

China in Africa:

Exploring the Positive Sides

Dr. ZHANG Chun

Visiting Fellow, CSIS

Deputy Director, Center for West Asian and African Studies,
SIIS, China

China in Africa:

Exploring the Positive Sides

I. Changing Attitudes

II. Physical Level

III. Strategic Level

IV. Theoretical Level

V. Future

I. Changing Attitudes

China-Africa relations has become a hot topic since 2005/2006.

Since 2000, there are 3 phases of attitudes changing toward China-Africa relations:

1. 2000-2005: almost nobody cared about this relationship;
2. 2005-2008: violent critiques, very hot [Darfur (2C strategy: China + Celebrity) & Beijing Summit (peak: Beijing Olympic Games)]
3. 2009-now: some more balanced views emerging

I. Changing Attitudes

The mainstream attitudes about China in Africa are still negative.

Six questions most frequently asked:

- (1) Is China a newcomer to Africa?
- (2) Is China a threat to American interests in Africa?
- (3) Is China supporting the Pariah regimes in Africa?
- (4) Is China engaging Africa mainly for natural resources?
- (5) Does China's no-strings attached assistance practice hurt America's efforts in Africa?
- (6) Does the African continent now have a very high anti-China mood because of huge number of Chinese immigrants and Chinese workers?

I. Changing Attitudes

An interesting phenomenon

While criticizing China, many experts still acknowledge some contributions China has made in Africa, and even call for cooperation with China in Africa.

We haven't gone very far to find the justifications for our cooperation. People have no concrete idea about how, when, where, and what to cooperate.

Dr. Jendayi Frazer: We need to acknowledge each other's **Comparative Advantages** and **Legitimacy**.

Brainstorming:

What are the positive sides or constructive roles of China-Africa relations?

Three level of analysis: physical, strategic, and theoretical levels.

