

China's Developing Foreign Policy Initiatives towards Major International Issues

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Abstract: *Since 2006, it has become clearer that China is adopting a new approach to dealing with major international issues, such as the North Korea and Iran nuclear issues and the Darfur crisis in western Sudan. In all these issues China has contributed positively and has demonstrated a high degree of cooperation with other major powers in order to solve these problems. On the Iran and Korean nuclear issues, China has encouraged these countries to respect the nuclear non-proliferation regime while using her influence in Sudan to push the Sudanese government to accept the deployment of the United Nations – African Union forces in Darfur.*

Key Words: *China's Foreign Policy; China and the Middle East*

I. Pursuing a More Balanced and Dynamic Foreign Policy

For more than fourteen years as I lived in China and specialized in Chinese studies, I have observed the currents of change in China's external and internal policies.

Jiang Zemin transformed China into a relatively advanced industrial state in his thirteen years' administration. At the same time, Deng Xiaoping's theory of the socialist market economy yielded exceptional economic and developmental results. Yet, its foreign policy, in my understanding, did not witness any apparent change, as had occurred in the internal affairs. Thus, China continued its policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other nations and promoted the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

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It seems that China discovered later that these five principles guarantee her participation in and contribution to solving international problems on which western states expended their efforts and resources while gaining them also the hostility of a number of emerging governments especially.

In the view of some scholars, China and its companies filled the vacuum which occurred when the western states withdrew from countries such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Iran, Burma (Myanmar) and Venezuela. They also argued that China's contributions in solving the remaining international problems from the last century, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, Cyprus problem, Balkan crisis, and the nuclear non-proliferation system was still limited. So there was a comfortable situation for China; as she could gain an enhanced reputation as an international stake-holder and lose nothing. She could also stretch herself southward and eastward because of her non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other states.

This foreign policy orientation, in my mind, was always timed with her readiness to confront the US and other western nations before the 1990s, when it provided practical benefits for China. The response of the western states towards this policy was often negative and doubtful about her objectives. Even more, western leaders accused China of supporting isolated corrupted regimes, in order to defend her economic and energy interests, such as in Zimbabwe and Sudan.

Then, during the 1990s some Chinese academicians and strategists started , to call modestly for a review of China's foreign policy towards the US and the West. In reality, the roots of this development began toward the end of the Cultural Revolution, ending with the death of Chairman Mao in 1976. These Chinese arguments for a review of China's foreign policy became more active from 1980-1989, as it had achieved notable success between 1984-1989, to the disillusionment of the conservative approach then current in China. The new orientation seemed confident in itself, because China economically was adopting the path of capitalist reforms (socialism with Chinese face or, with Chinese characteristics). This had supported the academics and strategists calling for more rapprochement with the West. Meanwhile, China was seeking both western technology and markets.

Yet, it was notable that this review appeared to neglect the emerging countries, as China's economic aid to the developing countries had dropped sharply since 1978 and reached a record low in 1982, totaling only \$40 million.² This was a weak point in China's vision of her role in the world during this period.

As a result of the 1989 incident, China faced waves of condemnation by the West, which denounced "her use of excessive force in confronting the students

² Gaafar Karar Ahmed, *Sino-Arab Relations* (unpublished doctoral Dissertation, Nanjing University 1996, conducted under the supervision of Professor Chen Dezhi), p.484.

movement.” Thus, the West briefly organized a boycott campaign and widely denounced China diplomatically. Once more, the West briefly closed its doors to China which was searching actively for technology and markets. The US and European states prevented China from being awarded the 2000 summer Olympics, though the United Nations awarded her the opportunity to hold the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 attended by more than 30,000 women from developed and developing countries.

Naturally, it appears that conservatives inside the CCP and the Chinese government took the opportunity in this perceived dangerous development and attacked the reformist current in China, especially those calling for more cooperation with the West. The reformist voice started to retreat in the mass media and disappeared, virtually, up to the mid 1990s when it regained some of its power, lost after the 1989 event. Advocates of reform and rapprochement with the US and the West contributed to normalizing relations with the West in general and the US in particular. Thus, since 1997, the Chinese reformists started once again to raise their voices not only for improving relations with the West and the US, but also for building a strategic Sino-American partnership which President Bill Clinton reinforced in his 1998 state visit to China. Likewise, the growth of foreign trade with the West at that time, especially with the US and EU states, enhanced the orientation of the reformist current. As an example of this, the size of trade exchange between China and EU states and the US, rose from \$34.9 million in 1992 to \$81.17 million in 1995 and then to \$157.11 milliards in 2001.³

The 2001 American EP-3 crisis and its aftermath created dangerous developments and major challenges for the Chinese reformists’ capacities to adopt a plan and define it, amid an official and popular wave of accusations against US.⁴ This occurred when the anti-China lobby in the US was calling for more drastic policies towards Beijing and besieged it with security and military agreements, particularly with Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Australia.⁵ To its good fortune, the reformist current emerged out of the crisis with relatively little losses, so it continued its pressure upon the CCP and state by a large quantity of studies, forums aiming to influence the decision-making circles to convince them that the

³ “Almanac of China’s Foreign Economic Relations and Trade” (Beijing: China Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Publishing House, 1992-2002), Years 1992, p.457; 1993-1994, p.459; 1995, p.507; 2001-2002, p. 264, p.270 .

