chinese in Namibia and how these inform Namibian politics and Sino-Namibian relations.

Official relations between China and Namibia began in the early 1960s. China diplomatically and militarily supported Namibia and the South West Africa People's Party (SWAPO) in the country's liberation struggle. Relations continued after Namibia gained its independence on 21 March 1990, establishing official diplomatic relations with Namibia on 22 March 1990 (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008: 3). Since then the two countries have made it a priority to strengthen bilateral ties. Official Sino-Namibian relations are therefore largely based on the shared idea that they have been allies since the Namibian war of independence.

Chinese investment in Namibia has been seen favourably by the government. China is popular with the Namibian government because of its effective trade diplomacy, frequent invitations of Namibian government officials for state visits to China, generous credits to finance Chinese exports to Namibia and substantial contributions to public charities (Dobler, 2008: 239).

Official Chinese loans and aid play a very important role in helping Namibia achieve its development goals thus making the relationship beneficial to both the government and the local population (Odada and Kakujaha, 2008: 22). In this respect, China is viewed as a partner in Namibia's development. Sino-Namibian relations can be characterised by growing investment, aid and trade. Between 1990 and 2009, development aid from China had reached the N\$ 1 billion mark. China has contributed significantly to the building of infrastructure in

Namibia. This includes schools in the northern region of the country in places like Tsumkwe and Omuthiya, roads, railways lines and hospitals, and an agricultural research centre near the Okavango River. China also upgraded and expanded the Namibian Defence Force military school for N\$ 65 million (Weidlich, 2009). China's funding of various projects in different fields is viewed favourably by Namibians because they are helping the country meet its development goals.

However, China's engagement with Namibia has had mixed responses and reactions at a wider national level. As more Chinese immigrants enter the country, there is growing concern about the impact and effects of not only a growing economic but also social Chinese presence (Dobler, 2008: 244). This presence is having a noticeable effect on domestic politics. As elsewhere in Africa, issues of corruption and the lack of accountability and transparency associated with Chinese investment (Alden, Large and Soares de Oliveira, 2008: p, 22), have produced criticism at both political and grassroots levels. At the national level, the political climate in Namibia has become increasingly hostile towards Chinese migrant traders and companies backed by the Chinese government (Dobler, 2008: 253). As such, China's presence in Namibia has become a popular topic in parliamentary debates. In 2006, opposition party leader of the Congress of Democrats Ben Ulenga, introduced a motion to debate malpractices in the building industry and the favouring of Chinese tenders by the government (Dobler, 2008: 240) after six out of sixteen government construction tenders had been awarded to Chinese companies in 2005/2006, which was seen to have had a negative effect on local construction companies (Dobler, 2008: 241). This suggests that China's presence in Namibia is not only having an effect on the country's economy but also on domestic politics.

Even within SWAPO, concerns have been raised about whether China is trying to buy influence with the political leadership of the country in order to gain access to mineral resources or win government tender contracts (LaFraniere and Grobler, 2009). The negative

perceptions about the Chinese in Namibia demonstrates that there is a problem with China's aggressive strategy to deepen diplomatic ties, extract natural resources and solicit trade and business in the country as in the rest of Africa (LaFraniere and Grobler, 2009).

At a grassroots level, perceptions shape attitudes about Chinese immigrants who are perceived to be strangers or the "other" and this has fuelled feelings of xenophobia. Their physical presence in Namibia is seen as threatening to the local population. These feelings towards Chinese immigrants are coupled with feelings of resentment towards the government for promoting Chinese business and investment in the country (Dobler, 2008: 241), especially where Chinese traders and investors are a threat to the local traders' economic and social livelihoods. Such an example is the local traders in Oshikango, in the northern part of Namibia, who have to compete with a rising number of Chinese traders. In 2006 the total number of Chinese businesses in the area had risen to seventy-five, compared to twenty-two in 2004 (Dobler, 2008: 246) making it very difficult for traders to keep their businesses open.

Perceptions about the Chinese in Namibia are therefore being formed at different levels of society, in formal and informal relations, state-to-state, state-to-business, business-to-business, and individual-to-group relations. The way in which perceptions of Chinese involvement in Namibia at the grassroots level of society differ from those at the top is likely to have an effect on domestic Namibian politics and, as such, Sino-Namibian relations. It is therefore, important to look at the foreign policies of both China and Namibia to determine how perceptions are likely to affect Sino-Namibian relations.

## **Chapter 2:**

### **The Foreign Policy of China towards Africa and Namibia's Foreign Policy towards Asia and the World**

This chapter will look at formal Chinese and Namibian perceptions of each other based on their respective foreign policies and the strategies that are contained in them. Social constructivism emphasises that the world of international relations does not exist independently of human actions. It is rather intersubjective and its rules are formed and reproduced by human interactions. Therefore, the role of identities in international relations is important in determining state behaviour. Social aspects inform Chinese and Namibian state identities and interests. These interests are socially constructed and shaped through a process of social interaction. Foreign policy interests are therefore not solely defined by material factors but also through shared social norms.

#### 2.1 China's Foreign Policy towards Africa

Relations between China and Africa have evolved since the start of formal relations at the Bandung Conference<sup>2</sup> in 1955. This conference called for economic and cultural co-operation with Asian, African and Latin American countries. Its Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence were adopted by twenty-nine Asian and African nations. These principles are based on respect for sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, economic and technical cooperation, mutual benefit, the needs and rights of developing nations and peaceful co-existence among states (Mawdsley, 2007: 408). At this meeting, Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Central Government Council of the People's Republic of China (PRC), exclaimed that, "what the imperialists fear most is the awakening of the Asian, African and

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<sup>2</sup> The Bandung Conference was held from 18-24 April 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. Six out of the twenty-nine countries attending the conference were from African states, namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast (Ghana), Liberia and Sudan (Larkin, 1971: 16).

Latin American people” and that these nations “should unite and drive US imperialism from Asia, Africa and Latin America back to where it came from” (Muekalia, 2004: 6). Bandung was therefore, the first attempt of Afro-Asian states to come together based on shared ideas of the international system to counteract western domination of world affairs. It also saw to the start of Chinese diplomatic relations with Africa.<sup>3</sup> China maintained its position of anti-colonialism but did not stress or discuss specific anti-colonial and anti-apartheid issues on the continent (Larkin, 1971: 18).

During the years between 1949 to the early 1970s, China was going through a ‘revolutionary’ period (Taylor, 2011: 2). The establishment of the newly formed PRC prompted Mao to create his own model of nation-building rather than attempt to replicate the experience of other nations (Roy, 1998: 14). Regional problems, namely the Taiwan Strait Crisis<sup>4</sup> during the 1950s, meant that China’s foreign policy between 1949 and 1955 was directed at protecting itself from the perceived threat of American imperialism, seeking recognition as the legal government of China and cultivating friendship with its Asian neighbours (Wu, 1988: 850). China had very limited contact with African leaders during the period of 1949 and 1955. Colonialism also meant that nationalist organisations had not yet been formed to make any significant impact on world politics (Taylor, 2011: 5). Africa was therefore not an important part of Chinese foreign policy because China perceived Africa to be poor with very little to contribute to its national interests. The “spirit of Bandung” (Larkin, 1971: 19) did, however, mark the beginning of intensified relations with the continent.

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<sup>3</sup> The Bandung conference saw to the start of Chinese diplomatic relations with Egypt. Frequent contacts between China and Egypt later resulted in the opening of Sino-Egyptian trade and cultural co-operation (Larkin, 1971: 17).

<sup>4</sup> From 1949, The People Republic of China launched an ambitious campaign to unify Taiwan with the mainland and began preparing a campaign to attack the Taiwan controlled island of Jinmen in the early 1950s (Jian, 2001: 167). This was the start of the PRC’s ‘One-China’ policy.

The early 1960s saw to a rapid increase in Chinese aid and support to African liberation movements and states. The Sino-Soviet break from 1960 and Mao's intentions to pursue a distinctive socialist model apart from the Soviet Union caused China to seek alternative allies (Goldstein, 2006: 238). China's perceptions of Africa therefore changed. It now viewed it as an ally in balancing Soviet power and revisionism.<sup>5</sup> The period of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 saw to the intensification of relations with Africa. The principle of "exporting revolution" became the main tenant of foreign policy towards Africa (Anshan, 2007: 71) and unleashed a renewed interest in promoting armed struggle against imperialism. The promotion of disruption and unrest in Africa became a central part of China's Africa policy as a way of preparing it for revolution (Taylor, 2011: 8). Policy was greatly influenced by the extreme ideology and politics of the Cultural Revolution.

This era of revolution saw to an increase of visits to African states. Premier Zhou Enlai toured thirteen Africa nations between 1963 and 1964 to garner support for the Chinese model of socialism (Mitchell and McGiffert, 2007: 15). China also intensified relations with some African states during this period. In the late 1960s, China loaned Mali US\$ 4 million in foreign currency to repay its debts, granted a US\$ 2 million loan to Algeria and a US\$ 10 million currency loan to Egypt (Larkin, 1971: 95). At the height of the Cultural Revolution, China concluded an agreement for the US\$ 484 million Tanzania-Zambia railway project that had previously been turned down by the Soviet Union and the United States (Snow, 2006: 295).

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<sup>5</sup> Relations between China and the Soviet Union worsened as Mao believed that China had to liberate itself from the Soviet Union's model of socialism that focused more on economic improvement and not revolutionary goals (Goldstein, 2006: 241). Mao believed that socialism in China could only be achieved by separating itself from the Soviet Union (ibid: 246). After the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, the PRC felt that the Soviet Union, under Nikita Khrushchev's leadership was abandoning basic revolutionary principles by moving towards capitalism and imperialism (Roy, 1998: 24).

Escalating conflict with the Soviet Union and competition for the attention of African countries during the late 1960s (Mitchell and McGiffert, 2007: 16) resulted in China supporting liberation movements based on its own geo-political interests. China supported organizations fighting against Soviet-backed movements by offering arms, military instructors and economic aid<sup>6</sup> (Mitchell and McGiffert, 2007: 15). China's foreign policy towards Africa was predominantly shaped by its deteriorating relationship and competition with the Soviet Union and the radical leftist revolutionary mantra of the Cultural Revolution. One can, therefore argue that China perceived Africa as a key player in its efforts to mitigate Soviet influence in the region. Overall, China's immediate political interests seemed to be more important than promoting its template of revolution and Africa played a role in its agenda.

Table 1: Chinese and Soviet Support of Liberation movements in the 1960s

<b>Territory</b>	<b>Liberation movements backed by China</b>	<b>Liberation movements backed by the Soviet Union</b>
Angola	Nacional para Libertação de Angola (FNLA)	Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA)
Mozambique	Comite Revolucionario de Mozambique (Coremo)	Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique (FRELIMO)*
Namibia (South West Africa)	South West African National Union (SWANU)	South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO)
South Africa	Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC)	African National Congress (ANC)
Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU)	Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU)

\*Both China and the Soviet Union offered support to FRELIMO and SWAPO during this period

Source: Larkin, B. 1971. *China and Africa 1949-1970: the foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China*. University of California Press: Berkeley

<sup>6</sup> After 1963, China refused to support liberation movements that refused to sever ties with the Soviet Union (Snow, 2006: 296).

By the early 1970s, China re-strategized its foreign policy. China sought to improve relations with the developed world in an attempt to gain access to technology and economic aid, but also to counter Soviet influence (Roy, 1998: 25). However, China continued to call for ‘anti-imperialist’ solidarity and a new international economic order based on the developing world (Mitchell and Mcgiffert, 2007: 17). China also concentrated on efforts to pursue recognition over Taiwan and its ‘One China’ Policy.

In 1974, China adopted Mao’s idea of “Three Worlds”. Mao had perceived the international system to be divided into three worlds. It placed the US and the Soviet Union in the ‘first’ world, with the Soviet Union being the biggest threat, industrialised nations like Canada, Britain and Japan in the ‘second’ world and the non-aligned Third World led by China in the ‘third’ world (Mitchell and Mcgiffert, 2007: 17). The “Three Worlds” theory was a way of creating a coalition made up of the ‘third’ and ‘second’ worlds against the ‘first’ world to target US imperialism and Soviet revisionism at the same time (Van Ness, 1998: 156). The “Three Worlds” theory further pushed China to support liberation movements fighting against Soviet-backed movements. The Soviet Union was, however, the main source of military arms for African liberations movements (Snow, 2006: 297). African movements believed that the Soviet Union was more genuine in its efforts to support the cause of liberation and reacted unfavourably to the perception that China was using it as a weapon against Soviet power (Snow, 2006: 298).

During the 1960s, Taiwan had been successful in securing the recognition of newly independent African states through intensive aid and investment programmes.<sup>7</sup> By 1963 nineteen African countries had established bilateral relations with Taiwan compared to the

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<sup>7</sup> Taiwan’s agricultural and technical assistance programme in 1961 in over twenty-seven countries secured African recognition and support for Taiwan (Wu, 1988: 851).

thirteen that recognised China (Haifung, 2010: 53). China realised that improved relations with African states could help it achieve its political and ideological goals (Yu, 1988: 850). It embarked on an aggressive diplomatic and extensive aid programme to secure African support for a seat in the UN. Between 1970 and 1977, China spent US\$1.9 billion in aid on twenty nine African states. By the end of 1975, China had established relations with thirty-seven African countries while only eight maintained relations with Taiwan (Yu, 1988: 855). China's awareness and perception of the importance of newly independent African states helped it replace Taiwan on the Security Council of the United Nations in 1971<sup>8</sup> (Taylor, 2011: 16).

Sino-African relations did, however, also become less important to China during the late 1970s as China moved towards an "open door" policy. In 1978, Chinese foreign policy was moving away from Mao's revolutionary foreign policy towards Deng Xiaoping's<sup>9</sup> "socialist modernisation" policy. After 1978, China pursued a foreign policy that would attract FDI and technology, so it concentrated on improving relations with countries that it could economically benefit from (Taylor, 1998: 443). In 1980, China joined the World Bank and the IMF (Mitchell and McGiffert, 2007: 17). China continued to develop its relations with developing countries based on equality and mutual benefit (Taylor, 1998: 443) with aid amounting to US\$94 million between 1976 and 1980 (Anshan, 2008: 25). Financial aid and the rhetoric of 'South South' cooperation, however, declined from the 1980s<sup>10</sup> but Deng still supported the notion of liberation struggles in Africa (Mitchell and McGiffert, 2007: 18). China therefore, saw Africa as unimportant on its road to modernisation at this stage. The Tiananmen Square crackdown in June 1989, however, changed China's perception of Africa.

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<sup>8</sup> A third of Beijing's votes were from African countries (Taylor, 2011: 16).

<sup>9</sup> Deng Xiaoping became the paramount leader of China following Mao's death in 1976 (1978-1992)

<sup>10</sup> Aid to Africa fell from US\$ 254 million in 1980 to US\$ 25 million in 1981 (Brautigam, 2008: 203)

The protests and shootings at Tiananmen Square in June 1989<sup>11</sup> put China's human rights record under international scrutiny. The West had previously turned a blind eye to human rights violations in China but saw the violent crackdown as an inappropriate reaction to domestic unrest and a rejection of Western values and norms (Taylor, 1998: 446). Western rejection and sanctions on China caused it to actively seek diplomatic support from African allies, who similarly sent messages of support to China following the crackdown.<sup>12</sup> Leaders were willing to support China's claims that the West was trying to advocate the respect for human rights as a way of undermining the stability and progress of developing countries (Tull, 2006: 461). Shared ideas of sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs and the shared perception that the West was undermining developing countries changed the way that China viewed Africa. It realised that Africa could be a strong ally against Western dominance in the international system.

