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China's economic engagement in Zimbabwe: *Partnership or fishing in troubled waters?*

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SUPERVISOR: Prof. Garth Shelton

A research report submitted to the faculty of Humanities, School of Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of a degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies by coursework and research report.

Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this dissertation was carried out exclusively by myself under the supervision of Professor Garth Shelton. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has never been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

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December, 2018

Abstract

From the early 2000's until present, the Sino-Zimbabwe relations have been marred with controversy and grievances from the Zimbabwean public about the negative ramifications of China's investments in Zimbabwe. After the international community's condemnation of Zimbabwe's land reform programme, elections irregularities and human rights violations by the Mugabe administration the West imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe with the hope of bringing regime change and good governance in Zimbabwe. With East Asian countries left as one of the few states willing to do business with the Southern African country, the Robert Mugabe administration came up with the 'Look East Policy' which would see Zimbabwe reviving its historical diplomatic ties particularly with China.

While this study does not repudiate the negative impacts of the Chinese presence in Zimbabwe, it argues that there are positives that can be from the East Asian giant's economic engagement. After being seen as prolonging Mugabe's stronghold on power for a long time, China was implicated for being influential in the coup de tat that led to the ousting of the Zimbabwean President after 37 years in power. These allegations render the Zimbabwean bureaucracy as lacking agency of making political decisions. The continuation of the relationship between China and Zimbabwe under the new President is testimony that the positives of the Chinese investments in Zimbabwe might have been hindered by erstwhile administration under Robert Mugabe.

Contents

Chapter 1 1
1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Problem Statement 3
1.3 Aim 3
1.4 Research Questions 4
1.4 Theoretical Framework 4
1.5 Literature Review 5
1.6 Methodology 12
1.7 Findings 13
1.8 Outline of Chapters 14
Chapter 2 16
China-Africa Relations 16
2.1 Historical Background 16
2.2 Theoretical Perspectives 18
2.3 Chinese actors in Africa 19
2.4 The driving force behind Chinese Foreign Direct Investment 20
2.5 China's Foreign Policy towards Africa 22
2.6 South-South Cooperation 23
2.7 Conclusion 26
Chapter 3 28
Chinese investments in Zimbabwe 28
3.1 Background 28
3.2 Zimbabwe's Look East Policy 29
3.3 Chinese Investments in Zimbabwe 31
I. Mining 31
II. Agriculture 35
III. Trade 37
IV. Aid 41
V. Military Ties 45
3.4 Conclusion 47
Chapter 4 49
Zimbabwe-China Relations: Its implication on Zimbabwe 49
4.1 Introduction 49
4.2 Zimbabweans' Perception of Chinese investment 49
4.3 The Negative and Positive impacts of the Look East Policy 51

I. Job creation 51
II. Labour relations 52
III. Trade 53
IV. Capital 54
V. Loan/Grants 54
VI. Affordability of Basic Commodities 55
4.4 China's non-interference policy: Beijing's involvement in Mugabe's downfall 56
4.5 Sino-Zim relations in the post-Mugabe era 58
4.6 Conclusion 60
Conclusion 62
Bibliography 66

Abbreviations

AFECC - Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Company

DAC - Development Assistance Committee

EU – European Union

EXIM Bank - Export-Import Bank

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

FOCAC - Forum *on China–Africa Cooperation*

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

IFI – International Financial Institutions

IMF – International Monetary Fund

LEP – Look East Policy

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MMCZ – Mineral Marketing Cooperation of Zimbabwe

NRZ – National Railways of Zimbabwe

ODA – Official Development Assistance

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PLA – People's Liberation Army

SADC - *Southern African Development Community*

SAPs -Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

WITS – World Integrated Trade Solutions

ZANU PF - The Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front

ZCDC - Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company

ZIMASCO - Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company

ZNA- Zimbabwe National Army

ZISCO -Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Contemporary Sino-Africa relations can be traced back to the Bandung Conference of 1955 where 29 Asian countries and African countries convened in Indonesia to forge economic and political cooperation amongst the developing countries. This Asian-African conference laid the foundation to modern day south-south cooperation that consists of Third World countries.

In 1956, Egypt became the first African country to forge diplomatic relations with Beijing. As the wave of independence was sweeping all around Africa, China was a source of military assistance to African liberation movements in the latter's struggle for independence from the European colonizers. China's involvement in Africa's struggle for independence was a strategic one as China sought friendship from African as that would help China attain the recognition it sought in order to be recognised in the United Nations ahead of Taiwan as well as compete with the US and the Soviet Union which held a great share of influence in the African region during the Cold War era.

In the 1960s and 1970s the Sino-Africa relations revolved around ideological unity with socialist African countries such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania mainly by offering support to build infrastructure as a way of countering the US and Soviet influence in the region. Chinese nationals came and worked at ideologically driven projects such as the instalment of the 1, 160 mile Tanzanian Railway joining Tanzania and Zambia. Reciprocally, African countries supported China in her quest to achieve international recognition and join the United Nations.

Over the past 50 years, the Sino-Africa bilateral relations have grown to substantial proportions and have covered several aspects of international relations. By the turn of the millennium, China had provided economic and social development-related aid in nearly 900 projects in Africa. 16 000 Chinese medical personnel were dispatched to Africa by the Chinese government and 50 African countries were offered Chinese government scholarships as well as sending soldiers to carry out peacekeeping missions in Africa.

China's relationship with Africa is one of the most talked about development discourses in the Post –Cold War era. China has become one of the main actors in the international political economy and relentlessly pursues the status of hegemony as well as to meet the needs of its expanding economy in the form of raw materials and energy. China is mainly focused on Africa for raw materials and energy. This is a cause for concern in the global political economic discourse, especially from the states that previously enjoyed the sole monopoly in Africa, such as the United States of America, Britain, and France. The concerns come in many ways than one. Questions have emerged as to the nature of China's involvement in Africa with many Western supporters asserting that China's presence undermines the one size fits all economic principles of the West in relation to Africa. Concerns arise as to what motivates China to involve itself in undemocratic states with massive human rights violations.

Since the adoption of its land reform program, Zimbabwe's economy took a downward turn characterized by violent eviction of white farmers from the farms and their subsequent departure from the country. This invoked the wrath of the US and British governments who declared Zimbabwe a pariah state and hit the country with sanctions. Zimbabwe's land reform policy was accompanied by violence which took a turn for the worst in the wake of the controversial 2008 presidential elections. During this period of isolation, China continued having economic relations with Zimbabwe so much to the ire of the Western powers (particularly, the US and Britain). The power struggle between the West and China over its engagement in Zimbabwe and other African countries, in general, has led some scholars to call it ‘The Scramble for Africa in the 21sts Century'.

From the year 2008, Zimbabwe recorded an unprecedented inflation rate of 7 600 percent and approximately 25 percent of its then 12 million population lived in diaspora in light of the political and economic reasons in their country of birth. The dictatorship was the order of the day up to date. Prior to the 2008 presidential elections, opposition parties were silenced by means of violence which instilled fear in the opposition party electorates. In spite of all these happenings, China drew even closer in its relations with Zimbabwe.

This research assesses the relationship between China and Zimbabwe from the period 2008 to date. However one does not negate that the historical foundations of these

diplomatic relations of the two countries form an integral part of the relationship between these two countries.

1.2 Problem Statement

Since its increased presence in Africa's economies, China has been widely criticized for turning a blind eye to the economic and political realities in Africa which are hampering the development of the continent. The most vocal of the critics is the Northern bloc of industrialized countries headed by the United States and the International Financial Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and The World Bank. China's engagement with Zimbabwe has raised eyebrows in the international community given the West withdrawal of their support to Zimbabwe because of dissatisfaction with the Robert Mugabe's administration in terms of running the country. China's relationship with Zimbabwe is based upon China's policy of non-interference. China's policy of non-interference is the basis on which China conducts economic business with the rest of the African continent. China derives the non-interference policy from the respect of the principle sovereignty which means that each and every country has sole power over its internal affairs. In terms of China's relationship with Zimbabwe, China's involvement with Zimbabwe from 2008 onwards came in the backdrop of Western sanctions upon Zimbabwe through which the West expected no country to have any economic relations with Zimbabwe.

1.3 Aim

This study seeks to assess the implications of China's economic involvement in Zimbabwe from the early 2000s until the present. The year 2008 marks the period when Zimbabwe's presidential elections were characterized by controversy through violence, torture, and intimidation of the main opposition party members and the electorate. This is the period which would test China's consistency in adhering to its Non-Interference policy that posits that respects other country's right to sovereignty and does not influence in domestic political affairs. One's choice of assessing China's engagement in Zimbabwe is in the backdrop of Zimbabwe's contested elections of

2008 that resulted in a standoff between the incumbent ZANU PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). With the international community condemning the political activities on the ground in Zimbabwe, China went on to intensify its relations with Zimbabwe. This study seeks to also understand the motive behind China's intensification of its involvement in Zimbabwe at a period of immense political and economic disorder. It also seeks to do a cost-benefit analysis of the Sino-Zimbabwe relations and its implications to Zimbabwe's socio-political and economic realm from 2008 to 2016. Also, one seeks to find out what the outcome of the 'Look East' policy has been to Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following question:

- How has China's engagement in Zimbabwe contributed to the development of Zimbabwe both from the beginning of the 2000s to date? This question will guide one to conduct a cost/benefit analysis in terms of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The question also seeks to find out to what extent this partnership has helped the beleaguered economy of Zimbabwe since the withdrawal of Western investors from the Southern African country.

It will also be guided by the following sub-questions;

- Are the economic outcomes of the Sino-Zimbabwe partnership/friendship symmetrical?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

China's economic engagement in Africa is a highly contested debate in academic and political circles. The supporters of the West view China's entrance into Africa with a negative eye. This comes in light of China's non-interference policy. This policy asserts that China does not interfere with their business partners' internal political affairs. Therefore this school argues that since China's development aid, trade and its relationship with African countries comes without conditions, this means that China

enters African countries with self-serving motives (Asongu & Aminkeng, 2013). The neo-colonialist thought juxtaposes China's and the West's engagement in Africa. The Western supporters have the perception that the West's engagement in Africa is a sustainable one that seeks to promote development along the lines of democracy and upholding human rights. They argue that China, on the other hand, forges economic ties with autocratic regimes that subject its citizens to a violation of their human right. China as well is said to be undemocratic and this claim is supported by the unforgettable Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 when the Chinese military massacred thousands of protesting students.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are those who perceive China's economic engagement in Africa in a positive way. According to Cheru Fantu and Cyril Obi (2010), the Sino-Africa relations are grounded on the balanced development approach or win-win approach (Fantu & Cyril, 2010). The supporters of this perception argue that China's assistance, unlike that of the West, does not have conditions that to dictate to African countries how to structure their internal policies (Asongu &Aminkeng, 2013; Tull, 2006). According to Denis Tull, China's non-interference policy in Africa is more or less similar to the Western stance of influencing how a foreign country is administered through using trade and investment attached with conditions (Tull, 2006).

The Chinese perception is that China's meteoric economic development presents lessons for Africa because both China was once in the same economic situation that Africa finds itself facing (Akomolafe, 2008).

1.5 Literature Review

Prior studies have shown that China's engagement in Africa is a cause for debate regarding its intentions in the continent with some circle of scholars calling China's venture in Africa the 'Scramble for Africa in the 21st Century'. According to Hany Besada (2008), China's rapid economic rise has resulted in a number of security analysts and policymakers all around the globe to question China's objectives in Africa and other parts of the world. Further fuelling the questions surrounding China's engagement in Africa is the generally-held notion that China's engagement is heavy in autocratic regimes. China's engagement, according to Besada and other scholars,

reflects its economic aspirations rather than the political ones. To defend this, Chinese officials have, on many occasions, justified their presence in Africa to be solely on commercial grounds because interference on the political front disregards African countries' right to sovereignty (Besada et.al, 2008).

Adding his voice to China's involvement with autocratic regimes, Paul Zeleza (2008) propounds that China's engagement in repressive regimes characterized by poverty and corruption presents China with an unfair advantage over African markets with the *New York Times* dubbing it the "Patron of African Misgovernment". Chinese engagement in Zimbabwe under the leadership of Mugabe was under the microscope since Zimbabwe's adoption of the 'Look East' policy. The allegations that China was bankrolling Robert Mugabe persisted until Mugabe's removal from power. China is also said to have played a role in Mugabe's removal from office, an allegation the Chinese officials deny.

Many scholars have added their voices to the debate of China's ever-growing presence in Africa with some arguing that negative sentiments about Sino-Africa relations emanate from Western scholars and policymakers. Providing his view in this debate, the former president of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade argued in the context of the United States of America and European Unions' competition with China in Africa. He argues that the USA and EU view China's engagement in Africa as a threat to their national interests because they (the US & EU) fear encroachment on the established North and South way of economic relations (Shelton & Paruk, 2008). In agreement with the preceding notion, Horace Campbell argues that the growing presence of China in Africa causes confusion on the power struggle between the European Union and the USA over Africa (Campbell, 2008).

According to Johanna Jansson (2008), China has joined in what is dubbed the new 'scramble for Africa' and China's involvement is seen as imperialistic and have serious implications for Africa and the world (Jansson, 2008). On the contrary, some African scholars have thought and written extensively about China's engagement in Africa. They view China's expanding presence in Africa with positive lenses and are appreciative of the opportunities that arise owing to China's presence on the continent.

Not only are there positive reflections from Africa about China's engagement in Africa. There is a group of African scholars whose assertions are based on China's role in mining industries in Southern Africa. These scholars ponder whether China is an equal economic partner or simply an extractor of natural minerals.

China's Africa Policy

One of the major constituents of the Chinese foreign policy towards Africa is the 'One China Policy'. Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Africa has been the battlefield for the competition between China and Taiwan. The animosity between the two is that Taiwan perceives itself as an independent state while China sees Taiwan as part of China. The credibility of Taiwan as an independent state is derived from the international recognition as a state. China has used its size and economic power to forge relations with African countries on the condition that they adhere to the 'One China Policy' and not form relations with Taiwan as Beijing sees it as part of mainland China. (Alden, 2007).

