

CHAPTER 3

China's Search for a New Foreign Policy Frontier: Concept and Practice of "Harmonious World"

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Introduction

On September 15, 2005, Chinese President Hu Jintao called for a "harmonious world" at the summit for the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations (UN). He said, "History is making it clear to us that only by closely uniting with one another and jointly seizing the opportunity to cope with challenges at an important historical period where opportunities and challenges exist side by side can all countries of the world create a bright future for the development of the human society and build a harmonious world with permanent peace and common prosperity."¹ At the end of this year, the People's Republic of China (PRC) State Council Information Office issued a white paper on "China's peaceful development road," which placed building a harmonious world as the "lofty goal" of China in taking the "road of peaceful development."² Since then, the importance of the harmonious world concept has very quickly increased not only in terms of Chinese foreign policy discourse but also in terms of its domestic politics.

On August 21-23, 2006, the Central Conference on Foreign Affairs Work was held for the first time under the Hu Jintao administration with many participants. Present at the conference were Hu Jintao, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and eight other members of the CCP Central Committee Political Bureau Standing Committee. Also present were leading party and government officials from the various provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government, and municipalities with provincial-level decision-making authority; leading officials from the departments concerned in various central and national organs; officials from the relevant units of the People's Liberation Army (PLA); some Chinese diplomatic personnel stationed overseas; and officials from a number of

¹ Hu Jintao, "Nuli Jianshe Chijiu Heping, Gongtong Fanrong de Hexie Shijie [Strive to Build a Harmonious World Where There are Permanent Peace and Common Prosperity]," *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], September 16, 2005.

² "China's Peaceful Development Road," *Xinhua*, December 22, 2005.

large state-owned enterprises.³ The August 24 editorial in *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*), an organ of the CCP Central Committee, pointed out that this conference was a “major strategic move” of the party central committee to strengthen and improve foreign affairs work.⁴ The “major strategic move” was the meeting explicitly putting forward the “guiding ideology, basic principles, overall requirements, and main tasks” of foreign affairs work. That is to be adhered to in order to push forward the building of a harmonious world.⁵

This chapter describes the motivations and distinctive features of recent Chinese foreign policy under the “harmonious world” discourse. After the introduction of the concept of building a harmonious world into Chinese foreign policy in 2005, China's diplomatic landscape seems to have expanded. Most ideal example of this concept for China is its moves to embrace developing countries and regions, in particular Africa. How should we interpret China's proactive diplomacy? This chapter attempts to answer this question by exploring policy discourses on the harmonious world concept.

China's International Position at a Crossroad

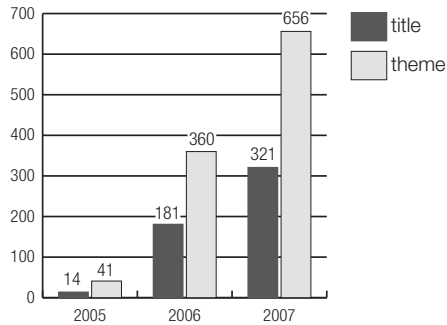
The growing significance of the harmonious world concept is also evidenced by increasing attention to it paid by PRC scholars. More than a thousand articles on the concept of harmonious world have appeared in Chinese journals since Hu Jintao raised the theme in 2005. Most PRC scholars understand the harmonious world theory as a result of the rise of China's international position (*guoji dingwei*) in recent decades or as a change of Chinese attitudes toward the outside world.

³ “Zhongyang Waishi Gongzuo Huiyi zai Jing Juxing [Central Conference on Foreign Affairs Work Was Held in Beijing],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People's Daily*], August 24, 2006.

⁴ “Jianchi Heping Fazhan Daolu, Tuidong Jianshe Hexie Shijie [Adhere to the Peaceful Development Road, Push Forward the Building of a Harmonious World],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People's Daily*], August 24, 2006.

⁵ The New Constitution of the CCP that was adopted at the 17th National Congress of the CCP says that the Party will vigorously develop relations with other countries and push for the building of a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity. “CCP Constitution Amendment Advocates Building of ‘Harmonious World’,” *Xinhua*, October 25, 2007.

“Harmonious World” in Chinese Journals



Source: Data from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI).

Professor Liu Jianfei with the Party School of the CCP Central Committee finds Chinese intention to be a “responsible power” in Hu Jintao’s proposal of building a harmonious world. He said, “China as a rising power has to make more of a contribution to international affairs, and to take on more responsibility in the international arena.”⁶ Professor Meng Xiangqing from the Strategic Research Institute under the PLA National Defense University also argues that the policy discourse on the harmonious world concept demonstrates increasing Chinese confidence and maturity in international society.⁷

Arguments on the harmonious world concept among PRC scholars acknowledge China’s rise in two contexts. First, China is still in the process of rising. China’s white paper on “China’s peaceful development road” affirmed in its very first chapter that the Chinese people were still working hard to build China into a prosperous, powerful, democratic, civilized and harmonious modern country, and continually making new contributions to human progress with China’s own development.⁸ In this context, the main theme of the harmonious world arguments is how China creates a stable international environment which is essential to continued economic development. Second, on the other hand, some PRC scholars such as Professor Liu

⁶ Liu Jianfei, “Fuzeren Daguo dui Shei Fuzhe [Which Responsible Power Takes on Responsibility?],” *Huanqiu Shibao* [*Global Times*], January 3, 2006.

⁷ Meng Xiangqing, “Zhongguo Guoji Juese Wancheng Lishixing Zhuanbian [Historical Change in Chinese International Role],” *Huanqiu Shibao* [*Global Times*], January 6, 2006.

⁸ Op. cit., *Xinhua*, December 22, 2005.

and Professor Meng understand China as already having risen in international society to some degree. According to Professor Meng, China's international influence has further expanded in the new century. With this understanding, the main theme of the harmonious world idea would be how China uses this rising influence and power in order to create a more favorable strategic environment. A joint study organized by the PLA National Defense University clearly mentions that an aim of the harmonious world idea proposed by the Chinese government is to produce a more favorable world for China by making use of its own increasing energy.⁹

These two courses hint that China's international position is ambiguous in domestic arguments. The premise of the former course is that China is still a developing country that is on the rise, while the latter stresses the fruits of rising. In other words, China has not given a clear answer as to whether it lays more emphasis on the fact that it "is rising" or that it "has risen" in the international arena. A few days later, after Hu Jintao's speech on the harmonious world concept at the summit on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the UN, the *Nanfang Dushibao* commented on China's international position in its editorial. "China is a member of the developing countries and should consider reconstructing the mode of international politics from the viewpoint of developing countries. But China is also a great regional power with global influence and, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China cannot ignore the rule of power politics among major powers."¹⁰

Policy Discourses under Hu Jintao (2003-present)

Hu Jintao's Policy Line

Chinese discourse on the harmonious world concept also emphasizes persisting in balancing the overall domestic and international situations. The Central Conference on Foreign Affairs Work stressed "managing the internal and external situations as a whole" in order to follow through with the harmonious world idea as a "guiding thought."¹¹

⁹ Yang Yi, ed., *Guojia Anquan Zhanlue Yanjiu* [Study on National Security Strategy] (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 2007), p. 266.

