



BACKGROUND ANALYSIS 24/11/2006

CHINA/SUDAN: UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR A GENOCIDAL ISLAMICIST REGIME, THE SYMBOL OF A GREAT LEAP... BACKWARDS FOR AFRICA

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Although China first established co-operative relations with Khartoum about forty years ago, there is no denying that Beijing has only entered the most hard-hitting phase of this policy since the early 1990s.

The Sudan is one of a group of African countries favouring intense co-operation with China, to the extent that it may become China's third leading economic partner in Africa. But in addition to a development partner, Khartoum has also found an unswerving diplomatic ally. This will allow the Sudan, which has been marginalised by the international community for its discriminatory and genocidal policies, to circumvent all economic and diplomatic sanctions. For China, the Sudan represents a highly important strategic zone, and Beijing has a variety of interests in this country.

But China's infrangible support comes at a price. A price paid by a segment of the Sudanese population (especially those living in Darfur), the countries that comprise the sub-region (Chad and the Central African Republic), and by extension of this policy of "blind co-operation," Africans in general.

1) The Sudan: an Islamist regime...

The Sudan made its Islamist identity plain for all to see in the early 1990s. After a coup d'état in June 1989 inspired by fundamentalists belonging to the National Islamic Front (NIF), a sworn enemy of the west, Sudanese President General Omar al-Beshir¹, came to power in Khartoum. The Sudan's emblematic figure of this new

¹ As of 2006, Omar al-Beshir is still the President of the Sudan.

regime is top NIF leader, the talkative and media-friendly Hassan al-Tourabi². He has made no bones about the Islamist direction adopted by the new Sudanese regime.

Confirmation of this trend was given as given to the international community at the first Popular Arab-Islamic Conference in 1991³ and when the Sudan supported Iraq during the first Gulf War that same year. Two years later, the Sudan was added by the United States to the list of terrorist states. The country was then considered to be the hub of international Jihadism,⁴ with international opinions certainly being swayed most by Khartoum's hospitality to certain terrorist organisations and to their leaders.⁵

Since that time, although relations with the international community and the United States have been significantly normalised, Sudan's Islamists are still in power and control all the country's levers⁶. *Al-Qaeda's* recent support for the Sudanese regime does much to demonstrate the Sudan's extremist leanings⁷.

Sudan still clearly wants to be a reference pole for Islamist and Jihadist⁸ movements, to set an example for the Arab-Muslim world⁹, and to be a key player in the Arabisation and Islamisation of Africa¹⁰.

² Hassan al-Tourabi fell in disgrace in 1999 after attempting to overthrow Omar al-Beshir. Jailed in March 2004 and released in June 2005, he was then accused of apostasy in 2006 after stating that women were equal to men, that women had the right to marry Christians or Jews, and that he was in favour of mixed prayer services.

³ From 25th to 28th April 1991 a Popular Arab-Islamic Conference was held in Khartoum, attended by delegates from nearly 50 nations with Muslim majorities or substantial Muslim minorities (the noteworthy presence of delegations representing the Palestinians' Hamas, Algeria's FIS, Tunisia's An-Nahdha movement, Egypt's Gamaa Islamiyya, Muslim brothers from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, and Afghanistan's Hizb-i-Islami). The Conference focused on the fight against the West's hegemony. The announced conclusions of that Conference were primarily that "*Muslims are the conscience of the world*" and that "*their liberation represents the freedom of the world since there is no longer any voice of refusal besides ours and no basis for freedom other than ours.*" Other Conferences followed in 1993 and 1995, with debates on the same topic.

⁴ Other than the hospitality granted to some jihad leaders (see note 5), the Sudan has provided Muslim terrorists with diplomatic passports, given Algerian, Egyptian, and Palestinian Jihadist movements with weapons, and still runs training camps for Jihadists. Sudan Tribune, "*Sudan may still have bin Laden terror camps,*" 6th October 2005, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article11940>
Human Rights Watch, "*Soudan : les camps de Janjawids existent toujours,*" hrw.org, August 2004, <http://hrw.org/french/docs/2004/08/27/darfur9277.htm>

⁵ We primarily cite: Carlos, Osama Bin Laden, Omar Abd el-Rahman (spiritual leader of the Egyptian Gamaa Islamiyya), Rachid Ghanouchi (leader of Tunisia's An-Nahda movement) or Rabah Kebir (representative of Algeria's FIS abroad).

⁶ Islamists belonging to the former NIF (now the National Congress) hold the Presidency, Vice-Presidency, and an absolute majority in the National Assembly and in the major Ministries (Defence, Interior, Finance, Justice, Energy and Mines, etc.); Sharia is still in force, and Omar al-Beshir still believes that an Islamist model of economic and social development is possible (see note 7).

⁷ The Washington Tribune, "*Al Qaeda's No. 2 urges jihad in Darfur,*" 30th September 2006,

<http://www.washingtontribune.com/world/20060929-102720-8639r.htm>

Sudan Tribune, "*Bin Laden rejects Sudan's CPA, calls for Jihad in Darfur,*" 24th April 2006,

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article15222>

Sudan Tribune, "*Bin Laden call for Darfur jihad clouds UN mission,*" 24th April 2006,

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article15238>

Sudan Tribune, "*Bin Laden urges fighters to Sudan's Darfur,*" 24th April 2006,

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article15220>

⁸ Art MOORE, "*U.S. ignoring Sudan's al-Qaida links? Activists point to continued terror despite moves to ease relations,*" WorldNetDaily.com, 24th June 2002,

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=28049

⁹ "*He [Al-Beshir] said his national salvation government will continue to adhere to Islamic Sharia (law), set an example for social cohesion and bring humanity out of darkness to the light of Islam.*" Daily Times, "*Al-Beshir: The World is targeting Islam in Sudan,*" 25th July 2004, http://www.aljazeera.com/me.asp?service_ID=2827

¹⁰ Especially not through the NGO Daawa Islamiya and the Islamic African Relief Agency. Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan "*L'humanitaire et l'islamisme soudanais Les organisations Da'wa Islamiya et Islamic African Relief Agency,*" Politique Africaine, no. 66, June 1997, <http://www.politique-africaine.com/numeros/pdf/066061.pdf>

... that is genocidal

In short, the country is split into two main components. The first includes so-called “Arab” populations (Culturally Sudanese, native Arabic-speaking groups), which represent 55% of the population (21 million inhabitants). They are concentrated in the capital region, along the Nile, and along the border with Chad (it has been traditionally acknowledged that they occupy the northern part of the country). These *Sudanese Arabs* are mostly Muslim. The second component consists of black African populations. Generally identified with the southern part of the country, where they make up the majority, these populations are less homogenous than those of the north. The southern Sudan is inhabited by a number of ethnic groups with a variety of traditions, languages, and faiths. Dinkas (3 million) make up the largest group, followed by the Nubas (2 million), the Nuers (1.4 million), the Shilluks (600,000), the Zandes (600,000), the Baris (500,000), etc., thus representing about 30 to 35% of the Sudanese population. Given this linguistic patchwork, southerners use English and an Arabic pidgin as lingua francas. These people are mostly animist or Christian¹¹.

