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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE LOOK EAST POLICY TO
ZIMBBWE'S ECONOMIC GROWTH FROM 2010 TO 2015.**

BY

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my mother and my late father who have supported me all the way to where I am today. This piece of work has been written in devotion to my late father who I will always remember with honor.

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Acronyms

AfDB: African Development Bank

AU: African Union

BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

CSEAS: Chinese Special Envoy to Africa and Sudan

EU: European Union

FOCAC: Forum on China-Africa Cooperation

GPA: General Political Agreement

IMF: International Monetary Fund

MDC: Movement for Democratic Change

MMCZ: Mineral Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe

NATO: National Atlantic Trade Organisation

NBS: National Bureau of Statistics

NIBMAR: No Independence before Majority African Rule

OECD: Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development

SADC: Southern Africa Development Community

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

USSR: United Soviet States Republic

ZANLA: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army

ZANU: Zimbabwe African National Union

ZAPU: Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZCBC: Zimbabwe-China Business Centre

ZDERA: Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act

ZIMASCO: Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company

ZIMASSET: Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Economic Transformation

ZIMCORD: Zimbabwe on Reconstruction and Development

ZIMPREST: Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation

ZISCO: Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Corporation

Abstract

The research explores the effects of the Look East policy to improving Zimbabwe's ailing economy. The Look East Foreign Policy was mainly adopted as an economic experimental attempt by the government to improve the dead-locked economy that Zimbabwe assumed after it had been economically sanctioned by its Western foreign engagements, namely Britain, USA, Canada, and Australia, UN, EU and other allies of the Western bloc. The research was inspired by the current topical economic engagements that the Zimbabwean government is harmonizing with the Chinese government *vis-à-vis*, the sustainable economic development agenda that the ZANU-PF led government that the party adopted after it was re-elected into power following its landslide victory at the 2013 harmonised elections. The study follows the dependency theory which objects to explain the nature of relationship that Zimbabwe has with China. It is a qualitative analysis which borrows much of its information from written secondary documents and observations within the socio-economic structure of the Sino-Zimbabwe relationship. In this case, the research is largely explanatory and evaluative of the historical, current and pushing factor to Zimbabwe's adoption of the Look East policy. It is worth noting that the Look East policy encompasses a multi-state bloc, including China, Iran, Indonesia, India, Malaysia and Singapore but the study has been predominantly biased on Zimbabwe's engagement with China because of the continued and active participation of the world's second largest economy in Zimbabwe's economic recovery strategy. Data analysis and presentation of the study is broadly explanatory, with the fusion of a quantitative presentation of Zimbabwe's economic outlook. The research looks at the impacts of the Look East Policy to Zimbabwe's economy from 2010 to 2016 so as to determine if the policy has brought about any notable development to the nation.

Introduction, Background and Rationale of Study.

China's close connections with Zimbabwe can be described through a historical analysis, normative convergences, and practical economic benefits to both parties. The relationship between the Eastern bloc and Zimbabwe stretches back to the era of African liberation fight against colonialism and imperialism by Europe. The East came in the guise of the Cold War to influence a Marxist-Leninist and ultimately Communist ideology into the African continent. Unfortunately, the Eastern countries were ideologically divided themselves, especially Russia and China, the division which saw the East taking sides during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

Russia became the first to engage Liberation fighters against the Rhodesian government, with its supply of arms to then ZAPU which was led by the late Joshua Nkomo. The rise of ZANU coincided with the influx of Chinese Maoism into Africa. This gave birth to the connection between ZANU-PF and China which has inspired the focus of this study. This connection continued up to the time Zimbabwe gained independence and fortunately ZANU-PF won the elections. The victory saw a continued intensified relation between Zimbabwe and China developing into the 21st century.

Zimbabwe arguably became China's closest African ally in the last years of the Cold War, an alliance that has consistently strengthened since 1991. China has since developed to become Zimbabwe's leading international supporter against Western condemnations of her authoritarian policies. Beijing has also organised economic recovery efforts in Zimbabwe to reinforce its control over the country and set a precedent for other alliance-building efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Zimbabwe's Look East Foreign Policy was officially launched by President Mugabe on 6 December 2005 when he presented his state of nation address to the Parliament of Zimbabwe. In his address President Mugabe declared that "Zimbabwe is looking 'East' and there is no looking back". The policy was adopted by the government following the imposition of a *defacto* and *dejure* sanctions regime by

the EU countries, the USA and some Western countries notably Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which resulted in the economic meltdown of the Zimbabwean economy. In launching the Look East Foreign Policy, the Zimbabwean government intended to increase co-operation with a number of countries in Asia and the Far East with a particular focus on China, Iran, Indonesia, India and Malaysia and in the process break the West's economic stranglehold in Zimbabwe. The main focus of Zimbabwe's Look East Policy is however on China more than any other nation in the East as evident through the bilateral relations which date long back.

In this case, the study explains the nature of China's increased engagements with Zimbabwe over the years 2010 to 2016 and explores the impact it had and has on the economy resulting from close interaction. The study prejudices the Look East policy as a desperate or crisis management foreign strategy basing on the assumption that, it was only after the imposition of economic sanctions by the Western bloc that Zimbabwe shifted its attention to the East rather than developing a comprehensive foreign policy approach that engages all angles of the international system. In this case, the analysis of the relationship in question is appreciative of the fact that Zimbabwe had nowhere else to turn to but the East. Therefore the research is a radical rejection of the commonly accepted phenomenon which dismisses the Look East policy as a weak and exploitative connection between Zimbabwe and China.

Theoretical Framework

The Dependency theory was used to explain the landscape of Zimbabwe's relationship with China. This theory proved to be the most appropriate in explaining the nature of Zimbabwe's Look East Policy. The connotation "Look East" in itself brings out the dependence of Zimbabwe's engagements with the Eastern bloc, particularly China. The "looking" part of the policy entails that it is Zimbabwe who orchestrate or initiate an open eye to the Asian bloc, that is, 'looking for assistance'. The Dependency theory clarifies the relationship between the underdeveloped and developed countries whereby the poor

countries export primary commodities (raw materials) to the rich countries who then manufactured products out of those commodities and sold them back to the poorer countries, (Rodney, 1992). The value-added by manufacturing a usable product always cost more than the primary products used to create those products, (Marx, 1962). Therefore, poorer countries will not be earning enough from their export earnings to pay for their imports.

Dependency theory is the notion that resources flow from a periphery of poor and underdeveloped states to a core of wealthy states, enriching the latter at the cost of the former. It is a central argument of dependency theory that poor states are impoverished and the rich enriched by the way poor states are integrated into the world system. The theory arose as a reaction to the modernization theory, an earlier theory of development which held that all societies develop through similar stages of growth. Singer and Prebisch (1949) concurred that the terms of trade for underdeveloped countries relative to the developed countries had depreciated over time; the underdeveloped countries were able to purchase fewer and fewer manufactured goods from the developed countries in exchange for a given quantity of their raw materials exports. This theory gives a reflection of the China-Zimbabwe relations whereby natural resources flow from Zimbabwe to China.

Dependency theorists hold that short-term emissions of growth anyhow, long term growth in the periphery will be imbalanced and unequal, and will tend towards high negative current account balances, Tausch (2003). Recurring fluctuations also have a profound effect on cross-national evaluations of economic growth and societal development in the medium and long run. What seemed like spectacular long-run growth may in the end turn out to be just a short run cyclical spurt after a long recession. Arrighi (1976), believed that the logic of accumulation on a world scale shifts over time, and that we again witness during the 1980s and beyond a liberalized phase of world capitalism with logic,

characterized by the dominance of financial capital. At this stage, the role of unequal exchange in the entire relationship of dependency cannot be underestimated.

In this case, the dependency theory entails that this cycle of development is inevitable in international relations and comprehended by the realist theory connotation of national interest and sovereignty, has been adopted into this research to help the reader understand the line of thinking that has been pursued. In fact “Realism” tendencies of national interest and sovereignty drove the Zimbabwean government to adopt the Look East policy from the onset.

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess if the Look East Policy has been of much benefit to the Zimbabwean economy over the years of 2010 to 2016 by looking at Chinese engagements in the African country and what success has resulted from those engagements.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess if the Look East Policy has met its targeted objectives.
2. To analyse the successes and progress that has been brought about by the Look East Policy.
3. To determine if the Look East policy has impacted the nation as a whole.
4. To ascertain if there is proof of success in the continuation of the Look East Policy.
5. To reflect on the economic situation prior to the Look East Policy.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the Look East Policy has proven to be more of a survivor policy with less sustainable economic development. The relations between China and Zimbabwe benefit the former more than the latter as Zimbabwe offers valuable materials than China; hence the Look East Policy can be viewed as

continued colonialism in a different face. Nevertheless the relationship is in this study appreciated as a necessary neo-colonial affair in terms of foreign policy engagements.

Significance of the Study

The study seeks to offer a detailed analysis on the nature of the relations between China and Zimbabwe hence giving an assessment of the impacts of the Look East Policy on the latter's economic growth. This will also be informative to academics, policy analysts and interested parties on the policy as a whole and its relevance to development and nation building.

Research Questions

1. Has the Look East Policy met its target objectives?
2. What progress or success has resulted from the Look East policy?
3. How has the Look East policy affected Zimbabwe at large?
4. Is there ample proof of success for the continuation of the Look East Policy?
5. How was the economic situation before the implementation of the Look East Policy?

Research Methodology

The research follows a qualitative methodology, accompanied by some quantitative pieces, mainly on the description of Zimbabwe's economic trends.

Nature of the Research

The research will be explanatory and analytical in pointing out the impact of the Look East Policy to Zimbabwe's economic growth. It will dwell on historic, present and future possibilities but however focus on the years from 2010 to 2016 so as to determine the success and failures of the policy.

Data Collection and Research Design

This study will be presented in the form of a case study of Zimbabwe over the years 2010 to 2016. It will also reflect on the period before 2010 so as to offer a clear understanding on the development of the Look East Policy

Primary sources will be employed through interviews of the relevant individuals as policy analysts, political analysts and academics. Interviews will be open so as to allow accuracy. The interviewer will be asking questions from the scope of the study and obtaining information from the responses of the interviewed individuals. Focus groups will also be another tool of data collection through the discussions with other academics so as to understand their views and opinions on the impact of the Look East policy to economic growth in Zimbabwe.

Secondary sources will be utilised through the vast literature on the policy which include books, journals, newspaper articles and internet sources. The qualitative approach offers ironic descriptive first-hand information obtained from limited number of individuals and allows flexibility.

Graphs and Tables will also be utilized as they are an effective tool of measuring progress and success of the policy and hence bring out clarity of whether the policy is bringing development or not.

Literature Review

Dr.Okeke (2014) articulates that the relations under the look East policy feature a wide variety of diplomatic activities, correspondence and missions, these partnerships under the Look East policy hold also a substantial amount of economic significance as both states have in between a few signed agreements regarding economic and technical support, trade and investment protection. In a bid presumptuously to create an environment where the Look east policy's capabilities at achieving success are enhanced and favorable the Government of Zimbabwe adopted policies such as Indigenization

Policy, policies whose basis is adapted from already existing Chinese policies and other later similar policies or stances such as the current ZIMASSET doctrine. These are not indigenous phenomena to Zimbabwe individually but are borrowed phenomena on the part of Zimbabwe and borrowed if not exactly copied from the country's business partners.

As the look east policy took center stage over the years no other side effect of this partnership reared its head such as that of unemployment. An article in the Daily News had an official report from the government of Zimbabwe announcing news on the pending rise in unemployment in Zimbabwe by end of 2015. The Daily News article stated that unemployment in Zimbabwe has not only rose over the application of the Look East policy, with the government of Zimbabwe announcing its intentions to cut down civil service employees by a staggering 40% of the work database by the end of 2015. According to BBC.com this is partly because of the dependency relationship that China has perpetuated with Zimbabwe through the provision of extensions on already pending extended loans, the pariah state Zimbabwe finds itself post souring relations with the west, mismanagement of resources in Zimbabwe and not forgetting corruption. Earlier in 2015, an article was printed in the Herald stating that the Council of Harare received a sum of US\$ 2 million worth of aid and this money, toilets in the nation's capital function without adequate or ample water supply. China according to the Reserve bank Of Zimbabwe contributes close to half of Zimbabwe's economic activity, this China instantly cripples the capabilities of locally run businesses forcing them to close shop as they cannot afford to compete with the large run Chinese run enterprises that have been known to never follow the conduct set forth by the labour law.