¹⁰ "Lianheguo Gaige ying Mouqiu Shijie Chijiu Heping yu Zhengti Hexie [UN Reform Should Aim for Permanent Peace and overall Harmony of the World]," *Nanfang Dushibao*, September 18, 2005.

¹¹ Op. cit., *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], August 24, 2006.

According to the *People's Daily*, the objective of foreign affairs and the target of the Chinese people's efforts should be one that can enhance the overall performance of party and state affairs, and realize, safeguard and develop the fundamental interests of the broadest majority of the people. This is the fundamental objective of Chinese foreign affairs and also the fundamental yardstick for assessing the results of its foreign affairs. China must focus on economic development and managing its foreign affairs in close conjunction with the general needs of the work at home.

A general need of the work at home in China is to build an "all-around well-off society" (*xiaokang shehui*). Building an all-round well-off society was set as a new historical task of China at the 15th National Congress of the CCP in September 1997.¹² Although Hu Jintao has inherited the basic concept of a well-off society from his predecessor Jiang Zemin, the new administration puts more emphasis on the shadows of Chinese development; widening regional disparities, a tattered social and welfare system, massive unemployment, structural poverty and environmental concerns. After Hu came into power, he raised the new domestic policy ideas "scientific development" (*kexue fazhan*) and "harmonious society" (*hexie shehui*). In September 2004, the 4th Plenum of the 16th CCP Central Committee adopted a resolution on improving the governance capability of the Party.¹³ The resolution placed the building of a "harmonious socialist society" as a new historic task.¹⁴ This new policy idea came to the Party as a means to delineate the direction of the new leadership. Another significant outcome of the plenum was the resignation of Jiang Zemin from his last official post as Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), and the appointment of Hu Jintao to succeed him. In this context, the application of the *hexie* concept to Chinese foreign policy suggested that the new leadership intended to penetrate foreign policy with its own policy line. This is the reason PRC scholars as well as Chinese governmental officials positively evaluate the harmonious world idea as a "guiding" thought or idea.

¹² Jiang Zemin, "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-around Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics to the 21st Century," September 12, 1997.

¹³ "Party Stresses Governance Capability," *China Daily*, September 20, 2004.

¹⁴ "CPC Issues Document on Ruling Capacity," *Xinhua*, September 27, 2004.

The possibility of China losing a “strategic opportunity”

However, the Chinese leadership's assessment of China's domestic and international situation is not necessarily optimistic. Hu Jintao has repeatedly mentioned the difficult and complex situation surrounding not only domestic affairs but also international affairs. On November 24, 2003 the Political Bureau of the CCP Central Committee held its ninth collective study session on the history of development of the world's major powers. General Secretary Hu Jintao, who chaired the session, mentioned that when a country is in a crucial period of historical development, it is possible to achieve development by leaps and bounds by grasping every new opportunity. For China, the first 20 years of this century might be an important period of “strategic opportunities” that must be seized. But he also emphasized that “if a country loses the opportunity, it might become a straggler.”¹⁵ What Hu stressed at this collective session was the possibility of China losing its strategic opportunity period. The tenth collective study session held on February 23, 2004 assessed the world situation and China's security environment. Hu said at this meeting that steering China's development and creating conditions for development by tapping both favorable and unfavorable factors for China in the international environment for a long period in the future is a major issue for the whole party.

Based upon Hu Jintao's perception, Jiang Zhenhua, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the tenth National People's Congress, discussed risks which appear in the period of strategic opportunities at a domestic forum on China's national security, pointing out that, in the international arena, China should combine the diplomatic doctrines “keep a low profile” (*taoguang yanghui*) and “make some contributions” (*yousuo zuowei*). The combination of *taoguang yanghui* and *yousuo zuowei* means that China has to recognize its own limitations in the international arena, according to Jiang.¹⁶ It seems that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao also supports this logic. On February 26, 2007, *Xinhua News Agency* carried the Premier's article entitled “A Number of Issues Regarding the Historic Tasks in the Initial Stage of Socialism and China's Foreign Policy.” In this article, Wen talks about China's “strategic opportunity

¹⁵ Cui Changfa and Xu Mingshan, eds., *Gaoceng Jiangtan [Top-leaders' Rostrums]* (Beijing: Hongqi Chubanshe, 2007), pp. 165-182.

¹⁶ Jiang Zhenhua, “Zhanlue Jiyuqi de Fengxiang yu Fangfan [Risks and Defense of a Period of Strategic Opportunities],” Ba Zhongtan, ed., *Zhanlue Jiyuqi de Bawo he Liyong [Grasping and Using a Period of Strategic Opportunities]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2006), p. 10.

period.” “The first 20 years of this century are an important strategic opportunity period which we must tightly grasp and in which we can get much accomplished. Seizing and making good use of this strategic opportunity period is of extreme importance and significance for achieving the goal of comprehensively building a well-off society and promoting the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics,” he said. However, “certain major mistakes, especially the ten-year catastrophe of the ‘great cultural revolution,’ once again caused us to miss a significant development opportunity. Opportunities are rare and fleeting, and when they come along they must be seized tightly.” “Will China have such an opportunity period in the future, and how long will it last? I say it will, and the duration will to a very great extent be determined by our own internal and external policies and ability to deal with things.”¹⁷

In this context, following the path of peaceful development is a strategic option to which China must adhere for a long time. Wen also insists that China should persist in “not raising banners and taking the lead” in international society in order to work with “single-minded devotion,” and “develop ourselves.” Judging from the policy discourses by Chinese leadership, it might be said that the foreign policy direction under the Hu Jintao administration is prudent rather than active.