The Sudan is thus at the crossroads between the Arab world in the north and the black African world in the south. Far from serving as a link between these two spaces¹², the country is a major conflict zone.

In practice, the black Africans are still discriminated against, looked down upon, and aggravated after nearly 200 years¹³, thus causing considerable delays in the development of this part of the country and instituting a hierarchy amongst the Sudan’s populations

However, after independence came in 1956, the non-Arabicised Sudanese suffered the most. Prime Minister Ismail al-Azhari laid the foundations for the establishment of daily terror directed at black Africans, even going so far as to proclaim the superiority of Sudanese Muslim Arabs in 1965¹⁴.

¹¹ However, as details reveal, the ethnic-linguistic situation in the Sudan is much more complex. Indeed, in the north, characterised by an Arab Muslim majority, there are black African populations that are Muslim but not Arabicised (such as the Bedjas, the Furs, the Zaghawas, and the Fulanis), as well as Christian black Africans (including Nubians), and southerners who have fled their region and sought refuge in the Khartoum region (in total, slightly more than 1 million Christians live in the north).

In conclusion, the Sudan is an immense ethnic (nearly 600 ethnic groups and 180 languages or dialects) and religious (Islam: 69%, Animism: 25%, Christianity: 5%, Baha’i: 1%) mosaic.

¹² This link was largely imagined by British colonists who wanted to address their serious analytical error: “*the black African peoples of the Sudan [were] inextricably tied to the Middle East and to the Arabicised northern Sudan.*” Gérard Prunier, “*Le Sud Soudan depuis l’indépendance,*” in Marc Lavergne (ed.) “*Le Soudan contemporain,*” Karthala, 2000.

¹³ Since 1820 and the Egyptian occupation of the Sudan, the southern Sudan was considered by Muslims to be a black slave trade zone. British colonisation hardly changed this situation, since the British colonists neglected the populations and their cultural specificities, using an irresponsible administrative approach for the south. The entirety (of the *Southern policy*) led to a definitive rupture between the north and the south. Catherine Miller, “*Langue et identité,*” in Marc Lavergne (ed.) “*Le Soudan contemporain,*” Karthala, 2000.

Caroline Fourest, “*Simon Deng, noir, chrétien et esclave des musulmans au soudan,*” cid-online.be, 10th July 2006, http://www.cid-online.be/article.php3?id_article=108

¹⁴ “*We are proud of our Arab origin, of our Arabism and of being Muslims. The Arabs came to this continent, as pioneers, to disseminate a genuine culture and promote sound principles which have shed enlightenment and civilization throughout Africa at a time when Europe was plunged into the abyss of darkness, ignorance, and doctrinal and scholarly backwardness. [...] That was noble in Arab culture, and handing them back to the rest of the world as a guide to those who wished to extend the frontiers of learning.*” Wole Soyinka, “*Darfur: The Avoidance Word Still Screams Its Name,*” 50th Anniversary of the 1st International Conference of Black Writers

Successive regimes (all led by Sudanese Arabs) continued this violent, racist policy¹⁵ **by imposing Sharia throughout the Sudan and making Arabic the country's national language, the desired goal being, quite simply, the eradication of black African traditions and cultures through forced Arabicisation and Islamisation**¹⁶.

Faced with these pressures, the black African populations formed a resistance against the Sudanese Arabs¹⁷. Using this resistance as an excuse, the central authority then proceeded to carry out what it considered to be relevant acts of genocide.

The following groups were primarily targeted by these acts of genocide: the populations of the southern Sudan (non-Arabicised animist and Christian black Africans – including the *Dinkas*) for 39 years¹⁸, the *Nubas* (non-Arabicised Muslim, Christian, and animist black Africans) for nearly a decade¹⁹, and now the populations of Darfur (all of them non-Arabicised black Africans, mostly Muslim, including the *Zaghawas*, *Furs*, and *Massalits*)²⁰

2) China's interests in co-operating with the Sudan

The Sudan and China established diplomatic relations on 4th February 1959. However, it was not until the mid-1990s that co-operation between the two countries reached any significant scope due to China's considerable growth. The Sudan is currently China's third leading commercial partner in Africa, and Beijing is

& Artists, Paris, 16th September 2006, <http://www.justiceafrica.org/blog/2006/10/13/the-avoidance-word-still-screams-its-name/>

¹⁵ The Coalition for the Defence of Human Rights, "Radical Islamism = Racism = Genocide. Jihad-Islamism (not Islam) abuses human rights worldwide," *chretiens-et-juifs.org*, <http://www.chretiens-et-juifs.org/article.php?voir%5B%5D=619&voir%5B%5D=2971>

¹⁶ Pax Sudani Network, "A newsletter committed to the rights and liberties of African Sudanese people," Sudan Newsletter Vol. III N°3, University Of Pennsylvania - African Studies Center, http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Newsletters/Sudan_News_3.html.

Barry Rubin, "The Region : A civil war born of Islamism," Grupo de Estudios Estratégicos, Colaboraciones no. 981, 2nd June 2006, <http://www.gees.org/english/pdf/2543/>

¹⁷ Other factors should also be taken into account, such as policies calling for the confiscation of arable lands, the "cleansing" of oil regions, and the redirection of the flow of oil from the south to the north. But these actions have only been possible with that feeling of superiority espoused by Sudanese Arabs convinced of the pre-eminence of their culture.

¹⁸ The conflict in the southern Sudan left 2 million dead, 4 million displaced, and 500,000 refugees between 1955 and 1972 and between 1983 and 2005. Roland Marchal, "Le Soudan d'un conflit à l'autre," *Les Études du CERI* no. 107-108, September 2004, <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/publica/etude/etude107.pdf>

Jacques Monnot, "Le génocide du Sud Soudan," L'Harmattan, 1999.