Owing to its meteoric rise, China's policy towards Africa is perceived as strategically seeking to gain access to Africa's mineral resources and a market for Chinese produced goods. Much emphasis is put on China's import needs in the form of natural minerals and oil with Africa being the reservoir or the source (Schoeman, 2008).

The perception that China is in Africa merely to extract minerals is repudiated by some scholars. Timothy Rich and Sterling Recker argue that many scholars evaluate China's engagement in Africa solely on the basis of China's need for access to natural resources but fail to locate China's relationship with Africa within the broader historical framework. They argue that ties or relations founded on Cold War politics have transformed into economic interests. In order for one to fully grasp the dynamics of the Sino-Africa economic relations, they should first explore the political sphere of these relations (Rich & Recker, 2013)

According to Besada (2013), China's policy towards Africa is unique from the economic and political standpoint. However, it would be myopic for one to view China's self-serving motives as the only push factor in China's policy towards Africa. Besada propounds that China's involvement in Africa is a component of its rise as global

superpower and in this regard, she is not acting differently from how any major power would act.

In the early 1950s and 1960s period, (the era when African countries were fighting for liberation from their colonizers), China lent a helping hand to African countries in the form of military training for the African liberation movements (Mlambo et.al, 2016). This indicates that China's relations with Africa are not just a phenomenon of the so-called ‘New Scramble for Africa'.

The relations between Zimbabwe and China will be best grasped if studied under the context of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). FOCAC is the main platform of China relations with Africa. One of the roles of FOCAC is to promote Sino-Africa cooperation as well as to regulate the interdependence of the economies of Africa and China in ways beneficial to both. Africa would benefit in the form of Chinese infrastructural loans and aid programs intended to alleviate poverty (Shelton, 2016).

According to Chuka Enuka, FOCAC is China’s gateway into Africa in its quest for natural resources and energy to help its ever-growing economy which Africa could abundantly provide. Garth Shelton and Farhana Paruk (2008) argue that FOCAC has the potential to be a success in light of the fact that China is willing to use this platform to listen to Africa's needs. However, the governments of Africa can only reap positive results from this platform (FOCAC) through having a unified agenda in their interaction with China (Shelton & Paruk, 2008).

China-Zimbabwe Relations

The contemporary relationship between China and Zimbabwe is built upon the latter's ‘Look East Policy' and the formation of China's Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). The ‘Look East' policy entails shifting focus from the Western superpowers to China. It also entails amongst other things, receiving credit from China in the form of developmental aid and loans (Chun, 2014).

According to Abiodun Alao, Zimbabwe's "Look East" policy in the wake of Zimbabwe's failed relationship with the West who imposed sanctions on Robert Mugabe's administration following the land reform program that led to the violent eviction of white farmers from Zimbabwe's farming land (Alao, 2014). Alao argues that the details of the failed relationship between Zimbabwe and the West revolve around three developments that took place in the same period. These are, the West's stance to declare Zimbabwe a pariah state in the wake of the country's land reform program whose outcome incensed the West; Mugabe's administration's policy shift away from the West and China's policy restructure in an endeavour to expand her economy with Africa is the focal point (Alao, 2014). According to Jeremy Youde, Zimbabwe's 'Look East" policy signifies the countries endeavor to assume a new international identity. He cites Mugabe saying "*it is very important for us in Zimbabwe to develop the Look East policy because that is where people who think like us are, same history of colonialism as ourselves, people who have started developing their economies, are more advanced than Africa, and relations with them will be reciprocal and rewarding"* (Youde, 2007; *Herald*, 2005c). The preceding statement by the president of Zimbabwe represents both his disdain of the West as well as his administration's positive expectations from their relationship with China.

China's involvement in Zimbabwe represents the way it deals with the rest of the African countries through FOCAC. A couple of years from the inception of FOCAC, China declared 2006 to be the year of Africa and ever since then it has committed a lot to Africa. According to Hodzi, Hartwell and De Jagger, it seems the relationship between Africa and China is largely determined by China (Hodzi et.al, 2012).

The Sino-Zimbabwe relations converge mainly on the mining aspect of the economy. China is in need of mineral resources which Zimbabwe has in abundance and, on the other hand, Zimbabwe needs revenue from the resources since it has not enough countries to engage within economic activities since the imposition of sanctions by the West (Alao, 2014).

According to Alao, China's engagement with Zimbabwe in terms of mining increased with the rise of diamonds in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe gave China a concession to invest in the diamond mines in exchange for the latter to construct the formers' National Defence College. However, this venture is not without controversy. Zimbabwe's

defense force has control in China's Anjin investments and this has resulted to what Alao termed the ‘militarisation of the extractive sector in Zimbabwe' because the government in this venture is represented by army generals in the capacity of shareholders and directors (Alao, 2010).

In terms of aid, Deborah Brautigam asserts that China is not chiefly concerned about disbursing aid to Zimbabwe. China conducts business with Zimbabwe (Brautigam, 2011). China supports Zimbabwe through providing non-repayable financial facilities on the basis of economic and technical cooperation. This is usually given in kind rather than in monetary terms and it includes equipment for rural development projects, food aid and agricultural equipment (Edinger & Burke, 2008).

The ruling ZANU PF enjoys strong relations with the Chinese Communist Party that were established during Zimbabwe’s struggle for independence from Britain in the 1960s and late 1970s. The extensiveness of the relationship dwindled following Zimbabwe’s independence from Britain in 1980 when major investors in Zimbabwe were from the West.

The relationship between China and Zimbabwe re-emerged and became fully fledged after Zimbabwe's fallout with Western investors that began at the turn of the millennium. The fallout was due to Zimbabwe’s ruling ZANU PFs record of human rights violations, election rigging, and political violence. According to Sachikonye, the political situation in Zimbabwe took a turn for the worst in the wake of the government’s defeat in a referendum for a New Constitution in February 2000 and a controversial election process marred by rigging as well as the repression of the opposition MDC. These autocratic events led to the isolation of Zimbabwe by the West particularly the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, the United States of America and the European Union (EU). An alternative of the *Look West*, the Mugabe government decided to *Look East* for economic survival. It is within this context that China and Zimbabwe intensified their relationship (Sachikonye, 2008).

The year 2008 was a historic moment in the political landscape of Zimbabwe. In the wake of the controversial elections of March 2008 which led to a power-sharing deal between the ZANU PF and MDC, a Chinese freighter was disallowed by South African unions to offload the cargo. The cargo contained ammunition and grenades destined

to Zimbabwe. It is in this context that China's non-interference policy is brought under scrutiny. There had been widespread speculations that armaments were meant to fill up the arsenal of Mugabe's military in the event of a coup by the opposition MDC (Brautigam, 2009). Three months after the refusal of the Chinese container ship to offload the cargo destined for Zimbabwe, China vetoed together with Russia against a UN Security Council resolution that was meant to impose an arms embargo and sanctions on Mugabe and his cronies. China based its stance on the UN Charter, Chapter VII that argues that sanctions should only be imposed in cases where international security is threatened, and in this case, the political situation in Zimbabwe was domestic (Brautigam, 2008).

China's ambiguous stance on Zimbabwe in terms of military trade and electoral process in the UN Security Council has led to sentiments that argue that China played a role in prolonging Robert Mugabe's stay in power by giving the erstwhile leader of Zimbabwe economic lifeline through investments, aid, and loans after sanctions from the West that sought to promote good governance in the Southern African country.

After years of the Sino-Zim relations, the Zimbabwean case got heated towards the end of the year 2018 when the army from which Mugabe drew loyalty decided to overthrow him after factional battles that led to the sacking of the Vice President by Mugabe's wife. The events that led to the removal of Mugabe did not go without the involvement of China, at least according to the international media and popular allegations. Chris Alden & Cobus Van Staden argue that implicating China in the removal of Mugabe from office overshadows other factors such the agency of Zimbabwe’s politicians and the ordinary citizens as well as that the removal of Mugabe was what the Western countries have been working hard for.

Brautigam (2017) argues that it is highly unlikely that China had official involvement in Robert Mugabe's forced resignation to end his 37 years in office. China would have a lot to lose and little to attain from interfering in the forced resignation of Mugabe. The Chinese are certainly would not want to jeopardize their relations with Zimbabwe going forward in the sense that direct involvement in regime change in Zimbabwe would sever or break China’s foreign policy principles that have helped it for a long time.

1.6 Methodology

This study employs qualitative and quantitative research methodologies in its analysis and data collection. The study makes use of journal articles, books, electronic media reports, and data from the World Integrated Trade Solutions and government publications to understand the relationship between Zimbabwe and China. These documents are accessed online, media houses and libraries. The use of graphs and tables would assist in analyzing the trade relations between the two countries and come up with an assessment that would lead to the findings of the research. The access to statistics is a limitation one came across in conducting this report because the activities between Zimbabwe and China are not transparent. The two governments do not release their trade statistics to the public.

This study seeks to explore and understand China's involvement with Zimbabwe by analyzing the interaction of these two countries from mainly the economic viewpoint in order to provide answers to the sub-questions which will lead to the response of the research question.

China's need for natural minerals and energy to feed its rapidly growing economy has compelled it to turn its focus to Africa which has an abundance of natural resource and Zimbabwe is quintessential of a natural resources-endowed country. Zimbabwe's need for revenues and trading partners after the withdrawal of the West from Zimbabwe paved way for China to establish consolidate its economic relationship with Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a suitable case study for this research because it represents an ideological battlefield for the West and China in what many scholars call a 'The New Scramble in the 21st century'. Overall, China's engagement in Zimbabwe is representative of its engagement in Africa; one of the most debated topics in development economics discourse.

1.7 Findings

Chinese involvement in Zimbabwe, the so-called ‘all-weather partnership' is perceived by many people as an unfair partnership. While that may be true, it should not obscure the fact that Zimbabwe's has reaped substantial benefits from this partnership given in the light of the economic sanctions imposed on her by the West and the international financial institutions. The latter closed all the credit lines to Zimbabwe with the hope that it would feel the hardships and act according to the principles of good governance so to say at least in the language of the U.S, Britain and the International Financial Institutions.

This research probes China's engagement in Zimbabwe from the early periods of the economic sanctions and the period the Zimbabwean government adopted the Look East Policy. Adoption, in this case, is unofficial because this policy was heard of from Robert Mugabe's rhetoric against the West and Looking East to him meant forgetting about the Western states and forge relations with the East Asian States.

The research found out that after the credit lines to Zimbabwe were closed by it’s the IFIs, China found an opportunity to expand its presence in Zimbabwe. This move by China is defended by its government officials that they are merely engaging in business with Zimbabwe as per their foreign policy whose one of the pillars is respecting the sovereignty of foreign countries by not interfering in their domestic political affairs.

China invested in various sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. It invested in agriculture, mining, construction, energy sectors and conducted trade with Harare. It also disbursed large sums of loans and development assistance.

From these investments, the research found out that;

1. Chinese investment has been of substantial help to Zimbabwe because it was the only developed country, although being classified otherwise, that would offer development assistance to Zimbabwe through a formal platform of multilateral gatherings known as FOCAC.
2. China's investment in Zimbabwe is largely focused on the extractive industry. The major point of focus in the last decade being in the controversial red

diamond that was discovered in the Manicaland Province in the Area known as Marange.

3. China's 'non-interference' policy has been consistent in Zimbabwe despite allegations of interfering the domestic affairs. This policy is brought into question in the backdrop of the ousting of Zimbabwe's President Mugabe interfering

Inferring from the above points, one found out that although China is perceived to be reaping more dividends than Zimbabwe from this partnership, it is still a win-win situation. In a cost/benefit assessment in Chapter 4, one highlights that Zimbabwe's benefits from its partnership with China are crucial for the revival of its economy especially in the sectors that were shut down due to insolvency. China's development assistance in bailing out the companies that were shut down notably in the steel industry would alleviate unemployment in the country. China's recent investments in the post-Mugabe era repudiate the notion that China bankrolls dictators so that it may gain access to the mineral resources reserves.

1.8 Outline of Chapters

The first chapter of the study gives a discussion of the China-Africa relations. It outlines the historical background of the Sino-Africa relationship and how the other actors with an interest in Africa, in this case, the United States of America and Europe view this relationship.

The second chapter delves into the theories underpinning the Sino-Africa relations and seeks to identify what new views emerge with regards to the Sino-Africa relations.

The third chapter will discuss the historical and contemporary Sino-Zimbabwe relationship. It also gives a brief discussion of China's role in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Also to be discussed is the economic relationship between the two countries from the early 2000s. I chose to begin from the early 2000s because it was the time when the economy started to go down in consequence of the sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by the West following incidents of poor governance evident in unfair

electoral processes, violence against supporters of the opposition and the forceful removal of white farmers from their farms.

The fourth chapter of the study discusses the economic relations between China and Zimbabwe. This chapter also analyses the outcomes of the economic relations between the two countries and how the Zimbabwean economy and its populace have been impacted by the Sino-Zim relations. It identified as the knowledge gap the prospects of the Sino-Zim relations in post-Mugabe Zimbabwe

The fifth and final chapter presents findings from the Sino-Zimbabwe relations and what the government could do to extract value from this relationship**.**

Chapter 2

China-Africa Relations

2.1 Historical Background

The relations between China and Africa have a long history that dates back to the Han Dynasty around AD 759 which continued under the Ming Dynasty (Snow, 2011). The contemporary economic relations between Africa and China are not a new phenomenon as they date back to the Bandung Asia-Conference of 1955. This conference laid the foundation to the contemporary China-Africa cooperation on the economic front with an objective of attaining development through peaceful coexistence and respect for each countries' sovereignty. This conference led to official diplomatic ties between China and Africa that continued throughout the latter's struggle for independence from the West.