International Environment under a “Harmonious World”

Tremendous Changes and Adjustments

What is the background of this prudent perception of China's surroundings for its development? One is, of course, that the Hu Jintao administration faces domestic structural obstacles which affect development, as already mentioned. On the foreign policy front, China is now facing new realities. At the 17th National Congress of the CCP in October 2007, Hu described the world China faces as undergoing “tremendous changes and adjustments.”¹⁸ “Tremendous changes and adjustments” means, firstly, continuity of basic perception on the “main theme of the present era.” Hu said, “Peace and development remain the main themes of the present era, and pursuit of peace, development and cooperation has become an irresistible trend of the times. The progress toward a multi-polar world is irreversible, economic

¹⁷ Wen Jiabao, “A Number of Issues Regarding the Historic Tasks in the Initial Stage of Socialism and China's Foreign Policy,” *Xinhua*, February 26, 2007.

¹⁸ “Full Text of Hu Jintao's Report at the 17th Party Congress,” *Xinhua*, October 24, 2007.

globalization is developing in depth, and the scientific and technological revolution is gathering momentum.” These are tremendous changes and adjustments which have been occurring in last thirty years since the beginning of reform and opening of the country.¹⁹ Based on this basic perception, the overall international situation is stable and enables China to continue economic development.

However, the tremendous changes and adjustments are also emphasized in terms of recent developments in the world. An article appeared in the *Dandai Shijie* (*Contemporary World*), a journal affiliated with the International Department of the CCP Central Committee, discusses the meaning of tremendous changes and adjustments in the world by paying close attention to negative world's trends, for example, the existence of traditional security concerns and the rise of non-traditional security threat to the peace and development of the world.²⁰ Hu Jintao also stressed in his report to the 17th Party Congress that “hegemonism and power politics still exist, local conflicts and hot spot issues keep emerging, imbalances in the world economy are worsening, the North-South gap is widening and traditional and nontraditional threats to security are intertwined. All this poses difficulties and challenges to world peace and development.” In this context, the world remains far from tranquil.

The Rise of China and Sino-U.S. Relations

The Rise of China is another important trend in the world. With an annual growth rate of around 10%, China quadrupled its gross domestic product (GDP) in less than twenty years, and is now the world's third largest economy. From 1979, when economic reforms were first introduced, to 2006, China's real GDP grew at an average annual rate of 9.7%, the size of its economy increased by a factor of 11, its real per capita GDP grew by a factor of eight, and its world ranking for total trade rose from 27th to 3rd.

Since the early 1990s, western economists have tried to use purchasing power parity (PPP) in order to recalculate the scale of Chinese economy, because prices for many

¹⁹ Xi Jinping, “Gaige Kaifang Sanshi Nian Dang de Jianshe Huigu yu Sikao [Looking and Thinking Back on Thirty Years of Reform and Open-up Policy],” *Xuexi Shibao* [Study Times], No. 452, September 8, 2008.

²⁰ Wu Zhaoxue and Ma Yanshen, “Goujian Hexie Shijie: Shixian Guoji Anquan de Genben Chulu [Constructing a Harmonious World],” *Dandai Shijie* [Contemporary World], No. 1, 2007, p. 51.

goods and services are significantly lower in China than in developed countries such as the United States and Japan. In 2007, the U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) reported that China's GDP for 2006 was US\$9,862 billion by using the PPP measurement.²¹ The estimated size of the Chinese economy was raised from US\$2.7 trillion (nominal dollars) to US\$9.9 trillion (PPP dollars), significantly larger than Japan's GDP in PPP (\$4.1 trillion), and nearly three-fourths the size of the U.S. economy. PPP data also raised China's per capita GDP from US\$2,040 (nominal) to US\$7,500. The PPP figures indicate that while China's economy is still far below that of the United States, China has already overtaken Japan as the second largest economy in the world. This economic catch-up gives China its great power status. Mr. Henry M. Paulson Jr., then U.S. Treasury Secretary, affirmed in his speech in March 2007 that China's great power status in the global economy by saying that China is already a global economic leader and deserves to be recognized as a leader because of its size and its role in world markets.²²

The rise of China has also enabled Sino-American relations to enlarge the scope of bilateral cooperation in the field of international security such as in counter-terrorism coalition and the Six-Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear issue. In this regard, it should be noted, in respect to this American policy toward China, the Pentagon has exhibited a growing acceptance of the "responsible stakeholder" approach advocated by Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick in September 2005. In testimony given before the House Committee on International Relations in May 2006, Zoellick said that the term "responsible stakeholder" means recognizing China as an actor which, like the European Union (EU) or Japan, is highly influential in the international system and, as such, encouraging China to behave responsibly in regard to the world economy and international security.²³ To be sure, some who were concerned about China's military rise and preferred to hedge against the rise still take a harsh view of the stakeholder approach or strengthening military exchange with China. For instance, Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, then chairman of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations,

²¹ Craig K. Elwell, Marc Labonte and Wayne M. Morrison, *CRS Report for Congress: Is China a Threat to the U.S. Economy?* (Washington D.C.: CRS, January 2007), p. 14.

²² "Prepared Remarks by Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson, Jr. on the Growth and Future of China's Financial Markets," March 7, 2007.

²³ Hearing of Robert B. Zoellick, "U.S.-China Relations," Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, May 10, 2006.

stated that China was only interested in gathering military intelligence about the American armed forces, and that he did not support increased military exchange with China.²⁴ However, both the 2006 QDR and *The National Security Strategy* issued in March 2006 call on China to act or emerge as a responsible stakeholder,²⁵ and, in an answer to a question at the 2006 Shangri-La Dialogue, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld asserted that Zoellick had spoken for the administration, and stakeholder policy here was a settled matter.²⁶ Rumsfeld further said, "China is an important stakeholder in the world system, and as such they have an obligation to see that that system is successful because they benefit so enormously from its success."

This "responsible stakeholder" approach signifies that the United States not only considers China an influential actor in the international system, but also urges China to behave responsibly in the international system as a stakeholder. In remarks at a reception given in his honor prior to the Sino-American summit meeting in April 2006, President George W. Bush underlined the deepening economic relations between the two countries, saying that the United States and China are "connected through a global economy that has created opportunity for both our peoples."²⁷ But Bush also noted that this prosperity depends on security, and strongly urged China to cooperate in international security, specifically mentioning the following issues: the nuclear ambitions of Iran; international terrorism; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and energy security. Bush also asked President Hu Jintao to use China's considerable influence with North Korea to make progress toward a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons. In other words, US policy toward China can be summarized as encouraging China to pursue their common strategic interests together with the United States not only in terms of economics, but also security.