⁴ Anti American sentiment reached its zenith in that period, see the Chinese newspapers during this crisis.

⁵ *South China Morning Post (SCMP)*, 13-17.Feb.2006, see also *SCMP* Sept.9.2007.



partnership with the West would have great benefits for China in the near and far future.⁶

In fact, between 2000-2007 China's important internal developments contributed to enhancing the position of her reformist current among the decision-making circles inside the CCP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These positive developments helped the reformists to push for a more flexible dynamic new foreign policy. These developments included China's increasing needs for energy⁷ and the increasing concern of Chinese leaders about economic, political and social stabilities in the country.⁸ Chinese leaders and scholars believed that the slow economic growth might lead to internal social tensions. Meanwhile, these leaders and scholars agreed that the continuation of the economic growth in China would depend on the existence of a peaceful international and regional environment and on the cooperation with the major powers in the world, especially and first, the US and its western allies.⁹

Hence, according to the reformist view of the needs of contemporary China, her current level of advanced development and its impact on the international affairs would not suit the older Chinese foreign policy vision, referring to that policy as an unacceptable international isolation. They indicated that China, as an emerging world power and permanent member of UN Security Council, must accept its full responsibility in the resolution of world conflicts and guard the nuclear non-proliferation regime to avoid slipping into a chasm of a world armed with the mass destruction and nuclear weapons.

According to the new reformists' vision, the old more internationally isolated China no longer existed. Thus, they believed that the new China must be engaged internationally. Significantly as her destiny, economy, its welfare and her capacity to solve both internal and external problems, all must be strongly committed to the broader world. Thus, China must endeavor to find strategic corporation with the US.¹⁰ Several politicians and academicians argue that China presently has no alternative but to coordinate her efforts and cooperate with the US in major

⁶ SCMP, Nov.15.2005, see also Li Yine and Lyn Dan Cao, "Yang a popular choice to head Foreign Ministry", *opcit*.

⁷ Gaafar Karar Ahmed, "The Oil and Petrochemical Industries in China and Their Implications for Sino-Arab Relations" (Asian Monographs, Faculty of Economics & Political Science- Cairo University, 2004), No.54, pp. 2-3.

⁸ Mohamd Cohen, "China Cracks Down on Rioters", *Asia Times online* March 23.2007. Hu Jintao Report at the National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Beijing, Oct.15, 2007. Hu's report reflected the Chinese leaders concern about the social and political stability of the country.

⁹ Hu Jintao Report at the National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Beijing, Oct.15, 2007. See also SCMP, June.7.2007.

¹⁰ Hu Jintao Report at the National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Beijing, Oct.15, 2007, reflected this new Chinese vision to the world.

international issues, instead of strategic competition as President George W. Bush first recommended when he became president in 2001, opposite to President Clinton's acceptance of the concept of "strategic partner." It seems that these reformist perspectives have succeeded recently, through intergovernmental memoranda, workshops, seminars and direct meetings with the Chinese leadership and especially with president Hu Jintao in convincing China's decision-making circles of the soundness of their opinions the importance of the ongoing CCP and governmental review of China's foreign policy and the enhancement of the mechanisms for strategic dialogue with the US.¹¹

In foreign affairs, I can argue that the new reformists' efforts have begun to yield their own fruits. I would also argue that recently several indicators show that China has entered a new foreign policy era. It is characterized by cooperation with the US and the West. China would deal, in this realm as a major world power, with international obligations in the preservation of peace and stability in the world.

II. Indicators of a New Chinese Policy

However, we have a number of indicators which prove that the new reformist current has actually succeeded in the alteration of some features of Chinese foreign policy for more involvement in international crisis and issues and coordination with the West as well as the other world powers, bearing the burden of the management of world conflicts and developing a new vision of the regional and international problems, which have troubled the West. This change in China's dealings could be observed through the recent period with three problems which greatly troubled the West as illustrative of China's involvement in solving international conflicts: the Korean nuclear issue, the Iranian nuclear problem, and the situation in Darfur region in the Western Sudan.

