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中華民國與撒哈拉以南非洲國家的關係探討：  
甚麼是可能促使撒哈拉以南非洲國家放棄或避諱承認中華民國  
的因素？

The ROC and Its Relations with Sub-Saharan African Countries:  
What Are the Possible Factors Prompting Sub-Saharan African  
States to Withdraw or Refrain Recognition of the ROC?

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to Victor Maia

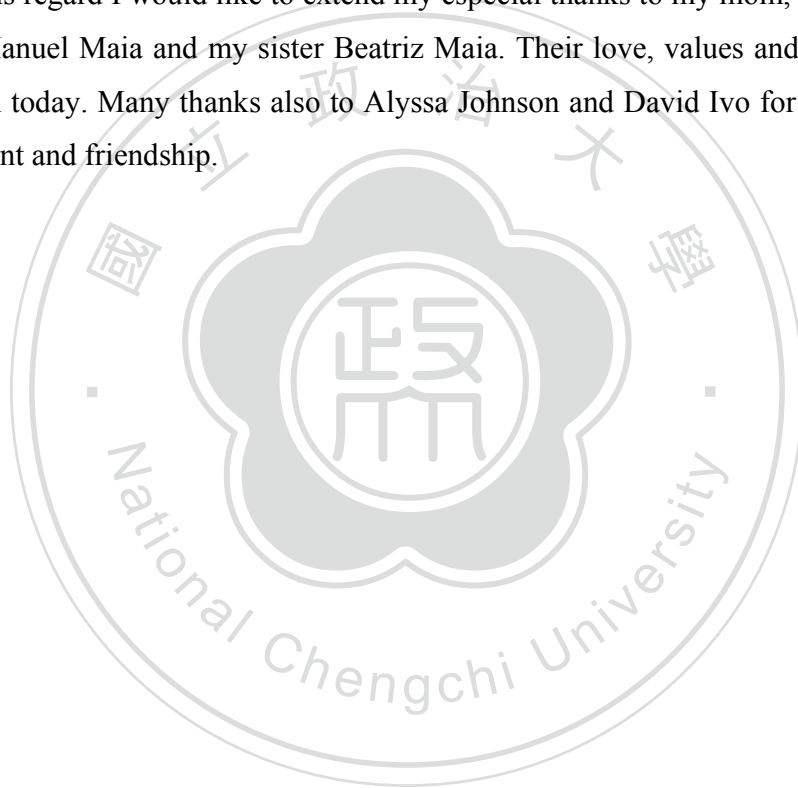
You will always be an inspiration for me



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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

APSA Union's Peace and Security Architecture  
ATEF Africa Taiwan Economic Forum  
AU African Union  
BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa  
CCP Chinese Communist Party  
CDB China Development Bank  
DFA Department of Foreign Affairs  
ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States  
EIA Energy Information Administration  
EU European Union  
EXIM Export Import Bank of China  
FNLA Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola  
FOCAC Forum on China-Africa Co-operation  
ICBC Industrial and Commercial Bank of China  
ICDF International Co-operation and Development Fund  
IMF International Monetary Found  
MINFIN Angolan Ministry of Finances  
MINURCA United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic  
MPLA Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola  
NGO Non Governmental Organizations  
OAU Organization of African Unity  
PRC People's Republic of China  
ROC Republic of China  
SAA South African Airways  
SACP South Africa Communist Party  
SADC Southern African Development Community  
SME Small and Medium Enterprises  
TANU Tanganyika African National Union  
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF China International United Petroleum & Chemicals Co., Ltd.

UNITA Uniao Nacional para a Total Independencia de Angola

UNMIL United Nations Mission in Liberia

UNSC United Nations Security Council

US United States

WB World Bank

ZANU Zimbabwe African National Union



## Abstract

This thesis aims to analyze the possible reasons shaping the sub-Saharan African states' decisions in withdrawing or refraining from recognizing the Republic of China (ROC). In the last decades the number of the ROC's diplomatic allies has decreased drastically and the majority of states located south of the Sahara Desert have taken part in this process. For instance, at the peak of its success in Africa in 1964, Taipei was recognized by twenty two countries. Yet, today it is only recognized by three states.

The research conducted is an attempt to provide a better understanding of this trend by focusing on the sub-Saharan African states' motivations in not extending recognition to Taipei. This is important because since the 1960s, Africa has become a potential area in the ROC's quest for international recognition. In this regard, one should not disregard the role of the People's Republic of China. Within the "one China" principle, Beijing's capacity in advancing these states national interests has been an important driving force in diverting sub-Saharan countries' allegiance from the ROC in the two China's diplomatic competition. In order to explain this tendency, the Neo-realism theory and its "bandwagon" behavior will be applied.

The expected contributions from this work include a new perspective on the ROC-Africa relations in which an evaluation of the African stance regarding this issue is proposed. The author hopes to bring new insights on the current vulnerable diplomatic position of the ROC in Africa, thus further contributing to the scientific debate on the relationships between African countries and the ROC.

**Key Words:** ROC-Africa; PRC-Africa; International Recognition; Diplomatic Competition;

## 摘要

本文主旨在分析構成撒哈拉以南的非洲國家決定中斷或抑制承認中華民國為主權國家原因。過去的幾十年來，中華民國的邦交國數目大幅下降，大部分位於撒哈拉沙漠以南的非洲國家都在其中。舉例來說，1964年是中華民國在非洲地區外交上的峰期，台北獲得了22個國家的承認。然而，現今只剩下3個國家的承認。這個研究計劃，企圖藉由關注研究撒哈拉沙漠以南的非洲國家不繼續承認台北的動機，使這種趨勢能更加被瞭解。這點是非常重要的，因為自1960年以來，中華民國已經將非洲視為在其謀求國際承認最有潛力的區域。而在這個層面，便不能輕忽中華人民共和國在其中所扮演的角色。驅使在“一個中國”的原則下，北京當局在推動提昇這些國家的整體國家利益上所擁有的能力，對中華民國在撒哈拉沙漠以南的非洲友邦國家而言，是推動他們轉向，開啟兩個中國外交競爭的一股重要力量。為了解釋這一種傾向，本文應用了新現實主義理論和其中的“bandwagon behaviour”模說明。筆者預期本文能達到的目的包含了提供一個新的視角來看待中華民國與非洲的關係，用來評估非洲國家對於此問題所持有的立場。筆者希望能夠針對現今中華民國和非洲國家間脆弱的外交地位，帶來新的見解，並進一步提供關於非洲各國和中華民國之間關係的科學論證。

**Key Words:** ROC-Africa; PRC-Africa; International Recognition; Diplomatic Competition;



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## CHAPTER I

### 1.1 Introduction

Since the early 1960s, the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China<sup>1</sup> have been involved in a diplomatic tug of war aimed at obtaining international support towards claiming China's seat of representation within the UN. In this regard, Africa has become one of the main battlegrounds for this dispute due to the fact that African representation comprises nearly 30% of all UN members, thus forming the largest regional group by number of member states.