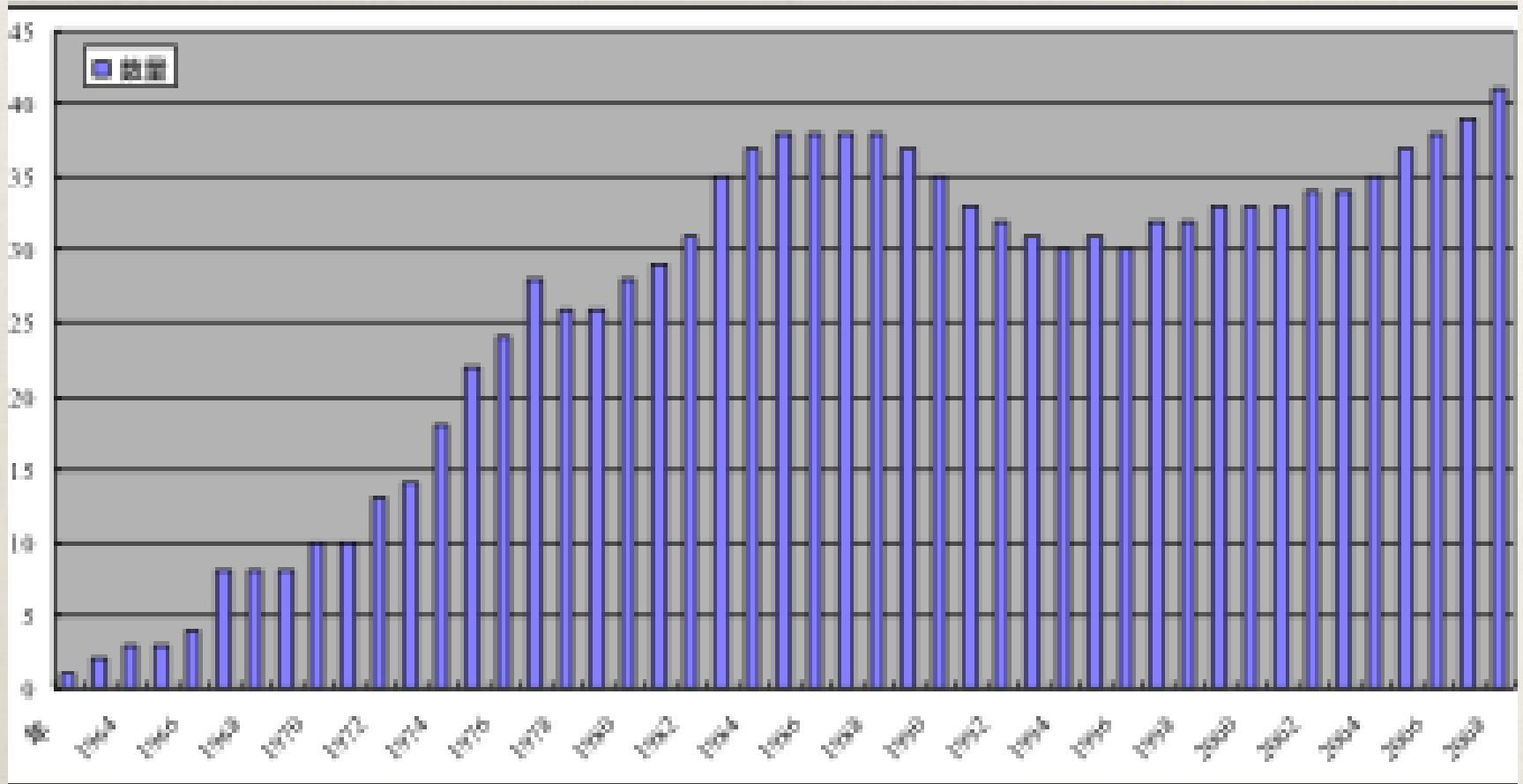
II. Physical Level

Most of critics focus on the physical level, for example: trade imbalance, investment for natural resources, aid without strings, corporation social responsibility, and so on.

China has contributed to the stabilizing of crisis or emergency situations, the post-conflict reconstruction, and the sustainable development of Africa.

Chinese Medical Teams to Africa Countries

Historically, 23 provinces for 46 African countries;
Currently 22 provinces for 41 African countries.