The visit by China's premier Zhou Enlai to Africa in December 1963 and January 1964 marked the earnest start of relations between China and Africa in the backdrop of the Cold War that saw powerful countries competing for support in the ideological bipolar order. During this period the wave of independence of African countries from the Western countries was prevailing across the continent. China provided African liberation movements with arms and military training in during the liberation struggle. In return for its support, China received trust and goodwill of the African countries which later translated to strong economic ties in the aftermath of the Cold War. Additionally, China made an offensive into Africa for political reasons, seeking support from the African countries so that it could be accepted into the United Nations as One China, which incorporates Taiwan besides the latter's claims of being an independent state.

According to Edoho (2011), the China-Africa relations are to some extent a part of the events that took place after many African countries gained their independence (Edoho, 2011). The end of the Cold War had a produced negative effect on the economies of much of African countries. During the Cold War, the two ideologically warring states, the US and the Soviet, competed for Africa's loyalty by means of offering unconditional

military and economic aid. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the USA shifted its focus from Africa to Eastern Europe, therefore leaving room for China to enter Africa. China's entry into Africa gained momentum during the mid-1990s as a result of its "Open Door Policy" that espoused the need for foreign direct investment with the objective of finding access to mineral resources abroad to feed its nascent economy at the time and Africa's natural resources were the solution given the East Asian giant's long-standing relationship with most of the African countries. According to Mhandara, Manyeruke, and Nyemba, China's entry into Africa in the wake of the Cold War was a well-calculated move given that it happened at a time when the West was focusing on consolidating their political influence in regions outside of Africa (Mhandara, et al, 2013).

China in Africa: from the early 2000s to present

China's engagement in Africa since the turn of the millennium has been a topic of discussion in the international media, policymakers, and scholars. China's Foreign Direct Investment in Africa has stirred debates about its model when conducting businesses with Africa. The area of particular interest in China's engagement in Africa has been the impact its development assistance has on Africa's development (Sun, 2014).

Diplomatic relations between China and Africa have been branded as ‘friendship' or ‘partnership' and all these terms come in the backdrop of the widely criticized Western economic engagement in Africa. China has used its non-interference policy to win the trust of African countries in an era when the Western policies have been dominant but the levels of poverty and under-development in Africa are on the rise.

The rhetoric of development partnership is evident in China's ‘non-interference policy'. On the basis of this policy, China asserts that its ties with African states are non-political and this, therefore, means it will engage with any country, including the states that are deemed authoritarian by the international community. Adherence to the ‘non-interference' also means that China provides development assistance even to those countries that the international community has branded as pariah states poor governance and records of human rights violation.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives

The relationship between China and African countries are viewed using different lenses. There are three dominant views that have been used when analyzing the Sino-Africa relations. These perspectives are; China as a development partner, new colonizer of Africa and as a competitor of the West in exploiting Africa's mineral resources.

The development partnership perspective argues that China's engagement in Africa is motivated by its hunger for African minerals and also, on the other hand, Africa's need for investment informs the current Sino-Africa relations.

This perspective has a positive and optimistic view of China's relations with Africa insofar as China extends its economic development model to Africa and share its technical know-how, industrial production strategies, human resource and modernization experience with Africa (Alden, 2009; Mhandara et al, 2013). This view portends the Chinese model should be a carbon copy on which third-world countries and Africa, in particular, should base their development aspirations (Edoho 2011). The notion of China being Africa's partner is grounded on China's mantra of win-win cooperation between her and the individual African countries.

The opposing view to that of Sino-Africa partnership is that of China as a colonizer. According to Natasha Menell (2010), the labeling of China as a colonizer stems from the exploitation of Africa's resources by developed countries for exportation and benefit to their countries while leaving Africa impoverished. This perspective is of the view that China's activities in Africa are parallel to the 18th Century scramble for Africa where they were a rush for African minerals for the overseas benefit (Bbaala, 2015). However, China's interests have been guise by the use of soft power. This means that China is not using force or coercive power to gain access to Africa's mineral reserves but it rather uses its non-coercive foreign policy that is attractive to African countries (Bbaala, 2015). The new colonizer perspective portends that China is in competition with other world powers for influence in Africa (Alden, 2009). This means that China seeks to expand its influence on Africa which would, in turn, pave way for market access and extraction of natural resources.

The growth and of China and its future role in global politics and economics have led to a widespread of China's role in the world. When China is being talked about in relation to Africa, the analysis usually pays puts emphasis on the threat the East Asian country might pose to the African economies.

Most of the analysis that comes from the international institutes and academic publication view China's presence in Africa as a threat in the sense that it is a new competitor to global foreign direct investments in accessing and extracting the resources of Africa. Also, the rise of China is viewed by the West as a threat to the current international economic system and global power status quo especially with respect to the US, the European Union, and Japan, that is China's regional competitor (Keet, 2010). Apart from competing with other countries, Chinese companies compete with each other in Africa as they seek to establish a stronghold in African markets.

Of the theoretical perspectives discussed above, one would argue that the view of China as Africa's development partner would best describe Africa-China relations. The reason being that China's foreign policy towards Africa is not of a domineering nature in the light of the West's development agenda towards Africa that argue that Africa's underdevelopment is due to bad policies by the African governments and as a prerequisite to receiving developmental they should change their policies in accordance with the prescription of the international financial institutions. In this regard, the Chinese model of engagement in foreign economies is consensual and respects the sovereignty of its economic partners by not interfering in their domestic affairs as per Beijing foreign policy whose non-interference policy has been welcomed by all African countries but one; Swaziland.

2.3 Chinese actors in Africa

There are three types of Chinese firms that invest in African countries. These are large enterprises that are state-owned that mainly operate in the infrastructure sector, large to medium private companies that focus on various markets and the small privately

owned enterprises that focus on farming as well as selling in African markets. Of these types of firms, the most active in terms of value is the state-owned enterprises (Thrall, 2015). In terms of controlling the activities of these Chinese firms operating in foreign countries, the central government of China does not exert the control that is reflective of a monolithic government that controls its overseas firms (Mertha, 2009). The most difficult to control by the Chinese government are those firms that are owned by the Chinese local governments. Chen Zhinmin and Jian Junbo (2012) portend that Beijing is likely to have minimal control over firms relative to their sizes. The central government is likely to have little control over private and small firms insofar as liberalization has enabled these firms to have tentative firms that engage in foreign trade. The difficulty has been exacerbated by the distance between China and the destinations in which the small firms are operating as well as the multiplicity of local governments overseeing the investment projects of these firms (Brown, 2012).

The state-sponsored Chinese enterprises have played a significant role in Africa and are the most important because they represent the Chinese governments in Africa and act according to the guidelines of the Chinese Communist Party and that of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

2.4 The driving force behind Chinese Foreign Direct Investment

Conventional knowledge and media reports argue that China's overseas economic ventures in Africa are driven by its resource scarcity. China has grown to be one the second largest oil-consuming country after the United States of America (Rich & Recker, 2013). China sees Africa as an alternative source of other mineral resources given that there has been a discovery of oil reserves in other parts of the world. China’s activities in Africa’s oil reserves amount to a paltry 2% and its companies are part of the 3 % of overall companies investing in African oil reserves (Downs, 2007; Hanson, 2008; Rich & Recker, 2013). A World Bank research by Foster, Butterfield, Chen, and Pushak assert that a large number of Chinese state-financed economic projects in Africa seek to secure a flow of mineral resources for export to China. However such arguments are refuted by other scholars who assert that resource scarcity is not the only factor behind China’s entry into Africa.

They argue that China's need for political control on a global scale plays a role is also a driving factor. After the Tiananmen massacre of 1989, China faced fierce reaction from the Western countries condemnation which included an arms embargo put into place by the European Union and the United States. To regain recognition and status China made an offensive into Africa to buffer criticisms and isolation. China saw the size of the African continent as crucial in its international relations and would play a very important role in attaining its development objectives in both the global politics and economic realms (Tull, 2006).

The Taiwan question is another factor for China's large footprint in Africa. The Taiwan issue is of geopolitical significance to China because recognizing Taiwan as part of mainland China would consolidate China's power over the South China Sea whose resources such as oil would boost China's economy.

One point worth noting is that despite China's growing economic footprint in Africa, the latter is lagging behind in terms of becoming the leading destination for China's Foreign Direct Investment. Records, however, show that in a decade spanning from the year 2000 to 2010 China's aggregate outward investment to Africa increased from 1 % to 3 %. From the 2009 China's FDI in Africa started increasing at a rate of at least 20 % a year.

According to Denis Tull, another factor that led China to develop ties with Africa was the sheer need of a global foreign policy. This realization came as a result of the Asian financial crisis of 1997 that alerted Beijing's policymakers of the downsides of international economic relations because of the inescapability of the external shocks when they take place (Tull, 2006). Upon the realization of this, China saw it necessary to not only establish international economic ties. The need for international political support would also help make China a superpower which in turn would give it leverage in attaining its national interests abroad and bring the people's loyalty to the Communist Party (Weinstein, 2005; Tull, 2006).

2.5 China's Foreign Policy towards Africa

China has always regarded African countries as diplomatically important since the 1950s and 1960s. China's diplomatic relations in recent times was revived in the wake of the Tiananmen Square deaths in 1989 when China faced condemnation from the West. Despite the international criticisms, China received support from African heads of states and saw this as an opportunity China to use the friendship to displace Taiwan's diplomatic relations with the African continent (Taylor, 2007).

Chinese presence is growing at a rapid pace in Africa. China has established investment links, aid and trade channels with nearly 50 of countries in the African continent. This proves that China's Africa strategy is yielding results insofar as displacing Taiwan's relations with African countries has been a major dimension of China's crusade of establishing diplomatic ties with African countries (Alden, 2007).

Beijing is most active in minerals extraction sectors of the African countries. According to Zweig and Jianhai (2005), China's foreign policy towards Africa is motivated by its need for resources to feed its development strategy. China's interests in Africa is not confined only to access to mineral resources as its companies are investing in the services sector, telecommunications, agriculture, clothing, and manufacturing. On the other hand, African countries are recipients of Chinese aid and investments which provides Africa with the capital necessary for its development (Zafar, 2007).

China's links with Sub-Saharan Africa have moved to great lengths owing to the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) which one talks about in detail in the ensuing sub-topic. China's engagement in Africa has been received with mixed feelings amongst the academics, journalists, politicians and the general public.

The most striking feature of the Sino-Africa relations is the way by which China is received by African leaders. According to Denis Tull, China is spreading the message that its relations with Africa present a 'win-win' result by offering an assortment of economic and political inducements. This argument portends that China does not only seek to present Africa with an alternative partnership, however, it also gives Africa a better choice of partnership in comparison with the one offered by the West.

The most appealing instrument that China uses is its dogma of respecting other countries' national sovereignty. It sees outside interference into the domestic affairs of another country as illegitimate. According to Tull, outside the issue of Taiwan, China's donor policies are a sign of that it does not attach political conditions to its development aid. This policy rivals the Western donors' policies that require African countries to undergo economic and political reforms as espoused by the 1980s Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). The insistence of the Western donors on African countries to adopt the SAPs have compelled African states to take China as an alternative because of its favorable 'non-interference policy. Chinese interest and the West interests in Africa have pitted the two parties against each other. Chinese sources say that the imposition of the Western development model in Africa is some type of neo-imperialism (Taylor, 2009).

The mutual economic benefit is China's main priority in its involvement in Africa. The notion on China's part means that even if there are ongoing human rights abuses and undemocratic practices in its partner's country it would still continue doing business with them. Beijing is of the belief that Africa can replicate China's strategy of developing at 'any cost' and its non-interference policy and regard for other countries' sovereignty rights means that China does not pay much attention to the negative spill-overs that result from its investments (Condon, 2012).

According to Chris Alden, discerning China's foreign policy towards Africa is not easy because it is played out on different platforms. These relations are conducted on bilateral levels between China and individual African states. These relations also overlap to a regional platform through FOCAC ministerial meetings and they are manifest in global platforms such as the United Nations Security Council through South-South cooperation (Alden, 2007).

2.6 South-South Cooperation

Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

In 2000, China forged a partnership with 44 African countries and formed the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) to consolidate cooperation between China and

Africa (Winton, 2013). This joint initiative's purpose is to promote a joint, pragmatic and meaningful political and economic dialogue between Africa and China. Within this context, all parties are presented with development opportunities in the globalized international system. According to Cisse (2012), FOCAC is an extension of the Chinese government's quest to strengthen political and economic cooperation within what is known as the South-South cooperation with the African continent.

Since the establishment of FOCAC 2000, the China-Africa relations have grown stronger. China has become Africa's crucial trade partner (Naidu, 2007). Through FOCAC, Africa has seen a surge in China's development aid, loans, and grants being disbursed to the continent. The assistance from China has been welcomed with open hands and warm hearts in the light of the developmental assistance Africa receives from the West that has some conditions attached to it that Africa has to fulfill before receiving assistance. The conditions are that of a liberal notion that argues that the aid recipient's government should not interfere with the markets but should be left to its devices, meaning that the forces of supply and demand should dictate the direction of the economy because the elite usually makes bad policies. This has been received by African leaders as undermining the sovereignty and self-determination. Chinese aid here comes as an alternative because of its non-conditionality.

The engagement between China and Africa through FOCAC is multifaceted, encompassing chiefly trade and economic relations. China's need for natural resources for its fast-growing domestic economy explains its growing footprint in African economies in areas of trade and investment. The abundant mineral resources in Africa has attracted Chinese investment in the industrial sector as well as in the light of the latter's quest for superpower status in global politics.

FOCAC is an extension of China's central government political agenda towards Africa which purports to consolidate economic, political and diplomatic relations. Since the turn of the new millennium, China's 'outward looking' policy has revitalized trade and investment in Africa through the Chinese state-owned enterprises that conduct business in Africa. The Chinese ministries and banks (Chinese Exim Bank) are the facilitators of Chinese aid, trade, and investment in Africa (Cisse, 2012).

The South-South cooperation agenda heralded by China has been perceived as a major element of China's quest to challenge the one centre of power in the international political economy agenda and as a way through which it forges relationships with developing countries so that it garners support in its diplomatic opposition to monopolization of the global political and economic agenda (Power & Mohan). According to Chris Alden (2007) and Ian Taylor (2006), the Chinese foreign policy over the past five decades has had one binding element which is to repudiate the concentration of power on the side of the West. Through its foreign policy, it has also sought to fight for recognition in the international relations space (Alden, 2007; Taylor, 2006).