¹⁹ In 1992, a jihad against the Nubas was declared, and the Nuba Mountains were declared off-limits to NGOs. During this period, which ended in January 2001, the Nuba genocide was able to be carried out without witnesses, and over half the Nuba population was killed. JSM, "Guerre dans les Monts Nouba," *jsmddh.org*, http://www.jsmdhdh.org/article.php?id_article=48

²⁰ 500,000 dead and 2.2 million displaced since 2003. When carrying out its dirty work, the Sudanese regime acted with the assistance of Arab militiamen, the Janjawids. AFP, "Selon un ancien janjawid, le gouvernement soudanais soutient les exactions au Darfour," *lemonde.fr*, 18th October 2006,

<http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3212,36-825010,0.html?xtor=RSS-3210>

Eric Reeves, "Quantifying Genocide In Darfur," *sudanreeves.org*, 28th April 2006,

<http://www.sudanreeves.org/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=102>

Human Rights Watch, "Questions et Réponses à propos du Darfour," *hrw.org*, March 2006,

<http://hrw.org/french/docs/2006/03/10/darfur13051.htm>

Diagne Chanel, "Le Drame du Soudan," *wmaker.net*, 24th May 2005,

http://www.wmaker.net/hermes/Le-Drame-du-Soudan_a405.html

Monique Mas, "Washington parle désormais de génocide," *RFI*, 10th September 2004,

http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/057/article_30409.asp

Théodore Zoungrana, "Une guerre née de l'apartheid au Darfour," *L'hebdomadaire du Burkina*, no.278, 6th -12th August 2004, http://www.hebdo.bf/actualite2/hebdo278/enafriue_soudant278.htm

Khartoum's leading supplier, leading customer, and leading investor. **China has a variety of interests in the Sudan. Although oil supplies are first and foremost, the Sudan's geopolitical positioning is not negligible.**

- ***Oil supplies***

China is now the world's second largest consumer of oil²¹. 3/4 of this "black gold" comes from abroad. Thus, it goes without saying that China's growth is largely dependent upon these oil imports. Beijing has thus been hit with an unprecedented "craving for oil" and is busy formulating a way to diversify its oil supplies. Chinese foreign policy has thus been characterised by soulless "oil diplomacy." Within the context of this approach, Africa has become China's favourite target²².

Today over half of Sudan's crude oil, valued highly for its low sulphur content, is absorbed by China (representing 7% of all Chinese imports).

China is firmly established in the Sudan, essentially through the ***China National Petroleum Corporation*** (CNPC)²³, especially at sites located in Muglad (blocks 1, 2, and 4)²⁴, Melut (blocks 3 and 7)²⁵, and Kordofan (block 6)²⁶. **The Sudan is where China has made its largest oil investment in Africa**²⁷, with the construction, in Khartoum, of a refinery currently able to treat 3.5 tonnes per year, as well as a 1,500 km²⁸ pipeline to export Sudanese crude oil from the Marsa al Bashair (Port Sudan) terminal on the Red Sea.

The end of the war in the southern Sudan should open up new prospects for the Chinese, especially through the ***Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company*** (GNPOC) consortium. However, in this part of the Sudan, the Chinese are expected to run up against more competitors than in other parts of the countries²⁹. Finally, the

²¹ Estimated at 7 million barrels/day for 2006. This consumption could more than double by 2025.

²² African oil currently represents 30% of Chinese imports. In 2005 Chinese imports of African crude oil represented 38.47 tonnes, reflecting a 9% increase over 2004. China is the world's second leading importer of African crude oil.

²³ The CNPC's presence in the Sudan dates back to 1996 with a 40% interest in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) consortium for a cost of 441 million dollars.

²⁴ Production of 325,000 barrels/day (500,000 barrels/day are expected). Production is handled by a consortium called GNPOC, which currently comprises the Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) with 40% of the shares, Malaysia's Petronas (30%), India's ONGC Videst Limited (25%), and the Sudan's Sudapet (5%).

²⁵ Production is handled by a consortium called Petrodar Operating Company (PDO), which comprises the CNPC (41%), Malaysia's Petronas (40%), Qatar's Gulf Petroleum Corporation (6%), Sudan's Sudapet (8%), and the UAE's Al Thani (5%). At this site, China has been responsible for the construction of a refinery for 215 million dollars and the construction of a 500 km pipeline. 350,000 barrels/day are expected for this site (currently 200,000 barrels/day).

²⁶ China has been responsible for prospecting, drilling, and exploiting the region, for building a pipeline (715 km), and for a project designed to expand Khartoum's refinery so that it can treat 5 million tonnes per year (overall cost: 1.3 billion dollars). Production of nearly 200,000 barrels/day is expected for this site (currently 40,000 barrels/day).

²⁷ The overall investment reached 3.5 billion dollars. Chinese oil investments in the Sudan could reach 8 billion dollars by the end of 2006.

²⁸ This pipeline, which connects the Muglad site to the Port Sudan terminal, was completed with the help of 2,000 Chinese workers (common law prisoners who thus obtained a reduced sentence). Now that the project has been completed, these workers have remained onsite and have been working for Chinese companies close to the Sudanese regimes. Pierre-Antoine Braud, "*La Chine en Afrique : Anatomie d'une nouvelle stratégie chinoise*," *iss-eu.org*, October 2005, <http://www.iss-eu.org/new/analysis/analy124.pdf>.

²⁹ Mainly in the Bor Basin, a consortium has been set up amongst Marathon Oil (32.5% of shares), Total/Fina/Elf (32.5%), Kuwait's Kufpec company (25%), and Sudan's Sudapet (10%). The Swedish company Lundin Petroleum is also present in the southern Sudan. The southern Sudan, which has become more autonomous, favours partners other than China.

CNPC is a stakeholder in the future exploration of block 15, in the Sudanese offshore region³⁰.

- ***Penetration of the economy, opened up for industry, technology...***

As is the case in other countries where China is active, Beijing has been diversifying its economic presence.

Thus, China is present in sectors other than the oil sector.

China's ***Harbin Power Company*** (HPC) built the Qarre I³¹ hydroelectric station. Still through HPC, China is stakeholder in a gigantic hydroelectric project in Méroé³² and also constructed a power station similar to the type used at Kajbar Dam³³.

In the area of chemistry, the ***Petroleum and Natural Gas Exploration and Development Corporation*** has implemented a polypropylene exploitation project in Khartoum. The Chinese also hold 50% of the ***Khartoum Chemical Industry Company*** and 100% of the Sudanese company Petrochemical Trade Project.

China has also participated in other sectors: in the restoration of Khartoum's hospital (cost: 2.5 million dollars), in the construction of an international conference centre (cost: 3.6 million dollars), in the training of civil servants within Sudan's Ministry of Co-operation, in the construction of a potable water pipeline from the Nile to Port Sudan (cost: 345 million dollars), in the establishment of a water network for the city of Alfashir (cost: 325 million dollars), etc.

- ***... and Chinese weapons***

China is the leading supplier of weapons to the Sudan, thus furthering two aims: ensuring an outlet for China's military industry while securing enormous investments by arming a regime that is highly disputed, both domestically and internationally.