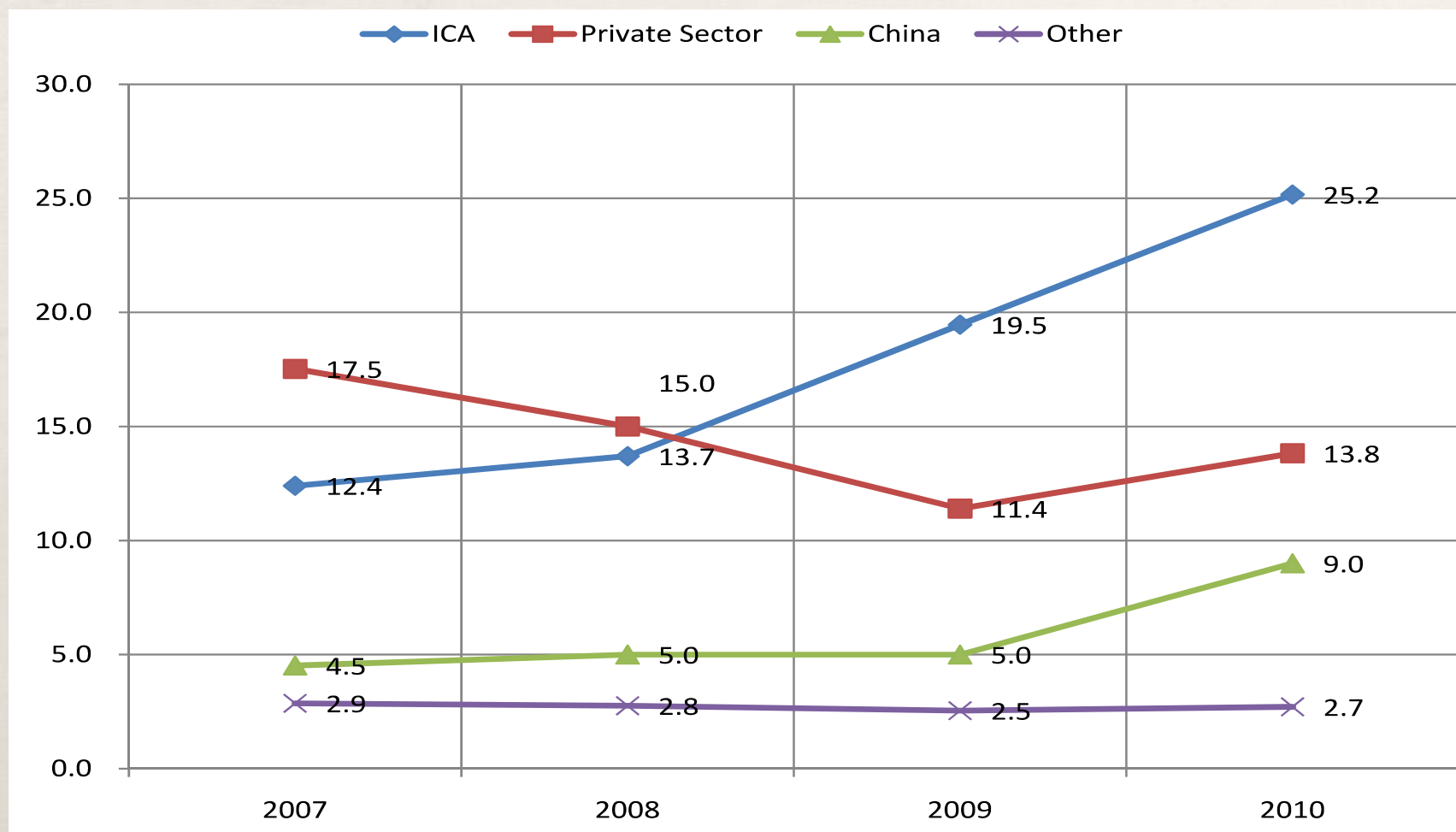


Africa Peacekeeping Operations China Participating (September 2011)

Mission	Troops	Police	Military Experts on Mission	Total
MINURSO			10	10
MONUSCO	218		16	234
UNOCI			6	6
UNAMID	322			322
UNISFA	1			1
UNMIL	564	17	2	583
UNMISS	367	6	10	383
Total	1472	23	44	1539

Source: <http://www.un.org/> September 2011.

Trend of external support to the African infrastructure sector (2007-2010) (USD billion)



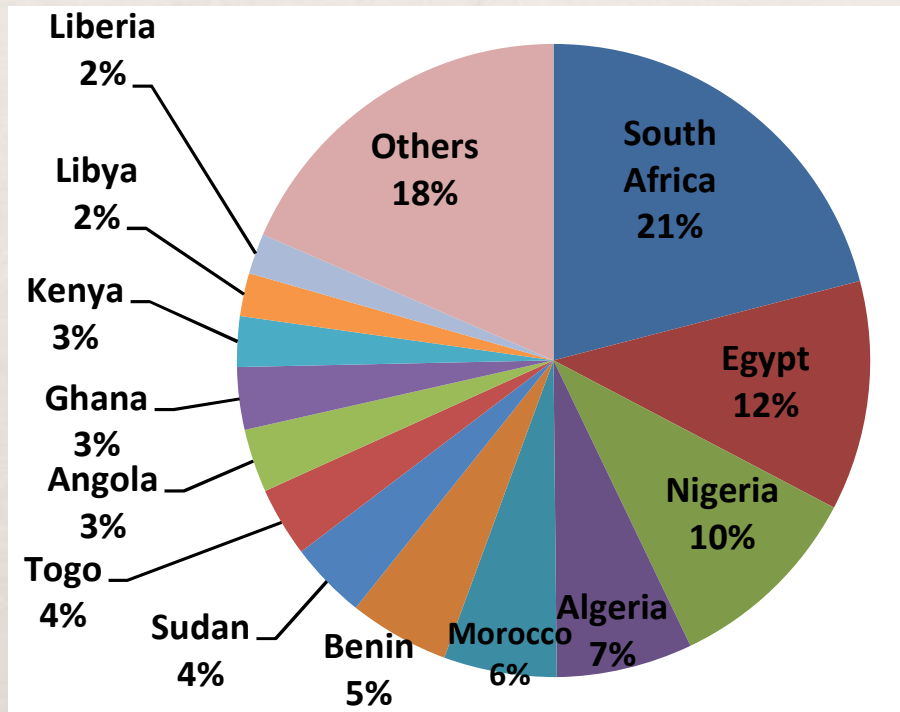
Source: Richard Schiere and Alex Rugamba, "Chinese Infrastructure Investments and African Integration," Working Paper, No. 127 (May 2011), African Development Bank Group