Marcus Power and Giles Mohan (2010) argue that while China's foreign policy towards Africa has been based upon a partnership, it is also one way through which China extends its development strategy (Power & Mohan, 2010). China's development strategy in Africa is through developing economic diplomacy through partnership, investment, and trade while at the same time forging a South-South dialogue in which China advances its soft power in international politics (Alves, 2009).

FOCAC is not the only platform China uses to promote its development strategy with Africa. China is not constrained by FOCAC in developing additional means of strengthening its relations with individual African countries by forging relations with countries that adhere to its 'One China Policy' (Alves, 2009).

The formation of FOCAC has been challenged by the West as it heralded rhetoric of China's neo-imperialism in the light of the latter's attempt to gain access to the resources of the African continent. The birth of FOCAC coincided with the passing of the African Growth and Opportunity (AGOA) by the US Congress. AGOA, just like FOCAC, sought to improve economic ties between the US and Sub-Saharan Africa.

FOCAC has enjoyed great success as evidenced by the turn out of African heads of state and dignitaries at the FOCAC summits. The high regard through which African countries have taken the FOCAC is a sign that the past FOCAC meetings have gone well and there still is hope that China will help the continent embark on the path of economic development. There has been following up mechanisms and documents published in the wake of the summits (Mashingaidze, 2016).

FOCAC has played a big role in directing or informing the relations between China and Africa. In the midst of China's diplomacy with Africa is the East Asian countries' natural resources-motivated foreign policy. This, according to Mashingaidze, has led to the emergence of polarised views on the role of FOCAC in shaping China's policy towards Africa. The first view is that China has policies that are Africa-specific. The relations between the two are informed by policies that are attractive to Africa such as the non-aggression, non-interference, respect of sovereignty, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. These policies have attracted Africa to China in light of the failure of the Western policies in addressing Africa's development agenda (Mashingaidze, 2016).

FOCAC is now a big player in Africa's development. However, there are misgivings about it from Africa's perspective despite that China's the luring Chinese foreign policy. While China may present Africa with development opportunities, the rules of engagement tilt in favor of China especially in its engagement with weak or pariah African regimes. Engagements between China and pariah regimes or dictatorships often than not represent a conflict variation of interest between the ruling elite and the general population. The attractive interest rates on Chinese loans has attracted China to many African leaders and this provides pariah states with the lifeline and in so doing concerns arise about the effects that would have on the ordinary people who are at the mercy of the tyrannical leaders (Naidu, 2007). It is within this milieu that the ideals of South-South cooperation remain just but a theory to the ordinary people. Development aid reveals class struggles between communities because it is administered from one government to the next and in the case of oppressive regimes, aid strengthens them and the lenders do not care (Chikowore, 2010).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of China's engagement with Africa. The improved relations between Africa and the East Asian country began in the 1960s. The relations became dormant and resumed fully took after the Cold War. The meteoric rise of China has led it to look outwards for natural resources to feed its rapidly growing economy. Africa's natural resources have attracted China and the beginning of the new

millennium saw the formation of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation that seeks to foster ties between Africa and China in what is known as the South-South Cooperation, cooperation between China and other developing countries, notably Africa.

FOCAC presents a lot of economic and political opportunities for Africa on the global stage. The coming together of the second largest economy in the world and Africa would amplify the voice of the global south in international multilateral institutions. The African countries have welcomed this opportunity because it is specific to Africa's developmental needs on a platform that seeks to create fairness amongst nations and see each other as equals. FOCAC also provides Africa with an alternative to global institutions whose assistance to Africa comes with numerous conditions that interfere with the domestic political affairs of African countries.

China's engagement with Africa under the auspices of FOCAC has also generated some concerns regarding China's activities in Africa's extractive industries. Vast literature that focuses on China's behavior in Africa's natural resources argues that China's behavior resembles that of the imperialists, hence many views on China as one of the actors in the new scramble for Africa. These assertions should not be ignored because they could be forewarnings about the threats or challenges that could arise in the future Sino-Africa relations (Naidu, 2007).

Chapter 3

Chinese investments in Zimbabwe

3.1 Background

The Sino-Zimbabwe relations go back to the 1970s. The relationship between the two countries at the time was premised on the ideological similarities during the Cold War. In the 1970s, China assisted ZANU PF in the liberation struggle against Ian Smith's British forces. Prior to Zimbabwe's independence, ZANU PF leader Robert Mugabe met with Chinese officials in Mozambique to discuss the two parties' continuation of bilateral ties in the wake of Zimbabwe's independence (Mapaure, 2014).

In discussing China's economic engagement in Zimbabwe in the early 2000s, it is important to discuss the economic circumstances of the respective countries during this period because they have a bearing on the 'all-weather' relationship between Beijing and Harare.

The Chinese economy, beginning from the early years of the new millennium has become one the strongest, if not the strongest in the world. It recorded a Gross Domestic Production of $4.1 trillion and a GDP per capita that was above $1000. This economic development from the domestic front informed China's opening-up policy that set China's eyes to other parts of the world, especially Africa.

At the same time Africa, in this case, Zimbabwe was experiencing dispiriting headlines about its state of the economy in the wake of what was remarkable progress in the years following its independence. Zimbabwe's woes began in the early 2000s after its land reform policy, elections irregularities and reports of politically inclined abuses meted on the supporters of the opposition. Zimbabwe's ruling ZANU PF instituted a land reform policy that saw forceful removal of white farmers off the land. This land reform programme was met with sanctions on Zimbabwe by the US, the European Union and the International Financial Institutions (IMF and the World Bank). After this

Zimbabwe was deemed a pariah state and more socio-economic pressure precipitated a downward spiral of the economy.

The isolation of Zimbabwe from the global economy crippled its economy. On the other side of the world, China was experiencing a growing economy which merited a ‘going out' strategy for minerals to feed its expanding economy. With an appetite for raw materials which Zimbabwe is endowed with, China reached out to its old ally for an economic lifeline. The relationship between the two countries led Zimbabwe to adopt a Look East Policy (LEP). This policy is not formally adopted by the government of Zimbabwe. It is an oral secret-public policy that was based only on the public orations of Zimbabwe's former President Robert Mugabe and his administration.

3.2 Zimbabwe’s Look East Policy

The Look East Policy, adopted by the Zimbabwean government was an endeavor by the Mugabe administration to regain its lost international status that had a negative effect on the economy of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's ruling ZANU PF under the leadership of Robert Mugabe sought to use this policy to reconnect with the global economy. Robert Mugabe based his arguments for his adoption of the ‘Look East Policy' on the colonial affinities between African and Asian states. In 2005 he announced that it was imperative for Zimbabwe to come up with this policy because Asians and Africa share a similar history. This Look East Policy is believed to have meant economic relations with the East Asian countries, but in the case of Mugabe, it meant developing ties with China.

The confluence of Harare’s Look East Policy and the formation of FOCAC had a cumulative effect on the mushrooming of an ‘all-weather’ friendship (Chun, 2014). This was further strengthened by numerous state visits by the officials of both countries. In 2016, President Hu Jintao on his diplomatic visit to Harare said that the burgeoning friendship between Beijing and Harare would be unshakable (Alao, 2014).

Using FOCAC and Zimbabwe's ‘Look East Policy', China seized the opportunity to invest extensively in Zimbabwe after the withdrawal of the West from Zimbabwe because of the former's disapproval of the latter's record of human rights violations

that was characterised by invasion and expropriation of white-owned farms without compensation as well as corruption electoral irregularities and torturing of the members of the opposition by the followers of Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF. Ignoring the West's call to isolate Zimbabwe, China saw this as a huge opportunity given that it was in need of platinum and other mineral resources to feed its ever-expanding domestic economy. Zimbabwe's need for foreign and investment and China's need for natural resources led to the establishment of 'win-win' relationship according to the two governments (Mapaure, 2014). One would argue that FOCAC has not helped Zimbabwe realize its development objectives because it is this platform through which China engages with African leaders and the latter has been disbursing incessant aid to Zimbabwe which fell in the hands of the corrupt leaders. Chinese development aid to Zimbabwe legitimized Mugabe's rule for a very long time (Chikowore, 2010)

Since its independence, Zimbabwe has remained a low-income country. According to Chikowore (2010). The assessments of the achievements of the expired Millennium Development Goals and the impacts of the Look East policy in 2009 revealed that development aid was unsuccessful to transform the living conditions of the ordinary Zimbabwean citizens.

Zimbabwe's 'Look East Policy' was the Mugabe administration's emphasis on the change of economic partnership from the Western countries and focus on the Eastern bloc (Ojakorotu & Kamidza, 2018). The inspiration behind Zimbabwe's LEP was that other countries would follow China in engaging with Zimbabwe and the ruling ZANU PF notwithstanding grave concerns in the country's political realm which included amongst other things electoral irregularities and violation of human rights by the governing party (Youde, 2013).

The relationship between China and Zimbabwe has made international headlines on numerous occasions because of China's inclination for forging relations with what the international media calls dictatorships infamous for violation of human rights. China has responded to such critics by reiterating its foreign policy which one of its guiding pillars is 'non-interference' with the internal affairs of its diplomatic allies. In the light of the prevailing policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the Chinese 'non-interference' policy has attracted it to many African countries. In her engagement with African economies, China has only used the 'One China Policy' as

a prerequisite for developing economic ties. China recognizes all African countries but one as its allies. Following the establishment of relations with Burkina Faso in May 2018, Swaziland (now formally known as eSwatini) is the only one that does not have relations with China due to its relations with Taiwan.

3.3 Chinese Investments in Zimbabwe

Chin invests investments in various sectors of Zimbabwe's economy, the major sector being the mining sector. They invest in platinum, gold, iron ore and coal. To attain the mining rights in Zimbabwe, the Chinese paid large sums to the tune of US$3 billion and a contract in the region of US$40billion. Not only has the Chinese invested in mining, but they also have investments in agriculture in an effort to support Zimbabwe's agricultural sector in the wake of the land reform programme instituted by Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF. The land has been leased to the Chinese and they do not have freehold ownership. The energy sector is also one area of the economy of Zimbabwe that the Chinese investors are investing in. The state-owned enterprises of Zimbabwe have entered joint investment in the extraction of coal for electricity generation for the country.

I. <u>Mining</u>

The mining sector is the focal point of the Sino-Zim relations. The Sino-Zim interests converge around the subject of mining (Alao, 2014). China's rapid economic development has increased its need for raw materials and Zimbabwe, just like many other minerals endowed African countries, is the source of minerals and raw materials China is in search of in the African continent

China sees Zimbabwe as an investment destination because the latter is the second platinum producing country in the world and home to other has other minerals like iron, steel, and ferrochrome.

According to Alao (2014), the mining agreement between the two countries was agreeable from the perspective of each country's needs (Alao, 2014). In 2013,

between the months of January and May, China accounted for 74% of US$ 134 million worth of foreign direct investment that Zimbabwe received.

With regards to steel, a Chinese company called SinoSteel took over ferrochrome production from the local mining and smelting company called ZIMASCO; the largest ferrochrome producer in Zimbabwe and fifth in the world. In 2007 SinoSteel acquired a 93% stake in ZIMASCO Consolidated Enterprises (Muronzi, 2016). This takeover was supported by the Zimbabwean government as it viewed Chinese investment 'mutually' beneficial in comparison to the Western investments in the country. The acquisition happened in the backdrop of Zimbabwe's Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act that was signed into law by Robert Mugabe in 2008. This law gave the right to Zimbabweans to assume 51% control over foreign-owned companies operating in the country. The passing of the law came at when concerns at the rate at which Chinese entities were becoming major actors in Zimbabwe's mining industry with the likelihood of acquiring all stakes in Zimbabwe's mining products (Mguni, 2016).

Marange Diamonds

The Marange Goldfields were discovered in 2006 and has become one of the world's lucrative mines and one sought after by illegal miners, smugglers, and foreign buyers. China has been a major investor in the diamond fields at Marange (Farineau, 2013).

The Marange diamond fields are located in the province known as Manicaland in the East of Zimbabwe and are said to be a belt that stretches 70km and cover an area of about 60 000 hectares. The fields are said to have 2 to 7 billion carats of raw diamond and due to this, they are one of the largest in the world (Makombe, 2017). The mining of these diamonds was believed to be a relatively easy task and this led to the influx of informal miners. The proliferation of informal miners in Marange was fuelled by the ruling ZANU PF when it gave it asserted that the fields were open to any Zimbabwean who wanted to mine diamonds. However, political and financial clout gave the senior government officials, the army, and the Chinese investors' advantage over the informal miners (Mtondoro et al., 2013)

In 2011 Anjin Investments, a Chinese company working together with Zimbabwe's National Army (ZDI) injected an investment amount to the tune of US$460 million into

the Marange diamond fields. China's Anjin investment in Zimbabwe's Marange mines has been marred with controversy. In 2008, the army dispatched 800 soldiers to the Marange area where they used violent tactics to take over the mining operations and forcefully evicting the inhabitants in the area (Farineau, 2013).

The Zimbabwean government put security agency controls on the Marange diamond fields to ward off illegal miners as it sought to seize the opportunity to fund their arms purchases. In an interview with the Daily Mail, a British Newspaper, a Mugabe intelligence official said the ZANU PF and China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) had struck a deal for an exchange of rough diamonds for a supply of military hardware (*Daily Mail*, 2010; Towriss, 2013). The deals were brokered by former Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) commander Constantine Chiwenga with the approval of Robert Mugabe. The signing of the memorandum was a secret affair and its date is suggested to be the end of 2009 when the announcement of a proposed runway in Chiadzwa (a location in Mutare West, home to the Marange diamond fields) was made. According to the *Daily Mail,* the runway regular users was a cargo plane that arrived two times a week with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) officials and military equipment on board (Daily Mail, 2010; Towriss, 2013).