Between June 1989 and June 1992, China's Foreign Minister Qian Qichen visited fourteen African nations (Taylor, 1998: 450). Although no precise figures are available for this period, China dramatically increased its aid to African states (Mwasdley, 2007: 411). Gaining the support of African countries allowed China to resist Western hegemonism by creating a coalition against Western pressures. Non-interference in state sovereignty was emerging as an important theme in China's foreign policy based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence (Taylor, 1998: 451). The shared idea among Chinese and African leaders of non-

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<sup>11</sup> The **Tiananmen Square** national protests in China occurred between April 15, 1989 and June 4, 1989. The protests were a result of conflict between the Chinese democracy movement and the Communist Party of China. A majority of the students from the numerous colleges and universities in Beijing took part in the protests which commanded widespread support from the urban workers who were alarmed by growing inflation and corruption. Party officials tried to persuade the students to abandon the protest and return to class. The leadership found it impossible to satisfy the demands of the protestors whose demands had escalated and the decision to crack down on the protests was made (Kristoff 2009)

<sup>12</sup> Such examples were messages from Angola's Foreign Affairs Minister and SWAPO president, Sam Nujoma who congratulated the Chinese army on their actions (Mwasdley, 2007: 411).

interference and the shared perception that the West's criticism of the Tiananmen Square as being imperialistic dramatically improved Sino-African relations during this period.

The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union created a uni-polar world that changed China's position and role in the international system (Muekalia, 2004: 7). China had the perception that the end of the Cold War meant that the US was the world's "sole superpower" (Godwin, 1998: 173) China saw itself as the sole balancing power to the US on behalf of the developing world. China redefined its foreign policy goals by calling for multipolarity and a new economic and political international order (Muekalia, 2004: 7) to counteract US dominance. China's world view of the international system after the Cold War led to the intensification of relations with Africa throughout the 1990s and 2000s. It pursued a dynamic campaign to strengthen its bilateral relations with the continent based on China's need for raw materials, the search for new markets and investment opportunities, and the search for diplomatic support (Adisu, 2010: 4).

From the 1990s onwards, China was determined to gain sovereign control over supplies of primary goods and to further marginalise Taiwan's presence in Africa (Rotberg, 2008: 2). It launched an aggressive diplomatic offensive in the form of investments, trade and aid (ibid: 3). China sought to strengthen its relations with individual African countries on a political and economic level. There were also a high number of visits by high-level government and military officials in both directions. Chinese visitors to Africa included former presidents Yang Shangkun in 1992 and Jiang Zeming in 1995, 1996 and 2000. From Africa, thirty heads of state or heads of government visited China between 1997 and 2000 (Muekalia, 2003: 7-8) Trade between China and Africa grew from US\$ 3 billion in 1995 to US\$ 55 billion in 2006 (Adisu, 2010: 4).

The acceleration of China's policy towards Africa came in the form of the first Forum of China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) at the Beijing Summit in 2000. The summit focused on promoting and establishing "a just and equitable new international order" and strengthening co-operation between China and Africa by adopting the Beijing Declaration<sup>13</sup> and the Programme of Co-operation on Economic and Social Development<sup>14</sup> (He, 2008: 147-148). It was followed by the second ministerial meeting in Addis Ababa in 2003 which furthered the consolidation of Sino-Africa relations through shared ideas of "mutual support, democratisation of international relations, meeting the challenge of globalisation and enhanced cooperation at all levels (Le Pere and Shelton, 2007: 146). The Addis Ababa Action Plan 2004-2006 was produced as part of the conference's theme of 'pragmatic and action orientated cooperation' (Le Pere and Shelton, 2007: 146). China advocated that the FOCAC should be seen as a continuation of the spirit of Bandung<sup>15</sup> which promoted the notions of "common prosperity, respect for equality, justice, peace and overall development of the developing world based in its independent status" (Le Pere and Shelton, 2007: 147).

In January 2006, China launched its first White Paper on Africa policy.<sup>16</sup> The paper states that "China, the largest developing country in the world, follows the path of peaceful development and pursues an independent foreign policy of peace. China stands ready to develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five

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<sup>13</sup> The Beijing Declaration proclaimed the establishment of a new type of Sino-African relationship through an increase in high level visits to enhance mutual political trust, to deepen and broaden mutually beneficial cooperation to encourage trade and investment, cultural exchanges and to enhance international co-operation to address and uphold common interests of the developing world (Le Pere and Shelton, 2007: 225).

<sup>14</sup> The Programme for China-Africa Co-operation in Economic and Social Development consolidated co-operation in the "economic, trade, financial, agricultural, medical care and public health, scientific and technological, cultural, educational, human resource development, transportation, environmental, tourism" fields (Taylor, 2011: 42).

<sup>15</sup> The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bandung Conference was held from 18 – 23 April 2005 in Bandung, Indonesia. This meeting was a reflection on the solidarity of Asian and African countries in the context of the new geopolitical situation and was a continuation of the spirit of Bandung in 1955 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> This policy re-iterated its commitment to peaceful development and was based on the Beijing Declaration and the Programme for China-Africa Co-operation in Economic and Social Development (Le Pere and Shelton, 2007: 133).

Principles of Peaceful Coexistence so as to contribute to peace, stability and common prosperity around the world” (People’s Republic of China, 2006) The enhancement of “solidarity and cooperation with African countries” is an “important component of China’s independent foreign policy of peace. China will unswervingly carry forward the tradition of China-Africa friendship, and, proceeding from the fundamental interests of both the Chinese and African peoples, establish and develop a new type of strategic partnership with Africa, featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation and cultural exchange” (People’s Republic of China, 2006).

Later that year, China commemorated China’s fifty-year diplomatic relationship with Africa with the Beijing summit in 2006 proclaiming it the “Year of Africa” (Jiang, 2008: 52). The summit marked the start of a “new type of China-Africa Strategic partnership characterised by political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation and cultural exchanges” (Jiang, 2008: 52). President Hu Jintao announced a package of major assistance, investment, trade and other key cooperation projects with Africa in an effort to forge a new type of strategic partnership. China promised to double its 2006 assistance to Africa by 2009, provide US\$ 3 billion preferential loans and US\$ 2 billion preferential buyer’s credits to Africa in the next three years, establish a US\$ 5 billion fund to encourage Chinese investment in Africa and to cancel the debts of some poor and least developed countries in Africa that have diplomatic ties with China. Hu Jintao also put forward a proposal to promote closer bilateral ties, political relations of equality and mutual trust with Africa, broaden win-win economic cooperation, expand exchanges for cultural enrichment and promote balanced and harmonious global development (Xinhua News Agency, 2006).

Africa is now playing a larger role in China's pursuit of acquiring raw materials and energy resources. Africa's rich deposits of natural resources are of great strategic importance for China's economic development and growth. It is already the world's largest copper, iron ore and wood consumer and is set to soon overtake the US as the biggest oil consumer by 2030. China's strategy in pursuing investments in Africa's resources is to establish stable bilateral relations with resource-rich African countries (Pehnelt, 2007: 6). In 2002, for example, China offered Angola a US\$ 3 billion oil-backed package to rebuild the country's infrastructure after the civil war. By the beginning of 2008, Angola overtook Saudi Arabia as China's top oil trading partner (Jiang, 2008: 54). From 2001 to 2007, China's trade with Africa increased by 681% (Jiang, 2008: 53). China is now Africa's second largest trading partner after the US (Herman and Davies, 2009: 4). China offers loans, grants, debt relief packages, weapon sales, infrastructure, various types of training and scholarships to African leaders as incentives to sell resources to China (Eisenman, 2007: 39). These economic incentives are a form of soft power to gain access raw materials in Africa and make them more willing to work with China.

China's total aid amount to Africa is unknown and difficult to calculate because China does not provide public data on aid disbursement and monitoring (Herman and Davies, 2009: 4). Estimates, however, suggest that before the first FOCAC in October 2000, Chinese aid to Africa was minimal. Aid dropped significantly from US\$ 100.9 million in 1976 to US\$ 13.8 million in 1982 (Snow, 2006: 306). Since 2000, China's cumulative total aid to Africa has risen dramatically, reaching US\$ 1.8 billion in 2002 and US\$ 5.7 billion by May 2006 (Herman and Davies, 2009: 6). China's support for debt cancellation has resulted in the cancellation of debt of thirty-one African countries in the amount of US\$ 1.27 billion (Tull, 2006: 463).

The provision of infrastructure has also proved to be important in its diplomatic strategy in Africa. Projects such as the US\$ 8.6 million loan for the construction of two administration buildings in Burkina Faso and a US\$3 million irrigation programme in Ghana have proved popular in creating positive perceptions of the Chinese in African countries (Brautigam, 2008: 199). African leaders plagued by development concerns, therefore, feel as though they stand to benefit from trade deals with China as opposed to deals with Western states.

Africa has proved to be an important partner to China in terms of reaching its foreign policy objectives. The success of Beijing's 'One-China' policy can be attributed to Sino-African relations and Africa's diplomatic support. Adherence to the 'One-China' policy is the only political condition attached to Sino-African bilateral relations and this has proved to be successful in terms of suppressing Taiwan's diplomatic ambitions. During the early 1990s, Taiwan was able to offer financial incentives as a way of forming diplomatic ties with African states. By the late 1990s, Taiwan could no longer afford these incentives (Eisenman, 2007: 36). China used this opportunity to forge stronger ties with these African states (Eisenman, 2007: 37) and to date Taiwan has managed to maintain bilateral relations with only four African states since 2000<sup>17</sup>.

Africa has also proved to be a very important ally in China's struggle against Western dominance in the international system (Eisenman, 2007: 33) and in its pursuit to create a multi-polar world through shared social ideas of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. China also relies on African governments for diplomatic support in international organisations such as the United Nations. Africa played a vital role in helping China claim a seat in the UN Security Council in 1972 and its membership in the World Trade Organisation in 2001 (Rupp, 2008: 68). African governments have also played an important role in mitigating

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<sup>17</sup> See Appendix 4.

Western efforts to bring about a formal condemnation of China's human rights record (Tull, 2006: 467). This solidarity with China against Western criticism of China's human rights record is based on shared ideas and notions of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and the respect of sovereignty.

China's foreign policy towards Africa after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989 demonstrated a change of China's perception of Africa. It now perceived Africa as being a useful ally in its political and economic ambitions. Counter to Western perceptions, China's interests are not just material but are socially constructed. The intensification of relations with Africa from 2000 onwards suggests that China will most likely continue to pursue and cultivate its strategic relationship with the continent with various countries that are willing to work it can provide it with its raw material needs, search for markets and diplomatic support. China's foreign policy towards Namibia can therefore be understood within this framework of engaging with African developing countries.

## 2.2 Namibia's Foreign Policy since 1990

China's relations with Namibia are based on China's foreign policy objectives to expand its global market, secure raw materials and gain diplomatic support in international organisation and for its 'One China' Policy. Namibia's own foreign policy objectives have also been instrumental in the strengthening of China-Namibia relations since 1990.

As stated by Former President Sam Nujoma, the purpose of Namibia's foreign policy is firstly, to preserve Namibia's national security interest in and around its national territory and secondly, to promote economic and social progress through interaction with other nations (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 47). The key main objectives, as stated in Namibia's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Management White Paper are as follows:

1. Safeguard Namibia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity. This is the first principle and central objective of the policy and indeed of [its] diplomacy.
2. Promote Namibia's economic growth and development. The external challenge lies in the creation of conditions that facilitate the fulfilment of these goals.
3. Foster international peace and security and regional harmony, through active support for collective initiatives and effective multilateralism.
4. Build a positive image of Namibia abroad, through concerted actions with other agencies of the government so as to re-affirm the good reputation of the country and attract to it economic partners as well as tourists and other visitors.
5. Protect and assist Namibia citizens abroad, including students and other nationals living or visiting other countries for business, leisure or for any other purpose.
6. Optimise a modern and flexible diplomatic apparatus that has the capacity to implement Namibia's foreign policy (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 48-49).

Territorial integrity, historical ties, ideology and economic development are the key drivers of foreign policy in Namibia. An official white paper for foreign policy was only drawn up sixteen years after Namibia gained independence. Foreign policy remains a working exercise in Namibia which still needs time to mature into specific policy. This has had the effect of making foreign policy in Namibia somewhat flexible. At the advent of independence Namibia was faced with various foreign policy issues which may have possibly delayed official policy formation as its plan was more to deal with issues and political challenges as they arose.

Since independence, two major political challenges were the re-integration of Walvis Bay from 1990-1994 and the Sedudu/Kasiskili conflict with Botswana in 1996. For the first five years of independence, the newly formed Namibian government was faced with the political and territorial challenge of claiming back Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands from South

Africa.<sup>18</sup> The Namibian government was determined to re-claim Walvis Bay. It stated in its constitution that Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands formed an integral part of Namibia and that the SWAPO government was determined to reclaim it. After negotiations with South Africa<sup>19</sup> were concluded, Walvis Bay was finally re-integrated into Namibia on 28 February 1994 (Simon, 1994: 128). Following the re-integration of Walvis Bay, Namibia was faced with the territorial challenge of trying to claim sovereignty over the Sedudu/Kasikili Islands in the Chobe River. These islands had previously been informally disputed between local residents since the Berlin Treaty of 1 July 1890, but took an official turn when a dispute occurred between Namibia and Botswana in 1992<sup>20</sup>. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) concluded that the periodic occupation of Caprivi locals could not be seen as a functional or legitimate claim of state authority over the islands and ruled in favour of Botswana in 1999 (Ashton, 2000: 5).

Namibia was preoccupied with resolving these historically based conflicts and this may have been a reason why the formalisation of an official documented foreign policy took so long to materialise. When the policy paper was, however, introduced in 2004, the principle of territorial integrity was stressed as an important part of Namibia's foreign policy. One can therefore argue that these two territorial disputes played an important part in shaping Namibia's official foreign policy.

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<sup>18</sup> South Africa had claimed sovereignty over Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands because it had been ceded to the Cape by Britain in 1876 and therefore had a distinct legal status from Namibia. It was later administered from Windhoek as an important part of Namibia by South Africa in 1922. Pretoria once again detached Walvis Bay in 1977 when international pressure on Namibian independence seemed imminent and it was incorporated into the Cape Province (Simon, 1994: 127).

<sup>19</sup> During the negotiations for Namibia's independence and the drafting of Resolution 435, the United Nations Security Council recognised Namibia's claim to Walvis Bay but left the issue out of the Resolution to be dealt with between independent Namibia and South Africa at a later date. South Africa's unwillingness to return Walvis Bay resulted in long and difficult negotiations over the institutional structure and modalities of transfer.

<sup>20</sup> The conflict in 1992 pushed them to each submit their claims for sovereignty of the Island to the ICJ in 1996 (Ashton, 2000: 3). Namibia claimed that Caprivi locals had rights to the islands because they had periodically occupied the islands since the beginning of the twentieth century. Botswana argued that its forces occupied the island in 1991, shortly after Namibia's independence, and had held an outpost there ever since (BBC News 1999).

Economic development is also closely linked to Namibia's foreign policy. At the time of independence, Namibia had three main economic characteristics that set it apart from most newly independent African states. Firstly, the apartheid dualistic economy it inherited meant that there was a privileged white minority and marginalised black majority. Secondly, it did not inherit a large economic debt and thirdly, it had not committed to any international policies in the form of International Finance Institutions (IFIs) structural adjustment conditions (Matanga, 2002: 137). It inherited socio-economic structures that placed a burden on the new government. Independence meant accepting the socio-economic structures that existed by constitutionally endorsing the status quo in terms of ownership and property rights (Melber, 2007: 110).

For the first decade of independence, Namibia's economic goal was to pursue a foreign policy that both encouraged and benefited the economic development of the country after South African rule, relying heavily on mining, fishing and agriculture<sup>21</sup> (Du Pisani, 2000: 301). The lack of foreign capital, high costs of modern technology, a high demand for available expertise, an underdeveloped domestic labour force and a heavy burden of human resource development (SAPEM, 1991: 12), challenged the government and forced it to adopt policies that would help the country cope with the effects of globalisation and attract FDI (Matanga, 2002: 138).

The lack of a diversified economy meant that Namibia had to heavily rely on its bilateral relations with South Africa for trade during the 1990s (Matanga, 2002: 138). During the mid-1990s, Namibia disliked the idea that it had become a dumping ground for South African manufactured goods and South African policies and practices that further helped it dominate

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<sup>21</sup> One of the first pieces of legislation was the Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zone of Namibia Act, 1990 (No.3 of 1990) (Du Pisani, 2000: 301) which is meant to protect and sustain its resources.