China appreciates this U.S. posture as a whole, but does not necessarily embrace the role or responsibility preferred by the United States. For instance, after Deputy

²⁴ The National Institute for Defense Studies, ed., *East Asian Strategic Review 2007* (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 2007), p. 108.

²⁵ The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2006, p. 41; and US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 6, 2006, p. 29.

²⁶ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Shangri-la Dialogue: The 5th Anniversary IISS Asia Security Summit* (London: IISS, 2006), p. 35.

²⁷ Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, "President Bush and President Hu of the People's Republic of China Participate in Arrival Ceremony," April 20, 2006.

Secretary of State Zoellick advanced the “responsible stakeholder” concept in September 2005, it was the subject of internal debate among PRC scholars, but the domestic edition of the *People's Daily* did not carry any clear-cut comments on it. At the Sino-American summit meeting held in April 2006, President Hu Jintao said that “China and the United States are not only stakeholders, but they should also be constructive partners,” seemingly accepting the American characterization of China as a stakeholder.²⁸ However, the *China Daily*, an English-language Chinese official newspaper, quoted President Hu as saying that China and the United States should become constructive and cooperative partners “rather than” just stakeholders, suggesting that China had some reservations about the American characterization of China as a responsible stakeholder.²⁹

Hu also stressed that the United States and China shared common strategic interests in the fields of security and economics, but did not touch on how the two countries should realize such common strategic interests, particularly in the field of international security. On the characterization of China as a responsible stakeholder, he never used the word “responsible,” suggesting that China does not entirely accept the American definition of China's role in the international community. In this way, while welcoming the responsible stakeholder idea insofar as it advances China's international status, China had yet to commit itself to any specific actions especially in the field of international security.

This cautious Chinese attitude can be taken as an indication that it has not yet made a definitive judgment as to whether the responsible stakeholder concept is at its core an engagement policy or a containment policy. Late in 2005, commentary in the Chinese magazine *Shijie Zhishi* (*World Affairs*) viewed the responsible stakeholder policy in a positive light as an indication of China's enhanced status in the international community, saying U.S. attitudes toward China have been more objective and pragmatic and that the United States recognized the economic development of China as an indisputable fact. On the other hand, more than a few Chinese experts on U.S.

²⁸ “Hu Jintao Zhuxi tong Buxi Zongtong Juxing Huitan [President Hu Jintao Had Meeting with President Bush],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People's Daily*], April 21, 2006.

²⁹ “Hu Wants Deeper Ties with United States,” *China Daily*, April 22, 2006.

affairs take a more cautious view.³⁰ Professor Shi Yinong of Renmin University of China, for one, admits that the “responsible stakeholder” policy indicates that the United States now recognizes the important position China has achieved in the world’s politics and economy. However, he believes that for the foreseeable future, the United States will continue to apply pressure to China in bilateral economic and trade relations and work to deter China from its military rise. He thinks that the containment urge runs deep in U.S. policy toward China.³¹

Cautious views on the part of China toward the U.S. stakeholder approach were strengthened especially after the second round of the Sino-American Strategic Dialogue (Senior Dialogue) in December 2005. According to a press release by the U.S. State Department, the topics U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick and China’s Executive Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo explored at the second set of talks included: (a) ways in which China could work with the United States and others on challenges such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and North Korea and in Africa, Latin America and South and Central Asia; (b) overlapping interests in fighting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, building energy security and reducing the risks of pandemic disease; (c) problems regarding trade imbalances and the protection of intellectual property rights; and (d) cooperative efforts for a secure and prosperous world that respects human rights and the rule of law.³² It must be noted here that the Taiwan question which has been placed as the “most sensitive core issue” of Sino-American relations was not taken up for discussion at this strategic dialogue, according to the U.S. press releases and Chinese official media reports. A premise of the strategic dialogue is that the Sino-American relationship is “more than a bilateral one,” so the representatives discussed overlapping interests in global/regional security as well as in bilateral issues.³³

To be sure, China was not necessarily required by the U.S. side to give a concrete answer to work together in a number of areas. U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Adam

³⁰ Huang Fang, “Cong Lao Bushi dao Xiao Bushi [From Senior Bush to Junior Bush],” *Shijie Zhishi* [World Affairs], No. 24, 2005, p. 37.

³¹ Shi Yinong, “Meiguo zai Ying Zhongguo de Fazhan [America Is Accepting China’s Development],” *Huanqiu Shibao* [Global Times], May 9, 2006.

³² “Senior Dialogue Examines Framework of U.S.-China Relationship,” December 8, 2008.

³³ “Common Interests Growing,” *China Daily*, December 10, 2005.

Ereli explained the purpose of the strategic dialogue as to coordinate the approaches to international issues, not to proscribe the course of action or specific moves by the Chinese.³⁴ On the other hand, the Chinese representative, Dai Bingguo, understood the role of the mechanism as to enhance mutual understanding, deepen strategic mutual trust, and reduce misunderstanding.³⁵ These evaluations hinted that both sides could not reach a consensus on coordinated approaches or policies on strategic issues. As a result, the Chinese side explained China's "peaceful development" strategy and clarified the position that China is developing in a way that is responsible for both the Chinese people and the world. The *People's Daily* reported that China and the United States agreed at the dialogue to move Sino-U.S. "constructive and cooperative relations" forward which was not found in any press releases by the United States.³⁶ It is fair to say that China prefer to keep the framework of "constructive and cooperative relations," rather than a new framework of "responsible stakeholder."

Another reservation in Chinese security policy circles about the responsible stakeholder concept is that it might bring with it additional pressure for China to democratize its political and social system. For instance, contributing fellow Yin Chengde of the China Institute of International Studies, while favorably assessing the recent trend of Sino-US relations, says that the United States sees China "as a potential strategic opponent that could challenge America's status as the world's sole superpower," and takes the view that the United States will not change "its set guidelines of guarding against, containing, disintegrating and westernizing China."³⁷ Thus, China has not dropped its suspicions about the United States trying to engineer a "peaceful evolution" of the Chinese political and social systems. To be sure, at a press interview given after the summit meeting, President Hu Jintao did not rule out democracy, saying that "if there is no democracy in China, there will be no modernization" of its economy. However, he added, "since China's reform and opening-up in the late 1970s, China has vigorously promoted economic reforms

³⁴ "State Department Briefing, December 7," *States News Service*, December 7, 2005.

