

Assessing the Gains and Challenges of Nigeria's Participation in The Forum On China-Africa Cooperation(FOCAC)

Halidu Agaba

Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of Abuja, Abuja

Chioma Blessing Umeh

Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of Abuja, Abuja

Odinakachukwu Osuji

Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of Abuja, Abuja

doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/gjpsa.2013/vol12n11428>

Published: January 09 2024

Citation: Agaba H., Umeh C.B., and Osuji O. (2024) Assessing the Gains and Challenges of Nigeria's Participation in The Forum On China-Africa Cooperation(FOCAC), *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, Vol.12, No.1, pp.14-27

ABSTRACT: *The paper examined the benefit that Nigeria has gotten following her participation in the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation(FOCAC) which was established in the year 2000 in Beijing, China. FOCAC is seen as an example of the South-South Co-operation attempt to realise the dreams of the Guandong Conference held in Indonesia in 1955. The paper relied on secondary data which were sourced from textbooks, journal papers, and seminar papers among others that are related to the subject matter and adopted complex interdependence theory as a framework of analysis. Findings from this work show that Nigeria's participation in the forum has greatly enhanced trade and increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as available data shows that FDI in Nigeria has increased exponentially reaching 19.27 billion US dollars in the year 2019 against 1,900 times that of 1971 when the diplomatic ties were established. FOCAC has also helped in developing Nigeria's infrastructure like the construction of the Abuja- Kaduna railway line, among other benefits. However, findings also revealed that there are challenges in this relation, typical among them are the fear expressed by so many Nigerians of the likelihood of Nigeria falling into the Chinese debt trap, unbalanced trade which favors China, and security challenges confronting Nigeria like kidnapping, banditry, and terrorism among others. Based on this, the work recommends that China should use the platform of FOCAC to allay this fear of the debt trap and assist Nigeria in confronting these securities challenges. On the part of Nigeria, the paper recommends that Nigeria need to increase her export trade among other measures, as this will help her build a strong economy and have the resources to supply China's growing need, rather than demand for energy resources and other raw materials.*

KEY WORDS: assessment, Africa, china, cooperation, forum

INTRODUCTION

China - Africa relation is deep in history and may be traced back to the sixteen century during the Ming Dynastic (1368-1644) when a well-known and celebrated Chinese seaman, explorer, and navigator, Zheng He (who had a maritime and commercial influence on China throughout the regions bordering the Indian Ocean) called on the East African coast. Although as noted by Agaba(2020)African scholars and explorers such as Ibn Buttatu of Morocco and Sa'id Mogadishu of Somalia had earlier made voyages to China before that of Zheng He(Agaba,2020). But contemporary history is traced to the 1950s, precisely the Bandung Conference organised in 1955. Through this conference(Agaba,2020), the method of mapping out a strategic framework for mutual bilateral and regional cooperation between China and Africa was started, and progressively, as captured in so much literature (on China-Africa Cooperation), the relationship between two has grown exponentially, especially in the last four decades covering many areas. It was in line with this that Madavo (2019), argued that such areas include, economic, diplomatic, cultural, and social, just to mention but a few areas and this is evident in her recent expansion into Africa which makes it one of the most significant developments in Africa, drawing international attention not only because of its extent but also because of its exponential growth in the areas of trade, investment, diplomatic ties and aid(Madavo,2007).

Under this mutual dependence, as Waheeda (2019) argued, the connection between the actors involved, which in most cases are states also as other transnational actors, is characterized by both cooperation and competition China's growing and expanding engagement with Africa just as just argued by Enuka(2011) which is multifaceted, encapsulating trade and related economic ties, the industrial sector, is partly because of China's demand for Africa's mineral and energy resources. The natural resources that capture China's interest in Africa in line with Enuka,(2011) position, are oil, copper, iron ore, bauxite, uranium, aluminum, manganese, and diamonds, just to mention but a few, and the demand for these resources is indicated by various Chinese state visits to Africa to promote Chinese trade. These include but did not end with the visits of Vice Premier Zhu Rongjin ji 1995(who visited Africa to support joint ventures by Chinese and African enterprises and to provide initial funding.), Premier Li Peng's visit to Africa in 1995 and 1997, and Chairman Jiang Zemin in 1996.