In the exchange of diamonds for military hardware, the deal occurred took place with the approval of the ZANU PF officials and former members of the security agencies. China appointed pro-China Zimbabwean military personnel to higher positions in its mining firms. This was a strategic move by the Chinese as the military's loyalty was at the time pivotal for Mugabe's position as the president of Zimbabwe. Beijing's investments were secured with the help of the Zimbabwe National Army officials. This also convinced the Mugabe regime to exempt Chinese companies from the indigenization policy that stated that 51% of shares should be owned by the Zimbabwean government (Ramani, 2016)

China's Anjin Investment Company is the largest mining company in Zimbabwe on the basis of output. Concerns have been raised in its activities in the mining industry because of the company's adoption of the military style of the workforce (Chinguno, Mereki & Mutyanda, 2015). According to Chinguno et.al, at least 10% of the labor force

at Anjin is made up of Chinese national who are low-skilled security guards. China has taken advantage of the exemption from the immigration laws that prohibits the importation of labor.

The rest of the labor employed by Anjin is made up locals from the nearby Villages of Marange. The remuneration of these workers is low when compared to other companies that are involved in the extraction of diamonds at the Marange Fields. According to Chinguno et.al, Anjin paid the lowest wages of US$300 in compared to the US$1000 which other companies that are extracting diamonds from Marange are paying its employees. Moreover, the labor relations at Anjin are coercive in the sense that they include corporal punishment. The working hours are 12 hours per shift each day for a period of at least 19 to 26 successive days. In terms of wages, the workers alleged that they are not paid for working overtime and at times called for duty without notice even on off-duty days. These practices violated the Labour Act of Zimbabwe which argues that the workers are allowed at least one day of rest per week (Chinguno et.al, 2015).

China maximized on the opportunity made by the withdrawal of the Western investments from Zimbabwe. The exit of the West presented an opportunity for China to invest in Zimbabwe, which alongside South Africa have the largest platinum reserves in the world. On top of China's interest in Zimbabwe's platinum, China is also attracted to nickel and copper. In 2008 a Chinese Nickel company, Jinchuan Nickel Mining of China signed a memorandum of agreement with the Mineral Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe ((MMCZ). The agreement between the two is that Zimbabwe is to sell nickel to China. According to Mguni (2016), the deals between Zimbabwe and China in the mining sector are carried out under the framework of Zimbabwe's 'Look East Policy". He further argues these deals are asymmetrical in the sense that they are largely tilted in favour of China insofar as Zimbabwe has no bargaining power (Mguni, 2016).

China's involvement in Zimbabwe's mining industry has had negative ramifications for Zimbabwe. With the help of Zimbabwe's government under its ousted leader Robert Mugabe, China has depleted Zimbabwe's minerals such as diamonds from the Eastern part of the country. The inhabitants of the mining area were forcefully evicted because they were said to be illegally extracting diamonds from the Marange fields.so

as to accommodate. According to a publication, *My Zimbabwe* (2016), the working conditions in the Chinese mining companies such as Anjin Investment are bad, characterized by poor remuneration, lack of protective clothing and physical abuse of the locals at the hands of their Chinese employers (My Zimbabwe, 2016).

This raises concerns about China's overseas labour practices which parallels its ugly human rights record on the domestic front back. The case of Zimbabwe is just a microcosm of wider Chinese engagements in other parts of the African continent. For example, across the border from Zimbabwe, China is infamous in Zambia for ill-treatment of its black employees. In Chinese mining firms, the Zambian employees are paid three times lesser than their Chinese counterparts.

Katie Farineau portends that the ties between China and the Zimbabwean government and military are a cause for concern because China pushed for the west to lift sanctions on the Marange field citing that Zimbabwe desperately needed the proceeds from the diamond trade to revive its crumbled economy and pay for government expenditures. However, such arguments by China, according to Katie Farineau, conceal China's true motives in the region; which is lust for power in the region (Farineau, 2013).

One would argue that as much as the deals between China and Zimbabwe may seem unequal they to some extent present positives to Zimbabwe's economy. According to Sachikonye (2008), who spoke in the light a US$300 investment in mining of metals by the Chinese Shanghai Baosteel Group, this investment created employment in Zimbabwe and a large portion of the investment was used to buy equipment for developing the production of iron in the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Corporation (ZISCO).

II. Agriculture

Zimbabwe was once the agricultural hub of Southern Africa but with the economic crisis following its land reform programme, shortages in farm inputs and poor rains the country has been faced with low agricultural productivity. In the midst of hardships in the agricultural hardships, China extended its helping hand to Zimbabwe's land reform policy in 2001 and it has since continued providing a lifeline to Zimbabwe's agricultural sector in the form of loans (Mvutungayi, 2012; Hogwe & Banda, 2017).

In 2004, China was awarded a contract by the Zimbabwean government to work the land of 1,000 square kilometers that was taken expropriated from white farmers by the Zimbabwean government. Additionally, China purchased machinery valued at US$25 million that would help Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. In reciprocity, the Zimbabwean government promised and delivered to China some tobacco valued US$30 million (The Zimbabwean, 2013).

In Zimbabwe, the agriculture industry has benefited immensely from Chinese investment. The tobacco sector, in particular, has benefited a lot since the Chinese firm Tian Ze started investing in that sector. Tian Ze started investing in Zimbabwe's tobacco industry in 2005 and at that period the price of tobacco went up from US$1.61 per kilogram to US$3.32 per kilogram. This investment and the subsequent rise of the price of tobacco provided business viability to over 8000 tobacco farmers in Zimbabwe whose produce is consumed by over a million people (Mutenga, 2014). Additionally, Chinese investment in this sector came with irrigation equipment which has helped revive Zimbabwe's agriculture (Tombindo & Tukić, 2016).

The Exim-Import Bank of China has also played a big role in reviving Zimbabwe's agricultural sector by donating machinery and training the employees of the government of Zimbabwe's agricultural sector (Mukwezera, 2013; Hogwe & Banda 2017) According to Mukwezera (2013), in 2011 the Exim-Import Bank of China injected into Zimbabwe's agricultural sector a loan of US$ 340 million destined for acquisition of tractors and other inputs. The repayment period of the loan was five years and the payment method was agricultural products (Hogwe & Banda, 2017).

Some of the contractual farming in Zimbabwe was carried out by the Sichuan Provincial government of China. This regional government of China offered 50 water pumps, 10 farm trucks, and 30 two-wheel walking tractors. On a lower level, the farming is carried is carried out by Chinese private companies that do contractual farmers with the Zimbabwean local farmers.

Contract farming is concentrated on tobacco and cotton farming. This is essential especially for cotton production as an estimated 300 000 smallholding farmers produce cotton of an average area of 1 hectare. Also, under contract farming terms and condition, the farmers are given all the equipment needed and they are in turn

required to give a portion of the product as part of the loan repayment (Mukwezera, 2013).

There are disadvantages that would accrue to Zimbabwean farmers and the government. Since the programme is administered by the government of the two countries, the repayment of the loan is expected to be done by the Zimbabwean government. The government is obliged to collect repayments from the farmers for the equipment within a time span of 15 years with an interest rate of 2 % per annum. Given the difficult circumstances, the Zimbabwean economy has been faced with it would be difficult for the government to service the loans as the repayments by the farmers are not harmonized to the borrowing country (Mukwezera, 2013).

Another disadvantage to Zimbabwe is that putting much focus and resources on tobacco and cotton has contributed to the decline in the production of other crops such as grain and maize (Mvutungayi, 2012). This would lead to shortages of mealie and other crops for local consumption as a big portion of resources are channeled to the production of commercial produces for export. (Mukwezera, 2013).

The other concern is that most of the agricultural produce is exported as raw or semi-processed. In consequence of this, the Zimbabwean economy suffers as the lack of processing agricultural products into finished goods contributes to the low rate of activity in the manufacturing sector which is supposed to play a crucial role to the GDP of the country (Mukwezera, 2013).

III. Trade

The Sino-Zimbabwe relations in the realm of trade have from strength to strength through high-level visits by government officials. Regardless of the depreciation of Zimbabwe's currency and its ultimate extinction which led to the adoption of the US dollar and South African rand, China has continued trading an assortment of commodities with Zimbabwe. The trading relation has grown and China is now Zimbabwe's third largest trading partner after South Africa and the European Union (Maodza, 2012; Chun, 2014).

The China and Zimbabwe trading relationship is informed by the former’s appetite for mineral investment and raw material. China’s need for natural resources to support its

rapid urbanization and development has pushed China to invest in mineral resources across Africa during the time of rising world commodity prices. On the other hand, Zimbabwe's economy has been deteriorating since the turn of the millennium and its reliance on aid and its dysfunctional export sector have seen the economy recording a trade deficit and growing current account deficit (Edinger & Burke, 2008).

The bilateral trade between China and Zimbabwe, just like trade between the former and the rest of the African continent is typified by the export of low value-added raw materials in exchange for manufactured products in the form of electronics, transport (buses, tractors, automobiles, and aircraft vehicles. This bilateral trade between the two nations is skewed in favor of Zimbabwe. This, according to Edinger & Burke, is atypical for an African country without oil reserves (Edinger & Burke, 2008).

The trade volumes between China and Zimbabwe reached $948 million in September 2016 (Kawadza, 2016). The Zimbabwean domestic businesses have relied to a large extent on China for electronics, clothes and other manufactured products. China on the other hand imports various products such as tobacco, cotton and mineral resources from Zimbabwe. In September 2016, Chinese Economic and Commercial Consular Mr. Li Yauhui upon his visit to handover educational materials by Tian Ze China tobacco Company to a School in a place called Beatrice in Zimbabwe talked about the trade relations between the countries. He said the import-export relations between the two countries tilted in favour of China insofar as Zimbabwe exports 55 % of its tobacco to Beijing (Kawadza, 2016).

Zimbabwe Import Share in Total Products in percentage **for China** between 2008 and 2016

Figure 1 (i)

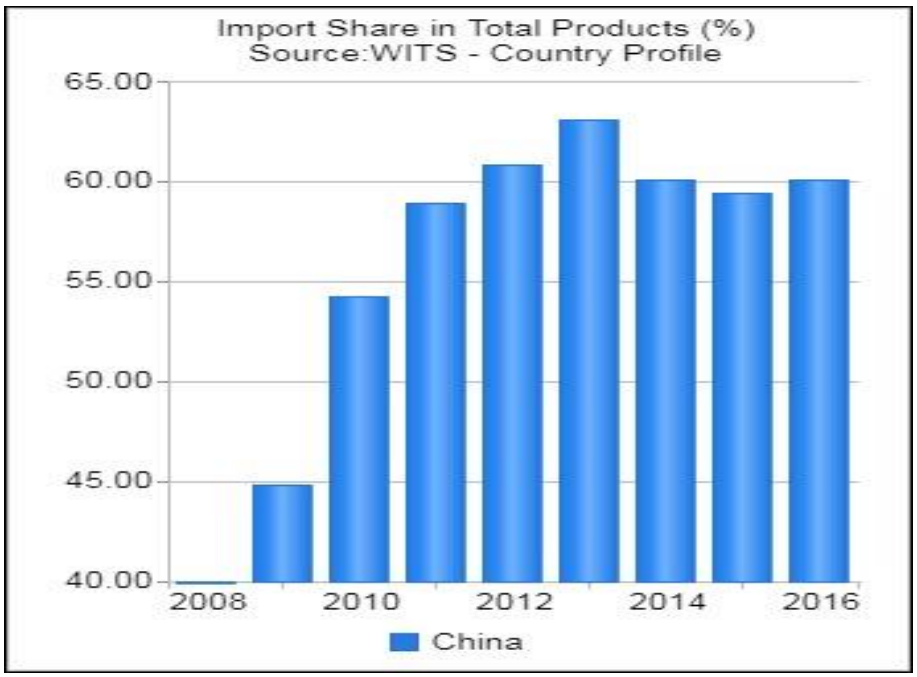
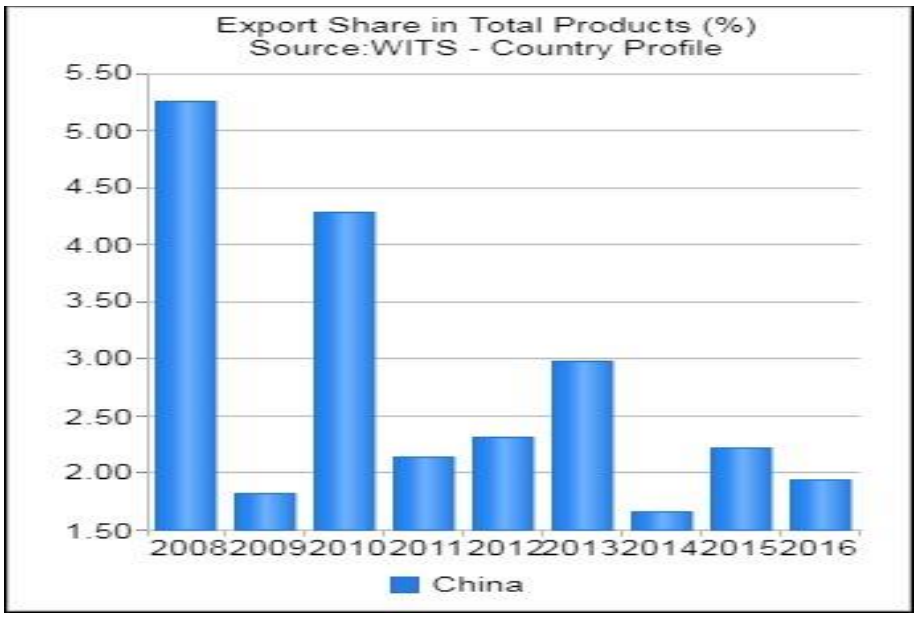


Figure 1 (ii)



Source: World Integrated Trade Solutions

Table 1

Products by Stages of Processing Exports Zimbabwe to China 2016

Product Group	**Export (US$Thousand)**	**Export Product Share (%)**
All Products	882.5	100.00
Raw Materials	862.18	97.70
Intermediate Goods	8.85	1.00
Capital Goods	8.20	0.93
Consumer Goods	3.27	0.37

Source: World Integrated Trade Solutions

The trade relations between China and Zimbabwe, (see figures 1a), show that Zimbabwe's export share in total products to China increased from 40% to 60% from 2008 to 2016. On the other hand, Zimbabwe import share in total products from China accounted for 5 % of China's exports in 2008 which decreased to less than 2% in 2016. This trend shows that while Zimbabwe's exports to China (which mainly consist of raw materials) account for a big percentage of China's imports, Zimbabwe on the other hand only accounts for a meager 2% of Chinese export share. This trend represents asymmetrical trade balances between the two countries in the sense that

Chinese extracts a greater value form Zimbabwe's raw materials while on the other hand, Zimbabwe is a destination of less 2% of Chinese exports.