³⁵ Yang Faxi, "Zhongguo Jianding Buyidi Zou Heping Fazhan Daolu [China Keeps Going on the Road of Peaceful Development]," *Qiushi [Seeking Truth]*, No. 1, 2006, p. 58.

³⁶ "Zhongmei Dierci Zhanlue Duihua Jieshu [Second Round of the Sino-U.S. Strategic Dialogue was Concluded]," *Renmin Ribao [People's Daily]*, December 10, 2005.

³⁷ Yin Chengde, "Zhongmei Guanxi Zou xiang Liangxing Hudong [Sino-US Relations Move Toward Benign Interaction]," *Liaowang [Outlook Weekly]*, No. 16, 2006, p. 57. See also, Tao Wenzhao, "Zhongmei Guanxi Pingwen Guodu [Sino-U.S. Relations See Smooth Transition]," *Renmin Ribao [People's Daily]*, overseas edition, December 20, 2005.

and has also actively, properly and appropriately moved the political reform process forward.” Hu thus emphasized the correct road China has chosen to walk in the last thirty years and indicated his intention to continue on this road. Based on Chinese wariness about a “peaceful evolution” of its internal system, the American “responsible stakeholder” policy no doubt looks like a unilateral American demand for China to change not only its diplomatic behavior but also its political and social systems in the name of “responsibility,” with no corresponding change in the American containment policy and strategic goal of a uni-polar world order under U.S. control.³⁸

New Frontier in Chinese Foreign Policy: Africa Policy

Sino-African “Strategic Partnership”

With a cautious perspective on its international environment, especially Sino-American relations, China has been trying to find a new path toward global power status. In the harmonious world argument, the Chinese leadership and foreign policy officials often mention the importance of China’s relations with other developing countries especially African nations by stressing common prosperity or common development with them.³⁹ In his speech at the UN summit in September 2005, Chinese President Hu Jintao said mutually beneficial cooperation should be upheld to achieve “common prosperity.”⁴⁰ In order to achieve common prosperity, developed countries should shoulder a greater responsibility for universal, coordinated and balanced development in the world while developing countries should make fuller use of their own advantages to develop themselves, according to Hu. It is fair to say that China gives special attention to developing countries in the discourse on the harmonious world concept.

On the previous day, Hu Jintao indeed announced new measures to provide more aid to developing countries at the UN High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development

³⁸ Masuda Masayuki, “Chugoku Gaiko ni okeru ‘Kokusai Sekinin’ [International Responsibility in Chinese Foreign Policy],” *Ajia Keizai* [Journal of the Developing Economies], Vol. 50, No. 4, 2009, forthcoming.

³⁹ As for China’s relations with developing or “third world” countries, see Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy Since the Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), Chapter 12; and Jianwei Wang, “China’s New Frontier Diplomacy,” in Suijian Guo and Jean-Mark F. Blanchard, eds., *“Harmonious World” and China’s New Foreign Policy* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008), pp. 21-37.

⁴⁰ Hu Jintao, op. cit., *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily], September 16, 2005.

which included (a) to accord zero tariff treatment to certain products from all 39 least developed countries (LDCs) which have diplomatic relations with China, covering most of the China-bound exports from these countries; (b) to expand Chinese aid programs to the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC)s and LDCs, and working through bilateral channels to write off or forgive in other ways debt within the next two years; (c) to provide US\$10 billion in concessional loans and preferential export buyer's credit to developing countries to improve their infrastructure and promote cooperation between enterprises on both sides; and (d) in the next three years, increase China's assistance to developing countries (African countries in particular) by providing them with anti-malaria drugs and other medicines, helping them set up and improve medical facilities and training medical staff.⁴¹

It is true that Jiang Zemin had also placed China's relations with developing countries as a fundamental "standpoint" of Chinese diplomacy.⁴² In May 1996, Jiang paid an official visit to Kenya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Namibia and Zimbabwe. During his visit to Ethiopia, President Jiang was invited to make a keynote speech at the Headquarters of African Union (AU), which was entitled "Toward a New Historical Milestone of Sino-African Friendship."⁴³ In his speech, he put forward a five-point proposal for the development of a 21st century-oriented China-Africa relationship. The proposal includes the following points: (a) to foster a sincere friendship between the two sides and become each other's reliable "all-weather friends"; (b) to treat each other as equals and respect each other's sovereignty and refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs; (c) to seek common development on the basis of mutual benefit; (d) to enhance consultation and cooperation in international affairs; and (e) to look into the future and create a more splendid world. In the late 1990s, the Chinese leadership also called meetings and dispatched consultative groups to African and Latin American countries to unite and cooperate with developing countries.⁴⁴ Although this standpoint

⁴¹ Hu Jintao, "Promote Universal Development to Achieve Common Prosperity (September 14, 2005)," *People's Daily on the Web*, September 21, 2005.

⁴² See Jiang Zemin, "Cong Zhanlue Gaodu Jiaqiang tong Disanshijie de Tuangjie Hezuo [Unite and Cooperate with the Third World from a Strategic Viewpoint] (August 4, 1999)," Jiang Zemin, *Jiang Zemin Wenxuan [Selected Works of Jiang Zemin]*, Vol. 2 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 2006), p. 372.

⁴³ Zhu Sanping, "Mianxiang Ershiyi Shiji de Quanfangwei Waijiao [21st Century-oriented All-around Diplomacy]," *Xuexi Daobao [Guidance of Theoretical Study]*, No. 7, 1996, p. 22.

⁴⁴ Jiang Zemin, "Dangqian de Guoji Xingshi he Women de Waijiao Gongzuo [Current International Situation and Our Foreign Affairs Work] (August 28, 1998)," *Jiang Zemin Wenxuan [Selected Works of Jiang Zemin]*, Vol. 2, p. 205.

of Chinese diplomacy has succeeded in the Hu Jintao administration, the focus of Jiang's foreign policy was still "major-power diplomacy," and he made every effort to establish a "strategic partnership" (*zhanlue huoban guanxi*) with Russia, the United States and the EU.⁴⁵