During all these visits, the Chinese government stressed the need for cooperation, broadening of trade, and increase in African imports, among others resulting in China being the continent's largest trading partner, displacing Europe and the United States. Interestingly, one of the lynchpins or cornerstones in China- Africa relations is the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)(Enuka,2011) which was initiated at the Ministerial Conference in Beijing in 2000 has the aim of fostering solidarity and cooperation supported equality, consultation,

consensus, friendship, partnership and mutual benefit (Hellstrom ,2009) in Enuka, (2011). The membership comprises the African Union Commission, the People's Republic of China, and the 54 African countries of which Nigeria is a member Nigeria has actively participated in all the forum's activities just as she has shown commitment to other engagements with China either at bilateral or multilateral after formalizing relation with China in February 1971, which has delivered tangible benefits in the areas of energy (oil), infrastructure and education among other areas.

FOCAC has existed for some years now with Nigeria being a strong and active member. what has been the level of participation of Nigeria and since her joining this forum, have there been gains for the Nation? These questions are what this paper is out to provide answers to. To this end, the paper aims at finding out the level of participation of Nigeria in the forum as well as the benefits that have accrued to the nation since she became a member.

METHODOLOGY

The work relied on secondary data. Data, therefore, was collected from magazines, textbooks, monographs, journal articles, seminar papers, and symposiums that are directly or indirectly related to the subject matter. Data collected were analysed using the content analysis method.

Theoretical Framework

The theory that was adopted for this work is the complex interdependence theory. Interdependence in international relations or world politics is seen as a situation in the world where all the actors including states as well as non-state actors, are dependent upon one another. Waheeda (2015) while referring to the work of Keohane& Nye,(1977: 8) is of the view that in general terms “Dependence means a state of being determined or significantly affected by external forces. To him, therefore, interdependence, most simply defined, means mutual dependence. To this end interdependence in world politics, refers to situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or actors in different countries(Waheeda,2015).

It is therefore argued that under this mutual dependence, the relationship between the actors involved, including states as well as other transnational actors, is characterized by both cooperation and competition. Interdependence does not only mean peace and cooperation among actors, but a relationship between actors characterized by cooperation, dependence, and interaction in several different areas, and conflict as well(Waheeda,2015)

The defining features or characteristics of interdependence theory as captured by Huseyin(2004) are:

- i. The actors are states and non-state actors with multiple channels of communication; interstate, trans governmental, and transnational.
- ii. The agenda of interstate relationships consists of multiple issues that are not arranged in a clear or consistent hierarchy. In other words, there are multiple issues with no hierarchy; military security does not consistently dominate the agenda.
- iii. Military force plays a relatively minor role in international relations mainly because it is not used by governments toward other governments within the region, or issues when complex interdependence prevails.

Complex interdependence defined international institutions as it means of accomplishment. It offers that international regimes and institutions induce cooperation, and this enables states to transcend the anarchical forces in the international system. This theory is apt in explaining the work in that the foregoing postulations raised by Waheeda (2015) on the complex and interdependent nature of world politics find expression in FOCAC and the relationship between the actors involved- in this context China and African nations Nigeria is part of, is characterized by cooperation where you have multiple channels of communication and issues with no hierarchy. More so military security does not consistently dominate the agenda.

FOCAC: Origin and Objectives, Membership, Objectives, and Operational Mechanism

Origin and Objectives of FOCAC

FOCAC historically(Agaba,2020) is seen as a continuum of the spirit of the Bandung Conference held in Indonesia. However, the realities of the dawn of the 21st century the need to maintain peace, seek stability and promote development which has become the desire of people and nations around the world gave much momentum to birth to the formation of FOCAC, 21 years ago. This argument is corroborated by Development Imagined(DI) (2013) when they posited that FOCAC was formed in response to the request of African countries to the Peoples's Republic of China(PRC) for strong bilateral cooperation with China...