Namibia's market (Matanga, 2002: 39). It therefore became important for Namibia to pursue and develop bilateral trade relations with other countries.

In the past decade, Namibia's foreign policy has shifted towards its long term development efforts and sustainable economic growth. The formulation of Namibia Vision 2030 in 2004 demonstrates Namibia's economic ambitions and can explain Namibia's state behaviour in the international system. This national initiative was formulated with the objective of establishing a "prosperous and industrialised Namibia, developed by her human resources, enjoying peace and political stability" by the year 2030 (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 38). The main economic targets of Vision 2030 include the reclassification of Namibia's status from a lower income earning country to a high income earning country, a manufacturing and service sector that constitutes at least 80% of Namibia's GDP, a country that exports processed goods which accounts for no less than 70% of total exports, an established network of modern infrastructure and a reduced unemployment rate of less than 5% of the workforce (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 39). This development framework visualizes that the Five-year National Development Plans will contain the goals and targets that will eventually lead to the realisation of Vision 2030.

Namibia's foreign policy is therefore, key in helping Namibia reach its goals to become a self-sustaining and expanding economy by 2030. Its main foreign policy strategy is trade promotion and foreign investment through economic diplomacy (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 17). The need for foreign investment in the form of capital, technology, managerial and technical skills and the establishment of foreign markets (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 18) is important for the materialisation of Vision 2030. Namibia needs foreign capital to supplement its domestic savings and FDI is considered to be a cost effective way to gain capital to finance the country's growth (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 24). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs therefore relies on its foreign missions abroad to extend its strategy of

economic diplomacy. Personal diplomacy in the form of frequent state and working visits, diplomatic correspondence and the signing of agreements on trade and credit (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 26) are strategies to realise these industrialisation goals.

Namibia's political and economic relations with the European Union play an important role in its foreign policy. Namibia has diplomatic missions in Britain, Belgium, Germany and Sweden (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 46). Namibia regards the EU as an important trading partner because of its large market.

Table 2: Namibia's Export Trade statistics (2006-2010) in N\$

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
South Africa	5 877 692 800	8 154 786 949	12 465 899 679	9 245 675 947	6 801 503 285
UK	587 76692800	4 807 313 223	5 868 907 374	3 853 717 093	5 056 727 636
Germany	740 391 097	702 897 683	404 299 804	448 133 597	1 945 480 635
France	275 666 725	632 807 451	843 442 204	989 041 974	1 718 270 742
Sweden	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	424 438 103
US	555 237 409	1 402 788 771	2 048 558 406	1 776 906 335	1 503 906,334

Table 3: Namibia's Import Statistics (2006-2010) in N\$

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
South Africa	15 698 950 603	22 095 816 781	26 431 015 172	28 639 185 076	29 042 936 606
UK	160 710,069	317 466,399	3 102 994,280	2 042 498 731	2 007 686 572
Germany	425 103 655	589 814 056	788 731 808	1 340 485 542	1 088 683 244
France	62 464 962	801 470 372	159 739 874	286 420 920	162 355 511
Sweden	N/A	71,896,999	N/A	721,035,754	N/A
US	283 052 568	385 364 200	789 066 697	603 556 427	508 901 239

Source: TRADE STATISTICS BETWEEN NAMIBIA AND THE ROW FOR THE PERIOD 2006 TO 2010 BY COUNTRY AND VALUE (N\$), PRELIMINARY, Namibia Bureau of Statistics, Namibian National Planning Commission, 2011.

As can be seen by the above tables, South Africa, the US, the UK and Germany are Namibia's top four trade partners.

Relations with Germany are specifically important in nature because of its colonial past. Germany is Namibia's largest traditional donor and acknowledges its "special historic and moral responsibility" to the country (Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). In Germany, The Namibian Resolution of 1999, which was reconfirmed in 2004, allows for Namibia to receive a higher percentage of aid from Germany than any other African country (Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). In 2009, the German-Namibian Development Co-operation Agreement promised 1116.5 million Euros in aid for Namibia for 2009 and 2010 (Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany 2010).

Namibia's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Management White Paper, however, notes that the expansion of the EU to include new members is likely to have a political and economic effect on relations in terms of economic assistance and diplomatic attention (2004: 76). The introduction of new member states could possibly have the effect of compromising the importance of EU relations with Namibia for greater regional integration within Europe. Namibia's perception that a change in the structure of the EU could affect future economic relations has led it to take measures to cope with "these eventualities in its bilateral and multilateral relations with the EU" (Republic of Namibia, 2004:76). This in part explains the strengthening of Namibia's bilateral relations with non-Western nations such as China. Increasing Sino-Namibian relations could be a new strategy of Namibia's foreign policy to diversify its economy and find new avenues for donor aid and markets for its goods.

Relations with the United States have also proved to be important as it has become an important market for Namibian goods and as a development aid donor. The net bilateral aid

flow from the US in 2009 was US\$ 709 50 000 (Trading Economics, 2011). The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) allows for Namibia to have duty and quota free access for about seven thousand products to the US market. The AGOA is aimed at encouraging US trade and investment in Africa by removing quotas previously used as barriers for imports from African countries (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 22). The tables above show Namibian imports and exports from the United States. For the period 2006-2010, the US was one of Namibia's top ten trading partners, exceeding exports to Germany in 2007, 2008 and 2010. Western states are an important market and source for FDI in Namibia.

Namibia's foreign policy and economic diplomacy strategy has, however, been criticised for being too focused on economic development. Critics argue that it sidelines socio-political issues such as international solidarity, conflict and mediation, social justice and a more 'bottom up' approach to development. Political commentator Job Amupanda, argues that Namibia's foreign policy heavily emphasises on economic policies to try to attract foreign investment which has not brought much success. He argues that foreign policy is used to attract foreign direct investment from highly industrialised countries. This puts Namibia at risk of the country's market being dominated by foreign countries and this could negatively affect the local economy (Ekongo, 2010). Amupanda's criticism of Namibia's foreign policy can be linked to the large number of small Chinese retail traders and Chinese construction companies. China's dominance in these areas is a result of government policies to attract foreign direct investment in Namibia despite the criticism of Namibian local businesses to this influx. Critics argue that the contribution of Chinese business in Namibia is not significant as these companies mainly employ Chinese citizens and not Namibian locals

(Niikonda and Coetzee, 2009: 24). Such policies could therefore have an effect on Vision 2030's objective to lower the unemployment rate<sup>22</sup>.

Political commentator, Alfredo Hengari argues that Namibia's foreign policy does not reflect the values and norms of a young democratic country. He states that the key to a successful foreign policy is the clarity with which actors in that domain communicate it. He criticises the fact that foreign policy remains in the hands of the executive with very little presence of a "vibrant epistemic community and civil society with an active interest in the governance of foreign policy" (Hengari, 2007). Hengari also points to the fact that there is no real relationship between public opinion in Namibia and foreign policy (Hengari, 2007). This may have a large part to do with the fact that information is not readily available to the public and Namibian citizens are unaware of the basic principles and strategies of Namibian foreign policy. The Namibian Foreign Policy White Paper is somewhat vague on specific foreign policy issues and little has been done to clarify specific principles and goals. The documentation on specific policy towards emerging powers such as China is also limited and so it is difficult to discern what the government's strategy is towards such states.

### 2.3 Namibian Foreign Relations with Asia and China

Namibia's foreign policy reflects the awareness of developing bilateral relations that will help with its economic development goals. It is aware of the importance of having relations with countries in the South East Asia Bloc because of the region's fast growing economy and high percentage of the world's buying power. The Asian region, as stated in Namibia's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Management White Paper, offers bilateral and multilateral

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<sup>22</sup> There is currently a debate between the government and economists about Namibia's official unemployment figure. A report in 2010 stated that unemployment was at 51.2%. Economist Martin Mwinga however argues that this figure was based on poor and unreliable data collection, and that the unemployment rate is at approximately 28.4% (Duddy, 2011)

opportunities for stronger South-South cooperation to ensure that the effects of globalisation and liberalisation will result in equal opportunities for developing countries. In this context, Namibia focuses on strengthening traditional partnerships, especially with India and China, by pursuing bilateral agreements in the fields of industrialisation, human resource development, service sector development, technology transfer, tourism and investment (2004: 78). Namibia has established strong bilateral relations with China, Indonesia, India, Japan, North and South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 78) with it having diplomatic missions in China, India and Malaysia (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 46).

The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Bandung 1955 also influenced the formulation of Namibia's foreign policy. The conference ignited the "liberating spirit of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist collective action" and "gave birth to a doctrine of positive non-alignment which continues to serve as a source of inspiration for foreign policy" (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 43). The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence that were born out of the Bandung Conference are the foundation of Namibia's relations with Asian states, specifically with China.

China and Namibia regard each other as trustworthy friends and partners and have frequently expressed and reaffirmed their commitment to continue building stronger bilateral ties. In 2010, Prime Minister Nahas Angula remarked that Namibia appreciated the "disinterested assistance China has given to Namibia for its economic and social development" and hoped that the two countries would make a "joint effort to promote bilateral cooperation in all areas and elevate the level of mutually beneficial cooperation" (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, 2010). Since the beginning of official bilateral relations the two countries have seen a steady increase in the number of high level exchanges.

The high volume of high-level official visits of different political sectors from 2000 demonstrates the strengthening of Sino-Namibian relations in different fields.<sup>23</sup> Frequent exchanges have helped “deepen mutual trust and promotes co-operation in all fields” (Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Republic of Namibia, 2004). As a result, Namibia and China have signed numerous bilateral agreements in various fields namely, economic, technical and trade, culture, education and public health. Appendix 3 demonstrates that there has been a steady increase in the number of agreements signed since independence. Between 1990 and 2000, China and Namibia had signed twelve agreements. Between 2000 and May 2011, twenty-two agreements had been signed between the two countries. Sino-Namibian trade has also increased since the start of bilateral relations in 1990.

Table 4: Trade Statistics between Namibia and China from 2006-2010 in N\$

<b>Year</b>	<b>Exports from Namibia</b>	<b>Imports from China</b>
<b>2006</b>	332 694 406	659 392 835
<b>2007</b>	866 652 734	713 333 371
<b>2008</b>	2 048 558 406	1 274 934 293
<b>2009</b>	1 811 502 763	2 329 464 303
<b>2010</b>	1 225 885 402	1 341 484 552

Source: Namibia Bureau for Statistics, National planning Commission. Trade Statistics on all Commodities between Namibia and China for the period 2006-2010 by Commodity

The majority of Chinese exports are fish products, teas, canned goods, medical supplies cosmetics, vehicles, machinery, electrical appliances, cigarettes, textiles and shoes. Namibia’s main exports to China include minerals, such as copper, uranium, manganese, granite and marble, hides, live ostriches and game, and sea products. In 2006 and 2009 China

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<sup>23</sup> See Appendix 2.

was Namibia's second largest importer of goods<sup>24</sup> (Namibia Bureau of Statistics 2011). China's FDI in Namibia totalled approximately N\$913 million at the end of 2009<sup>25</sup> (Kisting, 2010).

Despite the increase of trade volumes with China, the EU and the US remain Namibia's top trading partners. In the last five years, Namibia's exports to the EU and US have been significantly higher than to China. Government officials have expressed the importance of dealing with China as a way of reaching its development goals of Vision 2030. Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry Tjikero Tweya expressed the government's wish of increasing economic ties with China and encourage more Chinese business in the country. He stated that China can become a very important trade partner but that Sino-Namibian trade relations should benefit the economy (Personal Communication, 3 March 2011). One could therefore argue that Namibia perceives China as an important development partner on its road to Vision 2030.

The increase of bilateral relations with China over the past decade stems from Namibia's realisation that the flow of official aid is "dwindling in volume and that aid comes with more stringent strings of conditions and caveats than before" which "intrude deep into the internal affairs of recipient countries" (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 53). Namibia's classification as a low middle-income country has made it difficult for it to obtain or qualify for concessional loans and aid from its traditional Western lenders such as Sweden, who have decreased their economic assistance (Odada and Matunda, 2008: 22). The perception that traditional lenders are intrusive in internal affairs or have scaled back on economic assistance has caused Namibia to look for other development partners who do not attach conditions to aid or

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<sup>24</sup> South Africa was Namibia's top trading partner from 2006-2010 (Namibia Bureau of Statistics 2011).

<sup>25</sup> Namibia has not established an FDI statistics system for monitoring FDI inflows. It is not possible to obtain accurate data on FDI's from the Chinese embassy or the Directorate of Development Co-operation of the National Planning Commission (Odada and Matunda, 2008: 6).

interfere in its domestic politics. China's own foreign policy objectives and strategy of non-interference and non-conditional aid is less intrusive and allows for Namibia to have an alternative development donor.

Namibia's relations with China have therefore proven to be beneficial in terms of its industrialisation goals as stated in Vision 2030. Namibia's perception and view of the international system is driving it towards bilateral and multilateral opportunities that will help it gain from the process of globalisation as a developing country. In this context, Namibia is focused to strengthen partnerships with countries like China but also retain its relations with its traditional bilateral partners. Namibian relations with China and China's presence in the country is, however, having a political, economic and social effect at different levels of society that is likely to have an effect on future Sino-Namibia relations.

## **Chapter 3:**

### **Official Sino-Namibian Relations and the Nature of China's Presence in Namibia**

China's presence in Namibia has created positive perceptions of Sino-Namibian relations at a state level. Government officials view the relationship as being beneficial to Namibia's economic development goals. China's engagement with Namibia is not, however, limited to state-to-state relations. The increasing number of Chinese businesses and immigrants in Namibia has produced non-state actor perceptions about the Chinese state, businesses, non-state actors and Sino-Namibia relations. There are intersubjective understandings of China's presence at different levels of society. Perceptions are being shaped by how different sectors and people engage and interact with the Chinese that are in Namibia.

#### 3.1. Sino-Namibian Political Relations

China's political presence is mostly defined within its official state-to-state relations with the Namibian government. China and Namibia regard each other to be friends, sharing a new type of close partnership (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Namibia, 2007) based on shared ideas of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. Both governments have time and time again re-iterated a "strong desire to further develop the bilateral relations between the two countries" with China stating that they are "confident that, with the joint efforts made by the two sides, and in the spirit of the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation, the existing friendly co-operation between the two countries are bound to develop to a new high in the days to come" (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Namibia, 2007). Like with other African nations, China has created close ties with government officials with the rhetoric of mutual benefit and aid, without interference in internal affairs.

Namibia firmly supports China's "One -China" policy (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 79). It accepts the National Unification Guidelines and acknowledges that the sovereignty and

territorial integrity of China includes Taiwan.<sup>26</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that the abandonment of these guidelines could have the effect of infringing upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 79). Namibia's support of China's policy also extends to the issue of Tibet. The government regards Tibet as an "integral part of China and therefore condemns all secessionist activities and orchestrated acts of violence which have been masterminded by the so-called Tibetan government in exile" (The Namibian, 4 April 2008). Namibia has pledged its support to China by supporting all legitimate measure to stop unrest in Tibet and ensure a peaceful resolution (The Namibian, 4 April 2008).

The government's defence of the "One China" policy is very much in line with Namibia's stance on secessionism as it dealt with the attempted secessionist plans of the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA)<sup>27</sup> in August 2009. One can thus argue that shared perceptions and notions of territorial integrity and sovereignty are a very important part of both Namibia and China's interests and it forms a common basis for its bilateral relations.

China has expressed its wishes to increase co-operation between Namibia and China's parliaments. During Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Wu Bangguo's visit to Namibia in May 2011, the two countries agreed to make an effort to push forward the co-operation to a higher level. Bangguo proposed to strengthen high level exchanges among governmental organs, legislative bodies and ruling parties, cement

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<sup>26</sup> The National Unification Guidelines issued in 1991 states that the Chinese mainland and Taiwan are under the sovereignty of China and the promotion of the states reunification should be the common task of all Chinese (The Namibian, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> The Caprivi Liberation Army, founded in 1994, is a group of Lozi people from the eastern part of Caprivi who do not identify with the rest of the Namibian population. It began campaigning for a measure of autonomy to pursue closer ties with the Lozi in western Zambia (Global Security). In August 1999, the secessionist group launched an armed attack in the North Eastern region of Namibia, Caprivi. The attack was launched on various government buildings and forces, in Katima Mulilo. CLA members were arrested and charged with high treason and the trial is still in process (Amnesty International Index, 2003). After the incident, SWAPO proclaimed that "the project of nation building through peace and reconciliation had been stained by the events surrounding the secessionist attacks" (Zeller and Kangumu, 2007: 199).

economic trade co-operation with mutual benefits and expand co-operation in humanitarianism. Together with the Namibia's Speaker of the National Assembly, Theo-Ben Gurirab, Bangguo expressed his wish for further exchange between the two parliaments as a way of enriching Sino-Namibia bilateral relations (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Namibia, 2011).