In comparison with Jiang, Hu Jintao has clearly raised China's relations with developing nations to a higher status in its overall foreign policy. In January 2006, in its first policy paper dealing with the African continent, China defined its relations with the continent as a strategic partnership.⁴⁶ Then-Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan stressed that this policy paper was the first policy paper on a continent ever issued by the Chinese government.⁴⁷ The joint declaration issued by the China-African Cooperation Forum (CACF) held in Beijing in November the same year, also proclaimed the establishment of a new type of strategic partnership between China and Africa.⁴⁸ In order to strengthen the strategic partnership, Chinese top leaders as well as foreign policy officials paid frequent visits to African countries. President Hu Jintao visited Africa four times after his administration came into power at the end of 2002. Notably in 2006-2007, he visited the continent twice (17 countries).⁴⁹ In June 2006, two months later of Hu's visit, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao followed by visiting seven African countries. During the frequent mutual visits by senior leaders, both sides discussed future courses of Sino-African relations and concrete measures for cooperation in every field.⁵⁰

What does China's strategic partnership with Africa mean? For China, comprehensive economic cooperation should be complemented by political and security cooperation in a bilateral strategic partnership. The influence of a strategic partnership covers the whole region and the world at large. In its relations with Africa, China has found a number of strategic interests. One of the strategic interests for China is no doubt to gain access to African oil. China's oil consumption has been rising rapidly with

⁴⁵ Masuda Masayuki, "Chugoku no Taikoku Gaiko [China's Great-power Diplomacy]," *Toa [East Asia]*, No. 402, December 2000, pp. 85-104.

⁴⁶ "Full Text: China's African Policy," *Xinhua*, January 12, 2006.

⁴⁷ "Sino-African Strategic Partnership Promising," *China Daily*, October 24, 2006.

⁴⁸ "Summit Adopts Declaration, Action Plan," *Xinhua*, November 5, 2006.

⁴⁹ Pan Huaqiong, "Zhongfei Guanxi Fazhan Bianxi [An Analysis of the Development of China-Africa Relationship]," *Xiya Feizhou [West Asia and Africa]*, No. 7, 2008, p. 21.

⁵⁰ "Wen Zongli Fangfei [Premier Wen Visits Africa]," *Jiefang Ribao [Liberation Daily]*, June 18, 2006.

the booming economy. Although China produced 183.68 million tons of crude oil, up 1.7 percent in 2006, Chinese demand for both crude and oil products will rise around six percent. As a result, China's dependency on foreign oil has risen to 47.0 and 48.8 percent of its annual demand in 2006 and 2007, respectively.⁵¹ In order to ease the shortage, China intensified diplomatic activities in Africa to secure new sources of energy. Hu Jintao signed a broader memorandum for China to provide billions of dollars for investment in Nigerian infrastructure during his visit to the country in April 2006. As a part of this memorandum, an agreement reached in the same month between China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and the Nigerian government allowed CNPC to invest US\$2 billion in the decrepit Kaduna refinery with the right of first refusal for development on four oil blocks.⁵² By the end of 2005, China had invested in 27 major oil and natural gas projects in 14 African countries including Sudan, Algeria, Angola and Nigeria since its first cooperation on oil exploration with Sudan in 1996.⁵³

Economic Diplomacy and Multilateral Diplomacy

However China's energy or oil diplomacy is not a new element of its foreign policy practice. At the end of 1995 when then Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji visited Africa, he already put importance on dealing with China's Africa policy from the viewpoint of serving China's domestic economic development; Africa has many natural resources which China needs.⁵⁴ So what is new in recent Chinese Africa policy?

First, the economic agenda of China's policy to developing countries such as Africa and Latin America is obviously broader in the Hu Jintao administration. In August 2004, Hu Jintao, at the 10th national meeting on diplomatic work, called for efforts to strengthen "economic diplomacy" to promote a combination of both "Bring

⁵¹ "Ministry Source Says China's Oil Dependency to Continue to Rise in 2007," *Xinhua*, February 13, 2007; and Cui Rongguo, "2007 Nian Woguo Kuangchanpin Maoyi Xingshi Fenxi [Analysis on Trading Situation of Mineral Products]," *Guotu Ziyuan Qingbao* [Land and Resources Information], No. 4, 2008, p. 27.

⁵² Erica S. Downs, "The Fact and Fiction of Sino-African Energy Relations," *China Security*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Summer 2007, p. 54, p. 66.

⁵³ "China's Oil Giant CNPC to Invest in Refinery in Chad," *Xinhua*, October 5, 2007.

⁵⁴ "Shuoshuo Dui Fei Xuanchuan [Talk Propaganda toward Africa]," *Duiwai Dazhuanbo* [International Communications], No. 2-3, 1997, pp. 22-23. See also, Zhong Fei, "Wei Hu Zhongfei Chuantong Youyi, Jiaqiang Zhongfei Youhao Hezuo [Protect Sino-African Traditional Friendship, Strengthen Sino-African Friendly Cooperation]," *Xiya Feizhou* [West Asia and Africa], No. 3, 1996, pp. 1-5.

In” (*yinjinlai*) and “Go Out” (*zouchuqu*) strategies.⁵⁵ In September of the same year, the first ever special conference on economic diplomacy toward developing nations was held in accordance with Hu’s call.⁵⁶ At this conference, the Chinese government decided to provide more emergency aid to developing countries, train more professionals, encourage more firms to invest in developing countries and try to solve the trade imbalance that some developing countries face. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, who chaired the meeting, also repeatedly mentioned “mutually beneficial cooperation.” Sino-African mutually beneficial cooperation means firstly that China supports development in African countries through strengthened aid package such as preferential loans, preferential buyer’s credits, and cancellation of debt in the form of all interest-free government loans. The mutually beneficial cooperation also means that China takes opportunities for trade and investment for its domestic enterprises and companies. Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce Wei Jianguo pointed out that concerned Chinese organizations had acted on the principles of mutual benefit, win-win and pragmatic cooperation.⁵⁷

Hu Jintao actually expressed that China would further open up its market to Africa by increasing the number of export items to China receiving zero-tariff treatment from the least developed countries in Africa having diplomatic ties with China from 190 to over 440.⁵⁸ Also, the Chinese leadership has emphasized the need to promote a combination of the “Go Out” and “Bring In” strategies. Nevertheless, most PRC scholars, Chinese media and local governments call for strengthening economic diplomacy by the leadership in terms of opportunities to encourage Chinese companies to “go out,” with little mention of “bringing in”. In October 2004, for example, the Zhejiang Provincial Government drew up plans in accordance with the instructions confirmed at the special conference on economic diplomacy to encourage

⁵⁵ “Dishici Zhuwai Shijie Huiyi zai Jing Juxing [The Tenth Meeting with Representatives of Chinese Diplomatic Envoys Was Held in Beijing],” *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily], August 30, 2004.