Reports of sweat shop like working conditions have been made against these Chinese run enterprises often leading in the exchange of nonofficial finance (bribes) to quash investigations into such matters on the part of police whose allegiance like the country's seems open to purchase by the highest bidder. The

Chinese can afford to flood the Zimbabwean market given their stance on child labour laws in China hence the rate of production overshadows the capacity of local Zimbabwean markets leaving the local business owners in Zimbabwe without a chance to match the competition forcing them to sell over their businesses to the Chinese. Eisenmann, (2012) states that as of 2012 Zimbabwe had received a total of US\$10 billion donated towards ensuring the resuscitation of the following sectors Agriculture, Health and Infrastructure under the revamping of the Public Works Ministry. Apart from the sudden rise in pseudo Chinese run clinics in cities and towns across Zimbabwe often brightly advertised across business areas with tiny little printed pamphlets offering an assorted list of New Age Techniques and therapies most of which are untested or unauthorized by the Medical Commission and Board of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government has constantly awarded the Chinese numerous tenders ranging from infrastructural construction to road maintenance depriving the local contractors of the opportunity to grow and make contributions to the economy says Kapuwa (2012). He further indicates that large sums of money have been spent on projects whose tenders have been given to the foreign institutions and companies who have perpetuated a dependency relationship though the provision and flooding of Zimbabwe's market with cheap obsolete products.

Due to the stifling economic hardships in Zimbabwe the people of Zimbabwe have adapted to the current economic paradigm. On Sunday 16 August 2015 Workers Union welcomed the New Labour Bill. According to the Chronicle welcomed proposals in the Labour Amendment Bill that seek to take away employers right to unilaterally dismiss them on three months' notice without benefits and provide for benefits for all employees who lost their jobs on the basis of the common law position which the Bill seeks to repeal. Clause 5 of the Bill stated that those who lose jobs on contract termination are entitled to minimum retrenchment benefits that include one month's salary for every two years of service. This would apply to both retrenches in general and workers whose contracts were terminated on or after July

17, with employers required to pay up, no later than the date when the notice of termination of employment takes effect, all this no too long after the government announced its intentions to down size the current civil service by a staggering 40% before the end of 2015 was indication of the failed attempt to Look East.

In this respect, much of the literature surrounding Zimbabwe's adoption has widely dismissed the policy as taboo to sustainable economic development. In this case, the vast pieces of literature have left a wide gap in their appreciation of the policy. Much of these schools of thought evaluate the policy with a micro-economic eye leaving the macro-economic perspective necessary to effectively analyse the impact of the Look East policy. Therefore this research presents the macro-economic perspective for approaching the nature of Sino-Zimbabwe foreign relations. The study synthesizes the external political influences within the international system that have pushed Zimbabwe to adopt a Look East policy, that is, isolation by the West.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the foundation of Zimbabwe's relationship with Asian countries which necessitated the country's adoption of its 'Look East Foreign Policy'. The chapter provides a chronological structure of the development of Zimbabwe's continued relationship with Asia. It gives an analysis of how Zimbabwe became aligned to the East. A brief background of the development of events that led to Zimbabwe's diplomatic connection with China as the main ally in the 'East' is given. The flow of events which led to the country's economic deadlock that then motivated Zimbabwe's continued relationship with China as an "all-weather" friend of Zimbabwe is also provided in this chapter. In this respect, the chapter offers an appreciation of China's role in acting as an economic escape platform to Zimbabwe's isolated and neglected foreign intercession.

Background of the Look East Policy in Zimbabwe

Manyeruke and Mhandara() state that "...the economic relationship between China and Zimbabwe dates back to 'over 600 years ago during the Ming and Qing dynasty when the Chinese established relations with the Munhumutapa Empire based on trade and cultural exchange". Unfortunately there has been quite limited documentation of historical relations between Zimbabwe and the rest of the "East". Though analysis of this study intends to reveal the influence of the "Look East" as a whole, much of Zimbabwe's engagements, especially on the economic diagnosis, has over the post- colonial era narrowed down to China. This has allowed the continued existence of economic bilateral relationship between Zimbabwe and China.

The Look East Policy was synthesised into the country's diplomatic endeavour to disengage relations with its colonial diplomatic strongholds, the West, (particularly Britain and its Western allies). This was

a result of the Western initiated movement to endorse a regime change agenda after the Mugabe led ZANU- PF government had adopted a fast- track ‘land- reform programme after negotiations for a willing buyer, willing seller strategy had failed, (Chigora and Dhewa, 2009).

This was a historical shift from the pre-colonial era in the country which saw Zimbabwe adopting a comprehensive diplomatic approach that involved engagement with a variety of countries including Britain itself. This diplomatic situation continued until the end of Zimbabwe’s fast-track land reform programme which saw souring relations developing between the country and her Western friends. Stiftung. (2010) added that the souring of relations between the African country and her traditional Western alignments re-introduced China to Zimbabwe’s diplomatic scene. China’s continued interaction with Zimbabwe had undergone three developmental phases.

This continued economic bilateral relationship between Zimbabwe and China is what this chapter seeks to unravel, focusing mainly on the developments which led to the cemented relationship. The three diplomatic developmental phases that characterises China-Zimbabwe bilateral relationship are also analysed in this chapter.

Support of the national liberation struggle, 1960s–1980

The end of the Second World War in 1945, the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, and the rise of national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America presented China a chance to break through the siege of the capitalist camp in 1950s and then the siege of both capitalists and the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1960s. This unfavourable international environment is the one that forged the relations between China and ZANU-PF as they were both fighting for the same cause of national liberation.

Griffith (1998) suggested that “the infusion of Marxist- Leninist philosophy into the liberation struggle of Southern African countries and Zimbabwe in particular, justifying the use of arms to liberate the African people came from two competing centres of Marxist-Leninist leadership, that is, the Soviet Union and China. This was a mark of the common Cold War to which Zimbabwe became a part of. Griffith added that the Soviet Union relied on a strategy of supplying military hardware and advice to liberation movements and prepared their clients for open warfare. Mudyadzo (2011) stated that (ZAPU) adopted this Marxist-Leninist philosophy, whilst the Chinese doctrine of guerrilla warfare accompanied by massive politicisation of the peasantry was used effectively by ZANU.

Eisenmann (2005) argued that ZANU’s continued engagement of China up until the end of the liberation struggle culminated a shift of Eastern country’s attention. This necessitated what Edinger and Burke (2008) named “...Socialist liberation- assistance payback....” which included the compensation of arms supplied to Zimbabwe during Mugabe’s repression of Nkomo’s supporters in 1984 in Matebeleland, (Ramini, 2016). Shoko (2000) had added that, from 1980 to 1999, Zimbabwe imported 35% of its arms from China. China provided Zimbabwe with military support during the fight against colonialism in the early 1960s. However; matters became complicated when the civil war, known as the Rhodesian Bush War then broke out. In this respect, Mudyadzo (2011) argued that Zimbabwe’s second war of national liberation began in earnest with the battle of Sinoia in 1966 when ZANLA guerrilla fighters fought a conventional battle with Rhodesian security forces and all the guerrilla fighters perished on the battlefield. ZIPRA fighters also launched its armed struggle in 1967 thereby reinforcing the armed struggle as the preferred method of dismantling the racist, minority regime in Salisbury. The conflict pitted three sides – the Rhodesian government under Ian Smith, ZAPU under Joshua Nkomo, and ZANU, led by Mugabe – against one another. ZANU had been formed in 1963 as a rival organisation to ZAPU, which was supported by the Soviet Union. Upon its formation, ZANU also

sought military support from the Soviet Union, as many other liberation movements in Southern Africa had done. Nevertheless, after failing to get Soviet military support ZANU turned to the People's Republic of China, which gave the party military and strategic assistance, helping it to develop into a powerful liberation movement. China facilitated the training of guerrillas from ZANU's military wing, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). It was under Chinese tutorship that ZANLA's military strategy underwent a fundamental transformation from conventional military tactics to the Maoist model, which entailed the mass mobilisation of the population.

After much violence, all three sides signed a ceasefire. In 1978, the Rhodesian government signed an agreement with ZANU and Zimbabwe officially gained independence in April 1980, when ZANU party won a landslide victory in the election. Robert Mugabe assumed Premiership and, despite his socialist rhetoric, integrated Zimbabwe into the global financial and capitalist system. The independent Zimbabwean government began as ambiguous social democratic one-party dictatorship and he promptly established official relations with China. The Prime Minister knew whom to thank and travelled with a large delegation to China in 1981.

Martin and Johnson (2002) postulated that this bilateral relationship was not as perfect as portrayed later. During this period, the China-USSR relations had also deteriorated and both parties frequently criticised the other and sought to oppose the other's policy, which pushed the strengthening of China-Zimbabwe relations. Beijing and Harare manoeuvred the ideological split between the former and the USSR. In this case, China through supporting ZANU, found a method to propagate its anti-Soviet campaign in Southern Africa. Davies (2002) added that 'Support for ZANU was a vehicle by which Beijing's anti-Sovietism could be pursued in Africa'. For ZANU, the China-USSR split presented an opportunity to maximise possible gains in its struggle against ZAPU.

The ZANU–ZAPU split coincided with the Sino–Soviet split, partially explaining why China and the Soviet Union were so invested in this proxy-like war in Zimbabwe. However, the initiative was not in the hands of the Chinese or Russians, but in the palm of Robert Mugabe. During the war, Mugabe had often sought aid from the Soviet Union but had been rebuffed, leading to further solidarity with Beijing. Even so, Mugabe was pragmatic and invited Moscow to the country’s independence celebrations. His half-hearted turn to Moscow prompted additional arms shipments from China. This drove Zimbabwe’s future first Premier to realise a potential ally he possessed in China necessitating the strengthening of bilateral relations between the two.

Zimbabwe – China Relations at Independence, 1980–2004

The year 1980 marked the end to a long and bloody liberation struggle against colonialism in Zimbabwe, a liberation which had witnessed the introduction of Asian support to the African cause. The end of the commonly designated “Second Chimurenga War” was accompanied by the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement which had ushered in a new framework that supported black majority rule in Zimbabwe. On 18 April 1980, Zimbabwe officially declared its independence from British colonial rule. Mudyanadzo (2011) wrote that the liberation struggle and constitutional negotiations for Zimbabwe’s independence had far-reaching repercussions on the diplomatic character of the country when it was finally born on 18 April 1980. Diplomatic ties between China and Zimbabwe were established immediately after Zimbabwe’s independence was announced. China-Zimbabwe bilateral relations have dominated Zimbabwe’s ‘Look East Policy’ because of the huge volume of mutually beneficial co-operation activities between the two countries. Since then, formal relations between the two countries have been strengthened by high level official visits.

The Sino–Zimbabwe bilateral relations are, and have always been based on mutual trust and respect. Diplomatically, Zimbabwe had since independence supported the One-China policy as a way of

upholding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, (Matahwa, 2008). Zindiye (2012) added that formal diplomatic relations between Zimbabwe and China were established on 18 April 1980. The two countries developed a relationship that grew through loans, projects and further visits. In fact, Maunganidze *et al* (2013) argued that “Beijing reaped the political capital it had sown in the 1960s and was invited to construct hospitals and the National Sports Stadium in the 1980s”. The period under review witnessed the shunning of Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe by former friends in the ‘West’ over the political crisis in his country. This necessitated the adoption of a “Look East Policy” by Zimbabwe forging stronger ties with countries like China, Malaysia, Indonesia and India.

On the other end, political turmoil in Beijing in 1989 provided another opportunity to cement China–Zimbabwe relations. Although the Tiananmen Square controversy damaged China’s international image, it also reinforced China’s relations with Zimbabwe and other developing countries that supported its right to defend its sovereignty. The Chinese crisis became a blessing in disguise to Zimbabwe. The positive dimension of this situation is appreciated only after a close analysis on the consequences that stemmed out of China’s repudiation by the international community. The incident saw Mugabe in particular strongly defend the Chinese government, stating that ‘any reforms in China can only take place on the basis of its own tradition and its own characteristics’, (Eisenmann, 2011). Zimbabwe refused to join the anti-China campaign, declaring that it was Beijing’s right to stabilise its domestic situation. This strengthened China’s trust and approval of Harare’s loyalty to the Chinese cause. It even strengthened bilateral co-operation, proving that the early ties between China and Zimbabwe remained important as they continued to direct the shape and scope of interactions between the two countries.

The two countries continued supporting each other even when faced with criticism from the international community. Xing and Farah (2013) suggested that “...in light of both Chinese and African

histories, one similarity can be noticed, that is, ‘the search to ensure their existence as prosperous strong nations and independent political entities. This has been the case with Zimbabwe as well.