“According to some sources, the Chinese jet fighters sold to the Sudan since the 1990s include more than 40 Shenyang J-6 and J-7 fighters, and, more recently, F-7 supersonic fighters, an improved version of the Russian MIG-21 Fishbed, China also provided the Sudan with 50 helicopters in 1996. In 2001, the Chinese Harbin Dongan Engine company signed an agreement to repair Mi-8 helicopters for the Sudan. In part Iran financed the Sudan's purchase of 21 J-6 fighters and two Y-8 D cargo jets, a version of the Antonov An-12 manufactured under licence in

³⁰ A consortium was formed to exploit this block: CNPC (35%), Petronas (35%), Sudapet (15%), Express Petroleum of Nigeria (10%), and High Tech Group (5%). China obtained this top percentage by granting a 2 billion dollar loan.

³¹ For a cost of 149 million dollars. Combined with Qarre II, the production at these stations could reach 330 megawatts.

³² 350 km from Khartoum at the site of a fourth waterfall. It is the largest hydroelectric project developed in Africa. Construction of seven substations, 70 km of roads, 30 km of railways, an airport, a residential complex (residential units, hospital, mosque, 4-megawatt electric station, potable water station, etc.) and the laying of 1,750 km of power lines. The project should be completed in 2008 with a capacity of 2,500 megawatts. The Chinese-HPC interest and the China Consortium Merowe Dan (CCMD) consortium— combined with France's Alstom and several Sudanese companies (other companies or investors participating with varying levels of interest, such as Germany's Lahmeyer International, Switzerland's ABB, and investors from the Arabian peninsula) is estimated at 750 million dollars. The total cost of the project could come to 1.7 billion dollars.

³³ For the second waterfall, the Chinese financed 85% of the project, supplying 470 million dollars. Capacity of 300 megawatts.

Chine³⁴,...³⁵. The Sudan has also acquired *Dong Feng*³⁶ military trucks, landmines (anti-personnel and anti-tank)³⁷, howitzers³⁸, anti-aircraft devices³⁹, and light weapons⁴⁰.

This military co-operation is so advanced that the Chinese have constructed, near Khartoum, three plants to manufacture light weapons, military vehicles, and T55 tanks able to fuel the African market directly⁴¹.

3) The Sudan's strategic position and a "showroom" of Chinese co-operation

Geographically, as it has been stated above, the Sudan lies on the threshold of the African and Arab Muslim worlds. From Beijing's perspective, a predominant influence in this country could allow China to extend its influence to both civilisations.

Infrastructures, largely built by China, would allow the Sudan to be positioned as a bona fide economic platform for China's exports and imports within the sub-region, even in all of Africa. As far as what interests Beijing most, namely oil, pipelines have been implemented as part of an evolutionary approach with the possible prospect of connecting it to other pipelines (Sudanese or non-Sudanese). This seems to be confirmed by Port Sudan's future refinery capabilities and the Sudan's forthcoming energy production capacities.

The idea of a "showroom" of Chinese co-operation must be understood as a demonstration of what China could contribute to those who would be tempted to enter into a very advanced partnership with Beijing: considerable financial aid, the construction of capital infrastructures for development, modern military equipment,

³⁴ "For several years, the Sudanese air force has been using Antonov cargo planes, especially as part of its Darfur operations [...] These planes certainly needed maintenance, spare parts, and safety tests that were probably provided by the manufacturers, namely, the Ukrainian office that designed the Antonovs and subsequently the Chinese aeronautical company in Xian that is currently the only manufacturer." Amnesty International, "Soudan, qui arme les auteurs de graves violations au Darfour?" Index AI: AFR 54/139/2004, 16th November 2004, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/fraAFR541392004>

³⁵ Amnesty International, "Soudan, qui arme les auteurs de graves violations au Darfour?" Index AI: AFR 54/139/2004, 16th November 2004, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/fraAFR541392004>

³⁶ Amnesty International, "Conflits et atteintes aux droits humains, un commerce des armes en pleine expansion," Index AI: ASA 17/030/2006, 11th June 2006, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/FRAASA170302006?open&of=FRA-SDN>

³⁷ Amnesty International, "Soudan, qui arme les auteurs de graves violations au Darfour?" Index AI: AFR 54/139/2004,

16th November 2004, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/fraAFR541392004>

³⁸ David H. Shin, "China's Approach to East, North and the Horn of Africa," Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, 21st July 2005, <http://www.gwu.edu/~elliott/news/transcripts/shinn4.html>

³⁹ Idem

⁴⁰ "In 2002, the Sudan imported 'gun or rifle parts and accessories' from China for 845,918 dollars (652,262 euros), 'pistols and revolvers' for 34,827 dollars (26,854 euros), and 'shotguns' for 97,437 dollars (75,131 euros)." Amnesty International, "Soudan, qui arme les auteurs de graves violations au Darfour?" Index AI: AFR 54/139/2004, 16th November 2004, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/fraAFR541392004>

⁴¹ United Nations Security Council, "Rapport du Comité d'experts créé par la résolution 1591 (2005) du Conseil de sécurité concernant le Soudan," S/2006/65, 30th January 2006, <https://grip-publications.eu/bdg/pdf/g4352.pdf>

Human Rights Watch, "Rapport mondial 2002," hrw.org, <http://www.hrw.org/french/reports/wr2k2/soudan.html>

non-interference in domestic affairs⁴², and, especially, unwavering support at the international level⁴³, which comprise the entire model of co-operation being proposed by China.

This model does not seem to involve variable geometry, as it has been applied in other countries that have chosen the Middle Kingdom as their primary co-operation partner (Angola, Zimbabwe, and Zambia). Beijing's lone requirement is that the concerned country must adhere to the policy of "one single China," thus breaking off ties with Taiwan.

We can thus speak of a "showroom," since the Sudan is where this model of co-operation is developed most. **The Sudan is becoming China's African "showcase."**

4) In search of a "Pax islamiya"?