China's role in African sustainable development

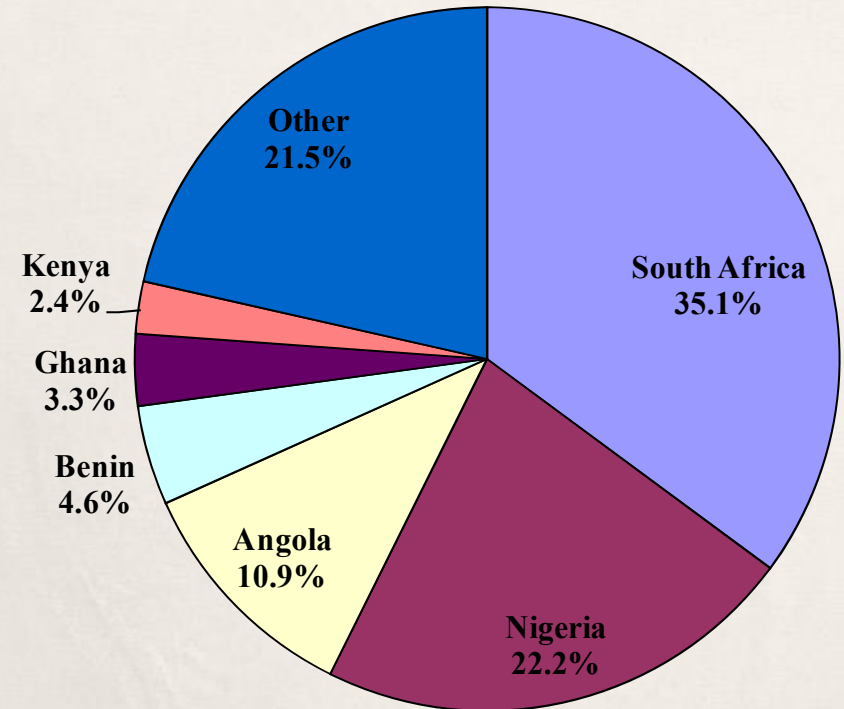
China is a valuable trading partner, a source of investment financing, and an important complement to traditional development partners. China is investing massively in infrastructure, which helps alleviate supply bottlenecks and improve competitiveness.

----Richard Schiere, "China and Africa: An Emerging Partnership for Development? – An Overview of Issues," Working Paper, No. 125 (May 2011), African Development Bank Group.