Some Chinese researchers, especially in the closed workshops, expressed their anxiety about the results of the policies of some states, for example, Iran, Sudan and North Korea. They have described the policies of these states as vague, inflexible and not fitting with the principles of peaceful coexistence, on which China formed its foreign policy. Those researchers demanded that the Chinese leadership must not send wrong signals to such states to encourage them to confront the West. They further called for a measure of coordination with the West

¹¹ SCMP.Nov.15.2005, see also SCMP. June.7, 2007.



about such issues as Darfur and the two nuclear issues. They also called for separation between trade and investment and her foreign policies. It seems that decision-making circles responded to these calls, in particular, as the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jun Zhai called, on October 26, 2006, for non-linking of investments with any political conditions¹². The Sudanese Government, according to informed sources, had exerted some pressure on Beijing to support it in the Security Council, to delay the Western resolutions in the Security Council against Sudan.

Careful observers of the recent Chinese foreign policy could clearly notice a new approach in this policy. An alteration or reform in the traditional Chinese vision of the external world had occurred. This works in favor of the new reformists who advocate cooperation and rapprochement with the West in certain urgent international issues. I wish to suggest the shape and extent of this reform in the recent foreign policy of China, vis-à-vis three international issues: the nuclear problem in the Korean Peninsula, Iranian nuclear issue, and the resolution of the Darfur Region crisis in Sudan.

A. The North Korea Nuclear Issue

Western scholars and officials accused China that it continued, since the outbreak of the North Korea Nuclear crisis in October 2002, between Pyongyang and the West to be indifferent in pressing North Korea to resolve this crisis. China objected to all international pressures for dismantling the Korean nuclear program, while, at the same time, supplying Pyongyang with vital economic support to prevent its economic collapse.^{13*}

Owing to the new reformist Chinese vision of China's international role in the world, since October 9, 2006, China was undergoing a drastic foreign policy transformation. Many sources confirmed that North Korea had successfully conducted a nuclear test on that day. China was endeavoring to cooperate with the international community to force Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear program. She, thus, voted in the United Nations Security Council to condemn Pyongyang — for the first time recently. China sent her envoys to Pyongyang, who met the North Korean leaders and other officials, to convey clear messages that China could not protect their regime, unless they would offer fundamental abandonment of its nuclear weapons development and signal clear messages to the international community, that they would be ready for dialogue. China clearly demanded that

¹² *SCMP*. Oct.27, 2006.

¹³ James Roub, *The UN Bites : China and America*, see also I.H.T.Sept. 23; Oct. 20, 2006.

* China provides North Korea with 80-90%of its oil need. For example, most of its need for grain also comes from China. China exported to North Korea in 2007 523,000 metric tons of crude oil. See www.mofcom.gov.cn.

North Korea must dismantle its nuclear program.¹⁴ When the Chinese were sending their envoys to Pyongyang, urging the Korean leader to cooperate with the international community, they were also executing with a full and high international responsibility, the penalties imposed on North Korea, according to United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1718. The Chinese envoys even went further than that, by declaring that in case Pyongyang would not stop threatening regional peace and return to negotiations, China would apply a special Chinese embargo besides the international embargo, which China actually began to apply.¹⁵

North Korean leaders in Pyongyang realized, because of the new and clear Chinese language, that the Chinese stance is not different from that of the West, demanding the dismantling of Pyongyang's nuclear program. The new firm Chinese stance towards Pyongyang forced her to agree to dismantle her nuclear program, according to the document of February 13, 2007.¹⁶ In my view, the way towards a peaceful solution to the nuclear crisis in the Korean Peninsula is now open. It was actually opened, forcibly or by wisdom, by the Chinese diplomacy; and not by the American warships which roam the regional waters around the Korean Peninsula. The US government withdrew North Korea from its list of state sponsorship of terrorism on October 12, 2008 to persuade her from reconstituting her nuclear weapons capacities.

The magnificent musical tones, which the New York Philharmonic Orchestra played in the heart of Pyongyang on February 26, 2008, might not have been performed, but for the efforts and the pressures – directly or indirectly – exerted by China, on the Government of Pyongyang. It might be partially by Chinese positive intervention for peace and security in this region, that the Korean Peninsula might be free from nuclear weapons. It is a question of time, for the total dismantling of the North Korea nuclear program, which she had announced that she would redevelop in the fall of 2008, because the US had not met its commitments to North Korea. It is true, of course, that the other states involved, the US, Japan, South

¹⁴ *SCMP*.30-5-1-6 2000; see also *SCMP*.Sep.9, 2006; see also Yahoo News Tuesday Dec.2, 2003, Yahoo News Feb.10.2004; see *China Daily*, Aug.2, 2005; see also *China Daily* Jan.19, 2006; see also Regular press conference of China's Foreign Ministry by spokesperson Jianchao Liu, Oct. 10, 2006; see also *S CMP*. and I.H.T. Oct. 10-15, 2006; see also *SCMP*.Oct.18, 2006; see also UN Security Council SC/8853.Dept of Public Information News and Media Division- New York Security Council 5551st meeting "Security Council condemns nuclear test by Democratic People's Republic of Korea unanimously adopted resolution1718"(2006)Oct.14.2006; see also W.S.J Oct.25, 2006; see also I. H.T. Oct.20, 2006; see also *SCMP*.Feb.18, 2008; see also I.H.T.Oct.17, 2006.