⁵⁶ “Give More Aid to Developing Countries,” *China Daily*, September 3, 2004; and Peng Xingting, “Siyang Qiye ‘Zouchuqu’ Qidai Chengshu de Jingji Waijiao [‘Go out’ of Private Enterprises, Expect Mature Economic Diplomacy],” *Zhongguo Gongshagbao* [China Industry & Commerce News], March 18, 2005.

⁵⁷ Wei Jianguo, “Cujin Zhongfei Wushi Hexuo Huli Gongying [Promote Pragmatic Cooperation, Mutual Benefit, and Win-win between China and Africa],” *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily], November 5, 2007.

⁵⁸ Hu Jintao, “Zai Zhongfei Hezuo Luntan Beijing Fengui Kaimushishang de Jianghua [Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation],” *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily], November 5, 2006.

local companies to “go out” to developing countries.⁵⁹ The central government also decided to set up a fund of US\$5 billion for Chinese companies to invest in Africa. This decision was announced by Hu Jintao at the 2006 CACF Summit in Beijing as an aid package for Africa.⁶⁰ After the approval of the establishment of the China-Africa Development Fund by the State Council in March 2007,⁶¹ the fund was formally launched in June 2007. As of September 2008, the fund had already invested in six projects involving more than US\$90 million.⁶² It is fair to say that establishment of the China-Africa Development Fund is a practice of China's economic diplomacy to promote “mutual benefit” with Africa. In this context, China's economic diplomacy is of great significance in China's overall foreign policy: China's rapid economic rise has become important diplomatic capital. Chinese leadership has decided to operate the new capital to create a more favorable international environment for its continued development.⁶³

Another new element of Chinese “harmonious world” diplomacy with Africa is placement of more emphasis on “multilateral diplomacy”. *China's African Policy*, China's first policy paper on the African continent, clearly expressed China's intention to establish and use multilateral mechanisms in order to enhance cooperation with African countries and African regional organizations such as the AU. While China, of course, gives importance to all bilateral relations, Chinese leaders and foreign policy officials stress that bilateral cooperation should be implemented in line with the collective agreement at the 2006 CACF Summit.⁶⁴ The CACF itself was established

⁵⁹ “Dui Fazhanzhong Guojia Jinchukou zhan Quansheng Waimao Zong'e [One Fourth of Whole Trade Amount of the Province Is with Developing Counties],” *Zhejiang Ribao* [Zhejiang Daily], October 27, 2004.

⁶⁰ “China Focus: China Announces a Package of Aid Measures for Africa at Historic Summit,” *Xinhua*, November 4, 2006.

⁶¹ “PRC State Council Approves China-Africa Development Fund,” *Xinhua*, May 13, 2007.

⁶² “Zhongfei Fazhan Jijin Yunzuo Lianghao [China-Africa Development Fund Is Operated Smoothly],” *Xinhua*, September 8, 2008. The projects include the construction of the African Union headquarters which was started in May 2007 and a power plant project at Kpone, near the capital of Ghana. “China-Financed Power Plant Project Officially Launched in Ghana,” *Xinhua*, April 18, 2008; and “PRC Foreign Ministry Official Cites Closer Cooperation with Africa,” *Xinhua*, October 18, 2008.

⁶³ During the early stages of reform and the open door policy, China placed emphasis on inviting foreign capital into the country in the hopes of jump-starting its economic development. With its economic rise, however, China has built up a capital surplus in place of its earlier deficit and had begun to venture into the outside world to make investments of its own. In this context, China's economic diplomacy has to serve the promotion of the “go out” strategy as well as the “bring in” strategy.

⁶⁴ See for example, “Hu Jintao tong Kemailong Zongtong Huitan [Hu Jintao Holds Talks with Cameroon President],” *Zhongguo Xinwenshe* [China News Agency], January 31, 2007.

at the ministerial level in October 2000.⁶⁵ The forum is convened every three years and both sides take turns hosting the event. In August 2005, China proposed that the African CACF members hold a summit meeting the next year in Beijing to intensify cooperation.⁶⁶ Intensified cooperation between China and Africa has been realized in the field of business through economic diplomacy as mentioned. During the first CACF summit meeting in November 2006, the Africa Business Conference was also held, providing an important chance for entrepreneurs of China and Africa to exchange ideas and explore chances for further cooperation. A *Renmin Ribao* article said that holding the business conference was a “new move” brought about by China.⁶⁷

Another area of intensified cooperation is multilateral coordination on global issues according to President Hu. During his visit to Cameroon in January 2007, Hu Jintao suggested that China and Africa should intensify multilateral coordination, keep contacts and coordinate on major international and regional issues, safeguard the proper rights and interests of developing countries, and work together to push for the construction of a harmonious world with sustained peace and common prosperity.⁶⁸ The CACF Summit adopted the Beijing Summit Declaration and CACF Beijing Action Plan for the 2007-2009 period. The Declaration calls for reform of the United Nations and other multilateral international institutions to make them better meet the needs of all members of the international community, especially African countries.⁶⁹ As for the reform of the UN Security Council, the Action Plan calls for giving priority to increasing the representation of developing countries, African countries in particular.⁷⁰ On economic cooperation, the two sides agreed in the action plan to work together to seek common development. In order to achieve common development with Africa, China made clear the need to enhance multilateral cooperation or

⁶⁵ “Text of China-Africa Cooperation Forum ‘Beijing Declaration,’” *Xinhua*, October 12, 2000.

⁶⁶ “Tang Jiaxuan Huijian Chushi Zhongfei Hezuo Luntan Disijie Gaoguanhui de Feizhou Guojia Daibiao [Tang Jiaxuan Meets African Representatives to the Fourth Special Senior Meeting of CACF],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People’s Daily*], August 24, 2005; and Huang Zequan, “Zhongfei Hezuo Luntan de Youlai yu Fazhan [Origin and Development of CACF],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People’s Daily*], November 2, 2006.

⁶⁷ Ai Fei, “Hongyang Youyi, Shenhua Hezuo, Quanmian Tuidong Zhongfei Guanxixin Fazhan [Promoting Friendship, Intensifying Cooperation, and Comprehensively Pushing forward the New Development of China-Africa Relations],” *Renmin Ribao* [*People’s Daily*], June 14, 2006.

⁶⁸ Op. cit., *Zhongguo Xinwenshe*, January 31, 2007.