The SWAPO led government of Namibia uses the narrative of China's help during the liberations struggle (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Namibia, 2007) to justify and further drive close relations between the People's Republic of China and the Namibian government. This discourse is re-iterated in speeches from both governments and demonstrates a shared idea of Namibia and China being partners and allies in the fight against colonialism, apartheid and oppression. There has been an escalation of party-to-party co-operation between SWAPO party elites and the CCP. This close relationship began during the years of Namibia's liberation war. China supported SWAPO's liberation efforts as part of its foreign policy in the 1970s and 1980s of supporting victims of colonialism and also raising China's profile on the international stage (Taylor, 1997: 112).

The special relationship between China and SWAPO has also extended to China providing funds to SWAPO. In June 2003, the Communist Party of China (CPC) donated US\$ 30 000 to SWAPO. This money was used to print SWAPO material for the extraordinary congress held in 2004. When this donation was criticised by opposition parties, SWAPO party defended itself by stating that foreign funding of political parties was not illegal in Namibia (Sherbourne, 2005: 6). During Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Namibia in 2007, he met with former President Sam Nujoma describing him as a good friend of the Chinese people who had witnessed the developing friendship and co-operation between the CPC and SWAPO. During this visit, he stressed how the CPC had given active assistance towards SWAPO during the liberations struggle which laid the foundation for good relations between

Namibia and China. Jintao stressed that the CPC gives priority to its traditional friendly relations with SWAPO and that it was ready to work to push for the friendship and co-operation between the two parties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2007). The relationship between the dominant SWAPO party and the CCP has created opposition party and grassroots perceptions that Sino-Namibia relations are driven by party politics and not by national interests that benefit the population as a whole.

The Chinese government has also offered gifts to Namibian officials. The Namibian Constitution clearly stipulates that senior government officials are required to declare their assets with the National Assembly Asset Register (NAAR) (Grobler, 2005). In 2003<sup>28</sup> for example, the NAAR reflected gifts donated by the Chinese government to Members of Parliament, namely Abraham Iyambo who received a DVD player, Mose Tjitendero who received a laptop computer and Hendrik Witbooi who received a fridge (Grobler, 2005). The most controversial instance of Chinese gifts to Namibian politicians was the awarding of Chinese university scholarships, speculated to have been meant for less privileged youths, but instead went to top SWAPO officials in 2009. These scholarships were awarded to the children of the President, Defence Minister<sup>29</sup>, the Namibian Police Inspector General<sup>30</sup>, The Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy<sup>31</sup>, Deputy Minister of Lands and Resettlement<sup>32</sup>, Minister of Mines and Energy<sup>33</sup>, Minister of Home Affairs<sup>34</sup> and Minister of Justice<sup>35</sup> (Mongudhi, 2009).

The awarding of these scholarships were perceived as bribes by the public. Citizens therefore had negative perceptions of both the Namibian government, for accepting the

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<sup>28</sup> The NAAR has only been published in 2003 and 2005 since independence (Grobler 2005).

<sup>29</sup> Minister Charles Namoloh

<sup>30</sup> General Sebastian Ndeitunga

<sup>31</sup> Deputy Minister Bernhardt Esau

<sup>32</sup> Deputy Minister Henock ya Kasita

<sup>33</sup> Minister Erkki Nghimitina

<sup>34</sup> Minister Rosalia Nghidinwa

<sup>35</sup> Minister Penduleni Iivula-Ithana

scholarships, and the Chinese government for seemingly trying to bribe top Namibian officials to further their interests in the country. This further shaped grassroots perceptions that high-ranking Namibian officials are personally benefitting from Sino-Namibia relations at the expense of the country's population.

The criticism of the Namibian government's relationship with China is growing. This may be due to the fact that people feel some government officials are more preoccupied with strengthening bilateral relations with China for economic and at times personal gain, rather than pursuing relations that would help further the interests and needs of the Namibian people as stated in the Constitution. The reaction towards the awarding of scholarships to affluent SWAPO officials is an example of these negative feelings as Namibians interpret that as bribery and corruption. The very close relationship between the Chinese and Namibian government is therefore beginning to shape non-state actor views about China's engagement in the country. These perceptions are having an effect on how Namibian economists, business people and grassroots level view China's economic presence in Namibia.

### 3.2. China's Economic Presence

China's economic presence in Namibia is closely linked to its overall foreign policy goals in Africa and this can be seen by the characteristics of its engagement with the Namibian economy. There are three main elements to China's economic relationship with Namibia. These are commodity export, the import of manufactured goods by Chinese migrant entrepreneurs and competition in the construction industry (Dobler, 2007: 95). These three main elements are having an effect at both a micro and macroeconomic level.

Namibia's economy heavily relies on its raw materials, namely the production and export of diamonds, uranium, copper, lead, zinc, gold and silver. Diamonds, uranium, zinc and copper

are its main exports (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008: 1-2). The five major mining operations in Namibia are NAMDEB Diamond Corporation, Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation, Rossing Uranium Limited, Navachab<sup>36</sup> (Shindondola-Mote, 2009: 7) and Langer Heinrich (Chamber of Mines Annual Report, 2010: 22). China mainly imports uranium, marble and lead from Namibia (Odada and Kakujaha-Matunda, 2008: 8).

Table 5: Namibia's main primary resource exports to China between 2006 and 2010 (N\$)

Mineral	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Uranium ores and concentrates	237 708 526	745 584 579	1 109 243 460	1 071 207 809	672 359 430
Marble and travertine	2 161 515	0	1 166 724	792 196	287 840
Lead ores and concentrates	52 563 842	59 464 976	55 084 481	14 994 442	0

Source: TRADE STATISTICS ON ALL COMMODITIES BETWEEN NAMIBIA AND CHINA FOR THE PERIOD 2006 TO 2011 BY COMMODITY, NET WEIGHT (KG) AND VALUE (N\$) PRELIMINARY, Namibia Bureau of Statistics, National Planning Commission, 2011

As can be seen by the table above, Namibian marble and lead exports to China have decreased but Uranium exports to China significantly increased since 2006, with the exception of a drop in 2010. It is very likely that China will continue to pursue more contracts with mining corporations and exploration companies in Namibia in a bid to have access to its resources, specifically Uranium.

China's interest in Namibia's raw materials and minerals has had an impact on Namibia's economy. China is not one of Namibia's top ten countries of export markets<sup>37</sup> and Namibia's primary sector commodities are insignificant to China compared to other African countries. Its pursuit for raw materials has, however, had an indirect effect on Namibia's primary sector. Chinese demand for raw materials has caused commodity prices to rise over the past decade.

<sup>36</sup> Navachab is a gold mine located in Karibib (Chamber of Mines Annual Review, 2010).

<sup>37</sup> Namibia's top ten export markets are South Africa, UK, Angola, Canada, USA, Spain, Switzerland, Japan, Germany and Italy (Namibia Bureau of Statistics, 2011)

The rise of world market prices for raw materials, as a result of this demand, has had an effect on Namibia's economy. Such an example is world market price for uranium, zinc, gold and marble, which had risen sharply from 2004 which helped Namibia achieve a 59% growth rate in the same year (Dobler, 2007: 98).

China involvement in the Namibia's raw materials market has mostly been limited to trade. It has not been able to sign any major contracts with Namibian producers because of the ownership over Namibia's mineral production through established distribution networks and long term contracts with other companies (Dobler, 2007: 98). Such an example is the mining of uranium. Rossing Uranium Limited's shareholders are made up of Rio Tinto (UK) 69 %, government of Iran 15%, Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) of South Africa 10%, 13 local individual shareholders 3% and the government of Namibia 3% (Shindondola-Mote. 2009: 22). This type of ownership has made it difficult for China to gain effective direct access to Namibia's raw materials.

China has, however, been eager to gain more access to Namibia's resources. China's Sichuan Hanlong Group, for instance, has made a US\$ 153 million offer to Australian Uranium developer Bannerman Resources Limited to buy shares in the exploration company. If Bannerman accepts this offer, China will have more access to Uranium resources in Namibia (Shanghai Daily, 12 July 2011). China has also concluded contracts in the mining of zinc in Namibia. In June 2011, Weatherly International signed an agreement with Jiangsu Eastern China Nonferrous Metals Investment (ECE) which should lead to the redevelopment and re-opening of Berg-Aukas lead-zinc mine in Namibia. The ECE owns 65% of the company responsible for leading the project, China Africa Mining (CAR) (Williams, 2011).

The conclusion of the contract with Weatherly International and its bid to become a stakeholder of Bannerman shows China's rising interest in Namibia's resources as a way of

sustaining its own economic and development growth and this will likely have an effect on Namibia's economy on a large scale if China is successful with similar deals in the future. This pursuit of resources is creating perceptions of China as a new type of coloniser in terms of trying to gain access to Namibia's raw materials for its industrialisation, with very little benefit to the country's economic development.

Chinese engagement with Namibia is not limited to resource extraction and exploration. There has also been a rise in Chinese businesses in the country. At the start of bilateral relations between Namibia and China in 1990, Chinese business interests were focused on small "China shops" which sold small items such as clothes, shoes, toys and small electronics (Niikondo and Coetzee, 2009: 6). "China Shops" have become a permanent feature across Namibia, and can be found in the most remote of places. The Ministry of Trade and Industry database reflects that there are five hundred registered small Chinese shops in Namibia (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 11). Most Chinese shops are run and owned by private business people and many of them are not registered with the Ministry of Trade and Industry<sup>38</sup> (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 11). These small Chinese shops sell cheap goods such as textiles, toys, appliances, clothing and accessories (Niikonda and Coetzee, 2009: 11) that have been manufactured in China. In the northern part of the country, some items are manufactured locally in factories based in Oshakati, Oshikango and Ondangwa. The access to goods in China gives them the advantage of selling merchandise at low prices (Xoagub 2011). They have very little contact with the Chinese Embassy in Namibia because China does not officially encourage the opening of small Chinese shops ostensibly because they have little impact on employment creation (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 11). Despite this condemnation, there has been a significant rise in the number of small traders in Namibia.

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<sup>38</sup> Many shop owners set up their own businesses once they obtain a work permit (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 11)

Chinese traders in Namibia have a strategic advantage in Namibia because they are familiar with the market and they are able to import goods at very low prices (Dobler, 2009: 717). Chinese traders buy their goods from large wholesalers or factories in China (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 16). In the northern town of Oshikango, Chinese traders buy their supplies with bulk suppliers instead of at large public wholesalers and then larger quantities are ordered directly from factories in China. This eliminates the middleman and increases their profit (Dobler, 2009: 713). This way of purchasing stock means that these traders can keep their costs low and be able to undercut local businesses (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 16).

Chinese retail shops are seen in both a positive and negative way. Positive perceptions stem from the fact that lower-income citizens are able to afford goods that they would not be able to afford in South African and or Western stores. Consumers however, also respond negatively to the low quality of the goods. The low prices of Chinese goods have also made it very difficult for local traders to compete in the retail industry. This unfair advantage has created negative perceptions about Chinese traders in Namibia because they are seen to be taking over the retail industry and putting locals out of business.

Chinese shop owners also only deal in cash with their local customers. This makes taxing them problematic because profit margins cannot be calculated. Chinese businesses also avoid banking in Namibia despite the country's foreign exchange restrictions (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 14-15). This means that the money that they make in Namibia is usually sent back home to China. These practices of Chinese business owners are perceived in a negative way because they do not directly contribute to the Namibian economy.

There are positive perceptions of the Chinese in terms of creating employment opportunities for locals. They create unskilled jobs for Namibians as shop assistants, store hands or security guards. Chinese traders, however, rely mostly on family labour and use Namibian labour for

menial tasks. Many Chinese traders have noted that they do not employ people without skills because they then have to waste money to train them. They perceive Namibian locals to be untrustworthy and this is why they prefer Chinese labour. It is therefore easier to import the skills from China (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 15). These sentiments are seen in a negative light because the majority of employees in Chinese shops are from China and not Namibia which again gives the perception that Chinese traders are not benefitting the economy or helping create employment in the country.

Chinese businesses are, however, no longer simply focused in small retail but have now become a prominent feature in the construction industry. The five main Chinese companies that have set up in Namibia are China State Construction, China Nanjing International, New Era Investment, China Zhengtai and China Jiangxe (Odada and Kakujaha-Matunda, 2008: 23) A large number of prominent public construction contracts have been awarded to these Chinese companies. These include the Windhoek Supreme Court (1994-1997), the police station, prison and police training college (1996-1997) and the Magistrates Court in Katutura (1997-1999), one hundred and two houses in Katima Mulilio (1999) and a new New Town Council building in Helao Nifidi Town (2006) (Dobler, 2007: 100). The largest public project undertaken by the Chinese to date has been the State House. Its construction was never put up for public tender and the Chinese government donated N\$ 55 million for it in 2002 with no strings attached. In 2005 another undisclosed figure was granted for the State House whilst in 2006 it was announced that the Presidential home attached to the State House would be completely donated by the Chinese government and built by Chinese companies which would be tendered in China (Dobler, 2007: 101).

This shows that Chinese construction companies have been awarded prominent local government building tenders as opposed to local construction companies. There are mixed perceptions about the projects undertaken by Chinese companies. These projects are useful in

terms of the development of infrastructure in the country and seen in a positive light by both the government and at grassroots levels. There are however also negative perceptions in terms of China using these projects, such as the State House, to win the favour of government officials. These projects are also all constructed by Chinese companies and this has caused negative perceptions of Chinese companies by local companies.

Chinese construction companies are now pursuing private sector projects. Most companies believe that they are successful in this sector because they are able to offer lower costs and they can undercut Namibian construction companies. Chinese companies claim that they are successful in receiving tenders because of their hard work, reliability and efficiency as opposed to local companies that inflate profit margins, frequently miss deadlines and have low productivity (Dobler, 2007: 101). State-owned and private Chinese construction companies submit tenders at a significantly lower price than local companies (Chen, Goldstein and Orr, 2009: 77). They can afford to do so because they purchase construction equipment and material from Chinese manufacturers at low prices (Chen, Goldstein and Orr, 2009: 82). This move into the private sector has had a large impact on local and South African construction companies as Chinese companies are able to undercut their competitors (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 14).

The presence of the Chinese in different sectors is having a notable effect on the Namibian economy in different ways. It is likely that their presence and involvement in the extraction of resources, construction and the retail industry will increase. This is mainly due to increase of political relations between China and Namibia as the two governments seek to strengthen co-operation in various fields.

### 3.3 China's Social Presence

Chinese companies and small businesses have brought about a significant increase in the number of Chinese immigrants in Namibia over the past decade. It has been difficult to gain access to the accurate number of Chinese immigrants in Namibia as the data is not available. In 2006, Monitor Action Group (MAG) Party leader, Jurie Viljoen estimated that there were 40 000 Chinese nationals in Namibia (Weidlich, 2006). In 2010, a 2006 Wikileaks<sup>39</sup> report suggested that a default on a repayment of a loan by the Namibian government resulted in the Chinese demanding five thousand passports and residential documents from the department of Home Affairs (The Namibian, 14 December 2010). The Namibian government denied ever defaulting on a loan payment but were elusive about the issuing of these documents with Prime Minister Nahas Angula stating that Chinese nationals are among the lowest number of those who have acquired Namibian citizenship (Kisting, 2010). The government has not commented on the number of Chinese nationals in Namibia but it is evident that there are a large number of them.