Whatever the controversy behind the background of the formation of FOCAC, it is incontestable that FOCAC's origin, as noted by Zenng & Shu (2018), can be traced to the good gesture shown to Africa by three premiers of China, Zhu Rongji, Qian Qichen, and Li Lanqing when they signed 11 intergovernmental framework agreements for concessional loans with Zimbabwe and Sudan, among other countries and precisely to when President Jiang Zemin's visited six African countries of Kenya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Namibia and Zimbabwe in May 1996. During these visits (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Chin- MFAPRC,2021) China rolled out a five-point proposal for the development of a 21st-century-oriented long-term stable China-Africa

relationship of all-around cooperation. The reason for the proposal was based on the belief that setting up an institutional platform for consultation and cooperation with African countries will promote the in-depth development of China-Africa relations.

Appreciating and embracing such gesture as a welcome development arising from Africa's long years of non-beneficial trade with Europe, (Zeng & Shan,2018) the United States, and Japan which many African countries had been looking forward to joint development with China and hoped to enhance the prevailing cooperation mechanism. In other words, it was seen as an alternative to traditional development assistance mechanisms. To this end, a proposal for the establishment of a China-Africa multilateral cooperation mechanism by some African countries end (Zeng & Shan,2018) was put forward and communicated to Chinese leaders during their visits to China. After much deliberations (First Ministerial Meeting of FOCAC, 2000), the CPC Central Committee and the State Council were advised to hold a FOCAC ministerial conference in Beijing in the second half of 2000, as this was seen as an opportunity to solve the challenges in China-Africa relations.

According to Thornton(2014) in October 1999, president Jiang Zemin wrote to 44 leaders of African countries with which China had diplomatic relations and invited their foreign ministers or ministerial officials in charge of international cooperation or economic affairs to the conference and also extended invitations to the heads of state of the OAU's previous, current, and future presidency (Algeria, Togo, and Zambia) to attend the opening ceremony and in the year 2000 FOCAC established in Beijing, China as an exemplary form of South-South co-operation

The forum has the precise objectives of Strengthening Sino-African economic cooperation and trade relationships (Africa- China Policy,2006) to determine a replacement international order which will better reflect the requirements and interests of China and Africa). In order words, FOCAC seeks to ensure equal consultation, enhance understanding, expand consensus, strengthen friendship, and promote cooperation among member states. Similarly, the forum also aims at addressing other issues like trade, technology, diplomacy, media, agriculture, culture, and people-to-people exchanges in terms of membership (FOCAC, ABC,2013)

Membership in FOCAC

FOCAC comprises 54 African countries (of which Nigeria is a member), the African Union Commission, and the People's Republic of China as partners. Examining therefore in detail these organs that drive the wheel of the forum, relying on the work of Anshan (2018) provides a detailed discussion on this.

Chinese Members and Their Functions

The Chinese Follow-up Committee of FOCAC was established in 2001 and is comprised of 28 departments and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, and Finance (Anshan,2018) are the core actors of the committee, ensuring that FOCAC decisions are carried out by the relevant parties and this committee (Ashan,2018) members have irregular plenary meetings as a means for reporting on the implementation of FOCAC measures.

i. Ministry of Commerce:

The ministry of commerce is saddled with the responsibility and is responsible for trade, investment, assistance, and training, and plays an important role in making and implementing economic and aid projects within FOCAC.

ii. The Ministry of Finance:

The ministry gives financial support to China-African cooperation within the frame of the FOCAC, including budget approval, auditing, and supervision(Anshan,2018)

iii. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The role of this ministry is to guide diplomatic policies on African issues and the overall decisions of FOCAC. To this end (Anshan, 2018) the Chinese embassies and consulates in African countries maintain lines of communication with related ministries of African governments and ensure an understanding of their expectations and demands. The Ministry co-chairs the Follow-up Committee with the Ministry of Commerce.

iv. The Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee (Anshan, 2018) is composed of 5 departments from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, and Finance. The Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee holds irregular conferences with its five-member departments and coordinates 28 Chinese members in day-to-day affairs(Anshan,2018)

v. Other participating Chinese Agencies are:

The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP).