It has been generally agreed that during the decade of 1960s the ROC performed well in Africa, a fact that allowed it to maintain its seat in the United Nations. However, after the loss of its UN seat in 1971 and Washington's switching recognition towards the PRC in 1979, the process of de-recognition of the ROC accelerated leaving the island state in a very complicated situation internationally. African states have participated in this process. At the peak of its success in Africa in 1964, Taipei was recognized by twenty two countries. However, today it is recognized by only three states.

In the majority of the analyses on the ROC and African relations, emphasis has been solely placed on how the ROC has been able to secure or obtain its diplomatic allies, therefore failing to thoroughly analyze the factors influencing the considerations of African nations towards relations with the ROC. In this study however, the author intends to approach these relations from a different perspective. That is, it will provide an analysis based not on the methods and reasons why the ROC has been able to secure its African allies, but rather why has the number of African states officially recognizing Taipei sharply decreased over time. This is because the author believes that the dynamic political reality in Africa plays an important role in shaping state's decisions regarding the 'two Chinas' quarrel. Since the current literature on these relations is missing some important aspects in this regard, the author found that a study focusing on this issue could provide a better understanding of the current diplomatic situation the ROC is facing in Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study the term ROC will be employed as it is Taiwan's constitutional name. The mainland of China is referred to as the PRC.

Currently the ROC enjoys official diplomatic relations with 22 countries, of which only three of them are in Africa: Burkina Faso, Sao Tomé e Príncipe and Swaziland (MOFA, 2015). This means that the other forty five countries located in the Sub-Saharan region have diplomatic relations with the PRC<sup>2</sup>.

In this context it is impossible to dismiss the role of the PRC. Although Taipei, with great efforts, had managed to maintain its seat in the UN until 1971, the Resolution 2578, which resulted in the recognition of the PRC as the sole legitimate representative of China to the United Nations, had a profound impact on the ROC's political influence in Africa. From this period onwards, Beijing, along with its so-called "one China Policy" and its claims of being the Third World leader, has used its seat in the UN and the Security Council to limit Taipei's endeavors for international recognition and assert its claims in the international arena that the island is an integral part of China. Moreover, the emergence of the PRC as a key economic player has raised Beijing's confidence and influence globally. Beijing is nowadays the world's second largest economy and Africa's biggest trading partner. In 2000, Sino-Africa relations saw a new development with the launching of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and relations between Beijing and the majority of African states have been upgraded since then.

The two China's diplomatic competition implies that states must decide to recognize either the ROC or the PRC. Over time, the ROC has been losing this battle globally and the current low number of its diplomatic allies located in the sub-Saharan region mirrors this reality.

It is usually claimed that the decision to recognize a nation or not depends on political preferences rather than on the legal grounds drafted by international law. Therefore, when a state faces the decision of whether or not to recognize another state, it'll first weigh the advantages against the disadvantages before deciding. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the evolution of the relationship between the ROC and the Sub-Saharan African states over the last fifty years, and the possible factors explaining why these states have never entered into relations with the ROC or withdrawn their recognition over time. In doing so, in this study the author will also touch upon issues such as the importance of

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<sup>2</sup> The Gambia which broke its ties with Taipei in 2013 has not been able to establish official diplomatic relations with the PRC as a result of the 'diplomatic truce' informally agreed between the ROC and the PRC since President Ma Ying-jeou came to power in 2008.

international recognition and the implications of its absence for the ROC on Taiwan. In addition, the neo-realist theory and its “bandwagon behavior” will be used to better explain the Sub-Saharan states act of non-recognition of the ROC. In this regard, it will be contended that a set of five different key national interests have been an important driving force in prompting sub-Saharan countries to side with the PRC at the expense of the ROC.

By looking at the dynamic factors possibly determining sub-Saharan states’ decision to not recognize or withdraw recognition from ROC over time, this study hopes to further contribute to the scientific debate on the relationships between African countries and the ROC.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The number of the ROC’s diplomatic allies in sub-Saharan Africa has shrunk dramatically over time. This has implied that Taipei’s presence on the continent is nowadays minimal, as the majority of states located in this region have tended to side with Beijing at the expense of Taipei. It is this current reality being faced by the ROC in this part of the world which has inspired the main question of this study: What are the possible factors prompting sub-Saharan African states to withdraw or refraining recognition from the ROC?

However, other questions can be asked in this context. A large number of scholars working on the ROC-Africa relations have contended that the PRC’s determination in limiting the ROC’s diplomatic overtures in the international arena has been highly successful overall. This reality is reflected on the African continent where only three states enjoy official diplomatic ties with Taipei, against fifty officially recognizing Beijing. In this regard, one can ask, is there any more space left in the sub-Saharan Africa for the ROC to be officially recognized as a sovereign state? Are there any states, apart from its current diplomatic allies, still willing to enter into official ties with Taipei?

## **1.3 Research Methodology**

Currently there are two main research approaches in the field of social sciences, namely quantitative and qualitative. For this study I decided to opt for the latter.

Qualitative research is multi-method in scope, involving interpretive and naturalistic approaches to its subject matter. This means that the qualitative researcher studies things in his natural environment, in an attempt to make sense or to better interpret the phenomena, according to the meaning attributed by others. The qualitative research allows us to develop explanations and generalizations that are close to concrete data and context but are more than simple generalizations (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). This method performs a careful analysis of content of the available primary and secondary sources such as speeches, academic studies, interviews, government reports speeches, press statements, etc (Costa, 2007).

For this study, both primary and secondary texts have been used. The primary data is essentially information obtained from international treaties, government reports and interviews. This has included government reports related to trade statistics (i.e. Bureau of Foreign Trade), and interviews I am expecting to conduct with the Africa Taiwan Economic Forum director-general, Dr. Richard Lin. Secondary sources have been obtained from several sources such as books, academic journals, conference papers, master and doctoral thesis on related themes (the ROC's foreign policy, the ROC relations with the African countries, the PRC's foreign diplomacy, and the PRC's political and economic relations with Africa) and other internet publications.