¹⁵ *SCMP*. Oct.17, 2006, see also I.H.T.Oct.20, 2006.

¹⁶ Jing Jong Yuan, "China's New North Korea diplomacy," *Asia Times* online Nov.14, 2007, see also *China Daily*, Feb.9, 2007, see also I.H.T. Feb.14, 2007.



Korea, and Russia have made their own contributions to resolving this major crisis issue for the world, but the Chinese efforts need to be recognized, especially in serving as the ongoing host for the Six Party Talks.

B. The Iranian Nuclear Issue

Iran has continued during its conflict with the West about her controversial nuclear program, referring to the positive Chinese cooperation or support. Thus, whenever the crisis between her and the West becomes severe, she would announce starting negotiations with the Chinese oil companies. Otherwise, she would sign a memorandum of understanding for tens of billions of dollars.¹⁷ Yet China, whose leaders are worried about her own increasing needs for energy, has continued to cooperate with Iran despite the American sanctions against this country. Nonetheless, until April 2008, China did not reap any tangible results from the memoranda of understanding and agreements signed with Tehran.¹⁸ So, Tehran has continued to promise and often not to meet its commitments, and, at many times it appears that she would have requested a political price for the supply of energy, i.e. oil in exchange for the Chinese veto in the UN Security Council.

The proponents of the new reformist view in China have felt the hazards of this policy, and have worked to solve it. As the Chinese-Iranian endeavor did not lay fruits yet, the new reformists have succeeded in pushing China for more cooperation with the West in general and Europe in particular on this issue. In fact, the Chinese officials conveyed to their Iranian peers at several meetings of the new Chinese stance calling for the urgent need of Iran to cooperate with the international community. In this direction, China has offered an important contribution by departing from its opposition to the efforts of the West, to refer the Iranian nuclear issue to the UN Security Council. Thus, China voted in favor of the decision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to refer Iran's file to the Security Council. The official spokesman of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs defended his country's stance, vis-à-vis this decision, stating that "the decision was concurrent with the basic stance of China, and that the nuclear non-proliferation system must be protected and enhanced."¹⁹ So, since that date, China has kept sending clear messages to the Iranian leadership encouraging it to respect the nuclear non-proliferation system, providing cooperation and flexibility with

¹⁷ I.H.T.Jan.12.2007, see also *SCMP*. Dec.10, 2007.

¹⁸ *China Daily* Nov.3.2004, W.S.J.18-19-20 Feb.2006, I.H.T.Jan.12.2007, W.S.J 12-14, Jan. 2007, see also *A Dangerous Partnership* By Ilan Berman, *SCMP*., Dec 10, 2007, W.S.J.Dec.12, 2007.

¹⁹ Regular Press Conference of China's Foreign Ministry by spokesperson Quan Kong, Feb.7, 2006, see also statement from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, August 23, 2006.

the international community and observing its fears about her nuclear program. Thus, China has agreed to several obligatory decisions to exert pressure on Iran.²⁰

China, in fact, has participated or allowed the issue and application of three international resolutions which targeted Iran's nuclear program, China's stance was very close to that of the US and Europe. The Chinese used the same language which the West employed, voted for the same resolutions in the Security Council and highly generated international esteem for their responsibility and role in the defense of the nuclear non-proliferation system, by words and deeds. The result has been that the Iranians understood as well as the North Koreans the meanings of the Chinese messages. This was reflected on the language of the Iranian address about this file, as they lessened much of their references to the external support for them in their conflicts with the West, about this issue.

Presently, the Chinese policy towards the Iran's nuclear file does not vary greatly from that of the West as far as their opposition to any Iranian military nuclear program. Therefore, if the peaceful means fail for dismantling Iran's nuclear program, she would probably generally support the western penalties against Iran in the future to force it to abandon her nuclear military program, while supporting its right to develop nuclear energy, especially as it relates to the US government and Indian government agreeing on US support for developing Indian nuclear energy in October, 2008.

It seems that China now does not reject a decision for penalties directly against Iran which do not include a military use of power. We do not know the stance of China, if the Western powers took a further step in this direction. Most probably, China will abstain from vetoing resolutions in the UN Security Council to support the western powers' resolutions that are not overly harsh against Iran.