MEP coordinates cooperation on environmental issues which is aimed at promoting the sustainable economic and social development of both states of China and the countries of Africa. One remarkable event that was held to practically see to the realization of this dream was the Ministry co-held in China-Africa Environmental Protection Conference with the UNEP in Kenya in 2005.

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)

The National Development and Reform Commission is saddled with the responsibility of establishing an intergovernmental investment mechanism between China and African countries and promoting China-Africa economic and technological cooperation. The Commission is also engaged in tariff exemption treatment on imports from the Least Developed Countries in Africa. The Ministry of Land and Resources is dedicated to cooperation in geological prospecting, mineral resources, and energy.

The Export-Import Bank

The bank is China's policy bank providing support to Chinese companies on international trade, outward investment, and overseas contracted projects with financial instruments, including commercial, mixed and preferential loans.

The Ministry of Science and Technology

It is to play the role of coordinating science and technology cooperation between Africa and China, it was in this regard that it initiated the "China-Africa Science and Technology Partnership Plan", prioritizing joint research and development projects and inviting African post-doctoral candidates to conduct scientific research in China.

The Ministry of Agriculture

This ministry is responsible for agricultural cooperation between China and Africa. China's agricultural technology takes China's minimal arable land and maximizes opportunity. This technology could be introduced in Africa to assist in safeguarding African food security.

The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade

This organ enhances cooperation between entrepreneurs of China and Africa, through the China-Africa Business Forum, a sub-forum of FOCAC(Anshan,2018)

The People's Bank of China

The Bank of China is to promote China-African financial cooperation by working with African multilateral development banks.³⁸ The China Africa Development Fund was set up as a result of the Eight Measures announced at the Beijing Summit in 2006

The Fund's investment portfolio:

The area of coverage of this organ includes agriculture, industrial manufacturing, or infrastructure projects. The Fund operates using market-oriented principles.

The Bank of China.

This is the most internationalized state-owned commercial bank in China. Unarguably, it supports Chinese enterprises entering Africa, enhances cooperation with local banks, and supports the development of African enterprises.

The General Administration of Customs

It is to ensure and promote the development of China-African trade by implementing a preferential tariff rate on imports from African countries.

African Members and Their Function

Just like the Chinese counterpart, the African countries operate on several levels related to FOCAC, with different functions. These structures include the African Diplomatic Corps in China, Senior Officials of African Countries, African Foreign Ministers, the African Union, African Ambassadors in China, Follow-Up Committees on relevant ministries in African countries, and sub-regional organisations. Expatriating on each of these organs in terms of their functions, I will rely once again on the work of Anshan (2018). Below is an examination of the functions of each of the foregoing structures.

i. African Diplomatic Corps

The African Diplomatic Corps coordinates communication between African governments and the Chinese Follow-up Committee, and is the primary method of a communication channel(Anshan,2018) and collates suggestions and responses from African governments to the latest developments in the implementation of the FOCAC measures(Anshan,2018), providing analysis and advice, and plays a key role in organizing FOCAC meetings through a Follow-Up Action Committee.

ii. Senior Officials of African Countries

The Senior Officials Meeting is convened twice for each Ministerial Conference one year before the Ministerial Conference to discuss follow-up activities, and a few days before the Ministerial Conference to prepare for the Ministerial Conference(Anshan,2018). The meetings establish the tone of FOCAC. The Ministerial Conference is convened at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, or Financial and Economic Affairs; the Senior Officials Meeting is at the level of Directors-General or equivalent.