The lack of documentation of the number of Chinese nationals in Namibia can be attributed to the legality of their entrance into the country as a large number of Chinese immigrants are there illegally. Public and political concern about the growing number of Chinese nationals in Namibia has made it difficult for them to obtain work permits. Some nationals have settled into the country on expired tourist visas hoping to not be found out by officials (Dobler 2007: 105). The most popular option, however, is for a new migrant to pay established Chinese business people to act as immigration brokers to provide housing and employment for them when they arrive in Namibia. Immigration brokers can charge up to N\$100 000 for their services. The migrant pays this money back through working for the broker and once the debt

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<sup>39</sup> US Ambassador Josiah Rosenblatt was informed about the alleged five-thousand Chinese families' resettled in Namibia as a result of the Namibian government defaulting on a loan, by French lawyer Allain Feneon. Former Togo President Koba was also at the meeting (The Namibian, 2010).

has been paid he or she has the skills and local knowledge to start their own business. New migrants also have the option of paying a well-connected Chinese immigrant who can help them obtain a work permit through a senior member at home affairs (Dobler, 2007: 104).

Using Dobler's study of Chinese traders in the northern town of Namibia, Oshikango (Dobler, 2009), inferences can be made about the Chinese community in the country. The chain migration of Chinese families which came about after Namibia and China established bilateral relations was a result of Chinese officials advertising business opportunities in Namibia in newspapers and magazines. Families, mostly couples move to Namibia and establish their businesses. Once they have grown their business, they bring family members from China to employ them. These family members are usually single males who want to establish their own businesses later on and so come to Namibia to learn the trade in the business (Dobler, 2009: 716-717). This chain of family migration thus suggests that the Chinese government does not organise for these traders to come to Namibia because the Chinese embassy has discouraged the establishment of small retail stores in the country (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 11). Chinese traders come on their own personal initiative to establish businesses and make better lives for their families. This disproves the popular view in Namibia that the Chinese government is encouraging the immigration of Chinese in the country (Dobler, 2009: 717).

The study also found that the Chinese in Namibia cannot yet be considered as a close-knit migrant community. The only thing that they have in common is their dependence on retail trade for a living in Namibia. Other than that, they are also competing amongst themselves. Dobler does, however, suggest that if their immigration into Namibia is not curbed, there is a high possibility that a stable expatriate community and society of Chinese Diaspora living in Namibia will be formed and will be shaped by the conditions exposed to them by the local population and government policies (Dobler, 2009: 724).

Chinese traders have managed to introduce a system to deal with the restrictions placed on acquiring new visas. The use of Chinese immigration brokers suggests that if more restrictions are placed on them, Chinese migrants will be able to invent new ways to deal with legislature that prohibits them from operating in the country. Chinese traders are coming to Namibia as a way to improve their livelihoods and this suggests that the number of migrants will most likely keep rising. This is likely to have a noticeable effect on the Namibian economy and its society.

There have been mixed local reactions to the political, economic and social presence of the Chinese in Namibia. Namibian officials view China as contributing positively to the Namibian economy as both a trading and development partner, and as an ally in the fight against Western imperialism. China's presence in the country is however, creating negative perceptions amongst local construction industry, local retailers, and consumers and at grassroots levels. These intersubjective perceptions are likely to have repercussions for official Sino-Namibian relations.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **Constructed Perceptions of China in Namibia and its Effects**

#### 4.1 The Nature of Namibian Domestic Politics

In order to determine what the effects of changing official and non-state actor perceptions of China's presence in Namibia may have on domestic politics and foreign policy, it is important to understand how the political system in Namibia functions and which main actors are involved in the decision-making process of the nation.

Namibia's political system is informed by and based on the constitution. Article 1 of the constitution defines Namibia as a "sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State founded upon the principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all" (Article 1(1)). State authority is vested in the Namibian people who "shall exercise their sovereignty through the democratic institutions of the State" (Article 1(2)). Liberal-democratic values are reflected in the supremacy of the constitution, commitment to the rule of law, a democratic government, separation of powers and a comprehensive Bill of Rights (Keulder, 2000: 86).

The political system is divided into three tiers, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judicial. As stated in the constitution, the Executive power of the Republic of Namibia is vested in the President and the Cabinet (Article 27 (2)). The Cabinet consists of the President, Prime Minister and Ministers (Article 35 (2)). The Executive is responsible for the day-to-day tasks and activities of the state and acts on behalf of the citizens. Ministers and their deputies are appointed by the President from the seventy-two members of Parliament (Kaapama, et al., 2007: 32).

The Legislature consists of the National Assembly and the National Council. The National Assembly is "representative of all the people and shall in the performance of their duties be guided by the objectives" of the constitution (Article 45). This means that the National

Assembly has sovereign legislative power subject to the constitution (Kaapama, et al., 2007: 32). The seventy-two members of the National Assembly are voted into parliament through a national electoral process (Article 46). The Speaker of the House presides over the National Assembly and has a casting vote in the event of a deadlock (Kaapama, et al., 2007: 33).

The National Council is made up of two members from each of Namibia's thirteen regions (Article 69 (1)). The Council has no legislative power but it can "investigate and report to the National Assembly on any subordinate legislation, reports and documents which under law must be tabled in the National Assembly. It can "recommend legislation on matters of regional concern for submission to and consideration by the National Assembly" (Article 74 (b) and (c)). Article 56 of the constitution specifies that each bill passed by Parliament requires the assent and signature of the President to become an Act of Parliament (1), a two-thirds majority from members of the National Assembly and confirmation from the National Council (2). This ultimately means that laws cannot be passed without the consent of the President.

As mentioned in Article 17, all citizens have the right to participate in peaceful political activity "intended to influence the composition and policies of the Government". All citizens have the right to form and join political parties and to participate in the conduct of public affairs, whether directly or through freely chosen representatives (Article 17 (1)). Every citizen over the age of eighteen years also bears the right to vote (Article (2)). The constitution also makes provision for the participation of civil society in the formulation and implementation of public policy in Namibia. Article 95 (k) states that the government shall adopt policies that encourage "the mass of the population through education and other activities and through their organisations to influence Government policy by debating its decisions". This process is meant to extend to the adoption of strategies and practices that

would make public participation and consultation an ongoing process in the formulation of public policies and legislation” (Republic of Namibia, 2005: 24).

Interaction between parliament, regional councils and the public is facilitated by the Legislative Strengthening Programme implemented by the Namibia Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Civil Society Development programme implemented by the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID). The Namibia Democracy Support Centre (NDSC) is an independent and autonomous membership-based institution made up of various organisations and is meant to help strengthen cooperation between the government and civil society and to facilitate the participation of civil organisations in the legislative process (Republic of Namibia, 2005: 24). Namibia’s development plan, Vision 2030, also states that the Namibian government strives to achieve “collaboration between public, private and Civil Society organisations, in policy formulation, programming and implementation” (Republic of Namibia, 2004: 3) as one of its broad strategies. It notes the importance of civil participation in the policy and decision-making process in Namibia (Kaapama, et al., 2007: 42).

Namibia’s political system is, however, dominated by the SWAPO party. Since independence in 1990, SWAPO has managed to obtain and maintain political control in Namibia. This is largely due to the fact that party followers share the same view that SWAPO was the leading liberator of Namibia in its struggle for independence. This shared idea and perception is also used by SWAPO to garner votes as cited in its 2009 election manifesto. It states that the SWAPO party

“specifically remember[s] the workers peasants, youth and students who...played a significant role in the establishment and building of the SWAPO party...[and]...provided all around support and materials needed to carry out the struggle for national liberation to its successful conclusion. It is for these historical realities that the

SWAPO party remains deeply rooted in these sections of our society and they will continue to be the focus of our policies” ( SWAPO Party Election Manifesto, 2009: 3)

SWAPO’s reputation and identity as being the liberator of Namibia and the absence of a strong alternative opposition parties remains an issue in the political system because it limits the ability of non-SWAPO party actors to effectively play a role in the countries decision making process.

Table 6: Percentages (%) of SWAPO votes from 1989 to 2009

<b>Year</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	57.3	73.89	76.15	75.1	75.27

Source: Elections in Namibia, African Elections Database. Available online at:

<http://africanelections.tripod.com/na.html>

SWAPO has managed to steadily increase its support since 1989, reaching a two thirds majority win in consecutive elections. The high number of votes obtained by the SWAPO party and the number of seats it has in the National Assembly means that it has majority control of the decision-making process in parliament. Melber thus suggests that the Namibian political system displays characteristics of a one-party state under increasing autocratic rule (2005: 146) where opposition parties are unable to gain enough votes to seriously challenge SWAPO dominance (2008: 66).

Melber also notes that SWAPO dominance can only be challenged by the different voting preferences of regions, which have had an impact on the regional and local elections. The practice of redefining demarcation boundaries of constituencies and regions has, however, allowed SWAPO to achieve country wide dominance (Melber, 2008:66). The consolidation

of power by the ruling party and the inability for opposition parties to pose as a serious challenge to its predominance means that they are unable to perform the important task of helping to formulate public opinion which could lead to political centralism in the political leadership and allow for a “concentration of power in the executive at the expense of other organs of the state” (Kaaapama, et al., 2007: 5).

Namibia’s most significant challenge is to try to institutionalise a viable multi-party political system in which opposition parties can be effective, therefore, appears to A continued dominance of the Executive branch over the Legislative branch of government is a threat to democratic consolidation. Kaaapama et al. (2007: 60-61), suggest that the role of the civil society is crucial in this instance as it can hold institutions of governance accountable and ensure that they are effective. They argue that a growth in Civil Society Organisations could potentially mitigate or negate the weakness of opposition parties. The lack of public debate on sensitive matters and governments criticism of dissident voices, however, remains an issue. This problem extends to the different perceptions about China’s presence in Namibia from various sectors in society.

#### 4.2 The Political Ramifications of China’s Presence

The main concern for Namibians is the role that government plays in Sino-Namibia relations. Government officials have been unwavering in their support for Namibia’s relationship with China. The narrative that China helped Namibia during its war for independence is continuously used as a reason for the strong relations between the two states and also doubles as justification as to why Chinese businesses are in the country. It is this close relationship that is having an effect on Namibian politics.

Official government perceptions of China being an ally against colonialism are an indication of how the Namibian government views and justifies China's presence in Namibia. It is this intersubjective understanding that is causing concern amongst local business people and grassroots levels of society. These groups are mainly concerned that Chinese businesses do not appear to comply with the laws of the country and are unfairly competing with local businesses. There is also concern about the allegations of corruption and bribery associated with Chinese businesses, and the lack of action against these practices from the Namibian government. This raises questions about the integrity of the government when dealing with China.

The nature of China's foreign policy of mixing aid and business in government agreements has become public concern. Most Chinese agreements require that financial aid and loan contracts be awarded to Chinese contractors that have been chosen by the Beijing government. That means that information such as project costs, loan terms and repayment conditions is not provided (LaFraniere and Grobler, 2009). Such an example of this was a case which resulted in the Namibian government taking a Chinese state-owned company, Nuchtech, to court in 2008. The N\$ 55.3 million dollar tender deal for cargo scanners revealed that N\$ 4.2 million dollars in the form of 'kickbacks' was sent to a front company set up by two Namibian officials and a Chinese Nuchtech representative (LaFraniere and Grobler, 2009). Such problems could be avoided if Namibia insisted on independently comparing prices before accepting the tender terms as is. The perception that China is a good friend and that the government will receive good value for its money makes it less vigilant when it comes to signing agreements (LaFraniere and Grobler, 2009). This example shows that the government may be less cautious when it comes to dealing with China because of their development aid and 'no strings attached' friendship.

The influx of Chinese construction companies is also creating negative perceptions of China and its relationship with the government. Namibian construction companies have accused Chinese companies of unfair practices and competition. The Construction Industry Federation (CIF) has on numerous occasions expressed their concern about Chinese firms profiting from preferential treatment in the allocation of tenders (Dobler, 2007: 101). The local construction companies that are organised under the CIF are subjected to regulations such as providing proof of registration as a Namibian tax payer, certificates of good standing from the Social Security Commission, and valid affirmative action certificates from the Employment Equity Commission (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008: 23) These local companies complain that Chinese businesses do not have to comply with these regulations (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008: 23). The bids of Chinese companies on public contracts are so low that local companies struggle to compete with them (Bloom and Poplak, 2011). The lack of government action against the domination of Chinese construction companies further drives the perception that Chinese companies benefit from preferential treatment from the government. Local companies feel that Chinese businesses have an unfair advantage over local companies. These allegations are therefore an indication of growing resentment against Chinese competitors among local business.

In 2007, Murray & Roberts and Namibia Construction took the Namibian tender board to the high court. The two construction companies requested the high court to stop China Nanjing International from starting work on the head offices of the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement in Windhoek after China Nanjing International was awarded the N\$ 74.4 million tender. Murray & Roberts and Namibia Construction wanted the high court to declare the tender null and void on the basis that it was not in compliance with the Affirmative Action Act and Labour Acts (Heita, 2007). The Chinese company was also accused of not being a member of the CIF nor the Employment Equity Commission, both a pre-requisite for

the tender process. Work on the head offices began and construction was almost halfway complete whilst the lawsuit returned to the high court for the third time in 2009 (Menges 2009). This lawsuit is an example of the frustrations facing local construction companies in Namibia who feel as though Chinese companies have no respect for the laws of the country and have the support of the government to do so.

Government officials have been steadfast in denouncing any criticism of China's relationship with Namibia, stating that negative reports in the local media are being perpetuated by the West to cause suspicion and distrust among the local population about China's interests in Namibia (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 6). Former Minister of Trade and Industry, Immanuel Ngatjizeko lashed out at negative criticism saying that the "unproductive sentiments bordering on xenophobia and outright narrow-mindedness not supported by historical and empirical evidence should not be entertained by Africans as regards to our Chinese brothers and sisters, who supported us all these years without any counter-demands" (Katswara 2007). SWAPO Youth League President Elijah Ngurare also expressed that negative perceptions are unavoidable but believes that negative criticism of China is being driven by the West (Personal Communication, 10 March 2011). Ngatjizeko affirmed that the Namibian government had no doubt that China meant well in Africa and was entitled to trade and invest in any country of its choice. He argued that negative sentiments were aimed at causing suspicion and distrust among Africans (Katswara, 2007). Former Secretary General of SWAPO Dr. Ngarikutuke Tjiriange also noted that China helped Namibia through its liberation struggle, unlike the US and Britain, thus proving that it was a true ally and friend to Namibia (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 5).

Despite the idea that certain government officials believe that negative perceptions of China in Africa and Namibia are driven by the West, interviews conducted suggested that relations with the West were as important as those with China. Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry,

Tjikero Tweya expressed that Namibia was exporting more products to Western countries than China and noted that South Africa and the EU are important export partners. He stated that Namibia was not more lenient with China than other Western countries (Personal Communication, 3 March 2011). Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Peya Mushelenga also stated that both the West and the East were important in terms of Namibia's development goals but that each country that Namibia deals with has different terms for its development aid and trade agreements. This means that one could not assume that China had obtained any preferential treatment in the country but rather that the terms of agreements were different to those of the West (Personal Communication, 10 May 2011). The government therefore suggests that China does not receive any special privileges from Namibia as its main goal is to deal with any country that can help it achieve its development goals.

However, a recent speech from President Pohamba suggested that China had more of a right to operate in Namibia than other Western countries due to its historical ties. In March 2011, Pohamba defended Chinese business people operating in Namibia by expressing his disappointment of black Namibian businesses for condemning them. He demanded to know why they do not criticise the presence of South African business people who were in the past responsible for oppressing Namibians before independence. Pohamba further expressed that it was shameful for black Namibian business people to condemn the Chinese because they had provided Namibia with arms during the liberation struggle (The Namibian, 17 March 2011).

In response, Pohamba came under heavy attack by various political and economic groups in Namibia. Most notably, the Namibia Chamber of Commerce Institute (NCCI) Chief Executive Officer, Taara Shaanika criticised the president for misunderstanding the concerns of Namibian business people. Shaanika argued that the local condemnation of Chinese business in Namibia stemmed from the fact that they had little or no respect for the country's

laws and policies. He therefore called for Pohamba to “undertake serious engagement with the private sector to design and formulate clear policies on how countries such as China should do business with Namibia at a local level that is beneficial to the local economy” (Heita, 2011). Illegal and unethical business practices, non-payment of taxes, dealing in foreign currency, the disrespect for labour laws, illegal siphoning of funds outside the country and the engagement in micro businesses through purported direct investments, according to Shaanika, are the main problems with Chinese and other foreign businesses in Namibia (Heita, 2011).