#### **1.4 Limitations of the Study**

For this study the author would have preferred to conduct the proposed research in Africa, namely in Angola, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Liberia in order be able to do interviews with officials and academics whose expertise is related to Sino-Africa relations. However due to limitations of funds and time, this study will only be undertaken based on the use of primary and secondary sources.

#### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

The ROC's diplomatic interactions with the African states have deteriorated over time. This relationship has been characterized by an increasing number of countries whose decisions concerning the 'two Chinas' issue have largely contributed to the ROC's current

weak diplomatic presence in Africa. In other words, the majority of the African states have tended to recognize the PRC at the expense of the ROC under the “one China” principle. Unlike Taipei, which since 1971 has seen its overall political clout being reduced as a result of its withdrawal of the UN and the loss of its main ally, the United States, Beijing has been able to gradually assert its influence in world affairs. This growing global influence has naturally been felt in Africa where the PRC’s presence is nowadays almost impossible to ignore. As mentioned above, China is today the world’s second largest economy and is Africa’s biggest trading partner. Moreover, through FOCAC, the PRC’s engagement with Africa has over the past decade grown to become a prominent feature in the international relations of the African continent. As a result, in the ‘two Chinas’ quarrel, African states, with few exceptions, have hardly ignored the leading position Beijing has been playing on the continent and prompted to engage in official diplomatic relations with the PRC at the expense of the ROC. In this study proposes the idea that sub-Saharan states have over time entered into official relations with the PRC due to its capacity to advance these countries’ domestic and foreign policy interests. In order to sustain this idea, the author has decided to apply in this project the ‘Neorealist’ theory and its ‘bandwagon’ behavior.

The Neorealist theory, which has become largely associated with Kenneth Waltz, is the foundational theory of international relations and tries to explain the behavior of states and their interactions with one another in the world affairs. According to the neorealist theory, states anarchically compete for survival in the international arena, causing them to behave rationally in order to insure survival. It is in this context of a desire for survival that the neorealist theory establishes its concept of balance of power in which, unlike the classic realism, countries are not automatically inclined to align themselves against one another for survival because they can display a group behavior (bandwagon) which is also beneficial for their interests. This ‘bandwagon’ behavior is often visible when a state is characterized as leading all others tend to follow it, because they want to be aligned with the forces in power rather than against them.

In analyzing the possible reasons refraining sub-Saharan African states to enter into official relations with the ROC, I would argue that these countries have tended to ‘bandwagon’ towards the PRC. Taking into account Taipei’s current diplomatic situation in Africa, and the aforementioned factors shaping the current relations between Beijing and



Africa, the decision of the sub-Saharan African States in siding with the PRC at the expense of the ROC, seems to display patterns a ‘bandwagon’ behavior, in which states in the pursuit of their interests tend to side with the leader. In this regard, this study proposes a layout grouping together countries with similar national interests and foreign policy goals which have been important factors prompting these states to ‘bandwagon’ towards the PRC, thus contributing to the ROC’s current diplomatic isolation in Africa. The nature of this study and the theory proposed will not only require an examination of the ROC’s relations with Africa in the last fifty years, but also a careful analysis of the African states domestic politics and their positions towards the ‘two Chinas’ diplomatic quarrel.



## CHAPTER II

### 2. The ROC since 1971 and its Need for International Recognition

#### 2.1. The ROC's Quest for International Recognition

Since the loss of its seat in the United Nations (UN) as the sole legal representative of the whole China in 1971, the ROC has been struggling to regain its international legitimacy as a sovereign state. From 1949 to 1970 the seat in the UN General Assembly and Security Council conferred the ROC wide international recognition and security, but the crucial UN General Assembly 2758 resolution profoundly altered this scenario. From then on, the PRC began to be recognized as the only legal representative of the people of the mainland China in the U.N, and the ROC delegation, under orders of Chiang Kai-shek, walked out of the UN to prevent further humiliation (Winkler, 2012). This event coupled with efforts by the PRC to further isolate the ROC has resulted in an accelerated loss of international recognition. This trend was further accentuated by the decision of the American government to switch recognition to Beijing, thus leaving the ROC without any world superpower defending its cause. Upon Washington's formal recognition of Beijing in 1979, most other holdouts followed suit, leaving only a few countries retaining official recognition of Taipei (Rich, 2009).

Facing international isolation since the PRC admission to the UN in 1971 and the establishment of the U.S.-PRC diplomatic relations in 1979, the ROC government on Taiwan has tried to ameliorate its international position. The 1973 declaration of 'total diplomacy'<sup>3</sup> by the then Premier Jiang Jing-guo became the foundation of 'pragmatic diplomacy' or 'flexible diplomacy' which would be launched by then President Lee Teng-hui in 1988, that called for (Chan, 2003; Yahuda, 1996):

1. The advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic ties;

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<sup>3</sup> Diplomacy conducted not only by the central government but also by virtually all other actors who have contact with diplomatic circles: local governments, political parties, non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, business people and ordinary folk. Such diplomacy is multi-directional. It sought to, promote the mobilization of all available resources in order to escape isolation.

2. The development of substantive relations with countries that do not maintain formal ties with the ROC on Taiwan;
3. Admission or readmission to international organizations and activities vital to the country's national interest;

The pursuit for international recognition of its sovereignty became the ROC's primary foreign policy goal. For decades since 1971, the ROC on Taiwan has engaged in multiple activities and adopted numerous policies in order to expand its international space (Larus, 2006). As mentioned above, President Jiang Jing-guo, initiated the aforementioned so-called "total diplomacy"; President Lee Teng-hui adopted a foreign policy of "pragmatic diplomacy" in which it sought to maintain unofficial relations with nations that had established diplomatic relations with the PRC, while also pursuing a more active diplomatic and economic based relationship with the Southeast Asian countries under the "southward policy" (Larus, 2006). Whereas President Chen Shui-bian continued to use flexible diplomacy to widen Taipei's international space, the current Ma Ying-jeou's presidency has adopted a flexible diplomacy policy of accommodation (Wang, n.d). That is, the ROC will pursue its diplomacy with the precondition of maintaining friendly and cooperative relations with the PRC<sup>4</sup>.