iii. African Foreign Ministers

To strengthen the follow-up process, at the Beijing Summit of 2006(Anshan2018) Chinese and African leaders agreed to set up a mechanism of regular political dialogue between Foreign Ministers, and the first round of China-Africa Foreign Ministers' political consultation was held to exchange views on major issues of common interest and in September 2010, the foreign ministers of China and 42 African countries, or their representatives(Anshan,2018) held their second political consultation in New York, USA.

iv. African Union

The African Union (AU) according to Anshan (2018) has assisted in coordinating African countries and in opening a separate channel of communication with China through FOCAC. Different African countries have conflicting opinions on the AU's role in FOCAC; some feel that the AU's role in FOCAC is enough, while others believe this role should be enhanced. Some scholars posit that China prefers to consider Africa as a whole, with which the AU can assist.

Operational Mechanism of FOCAC

FOCAC meets every three years in China or an African country on an alternating basis and has held meetings in Beijing, China in 2000; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2003; Beijing, China in 2006; Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt in 2009; Beijing, China in 2012 and Johannesburg, South Africa in 2015 and therefore the People's Republic of China in 2018(Mackinnon,2016 & Agaba,2020). Other mechanisms of the Forum are, the Senior Officials Follow-up Meeting; the Senior Officials Preparatory Meeting for the Ministerial Conference; the consultations between the African Diplomatic Corps in China, and the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee). FOCAC (Mackinnon, 2016). has 5 guiding values that embody the spirit of South-South cooperation which are, equality and mutual benefit; diversity in form and content; emphasis on practical results; pursuit of common progress; and amicable settlement of differences Mackinnon 2016). According to him, commitments made during the forum are divided into five broad cooperation areas as follows:

- i. Political: Increased diplomatic visits between China and African countries.
- ii. Social Development: Medical technology and training; increased scholarships for African students and schools built in Africa; Joint environmental research
- iii. Economic: Increased trade, foreign investment, official development assistance, agricultural technology, and knowledge sharing with a focus on FAO programs.
- iv. Security: Military assistance, intelligence exchange, international law research, preventing transnational crime, and anti-terrorism.

v. Cultural: Increased Chinese tourism to Africa, cultural exchange through arts and youth festivals, and women's cooperation (Mackinnon 2016).

Nigeria's Benefit in the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

Nigeria being part or a member of this forum since its formation in the year 2000 in Beijing, China, has actively participated in all the activities of the forum- attending all the Ministerial Conferences (with the city of Beijing hosting the first in 2000, third in 2006, the fifth in 2012 and seventh in 2018, and Ethiopia, Egypt, and South Africa respectively holding the second in 2003, fourth in 2009 and sixth in 2015;); attended the Senior Officials Follow-up Meeting and the Senior Officials Preparatory Meeting for the Ministerial Conference to the consultations between the African diplomatic service in China and therefore the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee(MFAPRC, 2021). And because of the central place Nigeria occupies not only in the Forum but also in the heart of China, she has been seen by China as a major partner who cannot be dispensed with within the forum. This is well captured in the speech of the outgone Ambassador of China to Nigeria- Pingjian when he reflected on the disposition of the President of China, Xi Jinping toward Nigeria. To him, as the largest developing country in the world, China highly values its relations with Nigeria, the largest developing country in Africa.

Indeed, to him, China-Nigeria cooperation (under FOCAC) is brotherly South-South cooperation between equal partners. The point made here is that (Olufemi,2019), China remains committed to stepping up its mutually beneficial cooperation with Nigeria in infrastructure, agriculture, industrial capacity, investment, and other areas. Chinese(Olufemi,2019) therefore appreciate the African wisdom, which says that if you want to go fast, go alone, but if you would like to travel far, go together.