C. China and the Question of Western Sudan Darfur Region

The Darfur question is a clearer indicator about the current changes in the Chinese foreign policy. As a matter of fact, western media and opposition groups opposing Sudan's actions in Darfur accused China that it continued to defend the stance of the Sudanese government and to support her in the international institutions including the UN Security Council. According to these western leaders and groups opposing Sudan on this issue, China continued to delay many of the Security Council's resolutions which have aimed at exerting pressure on the

²⁰ *Security Council SC/8792*, July 31, 2006; Department of Public Information- News and Media Division-New York, www.un.org/news/press/docs; see also *People's Daily* Online Dec.25, 2006; see also *China Daily*, Jan.5.2007; see also *People's Daily* Online Jun 16-18, 2006.



Government of Sudan, so that it would operate for improving the situations on the ground, checking violence and improving the standard of living of the population and the displaced people in the Darfur region.²¹

In view of the new reformist views in China, and the continuation of the western international pressures, China launched during the years 2004-2005 a campaign of advice to assist the Sudanese Government to deal better with the crisis, through the visits of Chinese envoys to Khartoum and advising the Government to improve situations in the Darfur region, but that was futile. This stance of China in fact started since the breakout of the armed resistance in Darfur in 2003.

In face of the negative reaction of Sudanese government to the advice of her friends in Beijing, China considered that the international community might exert pressure on the Sudanese Government to comply with the resolutions in the UN Security Council. In fact, China participated in adopting a number of Security Council resolutions which have condemned the behavior of the Sudanese Government, and have urged her to improve the situation in Darfur, otherwise, she would face international punishments. Examples are the UN Security Council's Resolution 1556 of 30/7/2004²²; and the Council's Resolution 1593, about referring the suspects of crimes against humanity in Darfur to the International Criminal Court,²³; UN Security Council's Resolution No. 1706 of 13/8/2006 that widens the mission of the peace-keeping forces of the UN (UNMID) in Sudan, so that its operations include the region of Darfur. Here, the UN Security Council would have decided on the spread of the international forces in the region.²⁴ Furthermore, it is the UN Security Council's Resolution 1769 that mandated the UN to serve as an international force of 26 thousand persons to Darfur. The response of the Sudanese Government was strong and threatened once more to fight these forces.²⁵ To date, neither the African Union nor the UN forces have reached the number of 26 thousand peace keepers to Sudan.

The new Chinese policy towards Darfur reached its zenith when the China on Nov. 5, 2007 appointed Mr. Liu Guijin — the veteran ambassador and the former

²¹ *People's Daily* Online Jan. 30, 2002, see also I.H.T., Sept. 2-3, 2006, see also *People's Daily* Online Oct.24, 2006. Regular Press Conference of China Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jianchao Liu, Nov. 2, 2006.

²² Gaffar Karar Ahmed, "Why China did not veto the Security Council resolution no.1593," *Al-Sahfa Newspaper*, Sudan, 14/4/2005; see also Sudaneseonline, April 16, 2005, Jan.16, 2007, Feb.2, 2007; see also Dow Jones International News, April 11,2007; see also Xinhua News Agency, 23/5/2007.

²³ Full text of Security Council resolution no.1593 (2005); Security Council meeting.5158th, 31/3/2005, <http://globalpolicy.org/issues/sudan/2005>.

²⁴ Xinhua News Agency, 6/8/2006, 1/9/2006, see also www.un.org/news/press/docs Security Council, 5519th meeting (am),31/8/2006 (the full text of the resolution)

²⁵ Ibid; see also Security Council SC/9089.Department of Public Information- News and Media Division-New York, "Security Council Authorizes Deployment of United Nations - African Union Hybrid Peace Operation Bit to Resolve Darfur Conflict"; see also *Sudanile* online Jan 12, 2007, *Al-Sudanie Newspaper*, April 18, 2007, *Alintibaha newspaper*, Feb 24, 2008, *Alraay alam newspaper*, Dec 15, 2007.

Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe, South Africa and Sudan — as special envoy for African Affairs. China also announced that she was sending 275 military engineers to participate in the international peace keeping operation in Darfur.²⁶ Likewise, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that "China is prepared to cooperate with the US in this matter" and said that "the US had played a positive role towards the resolution of Darfur Question." He then added that "China and the US are sharing a joint vision about Darfur and both are working for the resolution of the problem by diplomatic means."²⁷

Some western media reports referred to strong international pressures – such as some leaders of the European Union (EU) threatening to boycott the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games in August 2008. A message was sent by 108 members of the American Congress to the Chinese President, calling upon China to exert renewed pressure on Sudan in order to take some serious steps to stop violence in Darfur.²⁸ According to these reports the western nations had forced the Chinese leaders to change its stance and appoint the special envoy to Darfur with a reconciliatory agenda also with the West. Yet in my personal view, the change originally comes from the content of this study, as a part of a general and important review of the Chinese foreign policy by the Chinese reformists.