The Sudan is no longer a pariah of the international community concerning its support for Jihadism, and the country's authorities have made some efforts to participate in the war on terrorism⁴⁴. We recall the "delivery" of "Carlos" to France in the 1990s. However, *"although the Sudan's co-operation and the communication of information from the country have, in general, improved considerably and reflect significant progress in the war on terrorism, there are still reasons for concern"*⁴⁵, the Sudan must still deal with some heavy liabilities (the Islamicist orientation of its regime, shelter given to figures in the Jihadist movement, training camps for terrorists, the disputed role of Sudanese NGOs⁴⁶, etc.), *"it represents a hotbed of*

⁴² This non-interference could be put into perspective over the medium- or long-term in countries where China has made significant investments. One such example is Zambia during its last presidential elections. Faced with the possible victory of the opposition, the Chinese government did not hesitate to use all its weight to influence the minds of Zambian voters. John Reed, "China intervenes in Zambian election," Financial Times, 5th September 2006, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/d6d5d176-3do-a-11db-8239-0000779e2340_i_rssPage=5d866f00-6714-11da-a650-0000779e2340.html

⁴³ Chinese diplomatic support has been especially evident at the United Nations, where China has twice threatened to use its veto power (July and September 2004) to oppose the imposition of political and oil sanctions upon the Sudan as a response to the genocide in Darfur. Backed by this support, President al-Beshir was able to stand up to the UN without fearing retaliation, intimidating the Nations that were considering sending soldiers to Darfur (United States State Department, "Le Soudan intimide les pays qui envisagent de participer à la force de l'ONU," usinfo.state.gov, 6th October 2006, <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-french&y=2006&m=October&x=20061006134508atiaydujo.3155023>), by expelling the UN Special Envoy to the Sudan (Christophe Ayad, "L'émissaire de l'ONU expulsé du Darfour," Libération, 23rd October 2006, <http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/monde/212464.FR.php>) and by refusing to send the Blue Berets to Darfur (Resolution 1706) United Nations Department of Public Information, "Conférence de presse d'Omar Hassan Mohamed al Bashir, Président du Soudan," 19th September 2006, http://www.un.org/News/fr-press/docs/2006/Conf_de_presse_Al_Bashir.doc.htm

⁴⁴ "Domestically, the Sudanese government has stepped up its efforts to dismantle extremists' activities and to dissuade terrorists from taking action in the Sudan [...] The Sudanese government also adopted measures in 2004 to strengthen its legislative and administrative tools in order to fight terrorism." United States State Department, "Les États soutenant le terrorisme font obstacle aux efforts de lutte contre ce fléau," usinfo.state.gov, 29th April 2005, <http://usinfo.state.gov/fr/Archive/2005/Apr/29-210274.html>

We could also add the recent visit of the head of the Sudanese intelligence department to the United States. Jacky Mamou, et al., "Urgence Darfour," French television broadcast "C dans l'air," 2nd November 2006.

⁴⁵ United States State Department, "Les États soutenant le terrorisme font obstacle aux efforts de lutte contre ce fléau," usinfo.state.gov, 29th April 2005, <http://usinfo.state.gov/fr/Archive/2005/Apr/29-210274.html>

⁴⁶ Alain Charret, "Terrorisme : état des lieux en Afrique de l'Est," Les Nouvelles d'Addis, March 2005, http://www.lesnouvelles.org/P10_magazine/13_chroTERRO/000_032005.html
Decision Support Systems Inc., "An Analysis of Al-Qaida Tradecraft," metatempo.com, 2001,

activism on the border of an unstable Arabic world and a black Africa devoured by corruption, economic stagnation, disease, an ethnic conflicts,”⁴⁷ and it is all but certain that some networks subsist, and that there may still be contacts and goodwill amongst international Jihadist movements in the Sudan. Furthermore, the backing given to Somali Islamicists⁴⁸ and the support offered by Al-Qaeda’s nos. 1 and 2 to the policies of the Sudanese regime⁴⁹ show that Khartoum is still tacitly on the periphery of the international jihad. This may be a non-negligible reason behind China’s exemplary involvement in the Sudan.

Indeed, if a country allies itself with an Islamicist regime, the seriousness of which is compounded by a loose Jihadist conglomeration, this could perhaps be considered to be a possible strategy designed to protect the country from these same Jihadists by seeking out their neutrality. So the question is this: why would China want to protect itself from Jihadism?

Although China is not directly threatened by Islamicist terrorism⁵⁰, the fact remains that China has been characterised by an aggressive attitude towards its Muslim minority (estimated at 20 million people), especially the non-Han Muslim populations in Xinjiang⁵¹. Since the 1990s, the government has been cracking down on Jihadist movements in this province that have come together under the name “*East Turkestan Groups*”⁵². In Xinjiang, the Uighurs are the ones who have been most problematic for Beijing. In 2005, 18,227 people (including 18,000 Uighurs) were arrested in Xinjiang for reasons pertaining to terrorism⁵³. Uighur terrorist groups with ties to international Jihadism⁵⁴ have been identified in this province, the most famous being the *East Turkestan Islamic Movement* (ETIM, a separatist movement on the US list of terrorist organisations since 2002)⁵⁵. 22 Uighurs (out of

<http://www.metatempo.com/analysis-alcqaida-tradecraft.html>

Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan, “*L’humanitaire et l’islamisme soudanais Les organisations Da’wa Islamiya et Islamic African Relief Agency*,” *Politique Africaine*, no. 66, June 1997,

<http://www.politique-africaine.com/numeros/pdf/066061.pdf>

⁴⁷ Jean Philippe Conrad, “*Origines et réalités de l’islamisme activiste*,” Institut de Stratégie Comparée,

http://www.stratisc.org/strat6667_Conrad.html

⁴⁸ Somali Islamists have some ties to international Jihadism. Olivier Bergevin, “*L’islamisme en Afrique orientale : une montée en puissance récente, mais qui semble inexorable*,” in “*Islamisme, djihadisme et contre-terrorisme cinq ans après le 09.11*,” ESISC, 11th September 2006, <http://www.esisc.be/11%20Septembre%20FR.pdf>

⁴⁹ See note 7.

⁵⁰ Although, outside China, the Chinese may be targeted by acts of terrorism.

The Nixon Center, “*China’s Role in the War on Terrorism*,” [nixoncenter.org](http://www.nixoncenter.org), 2003,

<http://www.nixoncenter.org/publications/monographs/US-ChinaRelations2003Chapters.pdf>

⁵¹ Chinese Muslims are concentrated in the western part of the country, especially in the Xinjiang region, where they make up the majority. This province has historically been unstable and rebellious, often slipping from Beijing’s control and being subject to foreign interference. Most residents of Xinjiang are non-Han Muslims (Uighurs - over 50% - Kyrgyz, Salars, Uzbeks, Tatars, and Kazakhs).

⁵² Pan Guang, “*East Turkestan Terrorism and the Terrorist Arc: China’s Post-9/11 Anti-Terror Strategy*,” Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No.2, 2006,

http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/CEF/Quarterly/May_2006/Guang.pdf

⁵³ Chien-Peng Chung, “*Confronting Terrorism and Other Evils in China: All Quiet on the Western Front ?*” Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No. 2, 2006,

http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/CEF/Quarterly/May_2006/Chung.pdf

⁵⁴ “*The reality is the Uighurs are indeed in touch with Muslim groups outside Xinjiang, some of them have been radicalized into broader jihadist politics in the process, a handful were earlier involved in guerrilla or terrorist training in Afghanistan, and some are in touch with international Muslim mujahidin for Muslim causes of independence worldwide*.” Graham E. Fuller and S. Frederick Starr, “*The Xinjiang Problem*,” Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, 2003, http://www.cornellcaspien.com/pub2/xinjiang_final.pdf

⁵⁵ ETIM has been responsible for 200 terrorist attacks since the early 1990s. Shao Zongwei, “*Police Salute UN Rule on ETIM*,” *China Daily*, 21st September 2002, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Sep/43703.htm>

650 prisoners) who joined the Afghan Taliban have been detained at Guantanamo⁵⁶ and ⁵⁷. Furthermore, Uighurs have participated in jihads outside China⁵⁸, and Uighur separatist movements have financial ties to *Al-Qaeda*⁵⁹.