Only after Zimbabwe had embarked on a land re-distribution policy was it rebuffed by its Western friends. This inspired Chigora (2006) to conclude that “....souring of relations between Zimbabwe and the West, especially over the land issue neither began in the 1990s nor have the debates between them changed from the concerns of the period immediately after independence. During the 1980s, differences arose regularly between the Zimbabwean Government and the UK administration about the funding of land redistribution. The turnaround strategy adopted by Zimbabwe to redefine land acquisition, the deteriorated economy caused by the international community’s sanction of Zimbabwe and the willingness of China to engage the African country economically intensified the need for Zimbabwe to look ‘East’.

While Mugabe wanted to ‘free’ Zimbabwe from its traditional Western partners, the country had received substantial aid from the North in the 1980s, including \$417 million from the World Bank, \$204 million from the US, and \$156 million from the European Economic Community. In the early 2000s, most of Zimbabwe’s trade, investments and loans came from the West, despite the imposition of targeted sanctions. On the other hand, China–Zimbabwe economic relations have been dominated by development and co-operation through China’s provision of aid and concessionary loans to Zimbabwe. In this light, Chigora and Dhewa (2009) added that “Zimbabwe, with the inception of independence saw an increase in development assistance, particularly within the framework of the “1980 UN decade for development in the Third World”. At the launch of Zimbabwe on Reconstruction and Development (ZIMCORD) in March 1981, the USA pledged US\$225 million over a three-year period towards government goals on post-war reconstruction, distribution and development of land and the

development of skilled manpower. By the end of 1986, USA had contributed US\$380 million, the majority in grants, some in loans and loan guarantees, (Chigora, 2007).

The turning point in Zimbabwe's economic relations with the West came in the wake of the crisis surrounding Zimbabwe's constitution and land reform, starting in 2000. As a result of the land acquisition policy of the Zimbabwean government, which had started in 1997; the Fast Track Land Reform Programme of 2000–2002, and the reported violence perpetrated by ZANU-PF against its opposition during elections; the US, the European Union (EU), the UK and other member states of NATO imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe. This only strengthened the relationship between Zimbabwe and China. The then Zimbabwe Foreign Affairs Minister, Simon Muzenda (2000) added that trade volumes between Zimbabwe and China increased from \$56.35 million in 1997 to Z\$125.45million in 2000. Minister Muzenda (2000) even commented that China had stood by Zimbabwe even when the African country had been isolated by the Western community. The more the West isolated Zimbabwe, the more Asia gripped the Southern African Bread-basket. The sudden surge was caused by the tensions between Zimbabwe and the UK, to which Western countries had a negative response. The period 1997–2000 had seen sporadic land occupations and the acquisition of mostly white-owned farms in Zimbabwe, and in 1997 the British Government under Prime Minister Tony Blair denied that it was responsible for funding land reform in Zimbabwe. Chigora (2006) argued that the attainment of power by the Labour Party in Britain drove London to infringe the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement which stipulated that Britain and other willing UN members to provide the Zimbabwean government with funds to purchase land from the willing seller white farmers for re-settlement purposes.

Strengthened Bilateral Relations, 2005–2015

The 21st century, saw China–Zimbabwe relations revolve, thanks to their unique two-way momentum. Mvutungayi (2010) added that Zimbabwe’s Look East Foreign Policy was officially launched by President Mugabe on 6 December 2005 when ‘He’ presented his *State of the Nation Address*. Mudyanadzo (2011) also noted that, in his address, President Mugabe declared that “Zimbabwe is looking ‘East’ and there is no looking back”. Zimbabwe’s ‘Look East’ policy converged with the establishment of China’s Forum on China–Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) had a knock-on effect on the emerging ‘special relationship’. This established Zimbabwe’s position concerning its foreign policy establishment.

The African country’s Look East Policy was officially adopted following the imposition of a *defacto* and *dejure* sanctions regime by the European Union (EU), the USA and other Western countries, notably Canada, Australia and New Zealand, (Saungweme, 2002). In fact, Matahwa (2008) added that “Battling international isolation by the West and a creaking economy, Zimbabwe like other countries in Africa has warmed up to China as a possible way out from its economic crises. Maunganidze *et al* (2013)commented that, “In launching the Look East Policy, the Zimbabwean government intended to increase co-operation with a number of countries in Asia and the Far-East with a particular focus on China, Iran, Indonesia, India and Malaysia and in the process, break the West’s economic stranglehold on Zimbabwe. The move was an economic recovery and sustainability strategy. Zimbabwe being a developing country or a Third World establishment, it is inevitable for her to engage foreign assistance to ensure sustainable economic development. The Look East Policy was a necessity for Zimbabwe’s survival as an independent and economically progressive entity. The economic influence of the international community especially the West in the 1990s sub-Saharan African region hindered economic development. In fact the Western world had developed an exploitative and imperialistic

foreign agenda which America depicts in the Middle-East and in Cuba at the time. Matahwa (2008) stated that a number of African countries including Zimbabwe had gone through “Structural Economic Reforms” which left them with large debts to the IMF and the World Bank. In this respect, Africa had to and still has to develop sovereignty driven economic development policies.

On the other hand, after nearly 20 years of relative neglect, China shifted its attention back to Africa, not only to provide political support but also for the considerable economic opportunities, natural resources and market potential Africa demonstrated. This coincided with China’s creation of FOCAC platform to cement and expand its political and economic ties with African countries in 2000. Through FOCAC China institutionalised its symbolic diplomacy with Africa. Within this framework, relations between China and Zimbabwe have been further consolidated through China’s credit facilities and loans to the Zimbabwean government, as well as through investment projects in different sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. At the same time, momentum has been gathered from the Zimbabwean side.

Over the past decade Zimbabwe has faced severe political and socio-economic challenges that have compromised its people’s livelihoods. The adoption of the land reform programme in early 2000 resulted in the souring of relations with the international community as has been mentioned before, and Zimbabwe being subjected to sanctions by the US and European countries after being accused of human rights violations and undermining the rule of law. After the USA’ promulgation of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZDERA) in December 2001, Zimbabwe reeled under tightened targeted sanctions, the effects of which were exacerbated by the prohibition of budgetary assistance by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Zimbabwe was isolated from the international community after 2000 as government was criticised for flouting the tenets of democracy, rule of law, governance and human rights. The crisis was characterised by political instability, dilapidated infrastructure, increased poverty levels, high unemployment, economic

meltdown and hyperinflation. Since then trade with and investment from the West have faced continuous difficulties, which has had a negative impact on Zimbabwe's economic growth and development prospects. Confronted with these challenges, the Zimbabwean government adopted its 'Look East' policy in 2005. In terms of this policy Zimbabwe prioritised its relationships with countries such as, China, Singapore, Iran, Indonesia, India and Malaysia, broadening the scope of its foreign policy. An analysis of the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe by the Western bloc would indicate what Morgenthau (1992) called international power politics. In fact, after seeing that forceful regime change in Zimbabwe was impossible, the West confined itself to the use of economic sabotage in order to lure Zimbabwe into admitting the Western neo-colonial agenda. The Zimbabwean crisis presents a sad story of African stubbornness to the European post-colonial Africa endeavour. The Western bloc is, has always been and will always be a threat to Africa's independent sustainable economic development. This deadlock situation has led Zimbabwe to be inspired by the strategy used by China to independently develop itself. This is why Zimbabwe adopted the Look East Policy, which is surrounded by a series of sovereign economic empowerment sub-policies.

In this case, Maroodza (2011) noted that China has played a critical role in Zimbabwe's political crisis for three reasons: its veto power in the UN Security Council (UNSC); its own developing-country status; and its non-interference policy. As Zimbabwe began to face increasing economic and political disorder, its relations with China became more pragmatic and commercial oriented, grounded in the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in one another's internal affairs, (Gau, 2016). For example, China demonstrated its divergent approach to Zimbabwe when it partnered with Russia in 2005 to block Western-backed UNSC sanctions against the Zimbabwean government. More recently, following the June 2008 Zimbabwean presidential run-off election, China again joined Russia in vetoing UN targeted sanctions that would have imposed more travel bans and financial restrictions on ZANU-

PF's top officials. In response to the political crisis in Zimbabwe, China consistently preferred a dialogue solution, suggesting that any interference would constitute meddling with the domestic politics of the country. At the same time, China has supported the efforts of regional organisations such as the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in trying to come up with a negotiated settlement to the Zimbabwean political stalemate. Ambassador Lui Guijin, China's top envoy to Africa, was quoted by several news outlets on China's position on the Zimbabwean situation as saying, 'We think the issues concerning Zimbabwe should only be resolved by the Zimbabwean people and the international community could play a constructive role by promoting dialogue and reconciliation'. In this case, China and Russia's non-intervention into other countries' political landscape reveals the respect and integrity characteristic of the Communist bloc for sovereignty and independence.

Given that currently, China is Zimbabwe's main source of support and supply, it is time for both China and Zimbabwe to consider the future of their bilateral relations. What follows is a review of the major pillars of these bilateral relations.

Strategic and Diplomatic Co-operation

The China–Zimbabwe relationship has at least three pillars, namely strategic and diplomatic relations; economic relations; and social and cultural relations. The difference between this relationship and China's other bilateral relations lies in the internal balance of these pillars. Most international observers of China–Zimbabwe relations focus only on political support, non-interference and arms sales, which are too narrow a view to fully understand the relationship, (Chinamasa, 2015). China and Zimbabwe follow the same foreign policy principles, as stated by President Mugabe (2014) at the UN General Assembly that Zimbabwe's foreign policy is guided by the principle of *sovereignty*; which demands total ownership of the countries abundant natural and human resources, *empowerment*; which entails the

political and economic elevation of Africans and the promotion of international peace and security. These principles also mark the China's attitude in the international system. The strategic and diplomatic co-operation between the two countries is surrounded by a series of diplomatic agreements that are regularly reviewed and are regarded as binding in creating mutual respect and understanding between China and Zimbabwe. Hence the character of respect is prominent within the two countries' continued co-operation.

Strategic and governmental ties

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1980, China and Zimbabwe have enjoyed fundamentally stable and friendly ties. High level diplomatic visits on both sides of the relationship are depicted. The year 2010 marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries; bilateral relations grew steadily and made positive progress. The two countries have maintained frequent high-level diplomatic exchanges.

The most important and interesting aspect of current China–Zimbabwe relations is the overlap between China's re-engagement with Africa, with the creation of FOCAC at the core of this engagement, and Zimbabwe's 'Look East' policy; and, more recently, the overlap of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim-Asset) announced in October 2013 with China's 'six projects and three networks' proposal for upgrading China–Africa relations announced by Premier Li Keqiang during his trip to Africa in May 2014, Zuma, 2014). These overlapping initiatives highlight the two-way dynamics of this relationship, in that both parties have strong motivations to drive this bilateral relationship further, in contrast with lesser initiatives shown by other African countries in China's other bilateral relations.

In 2000, in response to African countries call for a collective platform to strengthen China–Africa relations, China established FOCAC and received positive feedback from its African partners, Okwoche (2016) added that since then, China–Africa relations have evolved from ‘a new type of long-term and stable partnership based on equality and mutual benefit’ in 2000, to ‘a new type of partnership featuring long-term stability, equality and mutual benefit and all-round co-operation’ in 2003, to ‘a new type of strategic partnership between China and Africa featuring political equality and mutual trust, mutually beneficial economic co-operation, and cultural exchanges’ in 2006. FOCAC provided a framework for China–Zimbabwe relations.

Sikuka (2015) reported on the Second Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in December of 2015 which was preceded by the 6th Ministerial Conference on FOCAC. The summit ran with the theme, “Africa-China Progressing Together: Win-Win Cooperation for Common Development” and was designated as the first time African and Chinese leaders met in Africa to look at ways of deepening cooperation. These meetings prove the improvement of Africa’s economic relationship with China which proves China’s initiative enthusiasm to do business with Africa and honour its obligation as had been agreed in 2000 when FOCAC was born. This strategic tie initiative promotes continued loyalty between China and Africa as a whole.

This was facilitated by China’s provision of a platform that allowed the two countries to pursue their own national interests while helping each other to withstand the effects of Western supremacy. After the 2013 presidential election in Zimbabwe, the new government launched its *economic blueprint*: the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIM-ASSET), which was initially scheduled for five-year tenure and would also contribute to China’s efforts to further upgrade the China–Africa relationship.

Diplomatic support and non-interference

One of the main characteristics of current China–Zimbabwe relations is mutual support in the international arena and mutual respect for domestic affairs. Due to the unfinished reunification, China always seeks external support for its ‘One China’ policy. Zimbabwe stood firmly by China’s side since the establishment of diplomatic relations. For example, when China’s Anti-Secession Law was promulgated in 2005, the Zimbabwean government declared, ‘We in Zimbabwe fully support the decision to adopt the Anti-Secession Law, which first upholds China’s basic policy of peaceful reunification and regards the non-peaceful means only as the last resort to stop Taiwan’s independence.’