Observers who closely follow the Chinese stance vis-à-vis the conflict in Darfur might come to know, with not much effort, that what is published in the Western mass media about the non-conditional Chinese support to the Sudanese Government about her stance vis-à-vis the human tragedy in Darfur region is greatly non precisely exact. This study has argued that the new reformist current in China had paid attention, much earlier, to the dangerous situation in Darfur; and the deficiency of the Sudanese Government to remedy the situation there. Since 2004, I would argue that China has promoted good relations with Sudan, and has started campaigns of advice to assist the Sudanese Government to find a peaceful solution, stopping violence and the return of stability to the Darfur region.

Since 2006, China has directed its efforts, at least, to practice direct pressures on the Sudanese Government, which used to refuse even any utterance or dialogue about the deployment of the international forces in the region. In fact the Chinese pressures may have led to more flexibility in the Sudanese government stance. As a result, Sudan appears to have accepted important regional and international resolutions,

²⁶ *China Daily*, May 11, 2007 ; see also *People's Daily Online*, May 11, 2007.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ I.H.T., May 12-14, 2007.



such as the Addis Ababa Consensus of November 2006 in which the government accepted the deployment of a joint African Union and United Nations force in Darfur.

All the Sudanese officials who have visited Beijing since 2006, have realized that China will not veto any new resolutions in the UN Security Council which aim to put pressure on Sudan to seek peaceful solution to the on going crisis in Darfur. The cries of war in Khartoum have diminished and the war drums have cooled to some extent, though it is still a very fragile situation. Despite the fact that the hard liners in the Sudanese Government would continue their resistance to the international resolutions, yet the realization of the Sudanese Government that she is no longer protected in the UN Security Council would push it to show more flexibility and raise the constraints it put in face of the spread of the international forces and the search for a real peace in the region, before it is imposed by the international will. Sudan's President Al Bashir, however, has resisted the charge by the International Criminal Court advocate that he should be charged with "crimes against humanity, including genocide in Darfur" and has indicated that he would stop cooperating with the African Union and UN forces if the charge proceeds. Thus, the situation remains very delicate in that region.

D. Other Models for Rapprochement and Co-ordination between China and the West

China's contributions noted above, relating to the North Korean and Iranian nuclear issues and the situation in Darfur, are the most important models, which I have cited to prove that there is a great change in the Chinese foreign policy in dealing with the international and regional problems which concern the West particularly and the international community in general. Also, China has shown some rapprochement with the Western and international stances in other cases. This applies in particular to other cases, such as the situation in Israel-Palestine, Iraq and Syria in the Middle East, Burma (Myanmar) in Southeast Asia and Zimbabwe in Southern Africa. China has shown, in all these cases, stances which agree to some extent with the international stances in general, and those of the West in particular. In this context, China has supported the legitimacy of President Mahamoud Abbas and the Palestinian Authority in the face of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS). China has recently moved to be a real supporter of the efforts of the present Government in Iraq. Evermore, it went further to exempt Iraq from the payment of a Chinese debt of 7 million US dollars.²⁹

²⁹ *People's Daily* Online, June 8, 2007; see also conversation with His Excellency Diab Alouh, Palestinian ambassador to People's Republic of China, March 24, 2008; see also press conference for the Iraqi Embassy spokesman, Beijing, July 2, 2007; see also *China Daily*, May 4, 2007; see also *SCMP.*, May 4, 2007.

At this time, China has practiced some pressures on the Governments of Burma (Myanmar) and Zimbabwe for the improvement of human rights situations in these two countries. She also joined in international pressure against Syria in the Security Council to force it not to interfere in the internal affairs of Lebanon.³⁰

III. The Future of China's New Policy

A. The World Response to China's New Policy

The most important response for this policy was from the US and Europe. President George. W. Bush and his aides in several occasions appreciated China's efforts to help resolve the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue as well as her reasonably positive role in Darfur issue in Sudan.³¹

Because of the new Chinese approach towards international crises, probably for the first time since 1949 European leaders have acknowledged the vital role that China can play in international affairs for enhancing peace, stability and development in the world. French President Nicolas Sarkozy stated that major international issues cannot be resolved without Beijing's cooperation. "There will be no solution to the question of Iran, to the question of Darfur, and to the question of North Korea nuclear issue without strong and positive Chinese involvement,"³² he said. It is clear that the new Chinese foreign policy is still in its early stages. It is not deep-rooted yet in the soil of the Chinese foreign policy. The new current, which led the new reforms in developing Chinese vision of the external world and which is concerned with this study, has met various cruel defeats and setbacks. The supporters of this current still fear and calculate the possibility of new setbacks.