IV. Aid

Since the end of the Cold War, foreign aid has been one of the instruments used by governments to attain their foreign policy objectives. There are numerous instruments that governments use to attain their foreign policy objectives and these consist of a transfer of goods and services, military assistance and money from their government to other countries. The most common tool in contemporary times especially when disbursing aid to less developed countries is infrastructure development.

China's resurgence in the world economy as well as its shift from the traditional tools for engaging with Africa have changed the rules of engagement and has consequently warranted close inspection from the international media and policymakers as to what China's objectives are towards its engagement with Africa. The Western world has been the most vocal critic and perceives China's model of engagement in Africa as a tool for exploiting the recipient country. This perception has is conditioned by Africa's shift from Western donors to favour the Chinese model (Lengauer, 2011).

The traditional definition of aid is based on the OECD-Development Assistance Committee. According to DAC, aid constitutes loans, grants that are provided to the developing world and these are administered through government institutions with the objective of promoting economic development and welfare to the recipient country.

The Chinese definition of aid has similarities with the DAC definition. However, differences in objectives are what has made China's definition of aid diverge from the DAC description. According to Davies et al., China's foreign aid policy is ambiguous and has a wide scope. China defines its aid using two formats, which are ‘co-operation' and Official Development Assistance. Co-operation, in this case, denotes Foreign Direct Investment and concessions with Chinese investors. On the other hand, ODA denotes debt relief, loans, and grants. These divergent descriptions of aid are what has reflected the ambiguity and wide-ranging scope in China's foreign aid policy and this has made the Chinese definition of aid a murky one.

China's aid to Africa is an object of scrutiny in reports and international media. A World Bank report once said that the motive behind the Chinese government-financed project is to gain access and to secure the flow of natural resources for export to Beijing. A European Parliament said that China's interest in Africa is limited to natural resources endowed countries, ignoring other African countries (Brautigam, 2009).

According to Deborah Brautigam, China's focus is not as much to give aid as to conduct business with Zimbabwe (Brautigam, 2011). From 2004 to 2013, China provided with official development aid worth $103 million channeled through concessional loans, grants, food aid and the construction of a hospital and two schools. This aid is administered by the China Export-Import Bank and is the terms are agreeable to Zimbabwe in the sense that the interest rates have been slashed from 4% and 3% respectively to 2% on two aggregating to $17.9 million (Chun, 2014).

In 2006, China offered the Zimbabwean government a grant that was in form of refurbishing the National Sports Stadium in Harare. In the same year, the China EXIM Bank offered the Zimbabwe Farmers Development Company a concessional loan for agricultural equipment and tools amounting to $25 million.

In December of 2017, less than a month after a de facto military coup that brought President Robert Mugabe's 37-year rule, Zimbabwe's new government signed a loan agreement with China worth $153 million and other two agreements to the tune of 400 million yuan (Reuters, 2017). The loan of $153 million is intended to revamp Zimbabwe's international airport in Harare. The other agreement is for the construction of a new parliament and the extension of the computer center at the University of Zimbabwe. The loan is repayable with an interest of 2% per annum over a period of two decades. Zimbabwe still owes China from previous loans, however, China is committed to disbursing additional loans to help revive Zimbabwe's ailing economy. This gesture by China towards Zimbabwe was seen by Zimbabwe's finance minister Patrick Chinamasa as a sign of an 'all-weather friendship". He said *"The Chinese government understands the economic situation we are going through. We're under sanctions and had no lines of credit coming into the country. This is why we call them 'all-weather friends'."* (Reuters, 2017).

A cause for concern has been around China's ‘no attachment of conditions to aid' in relation to African countries. There are polarised views on the non-conditionality nature of China's foreign aid. One view compares China's aid to that of Western donors. According to this view, China aid allows recipient countries ownership of the aid resources they are provided with. On the other hand, there are views that argue that China's aid undermines African countries endeavors of promoting good governance and global macroeconomic reforms (Chileshe, 2010).

According to Brautigam, the belief that China’s interest in Africa is to secure natural resources is true but it ignores other facts. Her argument refutes the assumption that China only gives aid to countries that have natural resources. In contrary to this conventional belief, she argues that China offers aid to every African country that regards the One China policy. For example, countries with relatively strong economies such as Mauritius and South Africa also receive aid from China. In this regard, China has argued that it is not selective in its disbursement of aid as compared to the international donors whose aid distribution favours one group of countries more than the other.

Aid from China to Zimbabwe is discussed in this section in order to come up with a cost-benefit analysis between the two countries diplomatic ties. Since 2000, Zimbabwe's governance has been controversial and this has led to the political and socio-economic collapse. Despite all the hardships as a result of the imposed sanctions by the international community, Zimbabwe found a breathing pipeline from China through aid as well as support in the United Nations Security Council. It is against this backdrop that one seeks to come up with a cost-benefit analysis so as to find out as to what extent is this partnership symmetrical.

According to Kishi & Relaigh (2015), China has provided Zimbabwe with aid on an unconditional basis and as a result of the long-standing history between China and the ZANU PF government, this aid has played a role to drown dissenting views from the people as well as perpetuating human rights violations.

According to Deborah Brautigam, China's main focus in its partnership with Zimbabwe is not giving aid but doing business. China provides official development aid (ODA) through concessional loans and grants. The latter in this case is defined as "non-

payable financial assistance to Zimbabwe on the basis of technical and economic cooperation between the governments of the two countries" (Chun, 2014). The China Export-Import is the procurer of these grants and loans and this aid is structured in a way that is favourable to Zimbabwe which includes reduced interest rates (Chun, 2014).

According to Mhandara, Manyeruke and Nyemba (2013), the granting of aid by China is not meant to interfere in the way the funds are going to be utilized. What China is keen on is the aid recipient's capacity to service the loan. They further go on to argue that in an implicit way China's policy looks appealing to African governments, however, this policy is likely to have an impact on African countries' internal affairs. Mhandara et.al (2013) argue so because of China's track record of investments in pariah states.

Zimbabwe is a country that has seen its economy run to the ground by Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF and the country has been subjected to an assortment of economic and political problems yet China has invested heavily in that Southern African country. Such a move by China would make one be wary of the real motives behind China's stance of forming a partnership with a country that is regarded by the international community as a pariah state.

In December of 2017, less than a month after a de facto military coup that brought President Robert Mugabe's 37-year rule, Zimbabwe's new government signed a loan agreement with China worth $153 million and other two agreements to the tune of 400 million yuan (Reuters, 2017). The loan of $153 million is intended to revamp Zimbabwe's international airport in Harare. The other agreement is for the construction of a new parliament and the extension of the computer center at the University of Zimbabwe. The loan is repayable with an interest of 2% per annum over a period of two decades. Zimbabwe still owes China from previous loans, however, China is committed to disbursing additional loans to help revive Zimbabwe's ailing economy. This gesture by China towards Zimbabwe was seen by Zimbabwe's finance minister Patrick Chinamasa as a sign of an 'all-weather friendship". He said *"The Chinese government understands the economic situation we are going through. We're under sanctions and had no lines of credit coming into the country. This is why we call them 'all-weather friends'."* (Reuters, 2017).

V. Military Ties

The Sino-Zimbabwe relationship has been thrown under the microscope for its trade in arms. The military ties between China and Zimbabwe are one of the closest ties China has on the African continent. The Zimbabwean defense force plays a big role in Zimbabwe's politics and the military forms a crucial element in the cooperation and exchange between the two countries (Edinger & Burke, 2008).

These military exchanges have led to the condemnation of China by the West given that Zimbabwe is facing an arms embargo instituted by the West. Two scenarios can be used to elaborate on the nature of the military relationship between China and Zimbabwe. The first example is the military relations between China and Zimbabwe during the latter's struggle for independence from Britain. China supplied ZANU soldiers with weapons and military skills. After the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe and its adoption of the 'Look East' policy in the time Zimbabwe was declared to be under authoritarian rule, China continued supplying arms to the ruling ZANU PF under the Mugabe rule (Chun, 2014).

According to Ian Taylor, China provided arms and security equipment to the Mugabe regime because the army was where Mugabe got the legitimacy to stay in power for a protracted period of time when the larger part of the Zimbabwean populace had lost faith in their leader (Taylor, 2008).

China supplied Zimbabwe with military equipment worth US$240 million on credit in 2004 which comprised of one hundred military vehicles and twelve jet aircraft. This acquisition of military equipment was defended by Zimbabwean then minister of defense who argued that this equipment was meant to replenish Zimbabwe's arsenal that was depleting owing to the sanctions from the West. Additionally, China provided the Zimbabwean air-force with six K8 jet aircraft whose purpose was for training jet fighter pilots. On top of the deal, China also installed a radar system at Zimbabwe's erstwhile president Robert Mugabe's mansion (Taylor, 2008). Such gestures from China would raise questions regarding its non-interference principle.

The major controversy surrounding the military ties between China and Zimbabwe came in 2008. A controversial arms cargo from China that was intended to Harare made international headlines as that shipment's arrival coincided with the presidential elections in Zimbabwe (Robertson & Corkin, 2011). The ship carrying armament to Zimbabwe from China was denied offloading in South Africa and Namibia as these countries concerned that the armament would aggravate the violence that was meted on the opposition by the ruling ZANU PF that following the disputed 2008 elections. This was also endorsed by the late former president of Zambia, Levy Mwanawasa who at the time also chaired SADC. The extent of criticism and public scrutiny led to the return of the ship with its contents not offloaded. It is still unknown as to whether the ship was unloaded at other ports (Robertson & Corkin, 2011).

In 2014, the *Zimbabwe Situation* reported that China extended a gesture of solidarity to Zimbabwe in the form of a $4.2 million donation that was used to fund military projects. China continued supplying the ruling ZANU PF with arms, without paying attention to the volatile political reality in Zimbabwe. Between 2005 and 2007, Zimbabwe received US$ 28 million worth of arms from China.

What makes this arms deal between China and Zimbabwe complicated is that the elections were preceded by reports of violence meted out on supporters of the opposition party the MDC by the Mugabe led ZANU PF. This arms shipment was defended by the foreign minister of China as a routine military trade between the two countries (Robertson & Corkin, 2011).

What were the ramifications of these arms deal between China and Zimbabwe in a time when the latter was going through economic hardships? Deborah Brautigam (2009) argues that Robert Mugabe needed the military equipment to forestall any unrest that could have led to a coup de tat.

The morality and legitimacy of China's interests in Zimbabwe is a cause for concern on the basis of China's provision of millions of dollars' worth of ammunition to the Zimbabwean government in a time of crisis. In a country faced with economic challenges China should at the very least provide food and medicine instead of military equipment and in that way its intentions would have been perceived legitimate.

According to Brautigam, the purchase of the Chinese jets by Zimbabwe's military was an unscrupulous transaction on the Zimbabwean side because the orders for the military hardware was done outside the knowledge of the parliament and the government's procurement board. There is no public proof that implicates China in a corruption-laden arms deal with Zimbabwe. However, the controversy surrounding Zimbabwe's military deals with China suggest that there was some form of illegal enrichment some sort. One of the reasons may be that Mugabe's long stay in power was aided by the military that worked in his defence.

One point worth noting is that China was not the only source of military supply for the Mugabe regime. Between 2005 and 2007 Zimbabwe was supplied with military weapon worth $12 million by Ukraine.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the beginning of the Sino-Zimbabwe relations. It talked about the beginning of the contemporary relations between the two countries since the early 2000s. Zimbabwe’s state of the economy took a turn for the worst when it instituted the land reform programme that culminated in the removal of white farmers from the Zimbabwean land. The members of the ruling ZANU PF took most of the land vacated by the white farmers. This act, commonly known as the ‘Land Grab’ attracted international media and the United Nations under the influence of the U.S and Britain imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe with the view that the land grab from the white farmers was a human rights violation. Coupled with the land expropriation without compensation was the election thievery and beatings of the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) whom Robert Mugabe and the ZANU PF believed they received much of its influence and support from the West.

At this point of Zimbabwe's isolation from the international community, China was on the rise as one of the global economic powers. China's rise was and its sustainability was to be maintained by mineral resources from abroad and Zimbabwe as a minerals endowed country was under China's radar. Nothing could stop China from engaging with Zimbabwe as China's foreign policy under the non-interference policy allowed it to do business with any country so long as it did not interfere with the domestic affairs

of its business partner. The entrance of China in Zimbabwe influenced the latter's formation of the ‘Look East' policy that led to the enlargement of China's economic footprint in various sectors of Zimbabwe's economy.

China provided aid to Zimbabwe in an effort to alleviate the deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe in the wake of the withdrawal of investments from the West. The increased cooperation between China and Zimbabwe has and still has economic and political ramifications for the latter country. These impacts are discussed in the ensuing chapter.

Chapter 4

Zimbabwe-China Relations: Its implication on Zimbabwe

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to show whether China's entry into Zimbabwe has been of help to the latter or Beijing was simply seizing the opportunity to exploit a beleaguered nation that has been isolated from the international community due to its government's record of human rights violations and its disregard of the principles of democracy.

This chapter also seeks to highlight the impacts of wrought by the entry of China in an economy shunned by the international community. It is worth stating that it has been difficult to access statistics on the economic relations between the two countries from their respective governments as they do not make public such documents. However, the statics by the World Integrated Trade Solutions (WITS) has been used to back some of the qualitative data made public through international media and academic sources such as books and journals.