Therefore, on the gains of FOCAC to Nigeria since she became a member, it is worthy of note that as the gains of this forum are spreading to all African states, Nigeria has not been left out. FOCAC has greatly enhanced trade and increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The point here is that trade between China and Nigeria in the era of FOCAC has increased exponentially heating 19.27 billion US dollars in the year 2019 against 1,900 times that of 1971 when the diplomatic ties were established (Olufemi, 2019 & Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Nigeria-EPRCN (2019) argued that. What is clear about this is that leveraging on FOCAC, trade between the two has grown at the rate of 26.3%, which is said to be in the top rank among China's top 40 trading partners.

On FDI, the total Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in Africa between 2005 and 2016(Madden,2019) was estimated at US\$293.36 billion by the Heritage Foundation. If not for the outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease in 2019(COVID-19), China was to scale up its investments in Africa, and plan to increase China's stock of direct investment in Africa to US\$100 billion in

2020 from US\$32.4 billion in 2014 Enewu,2018)). Construction is underway for the six Chinese overseas economic and trade cooperation zones in countries Nigeria, just as it is also done in Zambia, Mauritius, Egypt, and Ethiopia. These cooperation zones offer incentives such as tax holidays and import tax waivers to attract Chinese companies and other Foreign Direct Investments and are expected to provide employment and technology transfer to further economic development

Similarly, Nigeria has also gained from her membership in FOCAC in other areas including infrastructure. This became possible as a result of Nigeria's circumspective implementation of the 2015 Johannesburg Ministerial Meeting Plan of Action. At the conference, as captured by Xinhua, a \$60 billion package of aid, subsidized lending, state-backed investment, and a China-Africa production capacity cooperation fund with an initial capital of 10 billion dollars were announced. With the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of action, Nigeria now has the flourishing Ogun Guangdong Free Trade Zone and the Lekki Free Trade Zone, the Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) delivery, and the agricultural science and technology demonstration parks.

FOCAC has also helped in the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative(BRI) in Nigeria- a Chinese infrastructural development plan of building roads that will connect China to major parts of the world. According to Agaba (2020), it will increase its imports and provide more space for foreign products. It is no longer news that the infrastructural gains of BRI are here with us in Nigeria. To be sure, BRI has provided Nigeria with 186-kilometer Abuja-Kaduna Light Railway, the China and Nigeria agreed on a contract to build the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Railway which will stretch for 871 miles, the flag-off of Abuja-Keffi-Lafia-Makurdi Road, the ongoing construction of Zungeru Hydropower Plant(see figure 6)as well as Lagos-Ibadan Railway(see figure 6) and the Dangote contracts worth \$4.3 billion in 2015 with China's Sinoma International Engineering firm to increase its capacity to 100 million tons(Agaba,2020).

The area of skills development is not also left out as China on a general note has provided Africa, with an estimated 120,000 government scholarships, and opened 61 Confucius Institutes and 44 Confucius Classrooms in 46 African countries (Peter, Dennis & Schedrack, 2020 & Wang, 2020). It has also assisted in building approximately 100 rural schools, worth of medical equipment and antimalarial supplies for these hospitals and centers, and training 300 medical workers for African countries. Cascading this to Nigeria, Huawei and Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Communication and Technology (Chidebere,2018) were seen working together to promote information and communication technologies based on a one-year knowledge training program for 1,000 female engineers(Chidebere,2018) and this program aims to bridge the gender divide in Nigeria by fostering empowerment, employment and the inclusion of women in Nigeria's development) and have also seen private companies like Alibaba and Tencent extending e-commerce opportunities for China and other countries around the globe, which Nigeria can leverage(Chidebere,2018)

Through FOCAC, Nigeria has benefited from cultural and educational exchanges (Agaba, 2020) as China offers more scholarship programs for Africa than the West. China and Nigeria have signed an agreement on cultural cooperation and a protocol on cooperation between institutions of higher learning in the two countries and that is why Agaba(2020) argued that 512 out of the 6,845 Nigerian students who are studying in China as of 2019 are on a Chinese government scholarship. On the other hand, far back in 2011, 10 Chinese students enrolled at Bayero University, Kano to study the Hausa language (Garba 2020),