In my personal opinion, the continuity of this current in the Chinese foreign policy, which pushes China towards merging effectively as a major power in the

³⁰ See www.un.org/news/press/docs/2004 press release, SC/8/1/8/1/2.9.2004; see also www.un.org.radio , Sept.27, 2007; see also *People's Daily* Online, Feb. 15-17, 2005; see also *SCMP.*, Sept. 23, 2007; Yahoo News Sept. 25, 2007; see also W.S.J., Sept.27, 2007; see also *People's Daily* Online, Sep. 27, 2007; see also I.H.T. Sept. 27, 2007; see also I.H.T. (editorial) "Beijing may hedge its Burmese bet," Oct. 11, 2007; see also *SCMP.*, Nov. 18, 2007; see also Stephen Kleive, "China in Africa , Beijing cools on Mugabe," I.H.T. May 4, 2007.

³¹ *China Daily*, June 9-10, 2007; see also *China Daily* Feb. 27, 2006.

³² *SCMP.*, May 28, 2007.

* In my estimation, the events in Tibet which occurred in March 2008 formed a real test for the new Sino-American partnership. The partnership had successfully passed this test; as the American administration dealt with much objectivity, about those events. It avoided condemnation and the escalation of the issue. It also refused the call for the boycott of the opening ceremonies of Olympic Games,. Likewise, the American stance of objecting to the referendum which the party of President Shuibian Chen intended to conduct, in Taiwan, in case of his winning the March 2008 elections, weakened the party position in that election.



international community, depends on the understanding of the West especially the US of this policy, including respect for China and its international and regional weight as well as its national security. Despite the fact that China needs to build strategic partnerships with the US and push them confidently towards establishing these relationships and deepening them, as I have noted in this study, she will not accept unjustified American pressures or open intervention in its internal affairs.

China's new orientation to act as a responsible major power and a contributor in solutions for the world's problems, the extenuation of the tension spots starting from the international and regional crisis to climatic changes, terrorism and the combat against poverty in the world — all depend in my view on the response of the US and the West to the new Chinese foreign policy. The US needs to respect the historical, cultural and economic interests of China, her weight in the world and finding a formula for a flexible strategic form of cooperation between a major deep-rooted power (US) and new emerging one(China)

The understanding of the US leaders of China's particularity and dealing respectfully with her may encourage China to move forward in this new line of international resolution of problems, which may benefit China, the West and the world at large. But, if the US fails to understand the Chinese messages and changes which are positively occurring in her foreign policy, deals with China in a nonrespectful manner for this developing nation, her role in the international arena, and continues pressures on China then with containment policies and competition, not partnership and cooperation, China would be ready, in my opinion, to retreat from her current role which specifically has benefited the US. Then, the US might pay a high price, or even the whole world might also pay a high price.

B. What Would the World Benefit from the New Chinese Foreign Policy?

In my estimation, the world would benefit greatly from this policy. We have noticed, in the last decade, how the collision between China and the US almost returned the climates of the Cold War to the world. Even more, many of the corrupted regimes in Africa, for example, benefited from the conflict atmosphere between Washington and Beijing. Because of this conflict and competition, the world lost valuable time in solving political and humanitarian problems, e.g., Darfur in the Western Sudan, where the regime enforces itself by its strong relation with China. At a time it was bargaining with China "oil for veto". The same scenario is repeated in Zimbabwe, where whenever the international community makes its force harsh on its government, it threatens to go East, escaping from the entitlements for reform. Thus, if the Chinese new policy continues, it may mean that China is no longer a safe heaven for this type of regimes.

But in Asia, China could positively participate in the issues of the security in the Arab Gulf (Persian region). She would not stand as an outside on-looker, at a time when there were dangers of a nuclear rearmament race in the Middle East. In effect, the Arab States of the Gulf and Iran's nuclear ambitions, at the same time with their underdeveloped scientific structures and the historical conflicts in the area including the deadly nuclear weapon, may lead to a nuclear catastrophe. This could result in humanitarian and environmental disasters for which human society might pay its huge cost for hundreds of years.

The present Chinese foreign policy should no doubt aim at freeing the Korean Peninsula of nuclear arms. This in fact could lead to the suspension of the secret and public nuclear programs in the other parts of East and Southeast Asia. Many reports have referred to the existence of other nuclear programs in the region (Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) and some of these projects might be transferred, at any time, to nuclear programs for non-peaceful purposes. The dismantling of the North Korea Nuclear program should not leave any justification for any secret nuclear program in the region. Her return to the international community and its direction towards peaceful development, would improve the regional set-up and enhance the directions of the peaceful economic growth in Southeast Asia.

Likewise, the new more integrated Chinese policy with the international community, if the Sino-American strategic dialogue is enhanced, will improve the atmosphere in the Taiwan Straits, as the US would not, by necessity, allow the separatists in Taiwan to declare independence state, or to progress towards any constitutional procedures which may change the status of Taiwan. Also the policy would reduce the military show of power in the Straits, reduce military spending in the region and enhance the peaceful economic growth.