In 2012, during the signing of a \$180 million economic and technical co-operation agreement, Zimbabwe’s then Vice President, Joice Mujuru, stated that Zimbabwe adhered to the ‘One China’ policy. China has in turn expressed its gratitude for Zimbabwe’s adherence to this policy, as stated by then Vice President Xi Jinping during his visit to the country in 2011. Gau (2016) commented that China-Zimbabwe relations depict stereo-type diplomatic relations of mutual respect and regard for respect in a partner’s decisions towards its internal governance.

There is also international consensus that China has played a significant role in Zimbabwean politics between 2000 and 2013. The anti-sanctions campaign and China’s conduct alongside Russia in the UNSC, gave Zimbabwe a historic opportunity to redefine itself in terms of its democracy and governance through the establishment of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) between the ruling ZANU-PF and the two Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) formations. Zimbabwe also effectively utilised the opportunity to draft a new constitution with the technical assistance of China, (Mangwana, 2014). This led China and Russia to demonstrate to the international community that it was important to appreciate the Zimbabwean story before hastening into UNSC action. Even at this point,

South Africa and the entirety of the BRICS bloc supported the Zimbabwean cause. This was a stretch of China's influence into defending her "all-weather friend", Zimbabwe. The most significant example here is the voting on UNSC draft resolution S/2008/447 in July 2008 that would have applied further sanctions against Mugabe and his supporters. Ban Ki Moon (2010) added that the draft resolution came after the highly contested 2008 presidential election from which MDC opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai withdrew in protest after alleged voting fraud. China used its permanent seat on the UNSC to veto the draft resolution and was joined by Russia. South Africa also voted against the resolution, although it did not have veto power. In keeping with its principle of non-interference, China maintained that Zimbabwe's problems were internal and did not constitute an international security threat.

More recently, from 28 July to 3 August 2013, at the invitation of the Zimbabwean government, Guijin, the former Chinese ambassador to Zimbabwe and South Africa and the former special representative of the Chinese government on African affairs, led the Chinese observer mission to observe Zimbabwe's presidential election. The observer mission visited about 60 polling stations in five provinces and witnessed the voting process on 31 July. It was the first to announce that the Zimbabwean elections were peaceful, free, orderly and fairly credible, despite some flaws in the process.

Another crucial battle is currently raging, albeit this time behind the scenes and within the inner workings of the Zimbabwean ruling party. Given the fact that Mugabe is getting older, the prospect of a new president is becoming all the more real, and the usually concealed power struggles within ZANU-PF are increasingly being played out in the national spotlight, the Chinese government stands by its non-intervention principle.

Military exchanges

The military relationship between China and Zimbabwe is a traditional aspect of China–Zimbabwe relations. This relationship is the longest standing and the most emotionally attached. However, most analysis simplifies these military relations as arms trade, especially while Zimbabwe is facing Western arms embargoes. Two examples can be used to exemplify these relations, namely China’s arms sales to Zimbabwe and the *An Yue Jiang*’s cargo in 2008.

China–Zimbabwe military relations were formulated in the twilight days of the latter’s liberation struggle, when China supplied ZANU PF with military training and weapons. Based on these relations, China and Zimbabwe increased their military co-operation in the sanctions’ era. As military relations form part of its ‘Look East’ policy, Zimbabwe has purchased a sizeable number of fighter jets, military vehicles and other equipment from China.

The recent military weapons purchased by Zimbabwe from China are presented in the table below:

Table 1.1: Zimbabwe’s purchase of military weapon from China, 2004-2011.

Weapon description	Number	Year	Amount in US\$
Fighter jet	12	2004	240 000 000
Military vehicle	100	2005	5 000 000
Trainer/Combat aircraft	12	2006	3 000 000
	-	2008	12 000 000
AK-47 Rifle	20000		1 500 000
Handcuffs	21000	2011	800 000
Military trucks	15		1 200 000
Total			263 500 000

Source: Ministry of Defence.

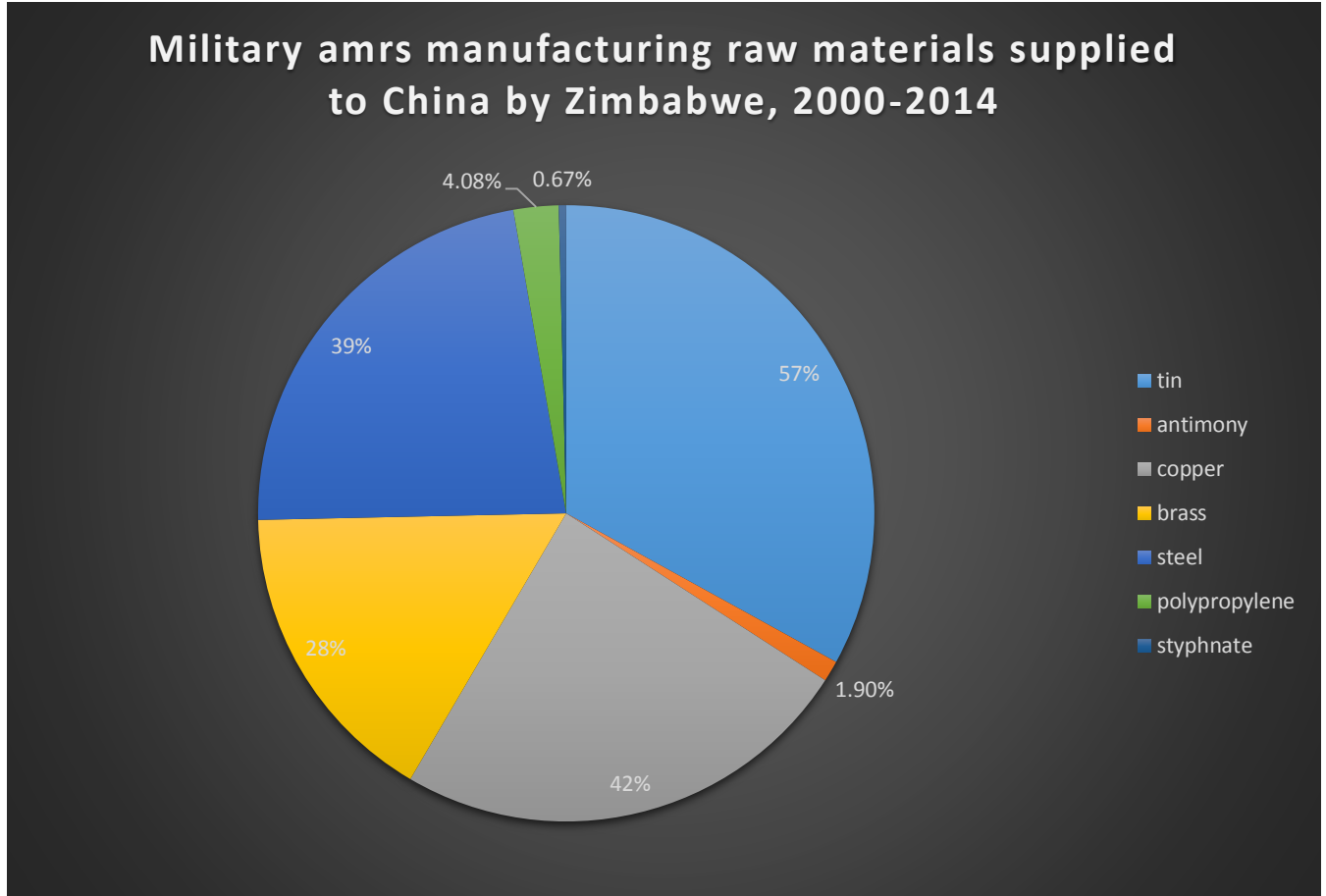
The table presents the major arms sales which include 12 jet fighters and 100 military vehicles valued at Z\$240 million in 2004; six trainer/combat aircraft in 2005; six additional trainer/combat aircraft in 2006; and 20 000 AK-47 rifles, 21 000 pairs of handcuffs and 12–15 military trucks in 2011. However, the Chinese government became very cautious about selling arms to Zimbabwe after the 2008 *An Yue*

Jiang cargo controversy, when it decided to add the country to its list of ‘limited level’ military trading, from which it was only removed at the end of 2013.

The UN (2014) added that China’s overall sales to Zimbabwe have been at least US\$300 million since 2000. The military relationship extends beyond the arms trade to personnel exchange and training. There are frequent training courses at the People’s Liberation Army’s National Defence University for Zimbabwean military officials, and Chinese military officials present courses at Zimbabwe’s National Defence College. The role that China has played in improving and maintaining the efficiency of the Zimbabwean Defence Force cannot be underestimated, especially during Zimbabwe’s international isolation. Zimbabwe has even exported diplomatic Missions to China, in the military personnel exchange strategy contained in the two countries’ bilateral arms relationship. High-Tech co-operation between Zimbabwe and China has also improved Zimbabwe’s State Security Authority into a modernised security organization with sophisticated strategies and technology.

In return, China has extracted most of its arms manufacturing raw materials. The pie chart below presents the amount of military weapon raw materials purchased from Zimbabwe by China.

Figure 1.1: Military arms manufacturing raw materials extracted from Zimbabwe by China.



Source: Retrieved from <http://www.usadefencecollege.org.usa>

This pie chart shows the percentage of China’s overall acquisition of raw materials for making military weapons. NATO (2013) argued that the military weaponry raw materials purchased from Zimbabwe by China from 2000 to 2014 amount to US\$250 million. The figure shows that Zimbabwe provides the highest percentage of tin to China than any other country. Zimbabwe also provides 42% of copper, China’s overall supply base. An analysis of this data depicts that the raw materials can provide Zimbabwe which more US\$50 million per year in tax. Hence the military supply relationship between Zimbabwe and China is a win-win scenario.

Economic Co-operation

With the combination of FOCAC and Zimbabwe's 'Look East' policy, the economic pillar of China–Zimbabwe relations has developed rapidly in the past decade. Economic co-operation between Zimbabwe and China intensified in the early years of the 21st century. Trade, investment, aid, financial crediting and tourism make up the economic outlook of China and Zimbabwe cooperation. Unfortunately, criticism has accrued against the nature of the relationship which Zimbabwe has with China. The economic sector of Zimbabwe has quite been a sad story and reveals the crisis Zimbabwe faces. Zimbabweans have subjected themselves to cancerous and noxious venom which is taboo in the development attempt of Third World countries. Even the long gone popular personality of South Africa, Nelson Mandela (2007) had commented that *corruption* is not healthy for a developing country. On the other hand, it is important to also note that economic co-operation between China and Zimbabwe is only a small part of the China–Africa economic partnership, which is in turn a small part of China's overall foreign economic engagement.

Trade, Investment and Aid

Trade between Zimbabwe and China has increased significantly in the last years, following the former's isolation by the West. Since 2000, trade relations between the two countries have been strengthened through high-level visits by government officials, sharing experiences in different sectors, (Mvutungayi, 2010). China has become Zimbabwe's largest trading partner. Zimbabwe-China trade has been intensified over the years. Despite the repeated decrease in the value of the country's currency since 2000, China continued trading in a variety of commodities with Zimbabwe. The recent trade between the two countries is reportedly based on China's appetite for Zimbabwe's mineral resources and raw materials. On the other hand, Zimbabwe also postures a desperate eye for China's international political

protection and financial assistance necessary for sustainable economic development. In February 2004, trade relations between China and Zimbabwe were further deepened by the signing of an economic and technical agreement. As part of this agreement China committed to helping Zimbabwe improve its tobacco production, a sector adversely affected by the land reform process, by providing the necessary resources. This agreement was expected to have mutual benefits for both countries. The late 1990s had seen very low trade between Zimbabwe and China, with figures as low as Z\$760 million in 1997. In 2000, the figures had risen to US\$6.9 billion. An analysis of the value of the Zimbabwean dollar by that time proves the diminutive character of trade between China and Zimbabwe at the start of the 21st century.

Trade between the two grew after Zimbabwe's isolation by the West and in 2005; the level of Sino-Zimbabwe trade had risen to US\$283 million and rose further to US\$520million by 2010. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of China, Zimbabwe's trade with China has steadily increased since the mid-1990s. It is reported that bilateral trade between the two countries increased from US\$52.2 million in 1996 to US\$295.25 million in 2006, with a peak of US\$874.37 million in 2011. This trend continued under the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2012 and 2013, witnessing further growth in bilateral trade with the figure reaching US\$1 billion in 2012 and US\$1.1 billion in 2013.