Problems and Challenges of Nigeria in FOCAC

It must also be stated that regardless of the benefits of FOCAC in Nigeria, there are serious concerns and fears about this forum as it portends a great danger to Nigeria. One such concern has to do with the fear of a debt trap. China (Itodo,2020 & India Narrative,2020) is having a great impact on Africa's growth and economic development and there is no change in sight even when it seems like a lot of the current debt of most African countries (India Narratives,2020) is not going to be profitable to China and China is keen on helping Africa, these loans allow China to take control over certain projects once the credit conditions are not met by the borrowing county(Ani,2020). This tactic(Itodo,2020) is known as "debt-trap diplomacy" and has been used by China in numerous instances as in the case of Sri Lanka(Itodo,2020) that the debt burden had become unsustainable in 2017, as reported by the same Itodo(2020) the authorities in Sri Lanka were pressured to transfer the majority control of the port of Hambantota as a replacement for the pending repayment. The port, Itodo(2020) argued was passed over to Beijing for 99 years.

The paper argues that this may be the fate of Nigeria with the increasing nature of her debt to China. For sure, China does not love Nigerians to that extent, nor is she a nation without domestic issues that would make her lend Nigeria the amount of money that was reported back in 2018 as noted by Segun(2020) that China's Exim bank would lend Nigeria \$328 million to enhance the west African countries' telecoms infrastructure

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has become clear that since years of the existence of FOCAC, Nigeria has been offered real economic and other benefits filling a void in trade and investment that is critical to Nigeria's economic development as I have demonstrated in the work. Despite the existing challenges being experienced in the forum as discussed in the work, I, therefore, advise that moving forward, FOCAC should give attention to enablers of development in Nigeria. China needs to prioritize the stabilization of Nigeria through robust investments in peace and security as enablers of sustainable development. To this end, the FOCAC Partnership for Peace and Security Plan adopted in 2012 and 2015, respectively seeks to support the African Union's peacekeeping operations in Africa (of which Nigeria is part), build and operationalize the African Standby Force, and the African

Capacity for the immediate response to the crisis should be religiously followed and implemented. Nigeria's security challenges are more peculiar among other African states – the cases of banditry, kidnapping, and terrorism are no longer news, and the consequences on states as relates to even bilateral and multilateral relations are monumental as no serious diplomatic relation can take place under these conditions. China is therefore urged to assist in any possible nipping of these security challenges on the board so that the benefits that FOCAC offers (beyond the ones discussed in the work) will not elude Nigeria.

Finally, I subscribe to the view of Madavo(2019) that Nigeria increase her export trade among other measures, as this will help her build a strong economy and have the resources to supply China's growing demand for energy resources and other raw materials