The latter parts of this chapter offer prospects on the Zimbabwe-China relations in the post-Mugabe era and what the new government of Zimbabwe could do in order to get the most out of the Chinese investments.

4.2 Zimbabweans' Perception of Chinese investment

The presence of Chinese businesses in Zimbabwe is viewed negatively by many Zimbabweans. From the business ownership viewpoint, Zimbabweans argue that Chinese businesses are taking domestic enterprises out of businesses. Morgan Tsvangirai, a leader of the opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) argued that Zimbabwe was mortgaged to the Chinese by the ruling party and also question the removal of Zimbabweans from the flea markets to make space for Chinese investors.

The Zimbabwe Competitions Act on Chapter 14:28 and the Competition Commission section 4 part 2 has the legal mandate to investigate monopoly in the market and hinder such situations from happening so as to protect the interests of the public. Despite the enforcement of this legal aspect, the public interest has not been served as evidenced by the influx of Chinese traders displacing the indigenous Zimbabweans in the informal sector and ultimately depriving them of their livelihood. In 2004, after the adoption of the 'Look East Policy' by the Zimbabwean government the estimated number of people that were subjected to job precariousness was in the region of 30 000 (Chigora & Dhewa, 2009).

The other view is concerned about the Chinese's corrupt means of getting deals done with government officials due to their financial clout (Alao, 2014). Grievances stem from Zimbabweans about the corrupt means through which the Chinese get things done. For instance, they are widespread disgruntlement about the tendering process through which China acquire concession to mineral extractions. They are of the opinion that the Chinese bribe the Indigenization minister in order to do businesses which are otherwise according to the Indigenization policy is supposed to be granted to local business entities. The blame has been apportioned largely to the Chinese in the sense that they take advantage of the corrupt and greedy practices of the government officials (Alao, 2014).

It is not easy to judge through scholarly literature whether the advantages of this relationship outweigh the disadvantages and vice-versa. To arrive at a more reasonable conclusion it would be best if one studies the impacts of Chinese investment on Zimbabwe's economic development.

As a point of departure in assessing the impact of Chinese investment on Zimbabwe's economy, one would look at how this intensified relationship came about. China's refreshed interest in Zimbabwe came at a point when Western institutions withdrew its investments and imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe. China entered Zimbabwe with its investments regardless of the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe. Chinese investment provided a source of capital to Zimbabwe through its investments at a time when the international community had turned away from Zimbabwe.

4.3 The Negative and Positive impacts of the Look East Policy

Since its adoption, the Look East Policy has been able to bring investment opportunities to numerous sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. China played and still plays a big role in providing equipment to Zimbabwe. The economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe closed the credit avenue, infrastructural assistance and technical support from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Chinguno, 2010). By choice, China defied the international community by providing grants, loans and technical support to the country that was going to suffer the most if it was not for Beijing helping hand.

I. Job creation

According to a Hogwe and Banda, China has been able to create a number of jobs. However, reports say Chinese firms employ Chinese nationals for high position jobs leaving the inferior jobs for Zimbabweans. This move by China has led to a rise of the phenomenon known as the ‘new colonialism'. To concur with this view one would argue that the economic marriage between the two countries presented positives for both parties, however, the issue herein is as to which side the substantial dividends of this relationship goes. One would argue from a realist point of view that China acted for its national interests when it invested in a country run by political party infamous for human rights violations and undemocratic governance whose acts led to it being shunned by the international community.

The Chinese investments in Zimbabwe have been able to create a number of jobs. In the early years of the sanctions, Zimbabwe was under a crisis which was evidenced by a declining balance of trade, rising levels of inflation and closing down of many local businesses. The arrival of Chinese investments helped to create jobs in numerous sectors of its investments. China topped the rankings of job creations as it created a job for every US$49 000 invested in Zimbabwe (Shelton & Kabemba, 2012).

With the withdrawal of Western investment in Zimbabwe, many companies were on the brink of shutting down and some shut down. The arrival of Chinese investment opened the non-operational firms and revived those that were on the cusp of closing

down. An example of the Zimbabwean companies that were revived by Chinese investment is ZIMASCO and ZISCO. Fortune Hogwe asserts that the economic partnership between China and Zimbabwe has helped in protecting the latter from a capital flight because the Chinese firms reinvest its proceeds in Zimbabwe. He also goes on to extoll the positives wrought by China such as contributing to infrastructural development. For example, the Sino-Hydro company installed two generators at the Kariba Hydropower station as well as the construction of a road that links Zimbabwe with its neighbouring Zambia (Hogwe & Banda, 2017).

II. Labour relations

According to Fisher (2011), the Chinese influence in Zimbabwe is felt in a negative way, mostly by workers. This statement is supported by Alden & Davies (2000), who documented one Zimbabwean employee at the China Garden restaurant in Harare saying “Working for these men from the East is hell on earth” (Alden & Davies, 2007). Another incidence portraying the negative impact of Chinese investment in Zimbabwe is the strike by the construction workers at a Military College which was being built by China’s Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Company (AFECC). The workers were striking over low pay, which was US$4 per day, these workers also argued that they were subjected to beatings by their Chinese Managers (Mapaure, 2014).

The way the Chinese employees are treating the Zimbabwean workers is believed to be adopted from the Chinese labour culture in China which does not grant any rights to the workers. In China, there is a prohibition of the existence of trade unions outside the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, which is the sole representative of all Chinese employees. In this light, China has extended its labour practices to their foreign business counterparts. In the case of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabweans employed by the Chinese are forbidden from affiliating with any trade union. According to Ruzvidzo, she cites one article in the Newsday Zimbabwe newspaper in 2010 which published an article about one Chinese employee who said that their boss told them there is nothing that would be done to them (Chinese employees) if the employees were to report them because they are friends with the Zimbabwean government. The Chinese are getting special treatment from the authorities which is not applicable to the ordinary Zimbabweans and if they are brought to law in the Zimbabwean courts there is an absence of information that shows that the case was put to book. This lack

of transparency on the part of the Zimbabwean authorities in their dealings with the Chinese gives the Chinese the powers to do as they wish because of the knowledge that nothing would be done to them (Ruzvidzo, 2016).

Labour relations between Chinese firms and African employees has been a topic of popular discussions in terms of Sino-Africa relations. There have been many issues emanating from China's operations and Africa's labour movements. There has been incidents of unsatisfactory remuneration of Africans in Chinese firms as well as the abuse of the rights of workers.

The increase of construction projects by Chinese firms in Africa has led also led to the increase of Chinese workers in these projects and this has had both economic and political ramifications because Chinese firms want to keep their costs of production as low as possible (Alden, 2009). The Chinese hold the view that it is less costly to pay a Chinese national in Africa than it is to pay an African employee.

III. Trade

The Sino-Zim trade relations symbolize a trade arrangement between developed and developing countries. This trade pattern has seen Zimbabwe as a less developed country, increasing machinery imports as well as items such as electronics and telecommunications from China. On the export front, Zimbabwe exports mainly agricultural produce. According to the Freidrich-Ebert-Stiftung report of 2004, the nature of the trade relations between China and Zimbabwe make it difficult for the latter to diversify its economy because it is highly depended on limited income generated from the sale of raw materials to China (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004).

However, most Chinese nationals are accused of unfair trade practices. They are accused of selling cheap goods and such practices push the capital-starved and self-employed domestic citizens out of the economic lines preserved for them (Bbaala, 2015). In Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the continent where China conducts its business there are reports of the effects of dumping by China. African countries are heavily depended on commodity exports and this issue South-South dumping impacts negatively on Africa's industries. Locals that produce basic commodities such as

clothes, shoes and other basic goods face fierce competition from the Chinese traders that sell low-quality goods at very low prices. The abundance of Chinese traders has led to the formation of complexes or clusters of shops that are known as *'China Towns'* that sell Chinese produced goods and this proliferation of Chinese shops has made it even harder for local traders who cannot compete financially, in terms of capital, against the Chinese nationals.

One would argue that the trade relations between China notwithstanding the accusations on China has helped Zimbabwe substantially in the face of the economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by the Western countries and the subsequent withdrawal of their investment in the country.

The land reform programme of Zimbabwe led to the decline in agricultural productivity in the wake of the removal of white farmers off the farms of Zimbabwe which led to food shortages. China's investment through the provision of agricultural equipment revived the agricultural sector and tobacco productivity was supported for the purpose of trade with China.

IV. Capital

There is a substantial loss of capital due to selective application of the regulatory statutes. The relaxation of the laws to the Chinese investors has led to a substantial monetary loss on the part of Zimbabwe when it comes to the mining sector. Zimbabwe's indigenization policy whose objective is to empower the citizens of Zimbabwe is applied to every other foreign investment but is relaxed when dealing with Chinese firms. The Chinese strike special deals with the government to attain access to the mining sector and they are the greatest exploiters of the minerals as they are no quotas set on them as to what extent they should extract minerals.

V. Loan/Grants

Under the Mugabe regime, Zimbabwe benefited substantially from the concessional loans provided by China soon after the West instituted economic sanctions on Zimbabwe. On the other hand, there have been grave concerns about the negative impacts of the Sino-Zimbabwe relationship in terms of human rights and labour practices. Since 2000, when the period crisis started in Zimbabwe the World Bank

indicators showed that Zimbabwe's political realm fell into despotic governance practices from Mugabe and ZANU PF and the same time China was reported to have strike agreements with the Mugabe regime (Hodzi, Hartwell & De Jager, 2012).

VI. Affordability of Basic Commodities

In the textile industry, the Chinese goods that are commonly known to be of inferior quality have become ubiquitous in Zimbabwe's textile industry. The proliferation of *"China Towns"* that sell Chinese products that the local businesses have not been able to produce goods in abundance and at very cheap prices (Mudavanhu, 2014). These goods are reportedly forcing the locals out of the market and ultimately destroying Zimbabwe's comparative advantage in the textile industry. This trend in Zimbabwe is a microcosm of the African region where there are Chines investments and it has been a one-sided affair that has not made it easy for Africans to establish markets in their own countries.

The influx of cheap Chinese goods led to thriving retail outlets in Zimbabwe because of the affordability of these products to Zimbabweans. However, this also presents disadvantages to the Zimbabwean economy because these products are being sold at prices lower than the prices of locally produced goods. (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2004; Mudavanhu, 2014).

It is without a doubt that the local industries in Zimbabwe have seen the influx of cheaper Chinese products. Zimbabwe was faced with skyrocketing inflation levels for a period of 8 years from 2000 to 2008 and this resulted in many Zimbabweans being unable to afford basic living goods and services. In the face of this hardship, the affordability of the Chinese products helped ordinary Zimbabweans to survive. Despite all the criticism about the substandard quality of Chinese products, these goods were appreciated by other Zimbabweans for their affordability (Chinguno, 2010).

4.4 China’s non-interference policy: Beijing’s involvement in Mugabe’s downfall

China's practice of its non-interference principle in Africa has elicited public criticism. China is accused of keeping African dictators in power by continuing doing business with pariah states and justifying this on the basis of its ‘non-interference policy. Despite criticisms, China's non-interference policy has proved to be attractive to the developing world.This comes in the light of the Western model of development championed by the US, European Union and International Financial Institutions that are said to have failed to achieve its objectives in Africa because of its development assistance that come with conditions that undermine on the policies of African governments and the agency of the its state officials (Osondu, 2013).

One of the greatest headlines in international media in 2017 was the coup d'état that led to the removal of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe from office after 37 years in a similar position.

In the wake of the ousting of Robert Mugabe as the president of Zimbabwe, there were unverified assertions about China's involvement in the political situation in Zimbabwe a few days before the removal of Robert Mugabe from the presidency. The speculations were about China's knowledge of the military takeover before it took place in Zimbabwe.

According to international media reports, China’s relationship with Zimbabwe had weakened under the Robert Mugabe administration due to the effects of the indigenization policy on Chinese investments in Zimbabwe. The Chinese investment in the mining sector was hit the most by the indigenization policy. In 2015, the Zimbabwean government ordered that the two Chinese diamond companies, Anjin and Jinan be evicted if they do not form part of the Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC), a company owned by the government of Zimbabwe (Sun, 2016).

The reason for the focus on China during the changeover of leadership in Zimbabwe was the visit to Beijing by Zimbabwe's army chief Constantino Chiwenga a few days before the military occupied the streets of Harare. China’s foreign ministry defended Chiwenga’s visit by arguing that it was a ‘normal military exchange’ (wwww.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42012629).

There were some media coverages that came in defense if China with regards to the coup. They argue that there is a disparity between knowing about the coup and encouraging it. The mention of China in the coverage of Zimbabwe's brief military takeover overshadowed the influence of other actors such as the Africa Union, SADC, the US, and the UK and to a certain degree it overshadowed the influence of Zimbabwean political leaders influence in the removal of President Robert Mugabe (Alden & Van Staden, 2017).

China is often criticized for developing close relations with dictators and protecting them from punitive measures from the international community; an act that is regarded as an enemy to progress with regards to human rights and humanitarian principles (Keine-Ahlbrandt & Small, 2008). On the contrary, China has championed humanitarian principles, for example when Beijing vehemently condemned North Korea in 2006 for its nuclear test and also led together with the United States, the drafting of a United Nations sanctions resolution against North Korea. Beijing has also shown its commitment to negotiating with the pariah states so that they can be recognized by the international community. For example, it created six-party talks on North Korea so as to create a path to legitimacy for Pyongyang; an act that sought to mitigate further alienation of North Korea from the international community (Keine-Ahlbrandt & Small, 2008).