Much like the trading patterns between China and other African states, bilateral trade between China and Zimbabwe has been characterised by the export of raw materials in return for manufactured goods (including clothing, textiles and footwear), vehicles (cars, buses, tractors and aircraft), electrical machinery and other equipment. However, in contrast with many other countries' trade profiles with China, indicates that trade between the two countries is skewed towards Zimbabwe. It is unusual that a non-oil-exporting developing country can export more products to China than it imports. This trend is

an indication that Zimbabwe secured a market in China for its resources after the withdrawal of the West.

Exports from Zimbabwe to China have been dominated by cash crops (tobacco, cotton) and minerals (particularly nickel and ferroalloys). Tobacco is Zimbabwe's main export product to China. Since the late 1990s there has been a gradual increase in Chinese imports as a result of the number of loans China has extended to Zimbabwe to buy agricultural and manufacturing equipment.

During the period under review, 2010-2016, Zimbabwe-China trade has grown intensively. China has become Zimbabwe's top trading partner. Zimbabwe's adoption of the multi-currency system in September 2008 saw enormous inflows of cheap Chinese products in the country. Mugabe (2015) recorded that China and Zimbabwe trade has totalled

Chinese investors have and continue to show a keen interest in mining, agriculture, manufacturing and the retail sectors, with business delegates from China visiting Zimbabwe regularly to explore opportunities. 'We have turned to the East, where the sun rises, and given our backs to the West, where the sun sets,' as President Mugabe declared when he launched his 'Look East' policy in 2005, (Maunganidze *et al*, 2013). The policy has been rewarding, especially for China. The Chinese have significantly increased their investments in Zimbabwe, which accounts for the growing number of Chinese citizens in the country. Chinese companies began investing in Zimbabwe since 1994. However, the process was relatively slow up until 2003. From 1994 to 2003, three Chinese companies actively invested in Zimbabwe: China Building Material Industrial Corporation for Foreign Econo-Technical Co-operation invested \$5.844 million (65% of shares) in the Sino-Zimbabwe Cement Company, Zimna Tractor Assembly Factory invested ZIM56 4.8 million (58% of shares) in Dwala Enterprises (PVT) Ltd, and Hongda Intertexture Factory invested \$810,000 (50% of shares) in a private company named Super Garments. After the launch of the 'Look East' policy, China's investment in Zimbabwe grew rapidly,

and in 2005, 29 companies were operating in Zimbabwe. Since then, the number has gradually increased, with 42 companies in 2011, 44 in 2012 and 45 in 2013, 59 in (May 2014)

Chinese investment in Zimbabwe rose by more than 5 000% from 2009 to 2013, with the country now among Africa's largest recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI) from the world's second-largest economy. Annual FDI from China increased from \$11.2 million in 2009 to \$602 million in 2013 as Chinese investors largely focused on mining, agriculture and manufacturing. In total, Chinese companies invested \$1.3 billion over this period. Zimbabwe's portion of Chinese investment in Africa increased from just 0.8% of \$1.43 billion in 2009 to 7.2% of \$3.5 billion in 2013. This made Zimbabwe the top recipient of Chinese investment in 2013.

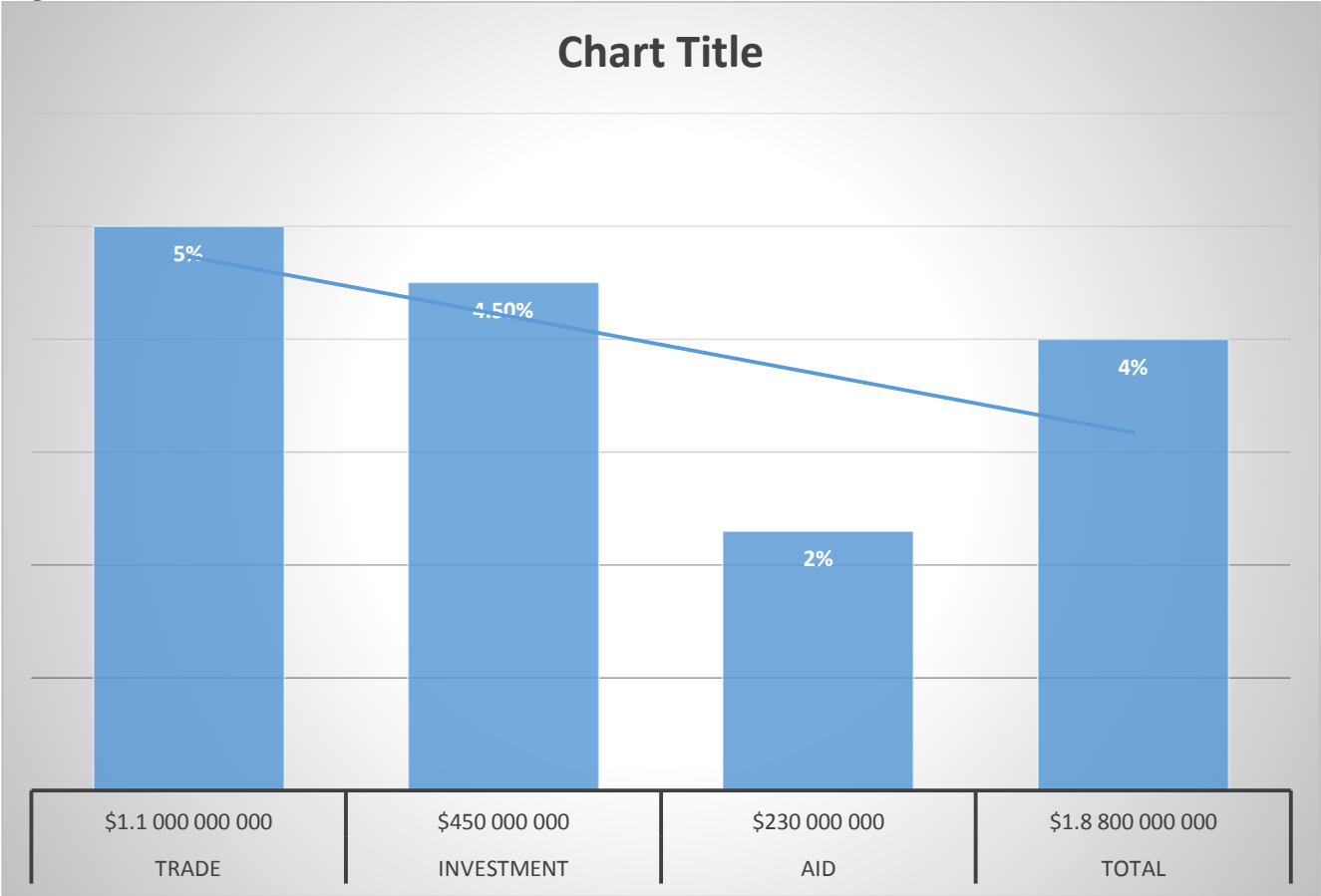
Initially, Chinese investments were concentrated in the extractive sector, responding to the exponential growth in industrial demand for raw materials and mineral ores. The Chinese diamond mining firm Anjin is in a partnership with Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation, which is operating in the Marange diamond fields, and China International Mining Group is interested in investing \$21.2 million in Bindura Nickel Corporation, a company that had ceased operations due to operational difficulties in Zimbabwe and a sharp decline in the price of nickel. Sino-Zimbabwe Ltd with its subsidiaries Sino-Zimbabwe Cement Company and Sino-Zimbabwe Diamond Ltd (which specialise in cement manufacturing and mining, cotton ginning and spinning, respectively), has invested significantly in Zimbabwe through various ventures. It is reported that in 2011 alone, Zimbabwe signed agreements worth \$700 million with Chinese investors interested in mineral extraction and beneficiation. China Development Bank is also reported to be interested in investing \$10 billion in Zimbabwe's mining and agricultural sectors. Chinese companies have also become active in Zimbabwe's manufacturing, agricultural, retail, transport and infrastructure sectors. As in other African countries, China is moving

beyond merely securing essential inputs to acquiring stakes in potentially productive enterprises in Zimbabwe.

In 2001, China EXIM Bank provided a concessional loan to Zimbabwe's Ministry of Water for infrastructural development. Through this loan the District Development Fund acquired equipment worth \$8 million for the development, maintenance and upgrading of road infrastructure. In 2006, the Zimbabwe Farmers Development Company received a China EXIM Bank concessional loan for agricultural equipment and tools worth \$25 million. The Zimbabwean government was awarded a buyer's credit loan facility by China EXIM Bank valued at \$200 million in August 2006 to buy the necessary inputs for the country's underperforming agricultural sector. These included fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural tools and irrigation equipment that Harare had been unable to buy due to the shortage of foreign currency.

The value of trade, investment and aid within Sino-Zimbabwe relations has intensified over the years and an analysis of this has been represented by the graph below.

Figure 1.2: Value of Sino-Zimbabwe trade, investment and aid, 2000-2015.



Source: Zimbabwe Investment Authority

The graph presents Zimbabwe’s total economic growth with China over the last 15 years. It shows that trade has had the largest input in Zimbabwe and China economic relations. In this case the total value of Zimbabwe’s economic engagements with China has gone up to US\$1.8 billion, from 2000 to 2015.

CONCLUSION

In this case, as can be noticed from the background framework of the Zimbabwe-China relationship provided above, it is evident that the two countries have a traditional deep rooted relationship which traces its origins back to the Zimbabwe's age of revolution, even way before. China has proved to be a long-remembered friend of the Southern African country who has brought about Zimbabwe's independence. Unfolding events as the millennium began have proved to be the pushing factors that cemented the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

As has been mentioned before, in analysing Zimbabwe's Look East Policy, the focus has been deliberately on China although there are many bilateral cooperation activities taking place with countries like India, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. China's relationship with Zimbabwe has overshadowed these other relationships. Other relations with the Eastern bloc do overallly contribute significantly towards the economic well-being of Zimbabwe and are therefore equally important.

In this case relations with the East, especially China were intensified by Zimbabwe's isolation within the international system. Zimbabwe has shown a failure to articulate effective crisis management strategies which would have saved the country's relations with the West as well. The 1990s economic deadlock, driven by Zimbabwe's adoption of ineffective economic policies in the name of ESAP put the country in a desperate position. This was exacerbated by the adoption of the land reform which had followed the country's involvement in the DRC war and the compensation of the war veterans which had sucked the country's Treasury of the little that it had left.

Political turmoil in the early 2000 was welcomed by the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe by the Western bloc, which pushed the country to adopt the "Look East Policy" in 2005 as a desperate measure in search of economic assistance for the country's endeavour to promote sustainable economic development, hence the cemented relationship between the two countries.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