Since the mid-1990s, successive Chinese governments have implemented a policy of “*Striking Hard*” (“*Yan Da*”)⁶⁰ towards the Uighurs while favouring the Huis (Islamicised Hans) and the establishment of Han populations in Xinjiang, thus discriminating against the Uighurs even more. Although terrorist activity has been sporadic in Xinjiang⁶¹ for several years, it is still intense and will continue to be largely determined by the activism of regional and sub-regional movements and by the Uighur populations’ feelings of persecution and discrimination. However, due to the Chinese strategy in Xinjiang that alternates “*Yan Da*” with “*Xibu Dakaifa*” (the more positive concept of “*Development of the Great West*”), at present it is unlikely that the *East Turkestan Groups* would be capable of striking without some sort of activation or assistance (logistical and/or financial) from abroad.

The *Pax Islamiya* that China could be looking for would aim to cut off foreign support to the *East Turkestan Groups* in order to protect two of its key objectives. The first is anecdotal but is very important as far as the pride of the Chinese people is concerned: the 2008 Olympics. Memories of “black September,” the “missed events” of the 1998 World Cup, and the example of Chechen terrorism targeting symbolic locations represent just as many nightmare scenarios for Chinese authorities who fear that Uighur Jihadists may use the heavily media-covered scene to strike out against the regime in the showiest possible way. The second objective, certainly the more fundamental, is to secure a potentially very rich province (Xinjiang contains non-negligible quantities of oil, gas⁶², and uranium. 115 of the 147 minerals discovered in

⁵⁶ “According to the US military court that ruled on these Uighurs, captured by Pakistani bounty hunters, ‘five were people in the wrong place at the wrong time,’ while the other ten were deemed ‘low-risk detainees’ whose enemy was China’s communist government—not the United States” (see “Chinese detainees are men without a country,” *Washington Post*, 24th August 2005). “Without a country to take them in, these 15 Uighurs are being held ‘indefinitely’ in Guantanamo.” Rémi Castets, “*L’Islam en Chine et l’après 11 septembre*,” Asia Centre, Observatoire géopolitique sur la Chine, 28th April 2006, http://www.centreasia.org/media/files/20060428_note-CR_OGP.pdf

⁵⁷ A total of 1,000 Uighurs have been trained by Afghanistan’s Taliban. Philip Pan and John Pomfret, “*Bin Laden’s Chinese Connection*,” *Washington Post*, 10th November 2001. Tens of thousands pursued religious studies in Pakistan’s Islamic schools. Rémi Castets, “*L’Islam en Chine et l’après 11 septembre*,” Asia Centre, Observatoire géopolitique sur la Chine, 28th April 2006, http://www.centreasia.org/media/files/20060428_note-CR_OGP.pdf

⁵⁸ Rémi Castets, “*L’Islam en Chine et l’après 11 septembre*,” Asia Centre, Observatoire géopolitique sur la Chine, 28th April 2006, http://www.centreasia.org/media/files/20060428_note-CR_OGP.pdf

⁵⁹ Council of Foreign Relations, “*Terrorism: Questions and Answers: East Turkestan Islamic Movement*,” cfr.org, November 2005, <http://www.terrorismanswers.org/groups/etim.html>

⁶⁰ “observing religious activities and festivals, monitoring Muslims who have returned from studying in the madrassahs (Islamic schools) of Pakistan or the Middle East, arresting and executing suspected terrorists, indicting known separatists, weapons and subversive literature at the border, establishing a number of anti-terrorist surveillance centers and quick reaction units in sensitive regions since September 11 2001, 8 strengthening overall military preparedness, reinvigorating the system of informants, and, it should be mentioned, promoting reliable and capable minority cadres to fill up party and government positions in autonomous regions, prefectures and counties. At least in the above aspects, the government’s campaign to crush separatism appears to have been relatively successful so far.” Council of Foreign Relations, “*Terrorism: Questions and Answers: East Turkestan Islamic Movement*,” cfr.org, November 2005, <http://www.terrorismanswers.org/groups/etim.html>

⁶¹ A result that is attributable to the “*Yan Da*” policy and also to a well-thought-out economic development policy (“*Development of the Great West*” or “*Xibu Dakaifa*”) that aims to create a local upper middle class (“The rich populations of the prosperous border region” or “Xingbian Fumin”), as well as strict monitoring of religious activities.

Council of Foreign Relations, “*Terrorism: Questions and Answers: East Turkestan Islamic Movement*,” cfr.org, November 2005, <http://www.terrorismanswers.org/groups/etim.html>

⁶² Reserves estimated at more than 6 billion tonnes of oil and 8 billion m3 of gas in the Tarim Basin.

China are present in this province⁶³) that is currently a strategic region with regard to Chinese imports of oil and gas piped from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan⁶⁴. A situation that is “beyond tense” in that region could have serious negative repercussions upon Chinese growth.

5) Negative consequences of Chinese support to the Sudan

For various reasons, China has positioned itself using an approach that stresses unwavering support for the Sudanese regime. But this model of “blind co-operation” has a price.

- *Perpetuation of the Darfur massacres*

By supporting the al-Beshir regime, **China is indirectly helping to perpetuate what the international community now describes as genocide.** By providing military equipment and considerable economic support and especially by preventing the UN from trying to cool down the local situation with a peacekeeping force⁶⁵, Beijing is, in fact, interfering in the Sudan’s domestic affairs. **Without this support from China, the Sudan, kept in check by the international community, certainly would not have been able to perpetrate the massacres observed in Darfur with such violence and over such a lengthy period of time.** The UN probably could have intervened and thus resolved the situation.

- *Sub-regional destabilisation*

In Chad, an immense oil-producing country bordering the Sudan, there is almost constant instability, and it always comes from the east, from the Beijing-backed Sudan.

These days Chad is being attacked by Sudanese-supported rebels, protected by France, influenced economically by the United States, and once again on good terms with China. It is an explosive coexistence that threatens to make the current regime teeter.

President Idriss Déby Itno, who came to power in 1990 after having overthrown Hissein Habré from a rear base in the Sudan. Several Chadian rebellions based on the border between Chad and the Sudan have tried to destabilise Déby Itno’s regime. Although the Chadian regime has resisted so far with logistical assistance from France⁶⁶, new offensives could turn out to be decisive. After six months of relative calm, the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD)⁶⁷ has resumed

⁶³ G Christoffersen, “Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle: the Impact of Transnational Forces on Chinese Economic Planning,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 133, March 1993.