It is generally accepted that the resilience demonstrated over time by the ROC's successive administrations and their creative and innovative foreign policy have brought positive results in Taipei's quest for diplomatic recognition. Despite the veracity of the statement, especially when one takes into account certain periods of time<sup>5</sup>, I would argue that overall the success of this pursuit has been limited. Contributing to this is the role the PRC has been playing over time concerning Taipei's struggle for survival. For instance, although the ROC dropped its claim to the mainland and has been open to dual recognition since 1991, Beijing's assertiveness regarding the "One China" policy has remained unchanged, a circumstance which has hampered the efforts of Taipei from attaining any

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<sup>4</sup> The reasons for President's Ma new approach: 1).Taipei realizes Beijing's rising power and influence in the world. It will be difficult for it to develop diplomacy without reducing China's suppression. 2).the ROC can avoid spending unnecessary resources in pursuing its diplomatic interests by bringing to an end the diplomatic battle with the PRC. The ROC can avoid being considered as an unstable actor in East Asia region by not taking a defiant diplomacy against the PRC.

<sup>5</sup> the policies adopted during Lee Teng-hui's presidency in the 1990s have achieved some success in fostering new diplomatic relations.

significant progress in increasing formal recognition (Rich, 2009). Given the PRC's growing influence in the world affairs, few nations dare to establish formal relations with the ROC on Taiwan and sacrifice their official diplomatic links with Beijing. The table 1 displays the decreasing number of the ROC's diplomatic allies since 1971, a rapid decline which is hard to ignore.

**Table.1** The ROC's Diplomatic Allies, 1971-2015

Year	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Number	55	42	38	31	26	26	23	22	22	22
Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Number	24	24	25	26	23	23	23	22	26	28
Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number	29	28	27	28	29	29	30	27	29	29
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2013	2015
Number	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22

**Source:** Elaborated by the author with data retrieved from: Where is Taiwan? 2012; Thinking Taiwan, 2013 Wikipedia, 2015; MOFA, 2015;

Despite the trend of derecognition that has been affecting the ROC on Taiwan since 1971, and the fierce opposition displayed by the PRC over the last decades, Taipei has not given up on its pursuit for the legitimization of its sovereignty and presence in international organizations. Diplomatic recognition matters for Taipei and Africa has become one of the arenas where the ROC has intensively conducted its foreign policy and tried to increase its presence. However, the current scenario is not ideal and the future doesn't seem to be promising. Currently, the ROC enjoys official diplomatic relations with 22 countries, of which only three of them are in Africa (The Kingdom of Swaziland, Burkina Faso and Sao Tome and Principe) (MOFA, 2015).

**Fig.1** The ROC's Remaining Diplomatic Allies



Source: <https://www.stratfor.com/sample/analysis/taiwan-loses-diplomatic-ally>

As the purpose of this thesis is to analyze the reasons behind the decisions of sub-Saharan African countries to break off their diplomatic ties with the ROC, I found that two questions should be answered in this context: what is diplomatic recognition and why is this recognition important for the ROC on Taiwan? This analysis will be particularly helpful for a better understanding of the need for the ROC to have diplomatic allies and the consequences that the trend of derecognition may have in the future of the nation.

## 2.2 International Recognition and its Importance

International recognition is defined in legal terms as a unilateral act by which a state expresses its readiness to enter into juridical relations with another state or entity under international law, and to conduct full diplomatic, consular or other relations with it. International recognition is seen as a voluntary declaration of intent and does not impose any obligation on the recognizing state (Akaba, 2011). There are essentially two theoretical models connected to the recognition of states: the constitutive theory and the declaratory theory (Carbonnier, n.d). The first one, the constitutive theory, considers that the act of

recognition by other states determines the existence of a new state and grants it an international legal personality. Its implications are that the new state is established as an international person by virtue of the will and consent of already existing states (Abdulrahim, 2009).

The second one is the declaratory theory. According to the declaratory theory, a state must fulfill four criteria before it can be accepted as a state in the international community. This criterion is based on the Article 1 of the Montevideo Declaration which will be explained below. This type of recognition has no legal effects and it is purely a fact. Thus if the entity is able to properly comply with the requirements of a state, it is a state with all international rights and duties, and therefore other states have the obligation to treat it as such (Abdulrahim, 2011; Carbonnier, n.d; Yamali, 2009).

In the past, the constitutive theory had its achievements. In the 19th Century, international law was regarded as applying mainly between states within Europe (Abdulrahim, 2011). Other nations would be admitted as states to this community only if they could attain recognition from those member states. Nowadays, recognition can occasionally have a constitutive effect, although state practice is not always consistent. When the creation of a new state or government is not in accordance with international law, this state or government is most of the times considered as having no legal existence until it is recognized (Abdulrahim, 2011).

Yet, currently the main view is that recognition is declaratory and does not create a state. This view was laid down in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States of 1933. The Article 3 of the Convention states that: *“The political existence of the state is independent of recognition by the other states. Even before recognition the state has the right to defend its integrity and independence”* (Montevideo Convention, 1933).

In fact, the two theories provide little contribution in explaining recognition or determining the status of non-recognized entities in practice. Moreover, in my opinion the distinction between them is of little significance. According to the declaratory theory, deciding whether a new entity satisfies the criteria of statehood depends on the decision of other states, and the granting formal recognition to a new state (considered a unilateral act) is left to the political discretion of states. On the other hand, the importance of the constitutive theory has lost relevance due to the obligation imposed on states to treat an

entity that satisfies the criteria of statehood as a state. Moreover, since recognition has a political side, the state's practice regarding recognition shows that states prefer a middle way between the aforementioned theories (Yamali, 2009; Abdulrahim, 2011).

According to Yamali (2009) International law is constituted by states and it is concerned with the activities and the transactions of states. However, if roughly 50 years ago the general consensus was that states were the only legal persons of the international law, nowadays this conception has broadened and participants can be regarded as: states, international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public enterprises, private companies and individuals (Yamali, 2009).

According to international law an entity able to meet the international legal criteria of statehood is able to become a state. In this regard, The Montevideo Convention<sup>6</sup> sets out the requirements for statehood in its well known Article 1. The criteria for statehood as determined by the Convention are: (1) a permanent population, (2) a defined territory, (3) government (4) the capacity to enter into relations with other states (Aynete, 2011).