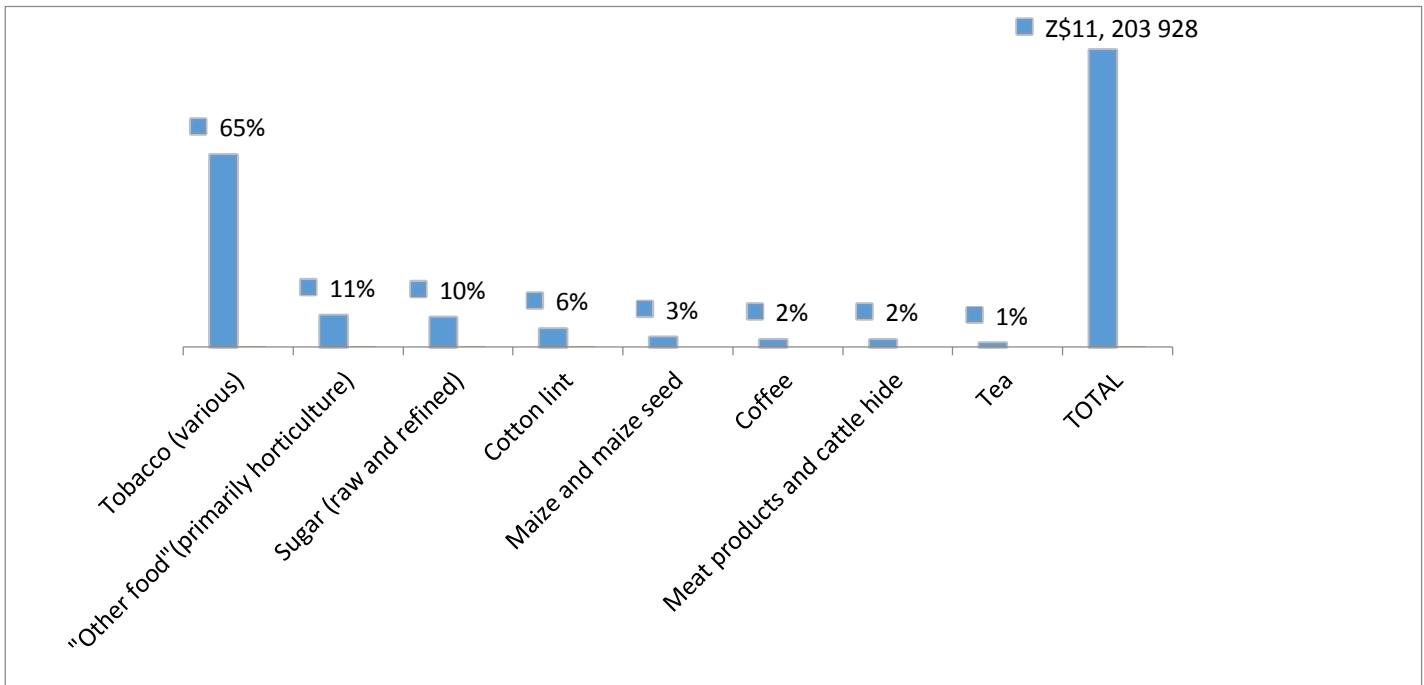
The chapter under discussion reveals Zimbabwe's economic meltdown and the initiatives to revive it. The Chapter analyses the developments that crashed the Zimbabwean economy. The economy of the country provides the sad-story surrounding the nation's development age. It leaves a history to be told to future generations. Zimbabwe became subjected to the worst punishments of capitalism. The consequences of stubbornness in a poor African country are pragmatically exposed in the Zimbabwean experience. This study ultimately aims to expose the evil, malicious, villainy and ultimate disregard of civilisation presented by the USA, Britain, the EU, Canada and the whole Western domain. In this second chapter of the research, the appearance of a Messiah is introduced to the sad analysis of Zimbabwe's economic spectrum. The Chinese' arrival as a possible solution to Zimbabwe's distressed economic landscape is critically appreciated. The chapter gives a brilliant examination of the relationship between Zimbabwe and China as a bias created in the evaluation of the role played by the Look East Policy in improving the economy of the African countries. The focus of this chapter is to persuade the reader to appreciate Zimbabwe's efforts to recover economically, whilst guaranteeing political, social, cultural and psychological sovereignty of the country's population. This chapter is a marketing piece for Zimbabwe to the Western propagandised reader who biasely views Zimbabwe as a threat to international peace and security.

Zimbabwe's Economic Decline in the 1990s.

Independent Zimbabwe's economic decline began to visibly take place in 1997. It began with the crash of the stock market on November 14, 1997. Civil society groups began to agitate for their rights as these had been eroded under ESAP. In 1997 alone, 232 strikes were recorded, the largest number in any year since independence (Kanyenze 2004).The period under review here witnessed the most difficult era in

Zimbabwe's economic history. A series of dreadful events unfolded and drastic policies were instituted with a visionless eye towards the demands of African people who had acquired back the land they had been long separated from saw the surrendering of what used to be a milk and honey economic structure into a poor, dilapidated economy of Zimbabwe. The later years of the 1990-2000 decade was the most destabilised by the then 20 year old Zimbabwean government. By 2000, the government of Mugabe was put in a distressed situation which made it succumb to the pressures by the majority of its people to embark on a desperate land acquisition programme which further distressed its capacity to develop sustainably. The country's main economic stronghold was its agricultural sector which according to Central Statistics Office (1998) provided for the employment and livelihoods of 70% of the total Zimbabwean population. Agriculture, before the year 2000 provided 30% formal employment for the total population. Jackson and Collier (1991) noted that, "Virtually all rural households in Zimbabwe, engaged in agriculture production to a greater or lesser extent. The then Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (1998) added that agriculture contributed to other industries by supplying 60% of the raw materials required in the industrial sector. Depending on the year from 1980 to 1998, the agricultural sector contributed 40-50% of total export revenue, over half of which came from tobacco. Table 1.1 below shows the agricultural 1996 export structure, revealing the maximum sales and revenue input of the sector, a year before chaos struck Zimbabwe's economy.

TABLE 1.1: Agriculture Exports 1996, (Zimbabwe).



Source: (Ministry of lands and Agriculture, 1998)

The above table highlights the importance of the agriculture sector to the early years of Zimbabwe's economy. The statistics prove that the Zimbabwean economy was alive and had the potential to grow as expected by the African government. The analysis of the agricultural sector has been done to show the misgivings of the land reform programme which destroyed Zimbabwe's number one economic growth sector.

Moreover, economists argue that the policies introduced into the Zimbabwean economy in the early years of the 1990-2000 decade hindered the flow of economy. The first being the commonly known, Structural Adjustment Policies adopted as a World Bank recommendation to the economic development of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's economy was on a high performance in the early years of the nation's independence. The Government of Zimbabwe's Economic Report (2008) stated that, "...prior to 1990, the country experienced periods of strong and weak economic performance. Gross Domestic Product growth rate growth rates averaged 4.5% a year during the 1960s-80s, reflecting deliberate policies that

promoted large-scale investment in domestic manufacturing and agriculture. The Report posited that the country recorded its strongest post-independence growth performance during the 1980-90 decade with GDP growing by an average of 5.5%, higher than the average for sub-Saharan African countries. Real GDP growth rate was however characterised by considerable volatility influenced by weather conditions and high levels of foreign capital inflows at independence in 1980. It was also driven by redistributive fiscal policies that focused on increased Government spending on health, education, and other social welfare programmes within framework of a *command economy*.

A series of economic policies adopted by the Zimbabwean government in the early years of the last decade of the 20th century, particularly ESAP are worth discussing in the analysis of Zimbabwe's economic crumble.

Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP).

In October 1990, the Zimbabwean government to Western donor pressure and grudgingly agreed to implement the prescribed five-year *Economic Structural Adjustment Programme*(ESAP) as a response to the economic crisis which had been afflicting the country since the 1980s. Sithole (2002) argued that this was a result of Zimbabwe's pursuance of the post war reconstruction programme which was supported by foreign donors. The 1980s saw the reconstruction programme become a success as the economy was re-capitalised and reintegrated into the world economy. In this case, foreign donors' influence in initiating economic policies for Zimbabwe was still visible in the early years of Zimbabwe's independence. Poulton *et al* (2001) argued that after the Lancaster House Constitution expired in 1991, removing one of the main constraints to land redistribution, the Zimbabwean government also adopted an economic liberalisation programme affecting virtually all sectors of the economy. Since 1990, policy makers in Zimbabwe worked to liberalize the economic system through

the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP), which allowed for an open market economy driven by a strong export base.

Adoption of the Structural Adjustment Plan meant that Zimbabwe had to: remove price controls, remove wage controls, reduce government expenditure, de-value the Zimbabwean dollar by 40%, remove subsidies on basic consumer goods, liberalise the foreign currency allocation system, remove protection on non-productive import substituting industries and increase profit remittance abroad and radically restructure the parastatals and other public entities, (Goz, 2002).

Performance indicators show that the economy grew by a respectable average of 4.3 percent per annum under the ‘bad’ control policies of the 1980s but only by a miserable 0.8 percent under the so-called ‘good’ policies. The failure to achieve the expected 5 percent growth rate under ESAP can be attributed to the adverse effect on the manufacturing industry. Although liberalization was viewed by many as positive, it had the effect of exposing the manufacturing industry to foreign competition for which it was unprepared for.

War Veterans Pay outs.

During the first half of 1997, the war veterans organized themselves and carried out demonstrations that were initially ignored by the government. As the intensity of the strikes grew, the government was forced to pay the war veterans a once-off gratuity of ZWD \$50,000 by December 31, 1997 and a monthly pension of US\$2,000 beginning January 1998 (Kanyenze 2004). To raise money for this unbudgeted expense, the government tried to introduce a ‘war veterans’ levy,’ but they faced much opposition from the labour force and had to effectively borrow money to meet these obligations.

War in the Democratic Republic of Congo

In a move widely criticized, Zimbabwe entered the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998. Assessing the involvement of Zimbabwe's troops in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is evident that this was one of the pivotal starting points of Zimbabwe's economic decline. Zimbabwe aligned itself to the government of Laurent Kabila and fought against the Tutsi rebels of the Rwandan and Burundi forces. Some view the intervention in the war as a move by certain individuals to enrich themselves through the illegal diamond industry that was booming in the Congo. The costs to Zimbabwe were estimated to have been almost 3 million USD per day, and analysts state that the government spent ZWD 6 billion in unbudgeted expenditure on the war. Although different sources quote ambiguous values for government expenditure for that war, the values still reflect a large portion of the budget. Many economists have viewed this as the beginning of the downfall of the Zimbabwean economy due to increased unbudgeted government spending.

The 'Fast Track' Land Reform Program

In 2000, President Mugabe initiated the 'Fast Track' land reform program to redistribute land to the black majority. Many independent critics view this as an unruly process that did not redistribute land within the judicial framework. Farms were taken by force and many farmers were given a one day ultimatum to evacuate their farms without prior warning. This project was later relabelled the 'Fast Track Land Reform program' and was aimed at creating 51,000 new farms. There was a huge disparity between the quality of farming that took place on commercial farms and communal farms; many Zimbabwean economists argue that this was due to property rights. Commercial farmers had title deeds to the land and therefore had access to loans for equipment whereas the black majority on communal farming areas suffered from the tragedy of the commons.

The government undertook the first of the white owned farm invasions in a bid to reclaim land that was in the hands of the white minority. Hawkins (2008) states however that the disorderly and hurried way in which the program was carried out contributed greatly to a decrease in production. From then on, agricultural output, which was once Zimbabwe's pride, began to fall drastically. In spite of falling tax revenues, civil servants' salaries were increased. The budget deficit progressively worsened from 5.5 percent of GDP in 1998 to 24.1 percent by the end of 2000. The deficit had been targeted to decline to 3.8 percent of GDP by the end of 2000.

By 2003, Zimbabwe's economy was the fastest shrinking in the world, at 18 percent per year. The most detrimental effects of the land reform program on the economy have been the following: Commercial farmers utilized economies of scale to achieve high yields at the lowest possible costs. The Land Reform program redistributed land by partitioning land into smaller farms, thereby eliminating this cost-cutting mechanism. A tremendous drop in output was recorded.

The new farmers do not have access to loans. Due to the tightening of the system, banks started becoming more reluctant to lend money to individual farmers. This is because after the Land Reform Program, banks had no mandate to lend to farmers as the farmers cannot use the land as collateral. As a result of the lack of access to loans, the government has had to hand out farming inputs including equipment and fertilizer, increasing unbudgeted expenses.

Richardson(2005) estimated that the land reform played a bigger role in creating the crisis than the drought: 'My econometric estimates indicate that the independent effect of the land reforms, after controlling for rainfall, foreign aid, capital, and labour productivity, led to a 12.5 percent annual decline in GDP growth for each of the four years between 2000 and 2003. The drop in rainfall in the 2001-02 growing season contributed to less than one-seventh of the overall downturn. Without above-average rains, Zimbabwe's economy would have been in even worse shape, hard as that is to believe.'

One of the main challenges associated with land reform in Zimbabwe is the fact that although there was transference of land, there was no transference of skill and knowledge about how to run these farms. The white farmers were forced to leave the farms, taking with them managerial knowledge and in some cases their tools, leaving the new breed of farmers with a piece of land and no skills to farm it. In retrospect, would it have been more efficient if instead of partitioning these farms, the government had allowed a tenancy situation whereby the white farmers remain and offer their managerial skills and then the black majority would 'rent' some of the land? Such a form of private contracting might seem more desirable because the economies of scale would not be lost and there would be no social cost because of a lack of farming skills.

The Influx of Chinese Nationals into Zimbabwe.

China's relationship with Zimbabwe deepened during the early 2000s, as the European Union and United States vociferously condemned political violence in Zimbabwe and Mugabe's flagrant human rights violations. The Council of Europe imposed targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe in February 2002 after concluding that upcoming elections would not be free and fair. In response to increased economic isolation from Western powers, Mugabe announced his Look East policy in 2005. This policy pivoted Zimbabwe economically towards the Asia-Pacific region, with an emphasis on closer trade relations with China.