In the case of Zimbabwe, China's relations with Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe led to many a debate on the ramifications of its non-interference policy in the realm of human rights protection and good governance (Tull, 2008). The criticisms emerged when China offered Robert Mugabe an alternative lifeline after the West instituted economic sanctions on Mugabe. In the wake of the disputed 2008 elections in Zimbabwe, the West discussed the Zimbabwe issue in the United Nations with the aim of imposing further sanctions. China voted against the draft resolution S/2008/447 in 2008 that sought to impose further sanctions on Zimbabwe in the wake of the disputed 2008 presidential elections by the opposition party, the MDC because of the reported acts of violence and election rigging by the ZANU PF. China's used its veto power to maintain its non-interference principle in the case of Zimbabwe by arguing that the problems in Zimbabwe were domestic affairs (Chun, 2014). Further sanctions on

Zimbabwe would have further hurt the ordinary Zimbabweans whom the Western countries claimed to be trying to protect.

4.5 Sino-Zim relations in the post-Mugabe era

According to a Newsday report, Zimbabwe and signed three agreements with China on the 6th of December 2017. China agreed to construct the parliament of Zimbabwe, a high-performance center at the University of Zimbabwe and the rehabilitation of the Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport (Newsday, 2017).

According to Zimbabwe's Finance and Economic Planning Minister Patrick Chinamasa, the concessional loan for the agreed projects would be administered through China's Export-Import Bank. The loan will be repayable over 20 years with a 7 year grace period at an annual interest rate of 2 % (Newsday, 2017).

Before the agreement, the two countries China had a couple of infrastructural projects underway in Zimbabwe. The projects included the supply of engines to Zimbabwe's Hwange thermal power station that was signed on 10 November, a few days before the political unrest in Zimbabwe that led to the ousting of Robert Mugabe.

At the beginning of 2018, a Zimbabwean online publication called *The Source* reported that the Zimbabwean government is to take over the ZISCO debt of $450 million so as to allow a Chinese firm called Tian Li to take over the steel manufacturing company. ZISCO owes loan repayments amounting to $211, 9 million to German development bank called KFW, Sumitomo Corporation from Japan and a China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation that is commonly known as SINOSURE (The Source, 2018). ZISCO was once the largest steel manufacturer in Africa before it collapsed in 2008 and its handover to Tian Li is seen as instrumental to reinvigorating the economy of Zimbabwe. The takeover of Zisco by the Chinese firm is seen by the Zimbabwean government as crucial because it would help the functioning of the Coal Mine in a town called Hwange. It is also seen as crucial for the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), which relies on steel from ZISCO (The Source, 2018).

In March 2018, Zimbabwe's President Mnangagwa reassured Chinese investors of continued partnership and continue investing in Zimbabwe. The new president

government has already identified ways that could help Zimbabwe to make gains from the Chinese investors;

"We, therefore, need to expeditiously come up with strategies on how local, regional and global finance can be mobilized so that we realize maximum value from our mineral resources," he said. (Xin, 2018).

This presents a very positive Sino-Zim relation in the post-Mugabe era as the country would not want to remain in the economic difficulties that the Mugabe regime put them in. The removal of Mugabe by his own party would be a good start to a progressive partnership with China because they know where they went wrong as compared to a new government with a new ruling party that would be in power for the first time.

The Zimbabwe-China partnership has already started on a good note with Harare commissioning a US$533 million expansion of the Kariba Hydro Power Station. This is said to be Zimbabwe's largest power project since its independence.

With Emerson Mnangagwa as the new president, there are expectations that China would refocus on its commercial interests in Zimbabwe as Mnangagwa is seen as a pro-business leader that is committed to attracting foreign direct investment. However, there are some concerns about Mnangagwa's commitment to extract value from Chinese investments because he was part of the government that was characterized by corruption and bad governance. According to Pinak Chakravarty of Observe Research Foundation, a think tank situated in New Delhi, argue that China is likely to bankroll Mnangagwa, in the same way, bankrolled Mugabe and his wife for many years.

The onus is on the new government on how to get much out of its partnership with China. The post-Mugabe loans to China could help the country to a large extent and the new government has to avoid corruption. The forced resignation of Robert Mugabe was a positive start as it would stir back the country to democracy.

In order to maximize on the Chinese investments, one would expect the Mnangagwa administration to revise some of the laws that were affected by the Robert Mugabe administration. For example, the Zimbabwean President could reverse the indigenization and empowerment act that compels foreign investors to hand over 51%

to the local people of Zimbabwe. If China were to pull out their investments from Zimbabwe, the country would suffer as China is the main source of foreign investment and aid.

The new government could also enforce a corruption watch agency that would help in purging corrupt government officials because corruption by the Mugabe relations derailed the developmental prospects of the Sino-Zim relationship.

The new government could also come up with a policy that serves as the official guideline on Harare's economic relations with Beijing. The Mugabe 'Look East Policy' was a hastily thought policy that was more of a reaction to the West as evidenced by the assertions that Zimbabwe has turned its back on the West and is now facing the east where the sun rises.

4.6 Conclusion

It is without question that China has assisted Zimbabwe throughout its isolation from the international isolation that was brought by the Western-imposed sanctions. However, the sustainability of Zimbabwe's benefits from this 'all weather' partnership has been brought to question. There is widespread opinion amongst ordinary Zimbabweans that the Mugabe regime mortgaged all its resources to China.

Just after the army briefly took control of the country through the peaceful coup, it was argued that China was involved in the plot to oust Robert Mugabe. This, therefore, raises the question as to why China would bite the hand it eats from given that it benefited excessively from Zimbabwe during Mugabe's reign.

China's non-interference policy should be brought into play at this point. The allegations of China's involvement in Mugabe's ousting made international headlines because of Beijing's offering a place of refuge to Mugabe's opposer who was once a long-time ally, Emmerson Mnangagwa.

A few months after Mugabe was ousted China signed major contracts with Zimbabwe under the leadership of Mnangagwa. This could help answering the question at hand as to whether this engagement is a true partnership.

In answering the question of the research as aided by the evidence raised throughout this dissertation, I would argue that China, just like any other developed country that invests in Africa is mainly concerned about making returns from their investment activities. Arguing from the international relations realist perspective, China's engagement in Zimbabwe was a self-interest motivated move. On the other hand, Zimbabwe's engagement with China was also motivated by self-interest after the West imposed economic sanctions. Regardless of who benefits the most, the relations are a partnership in the sense that it is a win-win type of economic engagement.

The criticisms on China in its engagement in Zimbabwe as colonial is misinformed. The relations between the two countries follow their respective foreign policies. In the case of China, its involvement with other resource-rich African countries follows Beijing's 'outgoing policy' whose main objective is to invest in foreign countries for the benefit of its domestic economy. On the other hand, Zimbabwe, just like any other country in international politics space follows a set of guidelines on how to interact with other countries on both political and economic realms. The fact that Zimbabwe adopted a 'Look East Policy' is a clear indication that it seeks to benefit from the East Asian giant. From the evidence presented above, one might argue that Zimbabwe has benefited from its engagement with China, however, in the case of public disgruntlement over China's conduct in Zimbabwe, these grievances should be directed to the political elite of Zimbabwe who has benefited from this relationship at the expense of the entire citizenry.

Chinese role in Africa is viewed negatively and the Chinese actors in Africa are perceived as dominant over African governments. Such views are flawed in the sense that they render African governments as passive and lacking a sense of agency.

The vast literature on Africa China relations pay much focus on certain Chinese actors and the political relations with the African governments and the assessments often attribute much power to China at the expense of their African economic partners (Mohan & Lambert 2012).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The research sought out to find the implications of China's involvement in Zimbabwe. The focal point was to find whether China is helping Zimbabwe disentangle itself from the economic crisis it is in which began in the early 2000s owing to the sanctions imposed on Harare by the West. The interactions between the two countries were examined under the guidance of their respective foreign policies. China's used its foreign policy and the Forum on China Africa Cooperation while Zimbabwe's engagement with Beijing is premised under the framework of its East Asian specific 'Look East Policy'.

The first Chapter provided a historical background of China's relations with Africa which outlines the establishment of the Sino-Africa relations in the spectrum of ideological warfare, the Cold War. The relations between the East Asian country and the African continent died down after the end of the Cold War as the West began investing substantially in Africa under the liberal policies which despite its development agenda most African countries still found themselves in the quagmire of underdevelopment and poverty while endowed with various mineral resources.

In the wake of the Cold War, China's economy was growing at a fast pace and to sustain its growth it had to look for natural resources and it could not look further than its historical allies, the African countries. Informed by its 'Open Door Policy' or 'Look Out Policy', China embarking on foreign investments with Africa which later culminated with the formations of the South-South Cooperation since Africa and China are classified as less developed in the realm of international political economy. This cooperation led to the formation of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation, a ministerial platform between China and Africa with the exception of the countries that do not abide by the 'One China Policy', a Chinese Policy that argues that Taiwan is part of China. At the formation of FOCAC, there were only two countries that regarded Taiwan as an independent state and these were Swaziland (now formally, eSwatini) and Burkina Faso. The latter has since 2018 cut its ties with Taiwan and established ties with China, leaving eSwatini as the only country that does not have diplomatic relations with Beijing.

With regards to Zimbabwe, the Southern African countries were condemned by the West for its bad governance in the form of its land reform policy that led to the expropriation of white-owned farms without compensation that was accompanied by violent removal of white farmers. In addition, the government of Zimbabwe under the Robert Mugabe led ZANU PF was alleged of torturing the supporters of its opposition which the ZANU PF believed was in cohort with the West. Electoral irregularities were also cited as being practiced by the ZANU PF. The response from the international community was in the form of imposing sanctions and the withdrawal of foreign investments form Zimbabwe.

China at the time was in need of mineral resources from abroad and could not resist forming ties with Zimbabwe despite the call by the West to stop ties with Zimbabwe until there was a regime change in the country that would bring about normalcy. Upon realizing that China was willing to invest in Zimbabwe without interfering with the latter's domestic political affairs, Zimbabwe adopted the ‘Look East Policy' which was based on its erstwhile president's assertions that they would look in East Asia for economic cooperation.

The Look East policy converged with FOCAC and formalized the relations between China and Zimbabwe. This partnership offered Zimbabwe an economic lifeline. China provided loans and grants to the resuscitate Zimbabwe's ailing economy. The East Asian country also supplied technological equipment to revive Zimbabwe's agricultural sector which was upon a time earned Zimbabwe the title of ‘Breadbasket of Africa' as it was known for food security. China also invested in the minerals sector of Zimbabwe whose minerals are of great importance in sustaining China's economic growth.

The Chinese investments in Zimbabwe have not gone without criticism just like its investment in the wider African region. International media and multiple scholars have labeled China as a new colonizer and a provider of a lifeline for African dictators. In the case of Zimbabwe, as discussed in this research, China is criticized for striking deals with Robert Mugabe and his government. The most notable criticism coming from abroad and a larger section of the Zimbabwean populations being the corrupt means of gaining access to Zimbabwe's markets and mining sector which defies Zimbabwe's Indigenization and Empowerment Act which says 51% of all foreign-owned investments to be transferred to native Zimbabweans.

The Zimbabwean markets are found to be swelling with Chinese owned shops that sell cheap products. This is found to be putting the local shops out of business in the sense that the Zimbabwean local business could not compete with the Chinese because they are financially muscled out of business and the cheap Chinese products undermine Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector, notably in the textile industry. The research also found out that despite the outcry by the Zimbabwean, the cheap Chinese products have helped many Zimbabweans in affording the basic commodities given that Zimbabwe is a cash-strapped country.

With regards to investments in other sectors, the research found out that the Chinese have invested in the steel and iron industry of Zimbabwe. Given the economic hardships of Zimbabwe, the major steel company ZISCO Steel was experiencing hardships and the Chinese investments revived it as the company was on the brink of shutting down. This revival also impacted positively on the labour market in the sense that employees in this sector were subjected to job precariousness.

In the mining sector, the discovery of the red diamonds in the Marange diamonds fields in 2006 brought much controversy to the Sino-Zim relations in the sense that China attained access to these diamond through its state-sponsored investments company, Anjin Investments which established a joint venture with Zimbabwe's National Defence Force. Prior to the establishment of this venture, the mines were open to the inhabitants of the outlying villages in the Marange area. Despite being initial stated that the mines were open to anyone from the surrounding areas to benefit from it, these miners were later deemed illegal miners and were subjected to forceful removal and torture from Zimbabwe's army officials which were working with the Chinese.

The working conditions in the Chinese owned firm operating in the Marange diamond fields are another area of many grievances as in other Chinese owned firms in various sectors. The working conditions are reported to not befitting humans. The working hours are very long and the rest days offered are not given according to the governing statute of employment. The wages and salaries are said to be very low and the workers are subjected to punishment and beatings from their Chinese employers.

The research also found out that the diamonds were used in exchange for arms from China. Given the time of the discovery of the diamonds in Marange in 2006 and the controversial arms deal of 2008 that saw the Chinese ship carrying armaments destined to Zimbabwean being denied docking off in South Africa, these events put a bad reputation on China's handling of the political situation of Zimbabwe. The military exchange between the two countries came under scrutiny is given that at the time of the refusal of offloading of the arms in South Africa, the events on the ground in Zimbabwe as there were heavily contested elections that later led to a power-sharing deal.

In the light of the above discussions, the research found out that Chinese investments in Zimbabwe have impacted negatively on the economy of the country. However, there are ways of realizing the positives of from this partnership. The ways of deriving benefits from this partnership on the part of Zimbabwe solely lies on the Zimbabwean government officials. There have been complicit in obstructing or blocking the opportunities of development of the country from the Chinese investments. Apportioning the blame on China would render the government of Zimbabwe as lacking political agency. The Sino-Zim relations would go a long way in helping Zimbabwe back on its feet again if the government is purged of corruption and greed. The ousting of the Robert Mugabe, despite ungrounded allegations of China's involvement in the overthrowing of Mugabe after 37 years in office could usher in a new era of development in Zimbabwe. The coming in of the new government could help to channel the investments from China to good use and for the benefit of the wider population of Zimbabwe. The new government has made a good start by further consolidating their partnership with China. China has since the ousting of Mugabe made strategic investments in Zimbabwe. With the hope of a better post-Mugabe Zimbabwe, the responsibility lies with the new government which has promised democracy and building the country back to its former self.

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