1. Permanent population: population is crucial for the existence of a state, as is indicated in Article 1; a permanent population does not mean that the population has to be static at one place. Rather, it takes into account pastoralists who move seasonally from place to place. Additionally, the size of the population is not an essential requirement.
2. Territory: the territory where the permanent population resides does not imply that the boundaries have to be defined precisely. Thus a border dispute with another country does not cast doubt on the territorial status of a country. It is only important that a country has a clear core territory in order to be a state.
3. Government: A state requires a government functioning as a political body and in accordance with the law and the nation's constitution. The government needs to exercise effective power over its territory and citizens.
4. Capacity to enter into relations with other states: defines the new entity's recognition by other states so that they have the capacity to start relations (Aynete, 2011).

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<sup>6</sup> The Montevideo Convention: treaty signed at Montevideo, Uruguay, on December 26, 1933. The Convention codified the declarative theory of statehood as accepted as part of customary international law.

The ROC, and other disputed territories (e.g., Somaliland or the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic), clearly meet these requirements for statehood (Rich, 2009). Yet, the recognition of a state internationally is rarely based on internal sovereignty, since sovereignty has both internal and external dimensions (Payen & Veney, 2001). Some authors such as Rich (2009) says that a political community claiming sovereignty, even if judged by outsiders as legitimate, cannot be called a state if in practice it cannot assert this right. In order to legitimize sovereignty claims, many entities attempt to mirror the actions of recognized states in order to be perceived as such (Rich, 2009). For instance, many disputed states (e.g. the ROC on Taiwan) declare their consent to international agreements and declarations of which they were not signatories as a means of legitimizing their claims to statehood. In 2007, Taipei, in its annual application for UN membership stated: (Washington Times, 2007):

*“We meet all of the attributes of statehood set forth in the 1933 Montevideo Convention — a permanent population (with 23 million people, we’re larger than 60 percent of U.N. member states), a defined territory and the ability to enter into relations with other states. Article 4 of the convention provides, “The political existence of the state is independent of recognition by other states.”*

*“We respect all of the rights enunciated in the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, which many U.N. member states routinely violate. Still, they’re members in good standing and we’re not.”*

Although there may be degrees of external sovereignty, a more precise indicator is diplomatic recognition (Rich, 2009).

Other authors such as Newnham (2000) contend that the very definition of state sovereignty must include diplomatic recognition. In other words, sovereignty can be conceived not only as the recognition of internal actors but also attributed to the state by other states (Payne & Veney, 2001). The greater the number of states extending diplomatic recognition to a state, the greater is the sense of external legitimacy. Moreover, recognition



is crucial to define a state's membership in the world community as well as to support its claim as an international person.

Currently the ROC on Taiwan is in a difficult position, with only 22 nations formally recognizing its claims to sovereignty. This lack of external legitimacy leaves the ROC insecure against counter claims from Beijing, since the majority of states around the globe side with PRC due to its size, power and forcefulness on the Taiwan issue in order to avoid antagonizing Beijing (Fossen, 2007).

During the first years of the 20th century, there were nearly fifty states in the world arena, right before World War II this number had grown to reach approximately seventy-five states and in 2005 there were almost 200 (Yamali, 2009). With the creation of each new state the concept of recognition must be put on the agenda of the international community. The ROC on Taiwan, due to its ambiguous international status, has been a difficult case to solve. Recognition has become a matter of great importance essentially due to its legal and political implications. Recognition of an entity not only confirms that this entity has met the required qualifications, but also that recognizing states are willing to enter into relations with the recognized state. As a result the newly recognized state may benefit from privileges and immunities within the international legal order, such as making treaties with other entities and allowing the government to act free from the control of other states (Yamali, 2009).

Thus, it is usually claimed that, the decision to recognize a nation or not, depends on political preferences rather than on the legal grounds drafted by international law. Chiu (1992) argues that states should regard the determination of whether a new entity is a state as a legal decision and base their decisions of recognition on objective criteria prescribed by international law, however this decision is usually treated as a question of policy. This tendency of states to recognize other entities based on political preferences is understandable given that extending the benefits of recognition is intrinsically linked to the recognizing state's interests. Therefore, when a state faces the decision of whether or not to recognize another state, they'll first weigh the advantages against the disadvantages before deciding (Yamali, 2009; Carbonnier, n.d.). For instance, Spain contending with separatist pressures from Catalonia and Basque region on its own territory, refused to recognize the secession of the ethnic Albanian territory of Kosovo from Serbia in 2008, presumably

fearing a chain reaction within its own borders (Reuters, 2008). For the same reason, Beijing immediately opposed Kosovo independence, anxious to stop Taiwan and separatist movements in Tibet or Xinjiang from following the example. Other Asian governments that are battling against separatism in their own countries, such as Sri Lanka, have refused to recognize as well (Chan, 2008). The Kosovo case provides a good example as to why states may decide not to enter into relations with other nations as the disadvantages of this action outweigh the advantages. Similarly, the ROC-PRC struggle for international recognition has provided several examples of countries providing recognition to either Taipei or Beijing according to their own interests. In this case, impoverished nations, highly dependent on foreign aid have consciously made use of this diplomatic competition and profited from either Beijing or the ROC, both economically and politically (Taylor, 2002). In other words, usually these nations are willing to establish relations with either Taipei or Beijing depending on how much compensation is provided by either side. For example, in 1996 Senegal switched-for the third time-from Beijing to Taipei and in return was able to receive a generous aid package. In 1994, Gambia as a result of having recognized Taipei, received funding amounting to US\$35 million (Taylor, 2002). In 1998, Taipei accused Beijing of having had provided an assistance package of US\$100 million to Guinea-Bissau in exchange for the country's recognition (Rich, 2009).

## **2.3 Withdrawal of Recognition and Non-Recognition**

### **2.3.1 Withdrawal of Recognition**

Diplomatic recognition is crucial to the very definition of state sovereignty. The greater the number of states extending diplomatic recognition to a country, the greater the external legitimacy that country exhibits. In this case, withdrawal of recognition can be a huge setback for a nation's aspirations of sovereignty.

According to some authors (Yamali, 2009; Carbonnier, n.d.; Hillgruber, 1998) the withdrawal of granted recognition is possible under certain circumstances. It is especially

easy when it comes to granting a *de facto* recognition<sup>7</sup>. *De facto* recognition is a simple acknowledgement that a government exists and wields effective control over people and territory (Essen, 2012). This means that *de facto* recognition is usually accompanied by disapproval of the recognizing state towards the new regime, or at least the expectancy of certain improvements before *de jure* recognition is granted (Essen, 2012). On the other hand, *de jure* recognition can only be withdrawn if the state is annexed or conquered by another state (Yamali, 2009; Essen, 2012).