China has therefore taken a leading role in modernizing Zimbabwe's dominant agricultural and mining sectors in a manner amenable to its broader interests. In 2003, Robert Mugabe agreed to a landmark Chinese agricultural investment deal to bolster Zimbabwe's corn production, after his radical land redistribution policies left an estimated 7 million Zimbabweans at risk of famine. The long-term goal of the project was to restore Zimbabwe to agricultural self-sufficiency and to its former status as the

“breadbasket of Africa.” Even though this effort failed, China became the dominant importer of a vital Zimbabwean cash crop, tobacco. By 2015, China was the destination of 54% of Zimbabwe’s tobacco exports. The research will also focus on industrial growth, tourism and the employment rate from 2010 to 2016 to determine the success of the Look East Policy on the Zimbabwean economy.

China’s attempt to rehabilitate the Zimbabwean mining sector has followed a similar trajectory. China’s mining interests in Zimbabwe are wide-ranging with its first major foray in 2003 being a \$300 million investment in Zimbabwe’s iron, steel, chrome and platinum resources. The commercialization of diamonds as a Zimbabwean export product rapidly increased Chinese investments in the mining sector and forced Mugabe to make major economic concessions to China.

As a result of Zimbabwe’s “Look East” economic policy, a trade between Zimbabwe and China increased to nearly US\$1.2 billion in 2014 (January- November). China is now the biggest source of imports for Zimbabwe, with cheap Chinese products threatening the survival of local industries. This has resulted in significant Chinese investments in various sectors, including mining, telecommunications, infrastructure, agriculture and retail.

The World Bank has projected Zimbabwe’s economy to register a modest 1,5% flat-lining on last year’s figures due to weakening commodity prices and low agriculture output, a projection Finance minister Patrick Chinamasa discounts as government crafts an economic blueprint to spur growth after full re-engagement with multilateral lenders.

According to the World Zimbabwe Economic Outlook Report (2016), the country’s services sector will drive economic growth. Zimbabwe’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) slowed from 3, 8% in 2014 to 1,5% in 2015 and 2016, due largely to the impact of an ongoing drought, which is taking a heavy toll on agriculture output. Aggregate consumption exceeds GDP and has made a disproportionately large contribution to economic growth during 2010-15.

Chinamasa however maintained that while weakening commodity prices would slow down growth, treasury maintained the economy would grow by between 2% and 3% this year driven by a raft of reforms boosting capital inflows. He said Zimbabwe, which owes three preferred creditors—World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank — US\$1,8 billion in arrears is crafting a strategy paper to quicken economic growth.

Zimbabwe is also experiencing liquidity constraints, rolling power outages and high labour costs weighing down on key economic sectors.

Infrastructure Development

China-Zimbabwe relations have seen quite tangible results of infrastructural development in Zimbabwe. The 36 years of Zimbabwe's independence witnesses China's construction of the gigantic Zimbabwe National Stadium and Magamba Hockey Stadium in the early years of Zimbabwe's independence, (Mudyamadzo, 2011). China had, between 1980 and 2006 availed more than 300 million Yuan in different areas of infrastructural development cooperation between the two countries, according to Zimbabwe's then Minister of Finance and Economic Development. The official launch of the Zimbabwe-China Business Centre (ZCBC) in 2004 by then Zimbabwe's Vice President, Joyce Mujuru aggravated infrastructural development especially within Zimbabwe. Up to date, a swooping US\$500 million has been devoted to infrastructural development in Zimbabwe under the Sino-Zimbabwe relations, (The Herald, 19 January 2006).

China availed more than US\$30 million for the Rural Electrification Project in Zimbabwe, (Murerwa, 2006). More so, recent trends have shown the inflow of infrastructural development investments by China to Zimbabwe. The completion of the Hwange Colliery Power Station and the Kariba South Thermal Power Station by the Chinese Government in amalgamation with the Zimbabwe Power

Company, (ZPC) has proved to be one of the greatest infrastructure completed projects within the spectrum of Zimbabwe-China relations, (Gau, 2016).

Moreover, Zimbabwe-China relations have witnessed the inflow of Chinese Parastatals in the construction sector of Zimbabwe. Chinese construction companies have flocked to Zimbabwe for massive infrastructure development investments. The construction of the Long-Cheng Plaza in the capital of Zimbabwe, Harare has seen the growing urge of Chinese endeavor to develop Zimbabwe's capital. In this case, the construction sector has seen widespread personal connection development between the two countries. This development movement has benefited both parties as it can be noticed that this relationship created an employment base for Chinese nationals who have flocked rampantly into Zimbabwe as technical support to the country's construction activities. In this case, the recent 12 mega deals signed between Zimbabwe and China are also focused on guaranteeing infrastructural development for the African country. The mega deals, Chinamasa (2016) says are more focused on developing Zimbabwe's energy infrastructure to allow effective consumption of energy. Even the high-tech investment relationship between Zimbabwe and China has witnessed widespread development of the technological infrastructure in the former. Hence infrastructural development has been a major pillar in the relationship between Zimbabwe and China.

The Mining Sector

Mining is a subject around which China and Zimbabwe's shares as a common area of interest. Zimbabwe has engaged Chinese firms to invest in the former's abundant mineral base. In this light, China has become one of largest investor in Zimbabwe's mining sector. Figures made available by the Zimbabwean government (2014) reveal that between January and May 2013, 'China accounted for 74% of the \$134 million of the foreign direct investments and during the same period, Chinese businesses invested \$16 million in mining'. Despite this convergence of interests, there has also been a string of

controversies, especially as a result of the involvement of the military in the politics of mining in Zimbabwe. The African country has failed to ultimately exploit maximum benefits from its wide mineral base. Allegations of corruption and mis-governance in the country's mineral sector have become widespread. Together with the economic sanctions and uninviting investment legislation, Zimbabwe has not had its fair share in mineral business, (Zindiye, 2012).

One of China's earliest involvements in the Zimbabwean mining sector took place in 2003, when the Shanghai Baosteel Group signalled its intention of investing \$300 million in the country's metal and mining industry, (Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, 2005). China's initial interest was in minerals such as iron, steel, chrome and platinum. However, its interest became far more pronounced when the Zimbabwe discovered diamonds on a commercial scale. Since November 2004, several trade agreements have been signed in the mining sector. One of the earliest of these agreements constitutes the basis for the establishment of a joint venture with China North Industries Corporation (Norinco) which is a leading armaments company. This agreement indicates the mutually reinforcing links that would exist between mining, defence and the economy in Sino-Zimbabwean relations.

Since the early 2000s, China has invested enormously in diamonds in Zimbabwe. The major investment in this area comes through the activities of the Chinese company Anjin, which invested \$400 million in a joint venture with the Zimbabwean government to mine diamonds in the Marange fields, (Chirara, 2014). This concession was given in exchange for the \$98 million construction of the country's National Defence College. Anjin Investments is controlled by a subsidiary company, Zimbabwe Defence Industries. This has resulted in the militarisation of the extractive sector in Zimbabwe, where the generals have become company directors and shareholders on behalf of the government.

In March 2011, China signed nearly US\$700 million in loan deals with Zimbabwe, which at that time was the biggest loan package to the country, (Simunye, 2015). In exchange, the Chinese government

hinted that Chinese companies in Zimbabwe should be protected from the country's nationalisation plans. Earlier, the Mugabe government had announced an indigenisation plan that would give 51% of all companies worth more than \$500,000 – including mining companies – to local shareholders. While discussing the \$700 million loan with the then Zimbabwean Deputy President, Joice Mujuru in 2011, then Chinese Deputy Premier, Wang Qishan, specifically noted that he 'hoped Zimbabwe would protect the legitimate right of Chinese businesses in the country'. Zimbabwe then exempted Chinese-owned alluvial diamond mines in the country's eastern region, Marange from the principles of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy adopted in 2011, (Kasukuwere, 2013).

The Nexus between the Look East Policy and ZIMASSET

ZIM-ASSET, (Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation) is Zimbabwe's 2013 to 2018 economic policy blueprint that lays the foundation upon which the country would apply in pursuing its economic objectives for five-year tenure. ZIM-ASSET is cluster categorized including four broad categories of prioritization in government business from 2013 to 2018. In this case, ZIM-ASSET was developed to complement Zimbabwe's Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy which advocated for the up-liftment of indigenous Zimbabweans and increase beneficiation of the countries resources, while attracting credible investment. In this light, ZIM-ASSET actually appears to be a threat to on the Chinese side of the Look East Policy. ZIM-ASSET has been argued to be far-much expensive for the Chinese liking, (Gau, 2016). The Zimbabwe Investment Authority (2014) posited that, the Look East Policy faces a threat from ZIM-ASSET or as had been done under the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Programme, Chinese firms have to be exempted from the obligations imposed under ZIM-ASSET.

Conclusion

The Zimbabwe situation over the period discussed in the chapter truly inspired Zimbabwe to ‘Look East’. Economic trends between 1980 and 2004 before the look east foreign policy was formally adopted suggests that Zimbabwe had been put in a desperate position which truly deserved the formulation of an alternative to fill in the financial support department which was exclusively necessary during the turn of the new millennium. In this case, there is no doubt that Chinese investment has propped up Zimbabwe during this period of alienation from West. Unfortunately there has been very little practical change on the ground in terms of economic development in Zimbabwe over the years. This may be the result of the continuation of continued imposition of economic sanctions against Zimbabwe by the West. In fact, corruption within Zimbabwe’s economic circles also premise continued underdevelopment of the country. To make matters worse, farming community is failing to produce enough to feed the nation despite getting support through National Input Scheme. Chinese economy is growing again so it is possible that bilateral investment may improve. Although there is marginal stability in the economy, liquidity problems never disappeared, manufacturing is dead as confirmed by Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries recently, unemployment is still in mid-40% and Zimbabwe Stock Exchange has only a handful of companies trading. The following chapter continues with an assessment of the rationale behind Zimbabwe’s engagement with China as an economic reform mechanism.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

This chapter presents the final analysis to the nature of Zimbabwe's relationship with China. It gives a close appreciation of China's assistance to Zimbabwe's struggle for sustainable development. A comprehensive assessment of what Zimbabwe needs to offer to China is provided in this section of the research. The chapter will also highlight the need for Zimbabwe to engage both the West and the East if the country is to effectively benefit from its vast resource base. The chapter finally concludes the research giving closing remarks of the work done by the researcher.

An Analysis of the Look East Policy in Zimbabwe

China's development assistance to Zimbabwe has no political conditions such as human rights, environmental protection, democracy and good governance tied to it. In fact, terms and conditions attached to the concessional and interest free loans are hardly made public. Sino-Zimbabwe relationship is strictly guided by contractual business terms and conditions that are based on mutual understanding and respect for one other's ideological decisions. Gau (2016) argued that Zimbabwe and China have a friendship based on respect and operate in good faith. This is because of Zimbabwe's experience with the West in the early 1990s which witnessed the World Bank and IMF offering economic advice to Zimbabwe's internal governance structure leading to the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme which has been argued by Vice President Mnangagwa (2016) as the worst blunder that the nation made in its history of development.

Moreover, one of China's fundamental criteria for funding projects in Zimbabwe includes the technical feasibility and ability of the project to generate favorable economic returns for the former. The country's 2011 White Paper on Foreign Aid makes it clear that China still has a largely 'poverty-stricken population' and it would therefore be unwise to think that it would simply hand out aid without

an expectation of a return (Karombo, 2015). China's aid is not exclusively 'unconditional' but the conditions it prescribes are not economically destructive as those offered by the West. Bing (2015) eluded that China will only consider extending a loan to Zimbabwe if it secured by mineral proceeds. In this case, Zimbabwe remains on the receiving hand of its relations to China. Zimbabwe has the urge to approach its relationship with China in diligent style, making sure that it makes the most out of this bilateral engagement. In fact, the changes in regimes in China may also require a change in regime in Zimbabwe for the two traditional mutual understanding to continue. This is so because, the good friends that Zimbabwe had in China stretching from the liberation struggle are long gone and the Asian nation has retained radical leaders who may not be personally attached to Zimbabwe's cries as was the case in the 1980s. Hence, Zimbabwe has to approach its relations with China with a neutral eye, which is, not expecting much favors from the Asian giant.

In addition, statistics have revealed that China's economic engagement with Zimbabwe has been rather infinitesimal than expected or compared to the whole spectrum of the Asian giant's relationship with Africa. Olisa (2016) argued that China's economic engagement with Zimbabwe today only amounts to less than US\$2 billion when the Asian country's total economic engagement with Africa amounts to more than US\$300 billion. In economics, this arguably reveals the level of commitment for economic engagement between Zimbabwe and China. The end of 2015 witnessed the Chinese president's state visit to Zimbabwe, the second in the history of Zimbabwe-China relations, against more than 20 times that the Zimbabwe's president has gone to China for bilateral engagements. This reveals that China is not fully committed to economic relations with Zimbabwe but has focused on maintaining the traditional friendship that these two countries have enjoyed. Okwoche added that China has a wider range of choices than any other country when it comes to economic relationships, in this case turns to be

too busy to listen to a poor African country's exclamations. In fact, Zimbabwe needs to stand on firm ground and claim a fair share of their dues within the space of its relationship with China.