⁶⁴ Of course, beyond China’s borders, the securing of the shipping lanes taken by Chinese supertankers can also be taken into account (Red Sea, Yemeni coasts, Bab el Mandeb).

⁶⁵ See note 43.

⁶⁶ Especially during operations carried out by the United Front for Change (FUC) during the Battle of N’Djamena on 13th April 2006. France has been present in Chad with Operation Sparrowhawk since 1986.

⁶⁷ The UFDD is a fusion of several groups, all of which are hostile to the current regime in N’Djamena, headed by General Mahamat Nouri, who was Chad’s Minister of Defence from 2001 to 2003.

its military operations and is becoming an increasing threat to the Chadian regime⁶⁸. According to the Chadians, the Sudan is undoubtedly supporting this movement. Thus, after a rebel missile was launched at a French reconnaissance plane in late October 2006, clear accusations were uttered by Ahmat Allami, Chadian Minister of Foreign Affairs: *“These rebels entered Chad from Sudan and they could only have procured this type of military equipment within the sight of and with the knowledge of the Sudanese authorities. Sudan cannot deny it [...] Sudan is behind the rebels. This (missile) firing constitutes an unfriendly gesture against Chad and France, and which we firmly condemn [...] There is no mystery. This equipment was delivered under the benevolent gaze of the Sudanese authorities or by Sudan itself”*⁶⁹. For Idriss Déby Itno, things are also crystal clear: *“I [...] drew the attention of the international community to President al-Beshir’s vague desires for war [...] the Sudan is perpetrating acts of aggression on Chad [...]”*⁷⁰

In economic terms, Chad has taken part in US “petro-diplomacy” since 2003. A US-Malaysian consortium consisting of ExxonMobil, Chevron-Texaco, and Petronas is currently occupying the Doba site (160,000 barrels/day) and the pipeline (1,076 km long) that carries black gold to the Cameroon’s Kribi oil terminal⁷¹. The consortium is also committed to drilling five other wells by 2010. Confronted with draconian oil revenue distribution conditions imposed by the World Bank and with Chad’s financial needs for resisting the rebel movements, the Chadian regime is involved in contentious relations with the consortium and with the World Bank (and thus with the United States) that vacillate between rupture and reconciliation⁷². On 31st May 2006, United States’ economic takeover was taken one step further with the signing of a so-called “Open Sky” agreement.

Diplomatically speaking, Chad re-established relations with China on 6th August 2006 after nine years of ruptures. N’Djamena surely wants to use these warmer terms with China to pursue two objectives. The first consists of playing the competition card in order to make the US-Malaysian consortium bend, leading it to renegotiate the terms of its concession agreement to Chad’s advantage (mainly by allowing the state-owned oil company, the Chad Hydrocarbons Society, into the consortium) and also influencing the World Bank with regard to oil revenue distributions. Simply by waving the threat of a China that would be ready to invest in Chadian oil if need be.

⁶⁸ AFP, *“L’armée en difficulté face aux rebelles,”* jeuneafrique.com, 30th October 2006, http://www.jeuneafrique.com/pays/tchad/gabarit_art_afp.asp?art_cle=AFP32236larmesellebo

⁶⁹ AFP, *“Chad blames Sudan for new rebel assault,”* sudantribune.com, 25th October 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18329>

⁷⁰ AFP, *“Les présidents tchadien et centrafricain accusent le Soudan d’agresser leurs pays,”* tchadactuel.com, 1st November 2006, <http://www.tchadactuel.com/main.php?2006/11/01/876-mm-bozize-et-deby-accusent-le-president-bechir-d-agresser-leurs-pays>

⁷¹ The project cost 3.7 billion dollars (the largest private investment in Africa). 97% of this funding was provided by the oil consortium comprising ExxonMobil (40%), ChevronTexaco (25%), and Petronas (35%), with 3% coming from the World Bank. Chad receives royalties amounting to 12.5% of total revenues.

⁷² Philippe Perdrix, *“La bataille de l’or noir,”* Jeune Afrique, tchadactuel.com, 6th September 2006, <http://www.tchadactuel.com/main.php?2006/09/06/718-la-bataille-de-lor-noir>

Christian Losson, *“Le Tchad défend sa part d’or noir,”* Libération, 29th August 2006, <http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/economie/200961.FR.php>

AFP, *“Armistice dans la “guerre du pétrole” avec la Banque mondiale,”* jeuneafrique.com, 27th April 2006, http://www.jeuneafrique.com/jeune_afrique/article_depeche.asp?art_cle=AFP22936armiselaidno

AFP, *“La diplomatie à la recherche d’un compromis dans la crise pétrolière,”* anr.typepad.com, 25th April 2006,

http://anr.typepad.com/anr/PointPresse_250406.html

Philippe Perdrix, *“Le président, la Banque et le pétrole,”* jeuneafrique.com, 12th February 2006, http://www.jeuneafrique.com/partenariat/article_jeune_afrique.asp?art_cle=LIN12026leprselortpo&part=35

The second objective concerns ties between the Sudan and China. **By getting closer to Beijing, N'Djamena must surely hope to convince the Chinese (perhaps in exchange for oil concessions?) to put pressure upon their Sudanese ally so that the Sudan will stop supporting Chadian rebels and ease their pressure on Darfur**⁷³.

Quite obviously, **China has its eye on Chad's oil possibilities. A segment of the Chad-Sudan pipeline could be used to redirect Chadian output to the Red Sea (and then on to China via Port Sudan) and no longer to the Atlantic (via Kribi, Cameroon)**⁷⁴.

By warming up to Beijing, the Chadian regime is embarking upon a perilous strategy. By playing the "yellow peril" card against "black gold," the Chadians have put their western allies in an unfortunate situation. France, which does not want a regime change brought about by uncontrollable movements supported by foreign powers, is being led to intervene while gaining nothing in terms of positive influence. France's position is thus justified more by the emergency situation than in a long-term strategy that has been well thought out⁷⁵.

Attempts to win over the Chinese have ultimately failed to bear fruit, since Chadian rebels have stepped up their campaign to overthrow the regime, the situation in Darfur is far from calm, and Sudanese planes bombed Chadian sites at the end of October 2006⁷⁶ and ⁷⁷.

In the Central African Republic: Bordering the Sudan and Chad, the northern part of the Central African Republic is paying the price for this proximity. This region seems to have slipped out of Bangui's control, with armed bandits known as "*coupeurs de routes*" alongside Chadian rebels⁷⁸ and Central African rebels⁷⁹.