As mentioned above, withdrawal of recognition can happen regardless the type of recognition. Yet, this decision can be easily made when it comes to a *de facto* recognition, due to its temporary nature. *De facto* recognition intends to be a preliminary acceptance of the political realities and can be withdrawn based on political changes taking place in the recognized country. When a *de facto* government loses its effective control over the country, the main reason for the act of recognition disappears and can subsequently be withdrawn. Regarding *de jure* recognition, given the fact that it is a definitive act, its withdrawal can be more complex. If a *de jure* government is overthrown a new situation arises and the question of recognition of a new government must be faced (Abdulrahim, 2009). In this case, withdrawal of recognition of the overthrown government is assumed and no declaration must be made.

Since recognition is essentially an act of political nature, no matter how circumscribed or conditioned by the law, a state possesses an unrestricted capacity to determine whether a certain case justifies the withdrawal of recognition and to take such action if it is in conformity with its own national interests.

### **2.3.2 The Act of Non-Recognition**

Recognition can be attributed to an already existing state and withdrawn according to the national interests and events taking place within the recognized state. However the act of non-recognition is applied within a different context, when a new entity is believed to have emerged as a result of illegal actions, such as in case of aggression or the use of

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<sup>7</sup> Recognition has been divided into *de jure* and *de facto* recognition. *De jure* recognition can be classified as a full type of recognition. *De facto* recognition is used to indicate a hesitance on the side of the recognizing state in according *de jure* recognition.

threats. Hillgruber (1998) states that the act of non-recognition of an entity that is actually emerging as a state remains as an exception in state practice. This can be explained as ostracizing a regime internationally, other states not only deny the newly emerging entity rights under international law, but also lack the capability to call on the new entity to fulfill international obligations and responsibilities. Therefore, the decision not to recognize a state can only be considered if the unreliability of the new state as a partner in international relations appears to be so serious that the community of states refrains from integrating the new state and keeps it away from the international community (Hillgruber, 1998). Simply speaking, the act of non-recognition implies a lack of confidence on the part of the international community in the ability of a political entity to remain viable and the conviction that the new entity lacks internal legitimacy and has failed to attain broad international acceptance (Payne & Veney, 2001).

## **2.4 The ROC and Sub-Saharan Africa: Withdrawal of Recognition, Non-Recognition and the Neorealist Theory**

### **2.4.1 The Withdrawal of Recognition in the ROC-Africa Relations**

When we look at the case of the ROC on Taiwan and its relations with the African countries two patterns should receive particular attention. The first one is due to the fact that the ROC on Taiwan has maintained a *de facto* rule over the island since 1971, several African states have conferred and withdrawn recognition from the country over the years. This is in line with the explanation provided above that the recognition of a *de facto* government can be easily withdrawn due to its temporary nature and the expectations of improvements before *de jure* recognition is conferred. Table 2 displays examples of some African states which, since the early 1960s, have switched and entered into diplomatic relations with the ROC several times. The most extreme cases are the Central African Republic, Liberia and Senegal which have established official relations with the ROC three times.

**Table 2.** African States Which Have Switched Sides Several Times

Country	Number of times it has established official relations with the ROC
Benin (Formerly Dahomey)	2 Times: 1962-1964; 1966-1973
Chad	2 Times: 1962-1972; 1997-2006
Liberia	3 Times: 1957-1977; 1989-1993; 1997-2003
Lesotho	2 Times: 1955-1983; 1990-1993
Central African Republic	3 Times: 1962-1964; 1968-1976; 1991-1998
Niger	2 Times: 1963-1974; 1992-1996
Senegal	3 Times: 1960-1964; 1969-1972; 1996-2005
Gambia	2 Times: 1968-1974; 1995-2013
Guinea-Bissau <sup>8</sup>	1 Time: 1990-1998

**Source:** Elaborated by the author with data retrieved from: Payne and Veney, 2001; Taylor, 2002; Tseng, 2008; Rich, 2009.

#### **2.4.2 The Act of Non-Recognition in the ROC-Africa Relations**

The second pattern is the one of non-recognition. Here we can include the states that have never recognized the ROC or maintained relations with ROC until the UN resolution 2578 was passed, which resulted in the transfer of China's seat to the PRC. Since 1971, an increasing number of African nations have entered into relations with the PRC at the expense of ties with the ROC. Others have recognized the PRC since their independence; or as early as the late 1950s early 1960s, had already established steady relations with Beijing

<sup>8</sup> Guinea-Bissau places a different case. Upon its independence established diplomatic relations with Beijing which came to an end when Bissau decided to formally recognize Taipei in 1990. However, official relations with Beijing were resumed in 1998 thus leading to the cut of official ties with the ROC.

which have been maintained up to now. Although some of these countries have maintained some economic and cultural interactions with the ROC<sup>9</sup>, overall current relations with Taipei are minimal.

**Table 3.** Countries with Relations with the PRC

<b>Country</b>	<b>Year of the Establishment of Relations</b>
Sudan	1959
Guinea	1959
Mali	1960
Somalia	1960
Ghana	1960
Tanzania	1961
Kenya	1963
Burundi	1963
Congo Brazzaville	1964
Equatorial Guinea	1970
Ethiopia	1970
Cameroon	1971
Nigeria	1971

<sup>9</sup> In 1992 Taipei set up a special delegation in Luanda, Angola, as a result of an agreement signed between the ROC and the Deputy Minister of Oil of Angola. Mozambique has currently an Office in Taipei to promote trade and investments between the ROC and Mozambique. Nigeria and South Africa have also trade offices in the ROC on Taiwan whose mission is to promote economic and bilateral relations.

Sierra Leone	1971
Rwanda	1971
Madagascar	1972
Mauritius	1972
Benin	1972
Togo	1972
DR Congo	1972
Gabon	1974
Mozambique	1975
Botswana	1975
Comoro Islands	1975
Seychelles	1976
Cape Verde	1976
Djibouti	1979
Zimbabwe	1979
Ivory Coast	1983
Angola	1983
Namibia	1990
Eritrea	1993
South Africa	1998

South Sudan	2011
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**Source:** Elaborated by the author with data retrieved from: Yu, 1963; Tseng, 2008; Wikipedia, 2015

What this chart shows us is that the position of the ROC in Africa is weak and that the process of derecognition accelerated after the UN Assembly Resolution of 1971. By not recognizing the ROC on Taiwan, the African states are depriving Taipei of international rights and immunities within the international legal order, such as making treaties with other entities and allowing the government to act free from the control of other states as well as limiting its participation in intergovernmental organizations. Although Taipei has consistently sought to affirm its commitments to international agreements and declarations of which is not a signatory in order to legitimize its claims to statehood, the reality is that the majority of sub-Saharan African states are not prepared to enter into official relations with the ROC for reasons that can be explained by the neorealist theory.