The benefits of Chinese development assistance to Zimbabwe have been 'the political preservation of Mugabe's reign and personal aggrandisement through corruption and kickbacks by his ZANU-PF cronies flowing from Chinese investments'. Though there has been mounting pressure for China to reconsider its development assistance to Zimbabwe, the Chinese Special Envoy to Africa and Sudan (CSEAS), (2015) has argued that: '...we do not believe in embargoes *that just means that the people suffer. From a practical consideration, embargoes and sanctions cannot solve problems, just like armed invasion cannot solve problems'. In accord with this view, in July 2008 China and Russia blocked attempts by the other members of the United Nations Security Council to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe. Again, it would seem, China's relations with Zimbabwe have contributed to continued patronage and corruption within the government in Harare.

Chinese development assistance has also been criticised for the flouting of regulatory frameworks. It would seem that Chinese-tied development assistance has been allowed to interfere with the government of Zimbabwe's trade and investment regulatory framework, as Chinese companies receive preferential treatment.

In essence, China's various engagements in Zimbabwe have been coupled with conditions that are beneficial to China; the nature of China's development assistance has contributed to internal conflict in Zimbabwe and diminished the role of NGOs, civil society and other potential political watchdogs; Zimbabwe has seen decreased political accountability as China's aid has fostered diminished transparency and thus, very likely, corruption; and China's aid policies have distorted Zimbabwe's regulatory frameworks. All this is largely due to the lack of good governance conditions on China's aid, and the secrecy surrounding China's interactions with Zimbabwe.

The reliance on China has so far been working to some extent; this model is simply not sustainable. China's long term growth prospects are increasingly being threatened by the recent trends of decline in the working-age population, somewhat attributed to its 'one-child' policy and its socio-economic structure where an estimated 900 million people of its 1, 2 billion population still live in poverty. Already, some are predicting that the Chinese economic bubble may be starting to burst. A weakening of the Chinese economy as a result of these structural issues would inevitably be a precursor to a massive scaling down of their outward FDI flows. Basing on the current economic model, Zimbabwe would be adversely exposed to this economic risk.

Zimbabwe's benefits from the Look East Policy

This section summarises the benefits of the various sectors in Zimbabwe's economy emerging from the main data sources. Trade relations between China and Zimbabwe are "characterised by a classical pattern of trade between 'developing' and 'developed' economies" (Stiftung, 2004). Zimbabwe as a 'developing' economy has increased its imports of machinery, electrical items, engine, motor parts and telecommunication products from China and is exporting mainly agricultural products. Such trade relations make it impossible for Zimbabwe to diversify its own economy as it heavily relies on the limited income from the sale of "raw materials needed by China". The tourism sector has seen a huge influx of visitors from China into the country and Zimbabwean visitors into China have also increased (Chigora and Chisi, 2009).

The two countries have signed an agreement which makes it easier to travel between Harare and Beijing. China granted Zimbabwe an Approved Destination Status, which simply means that China is committed to actively "encourage people to travel to Zimbabwe by simplifying visa requirements" (Alden, 2007, p. 153-155). Zimbabwe has responded to this influx by introducing direct flights. However, despite the agreement Zimbabwe has yet to be ranked as one of the most favoured destination

by Chinese. There is evidence that “some people interviewed in the tourism sector raised doubts in the estimation of Zimbabwean authorities of Chinese tourists arrivals” (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004, p. 4). Bad international publicity has not made it easier for Zimbabwe to portray itself as a safe destination and she is still seen as having little tourist attractions. A lot of effort has to go towards international publicity to portray Zimbabwe as a safe and good place to visit (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004). Overall, one can conclude that the increase has remained largely marginal.

According to Musarurwa and Moyo (2014), there has been a 25% increase of Chinese tourists into America and Europe between October 2013 and March 2014. The growing relatively rich middle class in China are spending and travelling more. An estimated 97.3 million outbound Chinese tourist spend approximately US\$129 billion during their travels. However, of the 80000 Chinese tourists who visited Southern Africa, only 5000 visited Zimbabwe. These figures are disappointing given that Zimbabwe is targeting to draw at least 5% (5 million tourists) of the 100 million tourist leaving China every year. The talks and suggestions by different ministers to relax visa requirements for Chinese nationals and citizens so as to facilitate an increased flow of tourists have not significantly made a difference.

Retail shops seem to be enjoying thriving business as there has been increased sale of Chinese made products which are more affordable to the ordinary Zimbabwean. However, products are being sold “well below the prices of local products” (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004, p. 4). It is important to note that there is nothing new about Chinese products in Zimbabwe as cross border traders have been going to Botswana, South Africa and Zambia to purchase cheap Chinese products for resale way before the Chinese flooded in the country (Chigora and Chisi, 2009, p. 154). The only difference is that cross border traders brought in fewer products as compared to what is happening today. Further, the local textile and leather industry have suffered greatly and are finding it hard to keep afloat. They are not able to produce goods cheaply and in huge quantities. Chinese companies are able to meet the demands of

the markets and therefore there has been a sprawling out of 'China town' places in Africa. Retail trade has remained one-sided as China has made it difficult for Africans to establish African markets or businesses in their country.

Stiftung (2004) posits that the construction sector has received significant investments in cement, tile and brick production and China has also been given tenders to construct roads along Harare-Mutare highway. Despite the general economic crisis the construction sector especially private housing is not suffering (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004). The economy cannot however be sustained and made better by private construction; it requires the construction of large projects such as roads, schools, hospitals, business towers, dams, stadiums and the like which will add to national wealth and its ability to generate income (Chimakure, 2010). However, where China has done construction the buildings are substandard and hence have a short life span.

The transport sector has been one of the biggest beneficiaries of the LEP. First, "Air Zimbabwe, bought two long haul MA60 bringing the total number of its fleet to 8 and Air Zimbabwe was therefore able to briefly expand its domestic, regional and international routes (Chigora and Chisi, 2009, p. 154). Second, "in November 2004, an agreement was signed between National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and China Northern Locomotive and Railway Stock Industry (CNR)" (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004, p. 6). The agreement helped put back the once dysfunctional railway system back into business, though not at full capacity. NRZ was able to acquire cheaper parts to replace the ones that had been worn out. Thirdly, "Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) acquired 135 conventional buses and 41 mini buses from China" (Chigora and Chisi, 2009, p. 154), cars and heavy machinery for agricultural and construction purposes (Srivam and Brown, 2007). These vehicles helped deal with the huge transport woes once a common feature in Zimbabwe. The problem was that this was short lived as soon

things returned to the usual transport woes, when the vehicles especially buses started developing faults and the government could not acquire more loans to keep them running.

Most of Zimbabwe's military equipment such as fire-arms, fighter jet and and military vehicle have been sourced from China (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004). Further, "in 2008, Zimbabwe acquired 8 Karakorum trainer jets, to boost internal security apparatus and also got water cannons to subdue protesters and bugging equipment to monitor cell phone networks" (Chigora and Chisi, 2009, p. 156) and radio jamming equipment to put public communication under government surveillance (Brown, 2007). It is argued in this paper that improvement in the Information and Technology sector was not realised yet the ruling elite was able to maintain a stronghold onto power. The government of Zimbabwe feared regime change and hence sought to enhance its political power through repressive measures.

There is no doubt that Chinese investment has propped up Zimbabwe during this period of alienation from West but there is very little practical change on the ground as reports indicate that unemployment and poverty are getting worse. To make matters worse, farming community is failing to produce enough to feed the nation despite getting support through National Input Scheme. Chinese economy is growing again so it is possible that bilateral investment will continue. Will investment from China alone be enough as none of that will help in raising enough cash to pay off national debt?

These minerals therefore attracted great interest from Chinese investors who saw the withdrawal of Western capital as an opportunity for them to step in the country's rich resources. In November 2004, China and Zimbabwe signed several co-operation agreements in this sector. It is reported that most of the agreements signed during this time gave exploration rights to a group of Chinese experts to study mineral resources in Zimbabwe. Of particular significance was the joint venture with China North Industries Corporation (Norinco). Chinese investments proved to be critical when Norinco granted

reprieve to the Hwange Colliery Company (HCC) after US\$6.3 million debt had accrued and threaten to ruin production in one of Zimbabwe's strategic mines relied upon by most industries for coal supplies. In addition to their great interest in Zimbabwe's platinum ores, the Chinese also explored other minerals in the country such as nickel and copper. In 2008, the Mineral Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe (MMCZ) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Chinese Nickel Company, Jinchuan Nickel Mining Company of China. Jinchuan is the biggest producer of nickel and cobalt in China with annual production capacity of 130 000 tonnes of nickel, 200 000 of copper and 6 000 tonnes of cobalt. It is reported that the deal required Zimbabwe to sell these minerals to China. Presenting the report in the Parliament, MMCZ Chief Executive Officer Onesimo Moyo described the deal as strategic adding that it could be a catalyst for the accelerated marketing of Zimbabwe's mineral in China. This mining deal with a Chinese company seems to be strategically established to attract more Chinese investments in Zimbabwe's resources in line with the government's 'Look East' policy.

Large Chinese investments have also been noticeable in the metals and minerals processing industries of Zimbabwe. In 2003 by the Chinese Shanghai Baosteel Group invested US\$300 million in this sector. This investment is reported to have created 2000 jobs. Part of the investment was used to buy equipment for boosting iron steel production in the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Corporation (ZISCO). Moreover, as part of its investment efforts in this industry, Sinosteel, China's second largest iron and steel dealer signed an investment agreement with the Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company (ZIMASCO) in September 2007. This investment was expected to boost the company which at that time was in deep financial problems resulting from the withdrawal of Western sources.

Exports from Zimbabwe to China have been dominated by cash crops (tobacco, cotton) and minerals particularly nickel and ferroalloys. Tobacco is however the main export product to China.

Policy Suggestions

A number of steps could be taken by Zimbabwe's government to promote transparency and the maximisation of benefits relating to Sino-Zimbabwe relations. These may include: (1) development agreements could be made public, especially the Zimbabwe China Framework Agreement and discussed in and outside of parliament. (2) External experts, such as architects and engineers, could be brought in to evaluate projects completed by Chinese companies to provide some form of quality control. (3) Government could publish results of development cooperation so that it could be discussed by interested parties. (4) There could be a forum where government and civil society organisations are able to participate in discussions regarding Zimbabwe's foreign policy, which by implication could address concerns relating to Chinese development cooperation. (5) main points from discussion regarding the Joint Commission could be made public and (6) given that there are different ideas about what is considered to be development cooperation, and that local buy-in is key to the success of any development project in the long term, civil society should be invited to work with the Zimbabwean government to define what should be included in discussions about this issue.

Moreover, Zimbabwe must be on guard from opening itself up to a new form of imperialism by the Chinese, and recognise that at the end of the day, like any other investor, they are competitively driven by the profit motive, and will ultimately look out for their own interests. In my opinion, the question of the effects over-reliance Zimbabwe, and perhaps to a level, Africa has on capital flows and trade with China is one that merits debate, especially as we rebuild our economy. Granted, the country has benefitted from the support of its 'all weather friend', but the question is how sustainable is this model moving forward?

Conclusion

In this respect, China's varied assistance to Zimbabwe, lacking any conditions of good governance, has allowed for increased corruption amidst diminished political accountability, and undermined the role of civil society within the country, despite the 2008 advent of Zimbabwe's GNU. China's aid and its diplomatic clout in the United Nations Security Council have undoubtedly assisted ZANU-PF in avoiding implementing political reforms thus far. Chinese aid often represents important alternatives to Western ODA, yet its interests are perhaps not much different from any other country if, as these authors subscribe, at the end of the day states generally aim to maximise their own interests.

However, with regards to Zimbabwe, and particularly since the 2000s, the Chinese as has been noted above have quite extensively engaged in lucrative development agenda for both countries. The relationship has for sure developed into a standard for mutual respect and understanding. Zimbabwe has over the period under review developed regardless of the sanctions and corruption aiming to hinder effective sustainable development in the country.

Unfortunately, Zimbabwe needs to develop a third eye in viewing its relationship with China. If the country seeks to follow China's development sequence, as it purports, there is need to adopt a comprehensive foreign affairs approach like that of China which engages both the East and the West. There is need to create common ground between the country and its former Western allies who had quite effective economic development endeavors in Zimbabwe. It is thus important for Zimbabwe's leaders to develop a clear strategy that would help Zimbabwe as a whole to benefit from foreign engagements.

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