Similarities in trade structure between China and America with Africa



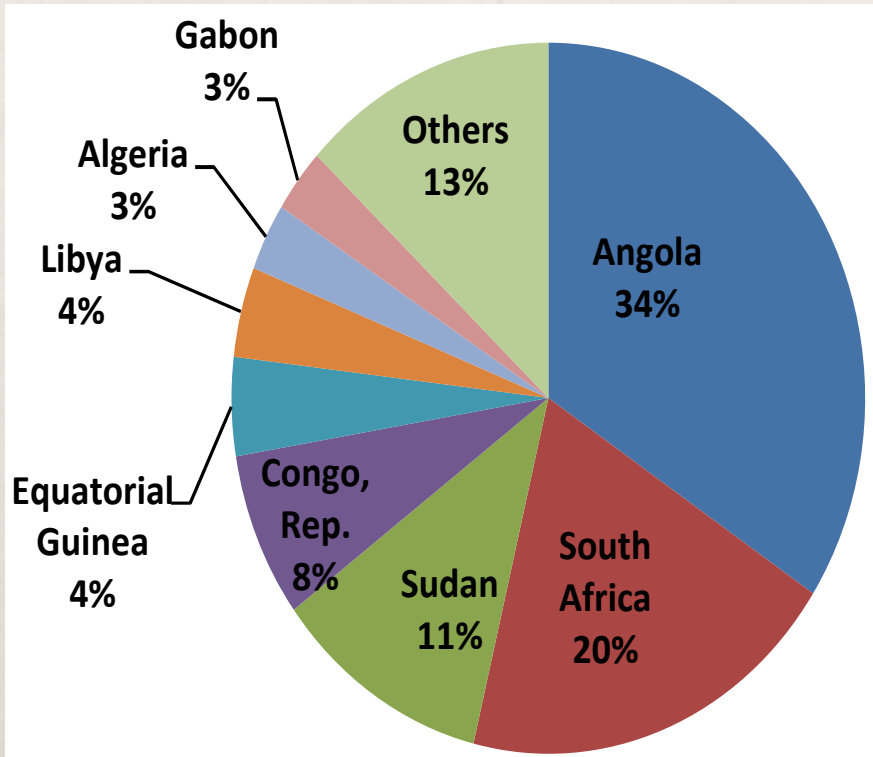
China



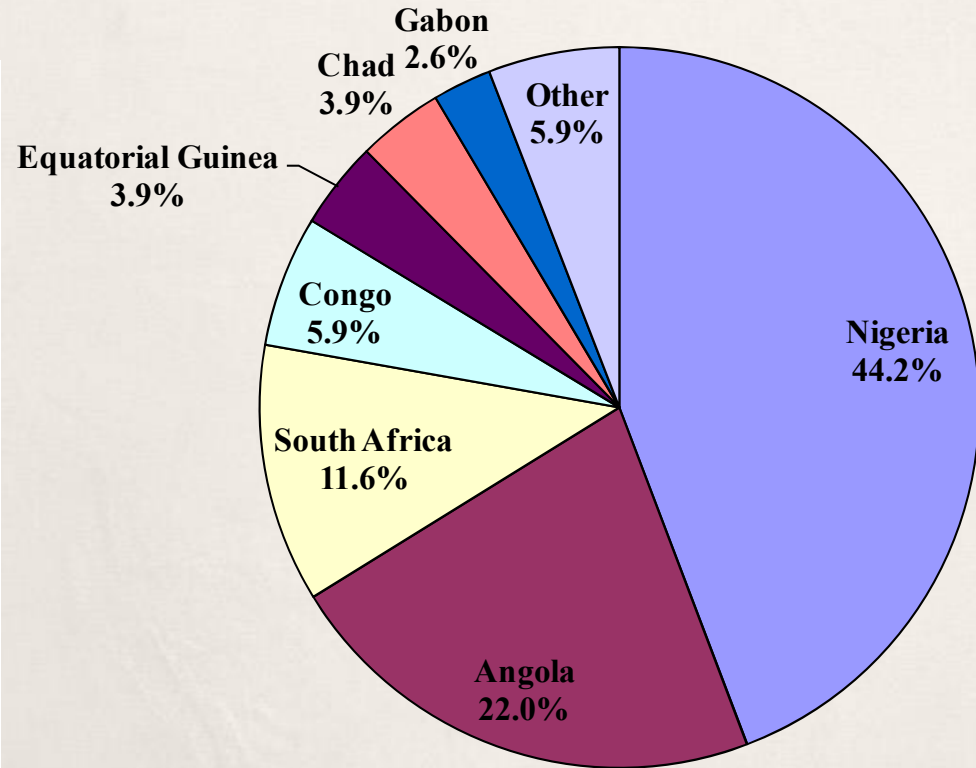
America

Export 2009

Similarities in trade structure between China and America with Africa



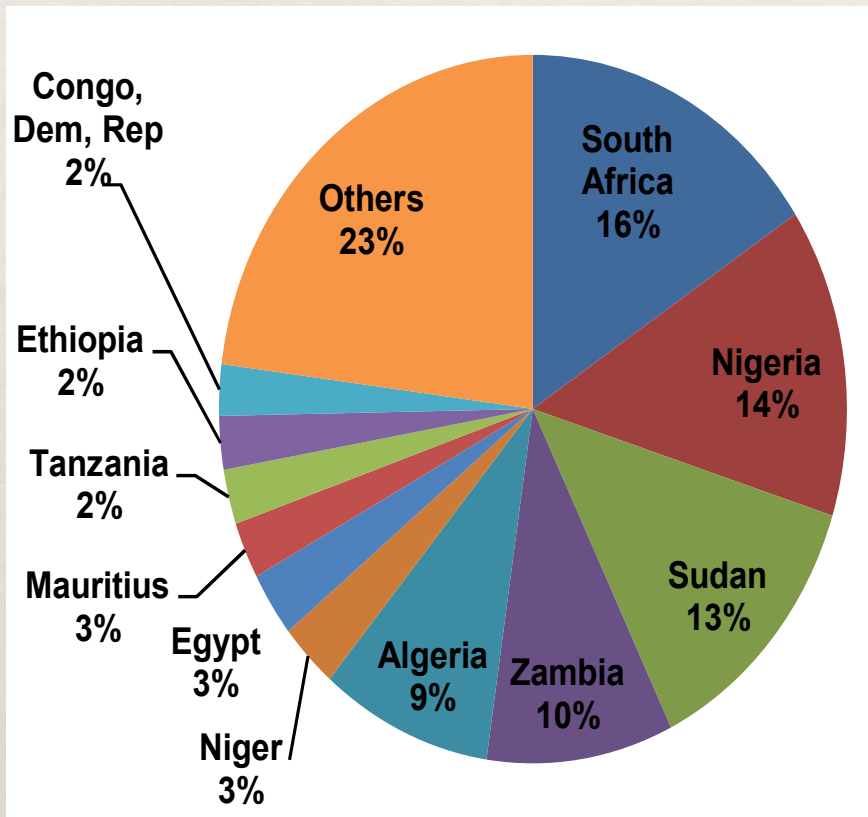
China



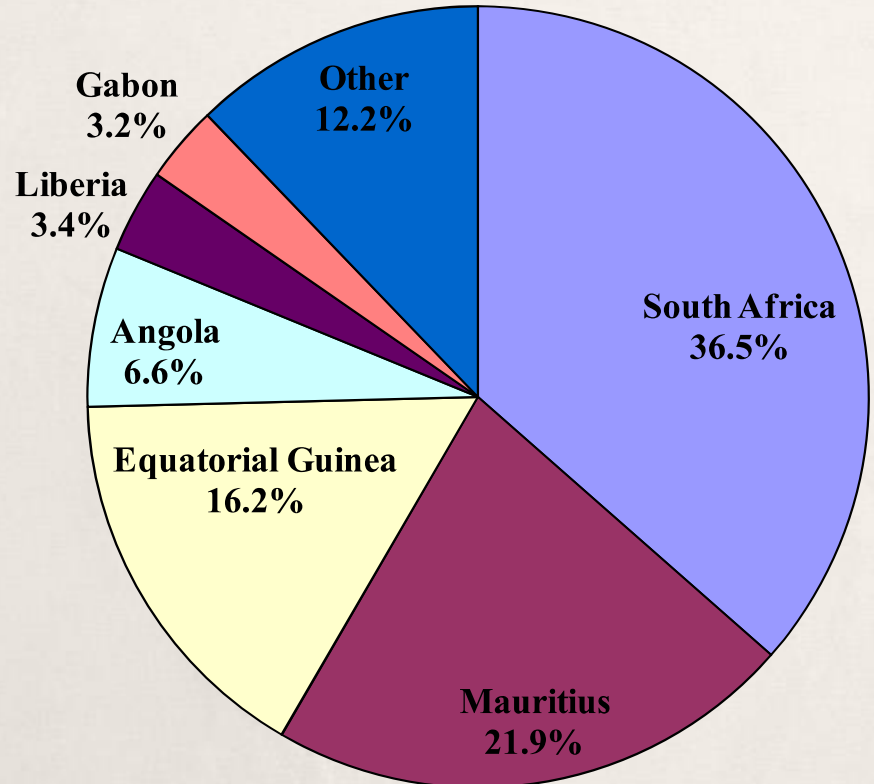
America

Import 2009

Similarities of Investment Structure between China and USA



China



2007

America

III. Strategic Level

By insisting on a non-interference principle, China does contribute to bargaining capability building of African countries.

China has served as a development model for Africa and an alternative source of trade and finance from Africa's traditional development partners.

----Mary-Françoise Renard, "China's Trade and FDI in Africa," Working Paper, No. 126 (May 2011), African Development Bank Group.

III. Strategic Level

Also, the development of China-Africa relations has contributed to the development of broader African external relations.