#### 2.4.3 The Neorealist Theory and its ‘Bandwagon Behavior’

Neorealism – or structural realism – is the foundational theory of International Relations. Starting from a simple set of assumptions, it seeks to explain the behavior of states as well as their interactions with one another in the international arena (Jakobsen, 2013).

The theory became largely associated with Kenneth Waltz after publishing his “Theory of International Politics” in 1979. In his work, Waltz preaches that realism had the need to establish more solid and scientific bases. For this reason, realism can also be called structural realism. His work was primarily concerned with explaining the reasons for continuity and repetitions behind state's actions, rather than focusing on singular instances of unusual state behavior, using a way of thinking aimed at explaining the inevitability of change to explain the continuity. This has been called systemic theory. Waltz identifies anarchy as a basis for all existing wars in the international system, and argues that any explanations of such events at the state level are too reductionist, because they limit the scope of issues driving international conflict. He maintains that the structure is not only the sum of the parts that compose it, but are also determined by how the parties position



themselves towards each other and how the structure as a whole restrains, limits and guides the actions of the agents within the system through two mechanisms: socialization and competition.

It is the structure that sets the standards of what is acceptable in terms of the agents' decision making. Socialization produces patterns that limit and shape the behavior expected by the actors within the structure, inducing states to avoid certain behaviors. Just as socialization causes actors to adopt certain behavior, competition also works accordingly. States compete for survival in the international arena, causing them to behave rationally in order to ensure survival. Sarfati (2005) view in this regard is that, in international relations, competition leads states to proceed rationally, so that those best adapted are able to survive in the international system.

According to Waltz, international political structures are determined by three main factors: the ordering principle, functional differentiation, and distribution of capabilities. The principle of order is anarchy, meaning the absence of a world government; there is no higher authority above the main units composing the system – the states. The functions of the units (states) are similar with respect to the other. That is because the units of the system closely resemble each other with regard to the functions they perform. Therefore, what matters is the third feature, which determines the power capacity of each unit. The distribution of power is the characteristic that differentiates the units. Therefore, by analyzing the structure of international politics, we prescind all the attributes of the states with the exception of its power capacity. Thus, it can be said that the relations based on the dimension of their capacity (power) stand out when compared to the intrinsic qualities of the units (Jakobsen, 2013). Taking the international system as anarchic and decentralized is the selfish and competitive sentiment of the actors that causes the system to be organized rationally. The desire for survival is a prerequisite for the rationality of States.

For Waltz, states have the characteristic of being sovereign, deciding for themselves how to manage internal and external problems. Thus, the difference between the actors is given by variations in the ability to run and manage certain functions. In international politics, this ability must be analyzed compared to other states. This ability, especially in regard to national security, is the central element of relations between States.

Finally, Waltz establishes the concept of balance of power in the neorealist theory, which is not unlike the balance defined in classical realism, because their requirements are the same: anarchic order and will to survive. However, contradictory to what happens in classical realism, in the neorealist theory, states are not automatically inclined to align themselves against one another for survival because they can display a group behavior (bandwagon) which is also beneficial for their interests. This bandwagon behavior is often visible when a state is characterized as leading and all others tend to follow him, because they want to be aligned with the forces in power rather than against them. This phenomenon is usually common at the end of a conflict when there is a clear victory from one of the competing sides. In the competition for leadership, the “bandwagon” concept is an important component to describe coalition formation around the leader. (Sarfaty, 2005). In the following section, the author will try explain what are the possible factors shaping this group behavior and their contribution to sub-Saharan African states decision to withdraw or refrain from recognizing the ROC over time. It will be contend that the PRC’s leadership position in Africa has motivated the majority of the sub-Saharan states’ to side with Beijing in pursuit of their own domestic interests and foreign policy goals.

## CHAPTER III

### 3. The Role of the PRC in the ROC-Africa Relations

#### 3.1 The ROC's Main Obstacle in Africa: the PRC

Hillgruber (1998) argues that the decision of denying recognition of a state can be considered only if the unreliability of the new state as a partner in international relations appears to be so serious that states refrain from integrating the new state and prefer to keep it away from the international community. In fact, the majority of the African states refuse to recognize the ROC on Taiwan. In doing so, one can assume that recognizing the ROC may have undesirable implications for a country's national interests and that the best decision is not to enter into relations with Taipei. But what are the implications and reasons causing African nations to refrain from establishing relations with the ROC, which is a respected democracy, which complies with all the statehood requirements defined by the Montevideo Convention, which is ranked amongst the thirty most powerful economies in the world, and holds the world's fifth largest foreign exchange reserves? That is the main goal of this thesis.

In this context it is impossible to dismiss the role of the PRC. Since, the early 1960s a tug of war between Taipei and Beijing ensued in Africa in which both the PRC and the ROC fiercely began competing for recognition from the newly independent nations emerging on the continent. Although Taipei, with great efforts, had managed to maintain its seat in the UN until 1971, the Resolution 2578, which resulted in the recognition of the PRC as the sole legitimate representative of China to the United Nations, had a profound impact on the ROC's political influence in Africa. From this period onwards Beijing, along with its so-called "one China Policy"<sup>10</sup>, and its claims of being the third world leader, has used its seat in the UN and the Security Council to limit Taipei's endeavors for international recognition and assert its claims in the international arena that the island is an integral part of China. Moreover, the emergence of the PRC as a key economic player has raised Beijing's confidence and influence globally. Beijing is nowadays the world's second

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<sup>10</sup> Implies that a country seeking diplomatic relations with the (PRC) must cut official relations with the ROC and vice-versa.

largest economy and Africa's biggest trading partner (The Economist, 2013). In 2000, Sino-Africa relations witnessed a new development with the launching of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (from now on to be referred to as FOCAC). As a result, relations between Beijing and the majority of African states have been upgraded since then.

Taking into account the aforementioned factors shaping the relations between the PRC and Africa, it seems that the PRC has gained a position of leadership among the African states. In applying the neorealist theory and its "bandwagon" behavior I will argue that sub-Saharan African states in the pursuit of their national interests, have been more keen to side with Beijing within the two China's quarrel context, due to the latter's strong political and economic regional position in Africa.