The president’s perception that China helped Namibia during its war of independence seems to suggest that for the state, Chinese businesses have more of a right to operate in Namibia than Western companies. Shaanika, however, argues that China’s help during the war of independence should not be an “open door for any nation to side step [Namibia’s] laws and national priorities” and that Namibia’s “friendship with others should not disadvantage [its] citizens” (Heita, 2011). In reality, it is debatable as to how much help Namibia received from China during the liberation war. Evidence suggests that the Soviet Union provided most of SWAPO’s military weapons and training. NamRights, a human rights monitoring and advocacy organisation, also argues that “‘white imperialist’ Sweden...accorded SWAPO much more support in terms of logistics, money and vital assistance than China” (NamRights, 2011).

NamRights also criticised government officials for implying that white South African owned businesses and other Western companies deserve to be attacked because of their role as oppressors before independence. Despite the fact that South Africa has a black democratically elected government, Namibia continues to treat South Africa’s government and its people as an “imperialist, ‘Western’ country” (Namrights, 2011). These sentiments seem to suggest that the government feels that the presence of Chinese businesses in Namibia

is less exploitative than South African ‘Western’ companies because of their identity as colonialists in Namibia before independence.

This narrative of China’s help during the liberation struggle and as an ally against Western imperialism is popular amongst government officials. Former SWAPO member, turned RDP Secretary General Jesaya Nyamu, articulated how China’s presence in Namibia was important in loosening the West’s economic stronghold in the country and stated that China was Namibia’s biggest donor and contributor to Africa’s development projects, that gave more than “other countries” (Personal Communication, 25 March 2011). Despite China’s frequent and large donations to Namibia, it is not, however, Namibia’s largest development donor. Germany, followed by the US and EU, contribute more aid to the country than China (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit 2010). Nyamu also argues that negative perceptions of Chinese business people are unproductive and baseless because of China’s declaration that they are willing to work together with Namibia in terms of investment and joint ventures (Personal Communication, 25 March 2011). These statements suggest that there is a perception amongst government leaders that China is a more favourable donor and partner than the West despite the fact that Namibia receives more aid from Western countries. It is this perception that the government tries to convey to the rest of the country through speeches about China being a ‘true’ friend that is not associated with colonialism.

For the wider public, the reaction is altogether different. Official Sino-Namibian relations make citizens question the integrity of the state and of the governing elite against a context of the ruling party’s dominance. The outcry over the bursaries awarded to high officials in the Namibian government that was referred to in Chapter 3, is an example of frustrations of the public about the relationship between Namibia and China. COD Secretary General Tsudao Gurrirab expressed his concern that that the children of these officials benefited from these

bursaries because their parents were in the position to extend reciprocal favours to the Chinese government. He further argued that the bursaries were a clear bribe “greedily accepted in return for favours done or already done at the expense of Namibia’s poor” (The Namibian, 04 November 2009). At a press conference aimed at addressing the awarded scholarships, former Minister Nangolo Mbumba blamed the media for falsely insinuating that government officials had taken these bursaries away from less-privileged youths but both the government and the Chinese embassy were unable to explain how or why these bursaries were awarded. Mbumba argued that “you cannot bribe someone with a bursary” (Mongudhi, 2009).

The lack of transparency about the reason for awarding the bursaries raises concerns about the nature of Sino-Namibian relations and whether or not it constitutes corruption. The fact that bursaries were awarded to the President’s daughter and children of high officials in strategic ministries such as Defence, Mines and Energy, Lands and Resettlement, Justice and Home Affairs raised questions about the type of relationship that exists between the SWAPO dominated government and the Chinese and further drives the perception that favours were exchanged for these bursaries.

The government’s defensive character against negative media reports about Sino-Namibian relations is both a reference to its support of China in Namibia and also an example of the rigid SWAPO-dominated political system of the country. Such an example is the dismissal of the Wikileaks cable referred to in Chapter 3 which stated that five thousand passports were given to Chinese families as repayment for a defaulted loan. Government denied the default of the loan and the accusations were followed by an article from SWAPO think tank member, Asser Ntinda. Ntinda dismissed the allegations as being “ridiculous and laughable” and blamed the media for trying to depict the SWAPO party government in a “bad light” soon after the party’s victory in the previous Regional and Local Government elections (Ntinda

2010) . He also argues that criticism from opposition parties, especially from the RDP, was expected because of their failure in the previous elections and was a way of trying to defame the SWAPO party (Ntinda, 2010).

Government perceptions and the nature of Namibia's political system allows for little room for non-state actor views to effectively change or alter foreign policy in Namibia. They can, however, hold the state accountable for its lack of integrity when it comes to official Sino-Namibian relations. Non-state actor perceptions about the Chinese are predominantly based on China's economic engagement with the country and from its relationship with the SWAPO-dominated government. More specifically, China's increased presence in the construction and retail industries as a result of this relationship is playing a large role in forming local perceptions of Sino-Namibia relations.

#### 4.3 The Socio-Economic Effects of China in Namibia

The rise of China in the world economy means that the terms of trade have become more favourable for commodity exporters such as Namibia. The issue, however, lies with elites that seek quick rents rather than investing in sustainable economic development. Namibia's dependency on commodity exports is increasing, therefore it is crucial that its economic framework must become more pragmatic and resourceful (Dobler, 2007: 99) so that the goals of a diversified economy and industrialised state, as set out in Vision 2030, can be realised. It therefore, remains to be seen if a sound economic policy will be implemented and whether it will improve terms of trade into improved livelihoods for Namibian citizens (Dobler, 2007: 99). The way in which policy makers engage with China in terms of trade will have an effect on how Namibians perceive the benefits of China as a trading partner.

As such, there are some perceptions that the Africa-China relationship could follow the colonial pattern of relegating Africa to the role of a raw material supplier (Jauch, 2011: 51). Opposition party president of Congress of Democrats (COD), Ben Ulenga, expresses this perception with the case of Sino-Namibia relations. He believes that China economically benefits more from its relations with Namibia than Namibia does. He argues that China's presence in Namibia parallels German colonialism because it has no restrictions and has an economic advantage over the Namibian locals. He believes that the Chinese presence in Namibia is a "déjà vu" of early colonialism in Namibia and even though China has a different approach, it is ultimately imperialist (Personal Communication, 30 March 2011). Jauch argues that the nature of the current relationship needs to be altered if Africa is to benefit from trade with China (Jauch, 2009: 51).

Some economists have criticised the absence of a coherent strategy by the government to engage local industry in terms of Namibia-China trade. They believe that the relationship will not go beyond the export of minerals and agricultural products unless there is a deliberate effort by the government to involve Namibia's industrial sector in Sino-Namibian trade (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008: 23). It is therefore important that Chinese investors "add value to raw materials domestically" and "establish joint venture manufacturing entities" (The Southern Times, 1 August 2011). Namibia's Vision 2030 goal for an industrialised state can only be realised if policies are put in place to help encourage the growth of a manufacturing sector in the country. It is therefore important that Namibia strengthen its ability to take advantage of trade with China by incorporating local processing in its raw material export agreements. This would demonstrate that Sino-Namibian trade relations are beneficial to Namibia's economy and development goals.

The perception of China being the 'new' coloniser extends to the exploitation of workers by Chinese businesses. Namibia's current policies to attract Chinese investment and trade with

China have had the effect of compromising the country's labour laws. Local construction companies and trade unions blame the government for not forcing Chinese construction companies to comply with Namibian labour laws. Chinese companies tend to be the lowest-paying employers in Africa compared with other employers in the same sector (Jauch, 2011: 52), and the situation is no different in Namibia. They tend to pay only one third of the minimum wage required by law.

A study conducted by the Labour Research and Resource Institute on labour practices in Namibia in 2009 found that Chinese companies do not pay the N\$ 8.44 per hour minimum wage agreed upon by the construction industry. Chinese employers claim that they have an agreement with the Metal and Allied Namibian Workers Union (MANWU) to only pay workers that reach a specific target each day. Chinese companies argue that local general workers do not apply for the minimum wage because they do not reach these targets. MANWU has claimed that no agreement exists (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 24). Chinese employers consider Namibian workers to be unskilled because they are not as efficient as Chinese workers and do not meet their standard of work (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 23). Low productivity means that they do not deserve the minimum wage and so Chinese employers reserve the right to choose how much to pay them (Jauch, 2011: 52). These sentiments again suggest that Chinese employers feel that they are above the law and do not have to comply with Namibia's labour laws and therefore reserve the right to pay worker's what they think is fair.

Low wages and poor working conditions ignited strike action by MANWU members in March 2011. Construction workers employed by the Chinese owned New Era Investment downed tools in an attempt to force the company to comply with their demands for better terms and conditions of employment (Smit, 2011). Strike action was a result of growing concern about the rising number of government tenders being awarded to Chinese companies,

the large number of Chinese workers displacing local construction workers and the exploitation of Namibian workers by Chinese construction companies. New Era Investments was also accused of paying below minimum wage, mistreating workers, not deducting union membership dues from wages and “not adding value to the Namibian economy and lives of the workers” (Smit, 2011). MANWU members pointed out that they were not being supported by the government and called for action against contractors who bribe government officials (Smit, 2011). A day after the strike, New Era Investment gave into workers demands and agreed to pay minimum wage and register its employees with the Social Security Commission and the Namibia Building Workers Pension Fund. The agreement, however, only covered three of the ten demands of MANWU and issues such as housing allowance, medical aid and union membership deductions were not addressed (Smit 2011). The strike action of New Era Investment workers shows that if Namibian trade unions and workers had more support from government and had more bargaining power it could lead to Chinese companies adhering to the country’s labour laws. The government has not tried to adequately deal with the contravention of labour laws by Chinese companies and this is creating negative perceptions and raising doubts about the integrity of the Namibian government.

Despite the negative effects of Chinese competition in the construction industry, there has been a positive effect. Productivity and efficiency have improved and construction costs have decreased (Dobler, 2007: 101). It is however, important that Chinese construction companies be closely and rigorously supervised in terms of making sure that they comply with Namibian labour laws. Dobler suggests that with regard to the tender process, local firms should be given preference or stricter regulations regarding the employment of local workers should be considered (2007: 101). If Chinese companies are allowed to continue with such practices, it will have the effect of driving local construction companies out of business and may result in more strike action from frustrated workers.

Overall, the increasing number of Chinese businesses in Namibia has become of concern in Namibia and is predominantly creating negative perceptions at grassroots levels and local traders. The five hundred Chinese shops and businesses registered with the Ministry of Trade and Industry is not a true reflection of the situation. The majority of small Chinese businesses do not register themselves with the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Many of these small business traders arrive in the country as employees with large state owned enterprises and then take advantage of openings in the market. They resign from their employment and start their own businesses. They then invite relatives and friends to help them once their businesses begin to grow (Thorniley, 2010). This makes it difficult to keep accurate figures of how many Chinese businesses are operating in Namibia. The increasing number of Chinese businesses is likely to become more of a political issue in the country.

Local businesses are concerned about their livelihoods as the increase in Chinese owned stores is driving them out of business. In 2008, northern indigenous business people appealed to government to protect them from foreign owned businesses that have successfully set up businesses as a result of the free-market system policy introduced in 1990. Even though they are not completely opposed to foreign business because of its positive effects on the economy, they feel that these businesses should be restricted to areas that Namibians are not involved in. Singling out Chinese and Indian owned stores, they expressed that it is unfair to compete with people who are financially backed by bigger companies in their countries (Shivute, 2008).

In Oshakati, clothing vendors and small garment manufacturers are against what they call a “Chinese invasion and colonisation” and a “competitive threat” (Xoagub, 2011). The Chinese demand for store-front property has also reportedly had the effect of pushing up rental prices. Chinese merchants also quickly occupy most vacated premises meaning that local businesses find it difficult to afford and find store spaces. Local businesses have further complained

about the local merchandise being sold by the Chinese. Such an example is the manufacturing and importing of cheap materials from China used in making the traditional Owambo attire, *Ondelela*. The low prices of these items displace local manufacturers as it is very difficult to compete with Chinese traders (Xoagub, 2011).

The NCCI has on numerous occasions complained about the invasion of Chinese corner shops, hairdressers, restaurants and traders which is having the effect of forcing out local businesses. It has stated that the rapid growth in the number of small scale retailing businesses is replacing long-existing locally owned businesses (Thorniley, 2010). Taara Shaanika has also expressed concern about the unethical and illegal practices of some Chinese businesses that have ignored Namibia's labour laws. He argues that the unfair and uncompetitive nature of these businesses threaten the livelihoods of small and medium enterprises (The Namibian, 20 June 2011). Tjikero Tweya notes the benefits of China in Namibia in terms of fulfilling Namibia's development goals but expresses concern about the tendencies of Chinese businesses to explore opportunities in the smallest parts of the economy. He pointed out that they are aggressive in seeking gaps in the market upon their arrival in the country which has the result of depriving Namibians of these opportunities (Personal Communication, 3 March 2011).

As a result of the outcry of local businesses, Minister of Trade and Industry, Hage Geingob, banned all foreign investments in hair salons and public transport, and introduced a permit system for new shop owners in 2010 (Thorniley, 2010). It is however, difficult to determine how well this ban has been implemented as there is no evidence to show that efforts have been made to close down or prevent these businesses from operating in the country. It is also questionable as to how effective the ban is due to the fact that the biggest issue is the dominance of Chinese retail businesses selling cheap merchandise and not only hair salons and public transport.

The labour issue also extends to the retail sector. Like the construction sector, Chinese employers do not comply with labour laws. The local workers employed by the Chinese do not have employment contracts or any form of job security (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 22). The LARRI study found that in both the construction and retail sector, local workers have complained of verbal abuse, intimidation and harassment by their Chinese employers. The workers felt that they had no rights to express their views or lodge any complaints out of fear that they would be retrenched (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 24). Employers indicated that they had to work between 07:30 – 17:30 on week days and 07:30-13:00 on Saturdays and Sundays. These hours are longer than permitted by Namibian labour laws. Workers are also expected to work during public holidays without extra pay and did not receive lunch breaks, which is also in violation of labour laws (Jauch and Sakaria, 2009: 25).

The Namibian government has yet to take any decisive action against Chinese businesses that do not comply with the country's labour laws and this seriously undermines the country's legal foundation. The Namibian government and the Chinese embassy have both, however, expressed the same view that workers rights and wages should not be prioritised so that the development goals of the country can be achieved in the future (Shejavali, 2009). The government is therefore justifying China's lack of compliance to the labour laws. This notion also points to how Namibia is emulating China's development model within its own goals.

These views and perceptions of how Chinese businesses operate in Namibia are helping shape the way Namibians see China. For the most part, Chinese business people are identified and viewed as being unfair, competitive and a threat to the economic livelihood of local Namibians. China's presence in Namibia and its close relationship with the government is a contributing factor to the views and perceptions of the Chinese because it appears that Chinese businesses are being encouraged by the Namibian government, through the lack of action against these companies, to operate without any fear of condemnation. This is having

the effect of compromising the integrity of the government as Chinese companies are not complying with the country's laws. The current debate about China's political, economic and social presence demonstrates that various sectors of society are taking notice of Sino-Namibian relations in terms of its national interests. Negative perceptions are being shaped by China's engagement with the Namibian government and governments responses to the growing criticism of China in the country.

The nature of Namibia's political system suggests that views and perceptions that are different from the official perceptions on China are not tolerated and are condemned by the SWAPO dominated government. Negative perceptions of the Chinese in Namibia are not responded to because of the SWAPO party's close relationship with the Chinese. The long standing historical ties between China and Namibia based on notions of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism suggests that it is very unlikely that growing public resentment against China will lead to any major policy changes with regard to Sino-Namibian relations. It is, however, likely that the SWAPO party may become more mindful of negative public perceptions of Sino-Namibian relations as this could ultimately have the effect of costing them votes in future elections. It is also likely that growing resentment will, over time, affect the government's behaviour towards privileging Chinese state owned companies and perhaps force it to become more vigilant in making sure these companies comply with the country's laws and regulations. Any form of specific change in policy would, however, be a result of a change in official state perceptions of China.