Concerning those who want to topple the Central African regime, President Bozizé points his finger at their protector and their rear base: "*In the last 48 hours, the Central African Republic has been attacked by the same country which has harmed Chad. Let's be clear: It is (Sudanese President Omar Hassan) al-Bashir and he must stop behaving like this [...] This friendly brother country uses a lot of resources to*

⁷³ Chad has been facing an increasingly unmanageable influx of refugees, and Idriss Déby Itno, a Zaghawa, has been criticised even within his own clan. A wait-and-see attitude concerning the massacre of his Sudanese "brothers" that already nearly cost him heavily in early 2006. Daoussa Déby, the Chadian President's half-brother, and the first cousin of the leader of the Darfur rebels, Khalil Ibrahim, was in charge of organising the logistical support of the Darfur resistance.

⁷⁴ With China's current attempts to win over the Cameroonian regime, accomplishment of this objective could even create a Kribi-Port-Sudan axis and link the Gulf of Guinea oil reserves to the Red Sea to China's advantage and the disadvantage of the West.

⁷⁵ Could it be that France is turning the page on Idriss Itno? Panapress, "*L'opposition tchadienne cherche à faire son unité à Paris*," panapress.com, 29th October 2006,

<http://www.panapress.com/freenewspor.asp?code=fre008627&dte=29/10/2006>

⁷⁶ Reuters, "*Chad says Sudan airforce bombards eastern towns*," sudantribune.com, 28th October 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18382>

⁷⁷ Irin, "*CHAD: Fighting on two fronts in chaotic east*," sudantribune.com, 31st October 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18426>

⁷⁸ These rebels used Central African territory to attack Chad and wage war and may be carrying out delinquent actions while travelling through the country.

⁷⁹ AFP, "*La prise de Birao souligne l'instabilité du nord-est de la Centrafrique*," jeunefrique.com, 31st October 2006, http://www.jeunefrique.com/jeune_afrique/article_depeche.asp?art_cle=AFP70736laprieuqirfo

arm people whom it sends into Central African territory without motives. We don't understand how Sudan can behave like this"⁸⁰.

To solve this problem, François Bozizé receives the backing of neighbouring Chad, which has also been attacked by the Sudan, while requesting military and logistical assistance from Paris⁸¹ and UN intervention⁸².

In this "adventure," the Sudanese regime is certainly trying to establish its influence, gained through the country's new status as an oil power, in the sub-region; thus, the Sudan has attacked an ally of its enemy Chad. In the background, China could bet on the Central African Republic's possible oil resources and could also be interested in the country's geographic position, a "lock" concealing regions further south and the countries surrounding the Gulf of Guinea.

6) A great leap...backward for Africa

Going beyond the Sino-Sudanese example, **the model of "blind co-operation," which is the basis for China's African policy, is likely to set Africa's geostrategic situation back 25 or 35 years.**

Since the end of the Cold War, **western nations have tacitly agreed to promote human rights, encouraging African nations to embark on the path to democracy, multiparty politics, anti-corruption measures, etc. In other words, to pursue "good governance"**⁸³. Western nations present in Africa have, in most cases, also agreed with the United Nations on initiatives designed to put substantial pressure on African regimes that have ignored the winds of democracy sweeping across the continent. Thus, in the 21st century, western co-operation depends heavily on that idea of "good governance". And **although there still remains much to be done**⁸⁴, **several African countries have enjoyed non-negligible democratic advances**⁸⁵.

China's arrival on the African scene and its model of co-operation have radically changed the deal. The Sino-Sudanese model of co-operation in Africa is the typical model of Chinese co-operation in Africa. This same model has been applied in African countries, such as Angola and Zimbabwe, that have established close partnerships with Beijing. Countries that, like the Sudan, have had trouble with the international community due to general "bad governance." *"We know that China has a different approach to human rights. By cultivating relations with repressive regimes, such as the Sudan, China is attaching more importance to its economic and*

⁸⁰ Reuters, "Central African President accuses Sudan over raid," sudantribune.com, 1st November 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18444>

⁸¹ Reuters, "Central African govt asks France to help repel rebels," sudantribune.com, 31st October 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18439>

⁸² Reuters, "Central African Republic appeals for peacekeepers," sudantribune.com, 2nd November 2006, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18471>

⁸³ Clearly stated for France by statements made at the 1990 La Baule Conference and subsequent doctrines regarding co-operation ("neither interference nor indifference" from 1997 to 2002 or "supporting without dictating" since 2002), or, for the United States, by various assistance programmes that have been proposed (Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, Millennium Challenge Account, Africa Regional Democracy Fund, etc.).

⁸⁴ The United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) indicates that West Africa holds the record for anti-constitutional changes on the African continent in a study entitled "*Life after the presidential palace, the peaceful turnover of power in West Africa.*"

⁸⁵ <http://www.freedomhouse.org>

*commercial interests than to respect for human rights, and China is enabling these regimes to obtain the resources that they never would have been able to obtain otherwise so easily.*⁸⁶ The most recent Sino-African Summit, held from 3rd to 5th November 2006, confirmed this voluntary blindness evident in China's African policy⁸⁷. **Choosing China can thus enable an authoritarian regime to evade its responsibilities by participating in a high-level co-operative partnership and by perpetuating its oppression of its people (oppression that is aggravated by the military co-operation included in the Chinese model).**

Chinese co-operation can also allow other countries to play the escalation card when involved in power struggles with western powers over various topics (e.g.: Chad being opposed to the World Bank and the US-Malaysian consortium). **This is thus a return to a “Cold War”-type situation with two poles that are confronting each other using two different ideologies of co-operation.**

Furthermore, the Chinese model, although positive over the short term for African countries (financial assistance, debt reduction, construction of development infrastructures, access to cheap consumables, etc.), could clearly turn out to favour Chinese interests over the medium- and long-term: **the ability to purchase raw materials under favourable conditions in order to transform them and sell them back to the African countries; financial loans dependent upon the granting of markets to Chinese companies; trade account balances vastly benefiting Beijing; the inability of African national production to compete over the long term with Chinese products; lack of technology transfers, etc.**

Finally, **despite all the rhetoric about good intentions, the Chinese model of “blind co-operation” in no way considers the basic interests of Africa's populations and echoes deviant western behaviours from the 1960s until the 1990s.** Combined with measures to build up African territories in order to exploit their natural resources, the “neo-colonial” character of the Chinese presence in Africa is gradually being established under the guise of a type of co-operation described by Beijing as being “mutually advantageous.”

⁸⁶ Saria Rees-Roberts, journalist for Amnesty International.

⁸⁷ Words of Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, at the opening ceremony of the last Sino-African Summit <http://www.bjinformation.com/fawen2006/2006-zflt/1106-zf-02.htm>