Second EU-AU Summit

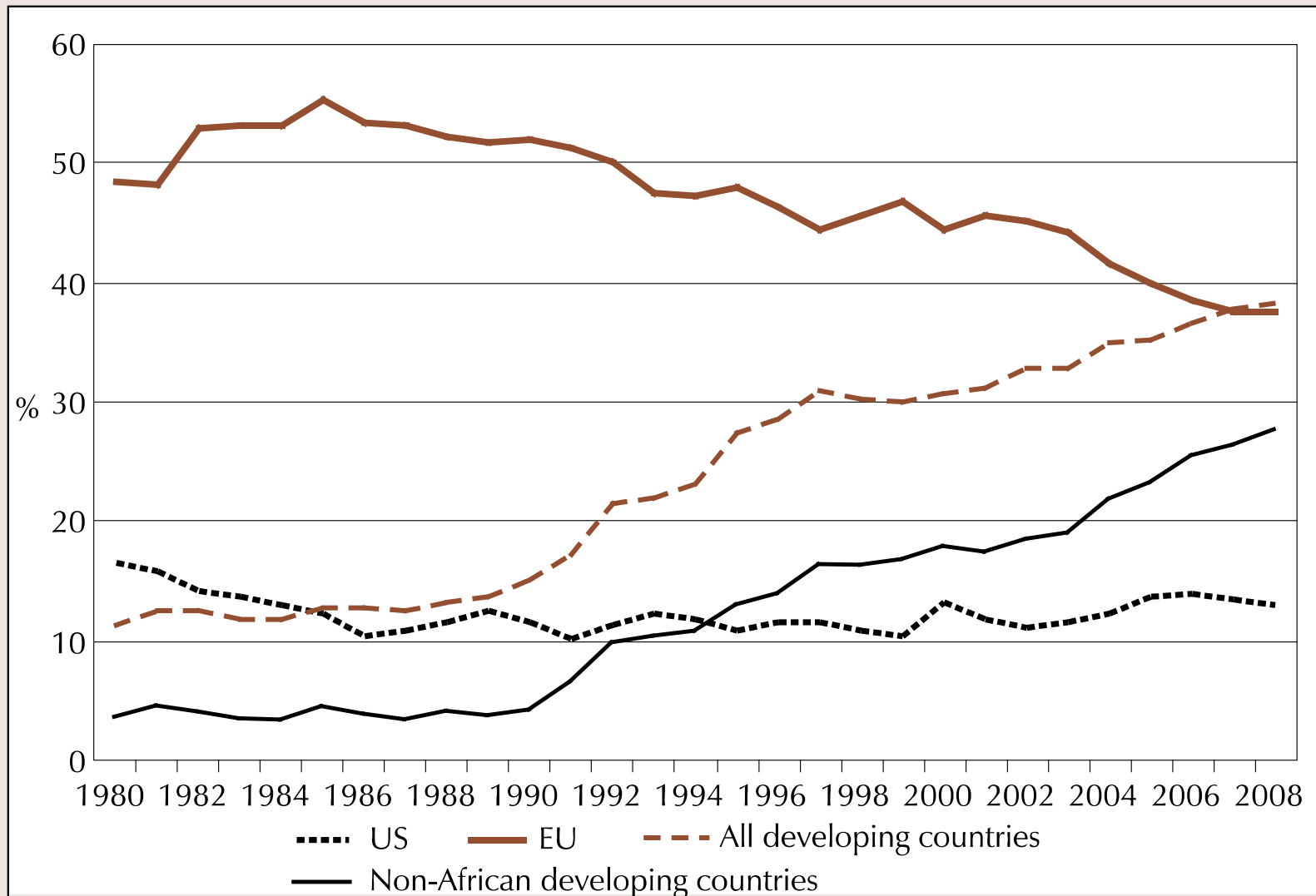
AFRICOM

South Korea-Africa Summit

India-Africa Summit

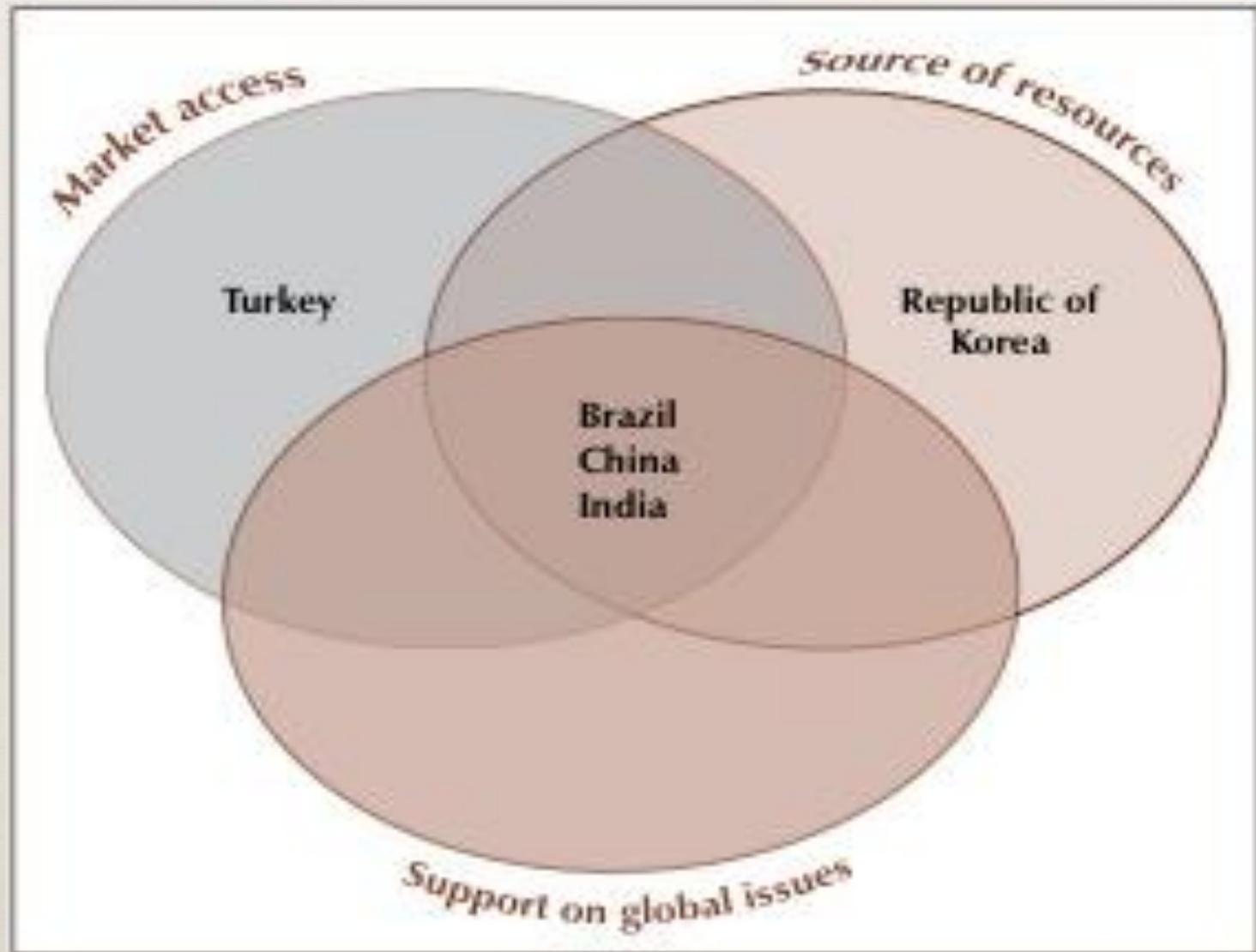
Turkey-Africa Summit

Share of Africa's total trade accounted for by selected partners, 1980–2008



Source: Computed using IMF *Direction of Trade* data.

Key Strategic Interests of Major Emerging Powers in Africa



Source: UNCTAD, 2010.

IV. Theoretical Level

1. Adding Africa element into dominant IR theory.
2. Creating real South-South cooperation theory.
3. Improving development assistance theory.

Non-conditional aid

Deborah Brautigam

No conventions or international agreements provide global rules for how donors should act.

(Deborah Brautigam, “China, Africa and the International Aid Architecture,” Working Paper, 107, African Development Bank Group, April 2010.)

Another two aspects:

1. By not attaching strings, China is actually showing that it does not want to wage a new ideological war with the West;
2. There is no coherent practice of Western aid; Where leverage exists, attach strings; where none exists, then you don't see conditions .

Selected features of support provided by Africa's development partners

	Africa's share of aid budget (%)	Form of support	Conditions imposed	Mode of delivery	Debt relief provided	Monitoring mechanism