## **Chapter 5:**

### **Conclusion**

Social Constructivism analyses the structures of human association and how they are determined by shared ideas rather than on material factors. Identities and interests are constructed by these shared ideas and social relationships are contingent on how nation states interact with each other. Changing perceptions of the Chinese in Namibia inform Namibian politics and have an effect on Sino-Namibian relations. Social constructivism describes how perceptions at different levels of society have been formed about the Chinese and how this is ultimately affecting domestic politics and state behaviour towards China. Perceptions of Chinese involvement in Namibia at the grassroots level differ from those at the top and this increasingly has an effect on domestic Namibian politics and, as such, Sino-Namibian relations. It is therefore essential to determine the importance of grassroots perceptions on China vis-à-vis official perceptions in Namibian politics and the effects of these grassroots views on Namibian politics and on official views regarding China.

China's seemingly aggressive economic presence in the construction and retail industry is mostly responsible for shaping negative perceptions of Sino-Namibian relations. Citizens are very much aware of the economic and social threat of the use of Chinese companies and workers in the construction of public and private projects and the increase in the number of Chinese traders in the country. China is perceived to be an emerging economic power that has no concern for the rights and wellbeing of the Namibian people. The apparent disinterest of the government in taking action against China's dominant economic and social presence in the country is causing widespread criticism of Sino-Namibian relations. Despite the positive perceptions that lower-income citizens have of small Chinese retailers and their affordable goods, they pale in comparison to the overall negative perceptions of Chinese presence in Namibia.

Official Sino-Namibian relations are perceived in a negative way. Both governments use the narrative of a shared colonial past and “invoke history to suggest a bond that is a result of a genuine kinship rather than mutual capacity” (Bloom and Poplak, 2011). There are perceptions that China is using this relationship, based on a shared colonial past, to gain access to Namibia’s resources, be awarded tenders for public projects and bypass the countries laws. Chinese companies appear to be receiving preferential treatment from the government at the expense of local companies. The rewarding of scholarships to top SWAPO officials and the close relationship that exists between the ruling party and China suggests to people that the government is willing to compromise its national interests for the self-economic gain of the ruling governing elite.

Government statements that China is a “friendly big power” (Kisting, 2010) that helped Namibia during the struggle for independence are problematic. Vekuii Rukoro<sup>40</sup> argues that Namibia should not be naive when dealing with its “former benefactors during the liberation struggle” (Duddy, 2009). He argues that it is naive to believe that China is not pursuing its own narrow national interests at the cost of Namibia’s national interests (Duddy, 2009). The anti-colonial and anti-imperialist rhetoric of Namibia’s foreign policy, which may have been popular during the liberation struggle, has ever less currency in the post-colonial world. The government’s rhetoric that China militarily and diplomatically supported Namibia during the liberation struggle cannot be an excuse for it to not have to comply with Namibia’s laws or disadvantage the local population.

The state has tried to justify China’s presence in the country arguing that the benefits of Sino-Namibian relations outweigh the negative. In August 2010, Hage Geingob expressed his dissatisfaction of anti-Chinese rhetoric in Namibia and argued that the Chinese are not in Namibia to take away employment from locals (Kisting, 2010). It is however very difficult to

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<sup>40</sup> The Chief Executive Officer of First National Bank Group of Namibia

argue that the government is unaware of the damaging effects China's economic presence is having on the local industry. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Peya Mushelenga, stated that the grassroots criticism of China's economic presence in Namibia is legitimate. There is government awareness that Chinese businesses are making it difficult for Namibians to compete in the local market and that investors are importing unskilled labour that can be done by Namibians (Personal Communication, 10 May 2011). It is for these reasons that the public believes that it is the responsibility of the government to take action and ensure that the local population is protected from the invasion of Chinese businesses.

The nature of the political system has allowed for policy to be dominated by the Executive branch of government and by ruling party interests. As such, Namibia is still experiencing a degree of democratic deficiencies. Sentiments and views that are not shared by the government are severely castigated and marginalised. Civil society as a concept is still regarded as suspicious and foreign controlled (Tonchi, 2002: 4), despite the provisions made for it in the constitution. It therefore seems unlikely that negative perceptions from the public will translate into a change of policy towards Sino-Namibian relations. However, increased criticism is likely have the effect of changing how the government engages with China. Statements from various government officials suggest that the state is becoming aware of the problems with the present nature of Sino-Namibian relations.

It is important to understand that China is pursuing its own foreign policy agenda and national interests. It is therefore crucial that Namibia also set and pursue its own agenda when dealing with Chinese investors. Permanent Secretary of Finance, Calle Schlettwein, expressed that Namibia should insist on conditions that benefit its development agenda when dealing with China. If these conditions are rejected then Namibia should have the courage to refuse signing such agreements (Duddy, 2009). It is also crucial that Namibia knows how it wishes to engage with China. Namibia's foreign policy is still a working exercise that needs

time to mature into specific policy. The current documentation of foreign policy, specifically towards China is in itself generally inexact and imprecise which suggests that Namibia does not have a clear policy in mind.

Namibia seeks to gain greater economic self reliance. Relations with China should assist in the industrialisation goals set forward by Vision 2030. The current practice of exporting of raw materials to China is not significantly contributing much to the development of the country. Chinese investors should add value to the export of raw materials domestically by establishing joint venture manufacturing entities that would make trade mutually beneficial. Namibia should be more assertive in terms of gaining what it wants from Sino-Namibian bilateral agreements. At present, with regard to the goals of Vision 2030, there is a lack of manufacturing companies in Namibia outside of the construction sector and joint ventures between Namibia and China are very rare. The Namibian government has been unable to use the relationship to channel investments into other sectors of the economy, other than trade (Dobler, 2009: 726).

With the number of Chinese migrants rising, it may be beneficial for the government to strategically take advantage of these Chinese migrants to benefit its own interests by creating opportunities that can lead to development. This entails the establishment of joint-ventures, restrictions on what type of foreign businesses can operate in Namibia and skills transfer (Dobler, 2007: 107). Foreign businesses should only be allowed to operate in the country if they can truly help with economic development. It is also imperative that the government deter China from importing unskilled labour and resources that already exist in the country so that they do not compete with the local population. Tweya suggests that Namibia should take advantage of Sino-Namibia relations by borrowing certain aspects of China's development model, culture of hard work and its ability to focus on economic goals. Namibians could

benefit from educational and cultural exchanges with China to learn skills for jobs that would regularly be contracted to foreigners (Personal Communication, 3 March 2011).

The issue, however, lies with the fact that the presence of the Chinese businesses in both the construction and retail industry are not being well monitored which is having an effect on the local economy. Namibia should improve on monitoring China's economic involvement in the country. Mechanisms such as tender requirements, work permits, labour laws and investment conditions can all be used to achieve that (Jauch, 2011: 55). Negative perceptions of China's presence in Namibia suggests that people want the government to protect certain sectors, specifically the retail and construction industries, as a way of coping with the influx of Chinese business in the country. Grassroots levels have the ability to hold the government accountable for the way it handles Sino-Namibian relations. This would allow for the government to show that it has the integrity to deal with the Chinese presence in Namibia. Non-state actor perceptions can therefore, over time, drive changes in domestic politics and Namibia's foreign relations with China.

It is difficult for non-state actors to see the positive aspects of Sino-Namibian relations when engagement appears to be to the detriment of the local economy and population. Growing negative perceptions could possibly have the effect of undermining the advantages of Namibia's relationship with China. Growing criticism of China could prove to be detrimental for the government and in turn for official Namibia-China relations. It is therefore crucial that the government make an effort to address these negative perceptions at grassroots level before they manifest themselves in violence against Chinese immigrants or possible wider social unrest.

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## **Appendix 1: China's Africa Policy**

China's Africa Policy 2006

January 2006

### Foreword

The first few years of the new century witness a continuation of complex and profound changes in the international situation and further advance of globalization. Peace and development remain the main themes of our times. Safeguarding peace, promoting development and enhancing cooperation, which is the common desire of all peoples, represents the irresistible historical trend. On the other hand, destabilizing factors and uncertainties in the international situation are on the rise. Security issues of various kinds are interwoven. Peace remains evasive and development more pressing. China, the largest developing country in the world, follows the path of peaceful development and pursues an independent foreign policy of peace. China stands ready to develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence so as to contribute to peace, stability and common prosperity around the world.

The African continent, which encompasses the largest number of developing countries, is an important force for world peace and development. China-Africa traditional friendly relations face fresh opportunities under the new circumstances. By this African Policy Paper, the Chinese Government wishes to present to the world the objectives of China's policy towards Africa and the measures to achieve them, and its proposals for cooperation in various fields in the coming years, with a view to promoting the steady growth of China-Africa relations in the long term and bringing the mutually-beneficial cooperation to a new stage.

Part I:

#### Africa's Position and Role

Africa has a long history, vast expanse of land, rich natural resources and huge potential for development. After long years of struggle, the African people freed themselves from colonial rule, wiped out apartheid, won independence and emancipation, thus making significant contribution to the progress of civilization. Following their independence, countries in Africa have been conscientiously exploring a road to development suited to their national conditions and seeking peace, stability and development by joint efforts. Thanks to the concerted efforts of African countries and the Organization of African Unity (OAU)/the African Union (AU),

the political situation in Africa has been stable on the whole, regional conflicts are being gradually resolved and economy has been growing for years. The NEPAD has drawn up an encouraging picture of African rejuvenation and development. African countries have actively participated in the South-South cooperation and worked for the North-South dialogue. They are playing an increasingly important role in international affairs. Africa still faces many challenges on its road of development. However, with the persistent efforts of African countries and the continuous support of the international community, Africa will surely surmount difficulties and achieve rejuvenation in the new century.

## Part II:

### China's Relations with Africa

China-Africa friendship is embedded in the long history of interchange. Sharing similar historical experience, China and Africa have all along sympathized with and supported each other in the struggle for national liberation and forged a profound friendship. The founding of the People's Republic of China and the independence of African countries ushered in a new era in China-Africa relations. For over half a century, the two sides have enjoyed close political ties and frequent exchange of high-level visits and people-to-people contacts.

Our bilateral trade and economic cooperation have grown rapidly; cooperation in other fields has yielded good results; and consultation and coordination in international affairs have been intensified. China has provided assistance to the best of its ability to African countries, while African countries have also rendered strong support to China on many occasions. Sincerity, equality and mutual benefit, solidarity and common development-these are the principles guiding China-Africa exchange and cooperation and the driving force to lasting China-Africa relations.

## Part III:

### China's African Policy

Enhancing solidarity and cooperation with African countries has always been an important component of China's independent foreign policy of peace. China will unswervingly carry forward the tradition of China-Africa friendship, and, proceeding from the fundamental interests of both the Chinese and African peoples, establish and develop a new type of strategic partnership with Africa, featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation and cultural exchange.

The general principles and objectives of China's African policy are as follows:

- Sincerity, friendship and equality. China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, respects African countries' independent choice of the road of development and supports African countries' efforts to grow stronger through unity.
- Mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity. China supports African countries' endeavor for economic development and nation building, carries out cooperation in various forms in the economic and social development, and promotes common prosperity of China and Africa.
- Mutual support and close coordination. China will strengthen cooperation with Africa in the UN and other multilateral systems by supporting each other's just demand and reasonable propositions and continue to appeal to the international community to give more attention to questions concerning peace and development in Africa.
- Learning from each other and seeking common development. China and Africa will learn from and draw upon each other's experience in governance and development, strengthen exchange and cooperation in education, science, culture and health. Supporting African countries' efforts to enhance capacity building, China will work together with Africa in the exploration of the road of sustainable development.

The one China principle is the political foundation for the establishment and development of China's relations with African countries and regional organizations. The Chinese Government appreciates the fact that the overwhelming majority of African countries abide by the one China principle, refuse to have official relations and contacts with Taiwan and support China's great cause of reunification. China stands ready to establish and develop state-to-state relations with countries that have not yet established diplomatic ties with China on the basis of the one China principle.

## Part IV

### Enhancing All-round Cooperation between China and Africa

#### 1. The political field

##### (1) High-level visits

China will maintain the momentum of mutual visits and dialogues between Chinese and African leaders, with a view to facilitating communication, deepening friendship and promoting mutual understanding and trust.

##### (2) Exchanges between legislative bodies

China favors increased multi-level and multi-channel friendly exchanges on the basis of mutual respect between China's National People's Congress (NPC) on the one hand and parliaments of African countries and the Pan-African Parliament of the AU on the other, for the purpose of deepening understanding and cooperation.

##### (3) Exchanges between political parties

The Communist Party of China (CPC) develops exchanges of various forms with friendly political parties and organizations of African countries on the basis of the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The purpose of such exchanges is to increase understanding and friendship and seek trust and cooperation.

##### (4) Consultation mechanisms

Mechanisms such as national bilateral committees between China and African countries, political consultation between foreign ministries, joint(mixed) committees on trade and economic cooperation and mixed committees on science and technology should be established and improved, so as to institutionalize dialogue and consultation in a flexible and pragmatic manner.

##### (5) Cooperation in international affairs

China will continue to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with African countries on the international arena, conduct regular exchange of views, coordinate positions on major international and regional issues and stand for mutual support on major issues concerning state sovereignty, territorial integrity, national dignity and human rights. China supports

African nations' desire to be an equal partner in international affairs. China is devoted, as are African nations, to making the UN play a greater role, defending the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, establishing a new international political and economic order featuring justice, rationality, equality and mutual benefit, promoting more democratic international relationship and rule of law in international affairs and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries.

#### (6) Exchanges between local governments

China's Central Government attaches importance to the exchanges between local governments of China and African countries, vigorously supports twin province/state and twin city relationship aimed at facilitating bilateral exchanges and cooperation in local development and administration.

### 2. The economic field

#### (1) Trade

The Chinese Government will adopt more effective measures to facilitate African commodities' access to Chinese market and fulfil its promise to grant duty-free treatment to some goods from the least developed African countries, with a view to expanding and balancing bilateral trade and optimizing trade structure. It intends to settle trade disputes and frictions properly through bilateral or multilateral friendly consultation, mutual understanding and mutual accommodation. Efforts will be made to encourage business communities on both sides to set up China-Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry. When conditions are ripe, China is willing to negotiate Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with African countries and African regional organizations.

#### (2) Investment

The Chinese Government encourages and supports Chinese enterprises' investment and business in Africa, and will continue to provide preferential loans and buyer credits to this end. The Chinese Government is ready to explore new channels and new ways for promoting investment cooperation with African countries, and will continue to formulate and improve relevant policies, provide guidance and service and offer convenience. African countries are welcome to make investment in China. The Chinese Government will continue to negotiate, conclude and implement the Agreement on Bilateral Facilitation and Protection of Investment and the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation with African Countries. The two sides

should work together to create a favourable environment for investment and cooperation and protect the legitimate rights and interests of investors from both sides.

### (3) Financial cooperation

To further develop China-Africa cooperation in the area of finance, the Chinese Government will support the effort of Chinese financial institutions to increase exchanges and cooperation with their counterparts in African countries as well as regional financial institutions in Africa.

### (4) Agricultural cooperation

China intends to further promote its agricultural cooperation and exchanges with African nations at various levels, through multiple channels and in various forms. Focus will be laid on the cooperation in land development, agricultural plantation breeding technologies, food security, agricultural machinery and the processing of agricultural and side-line products. China will intensify cooperation in agricultural technology, organize training courses of practical agricultural technologies, carry out experimental and demonstrative agricultural technology projects in Africa and speed up the formulation of China-Africa Agricultural Cooperation Program.

### (5) Infrastructure

The Chinese Government will step up China-Africa cooperation in transportation, communication, water conservancy, electricity and other infrastructures. It will vigorously encourage Chinese enterprises to participate in the building of infrastructure in African countries, scale up their contracts, and gradually establish multilateral and bilateral mechanisms on contractual projects. Efforts will be made to strengthen technology and management cooperation, focusing on the capacity-building of African nations.