REFERENCES

- Agaba(2021) 50 years OF China-Nigeria relations: A reflection. *Blueprint* Thursday 12th January. Papers. Pg 26
- Agaba, H (2020) FOCAC at 20: An Assessment of Nigeria's Participation. Sunday 25th October Leadership Newspaper. Pp 17
- Ani (2020) Nigeria in turmoil over China's debt-trap diplomacy. *BW- Business World*
- Anshan, L.I(2018) The Forum on China- Africa Cooperation: From a Sustainable Perspective. Centre for African Studies Perking University. World Wide Fund for Nature(wwf)
- Chidebere, E.E (2018) FOCAC Reshaping China- Africa Cooperation. Zhang Chengliang/ China Daily
- China-AfricaPolicy(2006)China's Relation with Africa. Retrieved from <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zflt/eng/zgdfzcc/t481748.htm#:~:text=China%20adheres%20to%20the%20Five,benefit%2C%20reciprocity%20and%20common%20prosperity.>
- Embassy of the PRC in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2021) Five Decades of Shared Journey- On the 50th anniversary of China-Nigeria diplomatic relations. Retrieved from <http://ng.chinaembassy.org/eng/zngx/cne/t1844810.htm>
- Emewu, I (2018) Looking at the gains of Beijing FOCAC Summit to Nigeria. *DailyTrust* 8th September. Retrieved from <https://africachinapresscentre.org/2018/09/08/looking-at-the-gains-of-Beijing-focac-summit-to-Nigeria/>
- Enuka, C (2011) The Forum on China- Africa Cooperation (FOCAC): A Forum for China's Re-engagement with Africa in the 21st Century. Institute of International Studies, Jilin University. *Jurnal e-Bangi, JILIDD 6, BILANGAN 2, 190-200*
- First Ministerial Meeting of FOCAC (2000) President Jiang Zemin delivers a speech at the first ministerial conference of FOCAC in Beijing in October 2000. Retrieved from <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zflt/eng/gylt/dyjbzhy/t157577.htm>
- FOCAC ABC(2013) FOCAC Archives., Retrieved from <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/zflt/eng/lttda/ltjj/>
- Garba, N (2020) NUC Verification Teams Visit BUK to Evaluate 8 New Programmes. *Bayero University Kano Official Bulletin. XXXIX(57) 1-6*

- IRS 115: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM(No Date)Retrieved from <https://training.daystar.ac.ke/login/index.php>
- Isiksal, H (2004) To What Extent Complex Interdependence Theory Challenge Structural Realist School of International Relations? *Alternative Turkish Journal of International*. 3. (2 &3)
- Itodo, U.F(2020) Nigeria and China: The Threat of Debt Trap. *Young Initiatives on Foreign Affairs and International Relations*. Retrieved from Initiative of Foreign Affairs and International Relations- www.ifair.eu
- Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye.(1977). *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.
- Khan, Kaza(2020) Complex Interdependence and Corona. *The News on Sunday(TNS)*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/632454-complex-interdependence-and-corona>
- Mackinnon, T (2016) *The Forum On China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC): This fact sheet outlines the International Cooperation between China and certain African states as a result of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)*. Syracuse University - New York
- Madavo, C.F(2019) *China and Africa: Opportunities, Challenges and Forging a Way Forward*
- Madden, P(2019) Figure of the Week direct investment in Africa. *Africa in Focus*. Wednesday, October, 9
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China-MFAPRC (2021) *A Long-term Stable China- Africa Relationship of All-round Cooperation*. Retrieved from https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/ziliao_665539/3602_665543/3604_665547/t18036.shtml
- Olufemi, A(2019) Chinese Ambassador speaks on country's development, relationship with Nigeria, others. *Premium Times* September, 26th
- Peter, K, Dennis, M & Schedrack, K (2020) *Retrospect and Prospects of FOCAC in Africa*. Africa Policy Institute. No 4
- Seun, O (2020) Analysis piece from 2018 sparks misinformation about Nigeria's debt to China. *Fact Check*, Friday 07 August and retrieved from
- Thornton, J.L(2014) *Africa in China's Foreign Policy* Washington: Brookings
- UKEssays. (November 2018). *The Impact Of The Complex Interdependence Politics Essay*. Retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/essays/politics/the-impact-of-the-complex-interdependence-politics-essay.php?vref=1>
- Waheeda, R (2015) *Theory of Complex Interdependence: A Comparative Analysis of Realist and Neoliberal Thoughts*. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*. Vol. No 2
- Zeng, A & Shu, Z (2018) *Origin, Achievements and Prospects of the Forum on China- Africa Cooperation*. *China International Studies*.
- Wang, Y (2020) *Build on Twenty Years of Proud Achievements and Open Up a New Chapter in ChinaAfricaRelations*. Retrieved from <http://me.chineseembassy.org/mon//zx/xx/t1831815.htm>
- Waltz, Kenneth. (1979). *Theory of International Politics*, New York: McGraw-Hill.