⁶⁹ “Zhongfei Hezuo Luntan Beijing Fenghui Xuanyan [CACF Beijing Summit Declaration],” *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guowuyuan Gongbao* [Gazette of the State Council of the PRC], No. 35, 2006, p. 25

⁷⁰ “China-Africa Cooperation Forum Summit Adopts Action Plan,” *Africa News*, November 7, 2006.

dialogue such as the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development in the United Nations and the Doha Round of negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) as well as the CACF. In May 2007, China hosted an annual gathering of the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB), calling for increasing the Bank Group's global influence and its capacity to leverage partnerships for the development of Africa.⁷¹ President Hu Jintao also made a proposal at an outreach session of the Group of Eight (G8) in Hokkaido, Japan in order to "promote balanced, coordinated and sustainable development of the world economy."⁷² His four-point proposal speaks with the voice of developing countries. First, the G8 developed countries should pay more attention to the voices and views from outside. Developed and developing countries should build a global development partnership to advance economic globalization in the direction of balanced development. Countries should work together to give the developing countries greater say and representation in international financial institutions to enhance the effectiveness of the international financial system. Second, the World Bank should make greater efforts to help the developing countries to adapt to economic globalization and achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Third, countries should jointly support efforts to strengthen the multilateral trading regime, and work for an early, comprehensive and balanced outcome of the Doha Round negotiations in order to build a fair and equitable international trade regime. Fourth, developed countries should take credible measures to honor their commitments by increasing assistance, opening markets, transferring more technologies to the developing countries and relieving their debts to build a fair and effective global development system.

For China, its relations with developing countries and regions, Africa in particular, present a successful model of South-South cooperation which is widely known at home as a new diplomatic achievement by the "CCP Central Committee with Comrade Hu Jintao as general secretary" based upon the harmonious world idea.⁷³ Professor Gao Zugui, director of the Center of Strategic Studies, China Institute of

⁷¹ "AfDB Group Annual Meetings in Shanghai Calls for Wider Sino-African Cooperation," *Africa News*, May 15, 2007.

⁷² "Hu Jintao Zhushi Baguo Jituan tong Fazhanzhong Guojia Lingdaoren Duihua Huiyi bing Fabiao Zhongyao Jianghua [Hu Jintao Attends a Meeting between Leaders of the G8 and of Major Developing Countries]," *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], July 5, 2008.

⁷³ Benbao Pinglun yuan [Commentator to *People's Daily*], "Jianchi Heping Fazhan, Tuidong Jianshe Hexie Shijie: Jiutan Renqing Xingshi, Zhenfen Jingshen [Uphold Peaceful Development and Push forward the Building of a Harmonious World: Ninth Commentary on Recognizing the Situation and Rallying Spirits]" *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], September 1, 2007.

Contemporary International Relations, discusses the relationship between South-South cooperation and building a harmonious world as follows. "In the meantime, it is all the more necessary for developing nations to join hands and help one another, working hard to expand the scope and mechanisms of cooperation so as to make South-South cooperation a better supplement to North-South cooperation. During this process, China will, in the spirit of being ever more responsible to itself as well as to the whole world, continue to play its unique yet significant role as a constructive force in advancing the strategic objective of building a world of lasting peace and common prosperity."⁷⁴ In this context, China has raised the status of its relations with the African continent to a "new type of a strategic partnership."

Conclusion

Beijing's implementation of a new proactive policy toward Africa based upon the concept of a harmonious world involves contradictions. On one hand, China's proactive policy discourse puts more emphasis on cooperative and peaceful intentions by stressing common prosperity, common development, or win-win cooperation with developing countries and regions. In this context, a new glaring component of China's new foreign policy is economic diplomacy with developing countries. In other words, the landscape of China's multi-directional diplomacy has now been expanded to the African continent. On the other hand, another important incentive that drives the Chinese embrace of Africa appears to be the need to counter-balance U.S. strategic moves both in the global arena and bilateral relations with China. China still views the U.S. as a world hegemon that would constrain not only Chinese diplomatic space but also China's grasp or use of the "strategic opportunity period." Furthermore, China has not dropped its suspicions about the United States trying to engineer a "peaceful evolution" of the Chinese political and social systems. In these regard, China has intensified multilateral diplomacy with Africa not only in the framework of the CACF but within the UN and WTO in order to garner strategic support from them.⁷⁵ Some Chinese foreign policy officials and analysts asserted the need for a "joint rise" together with developing countries and emerging powers in order to build a

⁷⁴ "China Has A Key Role in the Global Poverty Battle," *China Daily*, September 25, 2008.

⁷⁵ Guo Xinning and Xu Qiyu, *Cong Lishi Zouxiang Weilai: Zhongguo yu Fazhanzhong Guojia Guanxi Xilun [From History to Future: Reflections on China's Relationship with Developing Countries]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2007), pp. 93-94.

harmonious world.⁷⁶ With this understanding, “harmonious world” would be another expression of the multi-polarization of the world or a new international political and economic order.

Another important question is whether the contradictory harmonious world concept would be implemented to China's policy toward other developing regions such as Latin America. Professor Jiang Shixue, deputy director of the Latin America Institute at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, stresses the importance of China's relations with Latin America, saying that China and Latin American countries are all developing countries and have similar positions in regard to efforts to establish a new international political order.⁷⁷ Also on the economic front, Latin America is an important place for China in terms of energy diplomacy as well as economic diplomacy, and implementation of China's “go out” strategy by its enterprises, Professor Jiang said. While a multilateral platform such as the CACF is not available in China-Latin American relations so far, China would explore the same possibilities with them.

China might have found the right place to attain global power status in the frontiers like Africa and Latin America. In other words, China might feel uncomfortable in the center (major-power relations).

⁷⁶ See, Li Jie, “Cong Zerenlun Toudi Guoji Tixi Zhuaxing,” *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu* [International Studies], No. 1, 2008, pp. 37-38; Yang Jiemian, “Xinxing Daguo Qunti zai Guoji Tixi Zhuaxingzhong de Zhanlue Xuanze [Emerging Powers Strategic Options on Transitional International System],” *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi* [World Economy and Politics], No. 6, 2008, pp. 6-12; and Zhu Ming, “Xifang Yingdui Jueqi Daguo de Waijiao [Western Diplomacy to Rising Powers],” *Xingjingbao* [Beijing News], February 3, 2008.

⁷⁷ “Zhongyao Zhanlue Jiyuqi nei de Zhongguo Waijiao [China's Diplomacy in the Important Period of Strategic Opportunities],” *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], December 2, 2005.