### (6) Resources cooperation

The Chinese Government facilitates information sharing and cooperation with Africa in resources areas. It encourages and supports competent Chinese enterprises to cooperate with African nations in various ways on the basis of the principle of mutual benefit and common development, to develop and exploit rationally their resources, with a view to helping African countries to translate their advantages in resources to competitive strength, and realize sustainable development in their own countries and the continent as a whole.

#### (7) Tourism cooperation

China will implement the program of Chinese citizens' group tour to some African nations and, grant more African countries, as they wish and as far as feasible, Approved Destination Status for out-bound Chinese tourist groups. China welcomes citizens from African nations for a tour of the country.

#### (8) Debt reduction and relief

China is ready to continue friendly consultation with some African countries with a view to seek solution to, or reduction of, the debts they owe to China. It will urge the international community, developed countries in particular, to take more substantial action on the issue of debt reduction and relief for African nations.

#### (9) Economic assistance

In light of its own financial capacity and economic situation, China will do its best to provide and gradually increase assistance to African nations with no political strings attached.

#### (10) Multilateral cooperation

China is ready to enhance consultation and coordination with Africa within multilateral trade systems and financial institutions and work together to urge the UN and other international organizations to pay more attention to the question of economic development, promote South-South cooperation, push forward the establishment of a just and rational multilateral trade system and make the voices of developing countries heard in the decision-making of international financial affairs. It will step up cooperation with other countries and international organizations to support the development of Africa and help realize Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

### 3. Education, science, culture, health and social aspects

#### (1) Cooperation in human resources development and education

The Chinese Government will give full play to the role of its "African Human Resources Development Foundation" in training African personnel. It will identify priority areas, expand areas of cooperation and provide more input according to the needs of African countries so as to achieve greater results. Exchange of students between China and Africa will continue. China will increase the number of government scholarships as it sees fit,

continue to send teachers to help African countries in Chinese language teaching and carry out educational assistance project to help develop Africa's weak disciplines. It intends to strengthen cooperation in such fields as vocational education and distance learning while encouraging exchanges and cooperation between educational and academic institutions of both sides.

#### (2) Science and technology cooperation

Following the principles of mutual respect, complementarily and sharing benefits, China will promote its cooperation with Africa in the fields of applied research, technological development and transfer, speed up scientific and technological cooperation in the fields of common interest, such as bio-agriculture, solar energy utilization, geological survey, mining and R&D of new medicines. It will continue its training programs in applied technologies for African countries, carry out demonstration programs of technical assistance, and actively help disseminate and utilize Chinese scientific and technological achievements and advanced technologies applicable in Africa.

#### (3) Cultural exchanges

China will implement agreements of cultural cooperation and relevant implementation plans reached with African countries, maintain regular contacts with their cultural departments and increase exchanges of artists and athletes. It will guide and promote cultural exchanges in diverse forms between people's organizations and institutions in line with bilateral cultural exchange programs and market demand.

#### (4) Medical and health cooperation

China is ready to enhance medical personnel and information exchange with Africa. It will continue to send medical teams and provide medicines and medical materials to African countries, and help them establish and improve medical facilities and train medical personnel. China will increase its exchanges and cooperation with African countries in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS and malaria and other diseases, research and application of traditional medicine and experience concerning mechanism for public health emergencies.

(5) Media cooperation

China wishes to encourage multi-tiered and multi-formed exchange and cooperation between the media on both sides, so as to enhance mutual understanding and enable objective and balanced media coverage of each other. It will facilitate the communication and contacts between relevant government departments for the purpose of sharing experiences on ways to handle the relations with media both domestic and foreign, and guiding and facilitating media exchanges.

(6) Administrative cooperation

China will carry out exchange and cooperation with African countries in civil service system building, public administration reform and training of government personnel. The two sides may study the feasibility of setting up a mechanism for personnel and administrative cooperation.

(7) Consular cooperation

China will hold regular/irregular consular consultations with African countries during which the two sides may have amicable discussions on urgent problems or questions of common interest in bilateral or multilateral consular relations in order to improve understanding and expand cooperation. The Chinese side will work with Africa to facilitate personnel flow and ensure the safety of their nationals.

(8) People-to-people exchange

China will encourage and facilitate the exchanges between people's organizations of China and Africa, especially the youth and women, with a view to increasing the understanding, trust and cooperation of people on both sides. It will encourage and guide Chinese volunteers to serve in African countries.

(9) Environmental cooperation

China will actively promote China-Africa cooperation in climate change, water resources conservation anti-desertification, bio-diversity and other areas of environmental protection by facilitating technological exchange.

(10) Disaster reduction, relief and humanitarian assistance

China will actively carry out personnel exchange, training and technological cooperation in the fields of disaster reduction and relief. It will respond quickly to African countries' request for urgent humanitarian aid, encourage and support exchange and cooperation between the Red Cross Society of China and other NGOs on the one side and their African counterparts on the other side.

#### 4. Peace and security

##### (1) Military cooperation

China will promote high-level military exchanges between the two sides and actively carry out military-related technological exchanges and cooperation. It will continue to help train African military personnel and support defense and army building of African countries for their own security.

##### (2) Conflict settlement and peacekeeping operations

China supports the positive efforts by the AU and other African regional organizations and African countries concerned to settle regional conflicts and will provide assistance within our own capacity. It will urge the UN Security Council to pay attention to and help resolve regional conflicts in Africa. It will continue its support to and participation in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

##### (3) Judicial and police cooperation

China is prepared to promote exchange and cooperation between Chinese and African judicial and law enforcement departments. The two sides may learn from each other in legal system building and judicial reforms so as to be better able prevent, investigate and crack down on crimes. China will work together with African countries to combat transnational organized crimes and corruption, and intensify cooperation on matters concerning judicial assistance, extradition and repatriation of criminal suspects. China will cooperate closely with immigration departments of African countries in tackling the problem of illegal migration, improve exchange of immigration control information and set up an unimpeded and efficient channel for intelligence and information exchange.

##### (4) Non-traditional security areas

In order to enhance the ability of both sides to address non-traditional security threats, it is necessary to increase intelligence exchange, explore more effective ways and means for

closer cooperation in combating terrorism, small arms smuggling, drug trafficking, transnational economic crimes, etc.

#### Part V:

##### Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and Its Follow-up Actions

Launched in 2000, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation has become an effective mechanism for the collective dialogue and multilateral cooperation between China and Africa and put in place an important framework and platform for a new type of China-Africa partnership featuring long-term stability, equality and mutual benefit. China attaches importance to the positive role of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in strengthening political consultation and pragmatic cooperation between China and Africa, and stands ready to work with African countries to conscientiously implement the Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the Program for China-Africa Cooperation in Economic and Social Development and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation-Addis Ababa Action Plan (2004-2006) and its follow-up action plans. China will work with African countries within the framework of the Forum to explore new ways to enhance mutual political trust, promote the comprehensive development of pragmatic cooperation, further improve the mechanism of the forum, and try to find the best way for furthering cooperation between the Forum and the NEPAD.

#### Part VI:

##### China's Relations with African Regional Organizations

China appreciates the significant role of the AU in safeguarding peace and stability in the region and promoting African solidarity and development. China values its friendly cooperation with the AU in all fields, supports its positive role in regional and international affairs and stands ready to provide the AU assistance to the best of its capacity. China appreciates and supports the positive role of Africa's sub-regional organizations in promoting political stability, economic development and integration in their own regions and stands ready to enhance its amicable cooperation with those organizations.

Source: People's Republic of China. 2006. *China's Africa Policy 2006*. Accessed on 11 July 2011.

Available online: <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t230615.htm>

## Appendix 2: High Level Official Visits between Namibia and China since 1990-2011

	1990-1999	2000-2011		1990-1999	2000-2011
<b>Chinese Official visits to Namibia</b>	<p>Vice-Premier of the State Council Wu Xueqian (1990)</p> <p>Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Sun Qimeng (1991)</p> <p>State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen (1992) Former President Jiang Zemin (1996)</p> <p>Vice-Premier Zhu Rongji (1995)</p> <p>Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission of Communist Party of China, State Councilor and Minister of Defense Chi Haotian (1998)</p> <p>Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Chen Jinhua (1998)</p> <p>Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Xu Jialu (1999)</p>	<p>Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan (2000)</p> <p>State Councilor Luo Gan (2000)</p> <p>Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Wang Wen Yuan (2002)</p> <p>Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Li Ruihuan(2003)</p> <p>Standing member of the Political Bureau of CPC Central Committee, Li Changchun (2005)</p> <p>Deputy Head of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Ma Wenpu (2006)</p> <p>President Hu Jintao (2007)</p> <p>Vice Minister of Commerce Jiang Yaoping (2009)</p> <p>Vice Minister of Justice Chen Xunqiu (2009)</p> <p>Special Assistant Minister of Culture Li Hongfeng (2009)</p> <p>Deputy Governor of the China Development Bank, Mr. Li Jiping (2009)</p>	<b>Namibian official visits to China</b>	<p>Former President Sam Nujoma (1992, 1996,</p> <p>Prime Minister Hage Geingob (1991), Speaker of the National Assembly Mose Tjitendero (1994),</p> <p>Former President Sam Nujoma (1999, Minister of Foreign Affairs Theo-Ben Gurirab (1995</p> <p>Chairman of the National Council Kandy Nehova (1997),</p> <p>Deputy Prime Minister Hendrik Witbooi (1997)</p>	<p>Former President Sam Nujoma (2000)</p> <p>Minister of Foreign Affairs Theo-Ben Gurirab 2000</p> <p>Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Willem Konjore (2002),</p> <p>General Secretary of SWAPO Ngarikutuke Tjiriange(2002)</p> <p>Former President Sam Nujoma (2006)</p> <p>President Hifikipunye Pohamba (2006)</p> <p>Founding President of Namibia Sam Nujoma (2009)</p> <p>Commander of the Defense Force Lieutenant General Martin Shalli (2009)</p> <p>President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Speaker of the National Assembly Theo-Ben Gurirab (2009)</p> <p>Namibian Foreign Minister Utoni Nujoma (2010)</p> <p>Namibian Defense Minister Charles Namoloh (2011)</p> <p>President Hifikepunye Pohamba (2011)</p> <p>Namibia's Minister of Environment and</p>

		<p>Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the PLA, Vice-Admiral Sun Jianguo (2009)</p> <p>Special representative of the Chinese government on African affairs Ambassador Liu Guijin.</p> <p>Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference H.E Jia Qinglin (2010)</p> <p>Chinese Vice-Minister of Agriculture Niu Dun (2010)</p> <p>Deputy Director-general, International Health Exchange and Cooperation Centre, Mrs. Ma Jie (2010)</p> <p>Vice-Chairman of China's Central Military Commission, Xu Caihou, (2011)</p> <p>Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee Wu Bangguo (2011)</p>			<p>Tourism, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah (2011)</p> <p>Director of Tourism Sam Shikongo (2011)</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Tourism Board (NTB) Digu //Naobeb (2011)</p> <p>Deputy Permanent Secretary of Environment and Tourism, Erica Akuenje (2011)</p>
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Sources: [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-01/26/content\\_793505.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-01/26/content_793505.htm)  
<http://www.globaltimes.cn/NEWS/tabid/99/ID/678801/China-Namibia-vow-to-further-strengthen-bilateral-military-ties.aspx>

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<http://na.chineseembassy.org/eng/zngx/t828643.htm>    [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-12/09/c\\_13642723.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-12/09/c_13642723.htm)    <http://na2.mofcom.gov.cn/bilateralvisits/bilateralvisits.html>  
[http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Special/ChairmanWuVisitsNamibia/201105/17/content\\_1655938.htm](http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Special/ChairmanWuVisitsNamibia/201105/17/content_1655938.htm)  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109230312.html>

### Appendix 3: Bilateral Agreements signed between China and Namibia since 1990

1990-1999	2000-2011
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation, signed on 05 September 1991</li> <li>2. Loan Agreement, signed in 1995</li> <li>3. Agreement to provide goods and materials, signed in 1995</li> <li>4. Agreement to dig 30 boreholes, signed in 1995</li> <li>5. Agreement on Health and Social Services Co-operation, signed in 1995.</li> <li>6. Co-operation Agreement between the City of Windhoek and the City of Shanghai, signed in 1995</li> <li>7. Agreement to provide financial assistance of 10 million China Yuan Renminbi (CNY), signed in 1996</li> <li>8. Agreement on exports of Namibian ostrich meat to China, signed in 1996</li> <li>9. Visa Agreement between China and Namibia signed in 1996.</li> <li>10. Agreement to provide Namibia with credit worth 30 million China Yuan Renminbi (CNY), signed in 1996</li> <li>11. Agreement on Co-operation in High Education, signed in 1998</li> <li>12. Consultative Agreement between the Foreign Ministries of Namibia and China, signed in 1999</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agreement on the Establishment of China Space Tracking, Telemetry and Command Station in Namibia, signed in 2000</li> <li>2. Agreement on Visa Exemption between Namibia and Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, signed in 2001</li> <li>3. Visa Exemption Agreement between Namibia and Hong Kong Special Administration Region of the People's Republic of China, signed in 1997</li> <li>4. Lease Agreement between the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication (Namibia) and the China Manned Space Engineering Program office, signed in 2001.</li> <li>5. Agreement between Mariental Town and Zhengzhou Town, signed in 2001.</li> <li>6. Agreement between Grootfontein and Kunshan City, signed in 2002.</li> <li>7. Training Agreement on the China Space Tracking, Telemetry and Command Station, signed in 2002.</li> <li>8. Agreement providing a grant of 50,000,000.00 China Yuan Renminbi (CNY) for the construction of the Namibia's State House, signed in 2003.</li> <li>9. Cooperation Agreement between Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA) and the Chinese Xinhua News</li> <li>10. Memorandum of Understanding between TransNamib Holding Ltd and Ziyang Locomotive Works (ZLW), Siyang Locomotives and Rolling Stock Co. Ltd (SLRC), signed on 14th October 2003.</li> <li>11. Memorandums of Understanding between TransNamib Holding Ltd and Ziyang Locomotive Works (ZLW), Siyang Locomotives and Rolling Stock Co. Ltd (SLRC) were signed in Beijing, signed on 22nd October 2003.</li> </ol>

	<p>12. Two Contract Agreements between TransNamib Holding Ltd and China Railways Materials Import and Export co. Ltd, CSR Ziyang Locomotive Works and CSR Sifang Locomotive and Rolling Stock Co. Ltd</p> <p>13. Memorandum of Understanding between TransNamib Holding Ltd. and China Railway Materials Import and Export Co. Ltd., signed on 21 November 2003</p> <p>14. Cooperation Agreement between SWAPO Party and the Communist Party of China, signed in 2003</p> <p>15. Concessional Loan Agreement between Namibia and China, signed in December 2003</p> <p>16. Extradition Treaty</p> <p>17. China-Namibia Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement</p> <p>18. Economics and Trade Co-operation Agreement signed April 2007*</p> <p>19. Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement signed January 2009*</p> <p>20. Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement signed May 2009*</p> <p>21. Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement signed November 2009*</p> <p>22. Four Economic and Technical Agreements signed May 2011 with the National Planning Commission**</p>
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Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Namibia), 2006b, *Briefing notes from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the bilateral relations between Namibia and China*, Windhoek: unpublished.

\*[www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zjg/fzs/gjlb/3049/t16546.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zjg/fzs/gjlb/3049/t16546.htm)

\*\* The Namibian, 23 May 2011

#### Appendix 4: Taiwan's Diplomatic Relations with African States from 1990

<b>Bilateral Relations in 1990s</b>		<b>Bilateral Relations 2000s</b>
Central African Republic	(1991-1998)	Burkina Faso
Senegal	(1996-2005)	Gambia
Chad	(1997-2006)	Sao Tome and Principe
Burkina Faso		Swaziland
Guinea-Bissau	(1990-1998)	
Niger	(1992-1996)	
Gambia		
Soa-Tome and Principe		
Lesotho	(1990-1994)	
Liberia	(1989-1993 and then from 1997-2003)	
Malawi	(1965-2007)	