Traditional donors	35*	Mostly grants	Policy and non-policy conditions	Increasingly moving away from projects in favour of SWApS and budget support	Yes	Peer review by other traditional donors as well as the <i>Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness</i> Report published by the OECD Secretariat and UNECA
China	30–50	Grants and loans	Non-policy conditions	Project	Yes	Forum on China–Africa Cooperation
India	1.5–3.6	Grants and loans	Non-policy conditions	Project	Yes	India–Africa Forum Summit
Brazil	27–30	Co-financing, often through triangular cooperation	Non-policy conditions	Project	Yes	
Republic of Korea	15*	Grants and loans	Non-policy conditions	Project	Yes	Republic of Korea–Africa Forum
Turkey	6*	Grants		Project	No	Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit
Arab countries	11*	Grants and loans		Project	Yes	

Source: UNCTAD.

V. Future

The negative aspects will not disappear because of my observations about the positives, and in the future we still face some big challenges.

- (1) How to manage the diversification of domestic actors and interests in the Africa policy making and implementation;
- (2) How to deal with both competition and cooperation with third parties in Africa;
- (3) How to address the expectation gaps: African expectations, Western expectations, and China's available capability;
- (4) How to reconcile the conflicts between China's traditional FP principles and the new development of global values and norms.

Thank you for your time!