The model of the Sino-American cooperation in the issues of Darfur and Northern Korea may be repeated in some other complex issues such as the Palestinian Question, the Cypriot problem and the complex conflicts in Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and others). It could also contribute to the control over the prices of energy and the raw materials and regulate competitions in these strategic and reinstitute sectors, for the benefit of all national parties.

The Sino-American cooperation in the issues of the climatic change could be vital for the battle of humanity for the protection of the globe because China and the US have the greatest amounts of carbon and heat emissions. They are also the greatest countries in which scientific research is conducted, and such cooperation may reach joint research for the phenomenon of the climatic change. Thus, without



a full Chinese cooperation in the struggle against the climatic change, the world probably would not win this battle in suitable time.

Hence, the Sino–American partnership is important for the total world peace and peaceful development. Despite the great benefits of this partnership, some researchers whom I consulted during the preparation of this study indicated that this partnership, if its various parts are completed, may also lead to anxiety. So, what would happen if the interests of these two powers were confined to the defiance of their interests and divided the influence in the world between them according to their economic interests? So, the world, especially the developing countries will be a victim of balances and interests of America and China. The developing countries might go back to be the mean sources of oil and cheap raw materials and markets, without positive contribution of the new world powers, in development, stability, in the emerging states exactly as did colonial Europe in Africa for hundreds of years.

Yet, the older isolationist view missed the fact that there is a major difference in time, mind and consciousness of the world. This is because the universal dimension was not present in the old colonial mentality, which assumed that London, Paris and Madrid might not be affected by the poverty, wars, conflicts, famines and ignorance in the forests of Africa, amongst the Latin American poor and in Palestine.

The new universal mentality is well aware that poverty leads to waves of human migration, which does not know any limits for borders or oceans, and that national injustice and fear would lead terrorists to attack more and more innocent victims in various places in the world.

We live in a world which has no alternative today, but to search for peaceful coexistence. We live in a small global village which needs to be reorganized, enlarging electricity and pure drinking water for everyone, building schools and hospitals in all the corners of this village; and in a time when the developing countries in the world are not as they were before, for example, most of their leaders do not know their entitlements on the world and those of the world on them. The sense of responsibility had grown in many of the leaders of the developing states. Many of the intellectuals and civil society organizations rose to confront corruption and the defense of basic human rights and the environment. Also, the peace cultures, sustainable human development and human rights become increasingly a basic occupation of the UN institutions, including the Security Council. Likewise, the people in the US, Europe, China and others, are paying more attention to international issues such as human and political rights, environment, and climate changes. More and more international leaders serve as

lobby (pressure groups) acting very powerfully against any international violations of economic and political rights of humans, in any spot on the surface of this planet.

IV. Conclusion

I have attempted in this study to monitor new foreign policy features or new alterations which I believe have occurred in the developing foreign policy of China in the recent periods, which are directed towards building a strategic partnership with the US and its Western allies as the main power in the world. The partnership aims at the participation with the West in the administering of the affairs of the world and cooperates to solve the international crisis, starting with the armed conflicts and poverty and ending up with climatic changes.

I see that important internal factors which I mentioned in this study, and the increasing recent perception of the Chinese leadership that the destiny of China and its future is for the first time in the contemporary history of China, by the broader destiny of the world and China's stake in it. This has pushed China to move out of its great walls and practice its huge influence and tangible positive effects on the international sphere in an unprecedented way.

Yet, such a policy, in my view, was not well rooted deeply in the Chinese soil and thus, retreats from this policy is still possible, especially if the US does not read well the new Chinese orientations in positive ways, and if some circles in the American administration, the Congress and the Ministry of Defense interfere in the internal affairs of China and continue to encourage a policy of confrontation instead of cooperation.

Strategic partnership between China and the US does not mean, by implication, that there are no secondary inconsistencies between them. In fact, during the progress of this partnership, there shall still remain some variances in the vision of both countries, regarding some of the world problems and issues. Also, the conflict about the Chinese currency, the distortions in the balance of trade between the two countries, the position of religious freedom and the minorities in China and the intellectual property rights still continue.

US might raise, from time to time, the issues about human rights in China. On the other side, China might express, from time to time, its discomfort about the US policies towards her in the international arena. Nevertheless, the form of the impact of such variances on the partnership between the two countries probably



remains limited. The Chinese cooperation with the US and the West, of the benefits accrued out of this partnership, should enhance this direction in future. In reality, both the US and Europe have started to feel the significance and importance of the Chinese partnership in the international affairs, as had been generally and positively reflected on the Northern Korea and Darfur issues. Finally, the continuation of the new Chinese orientation greatly depends on the positive response of the US towards this policy.