The act of recognition reflects a nation's national interests and therefore is much more of a political than a legal act. In applying the neorealist theory and its "bandwagon" behavior to the competition between Taipei and Beijing, we see that Beijing with its outstanding growth in the international economy and its resulting influence over global affairs has put it in a position of leadership which sub-Saharan African states are not in a position to ignore.

### 3.2 Sub-Saharan Africa: A Brief Introduction

Africa is composed by 54 states of which 49 are located in the sub-Saharan region.

**Fig. 2.** Sub-Saharan Countries



**Source:** [http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/region/1 sub-Saharan Africa](http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/region/1-sub-Saharan-Africa)

This area is characterized by its enormous diversity in terms of cultures, religion, language, customs, traditions, history and landscape. Contrary to what most people think, the continent is not only a place marked by famine, wars, corruption and violations of human rights; it is also a continent full of potential and hope. Since 1995, Africa's economic and social performance has been constant which has allowed the continent to become the second fastest growing region of the world. Its per capita income grew at 2.2 percent annually and the poverty rate fell by a total of 10 percentage points, by far the best performance in the last 40 years (Emerging Markets Forum, 2012). Simultaneously, Africa has made good progress in many, though not all, social indicators such as childhood mortality and primary school enrollment (Emerging Markets Forum, 2012). Furthermore, the continent is also well endowed with natural resources, some of them of high strategic and economic value (Tseng, 2008; UNCA, 2015).

After years of exploitation and colonization by western nations which started in the early fifteenth century with the Portuguese sailors interactions in North and West Africa, the majority of the African nations had already attained their independence by the mid 1970s.

The period subsequent to independence was marked by instabilities such as military coups, famine, civil wars, territorial disputes and dictatorial regimes in some cases (Sierra Leone, DRC, Gambia, Gabon, CAR, Somalia, etc.); but it also witnessed some successful transitions where a fair degree of democracy and social stability have been responsible for the absence of wars, extreme poverty, military coups or the emergence of dictatorships (Botswana, Namibia, Ghana, Cape Verde).

The reasons determining the success or failures of regimes in Africa are complex and almost impossible to generalize. As mentioned before, the dynamics taking place within each country may differ from others and therefore each case should be independently analyzed.

Like any other nations in the world, every African country has its own national interests and foreign policy goals which are determined by domestic and international factors. For instance, South Africa until the early 1990s, could not aspire to obtain international prominence due to its practice of apartheid. Its main foreign policy goal was

instead to minimize its international isolation. Today, with the end of the apartheid, South Africa became one of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) members and is seen as a leading country in Africa. There is no doubt that the changes occurred in South Africa during the 1990s have allowed Pretoria to pursue other goals internationally which were not possible before. On the other hand, we have countries such as Liberia that due to internal instability, places pursuit of economic, military and humanitarian support in the international arena as its main foreign policy aim.

### **3.2.1 The Sino-Africa Relations: an Overview**

Although the economic interactions and cultural exchanges between China and Africa can be traced back to the fifteenth century, contemporary Sino-Africa relations began with the formal establishment of diplomatic ties with Egypt in 1956. Since then, relations between the parties have substantially evolved and nowadays the PRC is one of the main partners of the African states.

From 1954, with the adoption of the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence"<sup>11</sup>, disclosed by Zhou En-lai, the PRC's relations with Africa began to be guided by these principles, whose goal was to upgrade its relations with newly independent countries emerging on the continent.

The Bandung Conference, 1955, provided Zhou En-lai a form of contact with several African leaders, allowing an expansion of relations between the PRC and these states. As a result of these interactions the PRC and Egypt established diplomatic relations in 1956, followed by other countries such as Algeria, Morocco, Sudan and Guinea. The PRC used solidarity with the "third world" to distinguish itself from the bipolar Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, both of which the PRC considered hegemonic powers, and simultaneously assert a leading role within this group.

Throughout the 1960s, the diplomatic strategy adopted by Beijing was the struggle against the hegemony of the two superpowers. The disruption of Sino-Soviet relations, which caused a split in the socialist camp, was associated with the collapse of the colonial

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<sup>11</sup> The Five Principles: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non aggression, non interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence

system and the first victories of the national liberation movements that triggered a movement of "non-alignment", proved to be of great importance in the international relations of this period. In this context, Mao Tse-tung produced the "strategy of the two buffer zones" (the first being the underdeveloped countries and the second the countries of Western Europe), in which he argued that the PRC should fight the two world superpowers, by supporting the intermediate zone and through "diplomatic achievement". Thus, throughout the 1960s the Chinese concern in Africa focused more on ideological issues and its fight against imperialism, colonialism and revisionism. Moreover, it was also during this period that the PRC formulated the guidelines for its foreign aid programs: "Eight Principles." The principles were announced by Premier Zhou En-lai during his visit to Africa from the late 1963s to 1964s. The "Eight Principles" are: mutual benefit; no conditions attached; the no-interest or low-interest loans would not create a debt burden for the recipient country; to help the recipient nation develop its economy, not to create its dependence on the PRC; to help the recipient country with project that needs less capital and quick returns; the aid in kind must be of high quality at the world market price; to ensure that the technology can be learned and mastered by the locals; the Chinese experts and technicians working for the aid recipient country are treated equally as the local ones with no extra benefits for them. In this context, in addition to providing political and military support, Beijing built the TAZARA railway linking Zambia to Tanzania, helping free Zambia from its dependence on trade routes to the sea controlled by white-minority ruled Rhodesia (Chun, 2013). By the end of 1969, the PRC had already been able to expand to nineteen the number of diplomatic allies in Africa.

In the 1970s, the PRC made a shift in its foreign policy, changing the priority of national interests and adopting a pragmatic strategy. In this period, relations with the West improved and through the policy of the "three worlds", Beijing sought the support of Third World nations in its fight against Soviet hegemony. Over the decade, several national liberation movements in Africa received Chinese support, which were helpful in neutralizing some Soviet operations on the continent. In 1971, with significant support from African countries (accounting for 1/3 of the votes in favor of Beijing), the PRC took the China's seat at the UN, at the expense of the ROC. The status of permanent member,

along with the situation that presented itself, allowed the PRC to broaden its diplomatic presence in Africa. By the end of 1970s the PRC had relations with 44 African states.

The early 1980s marked a new turning point in Chinese foreign policy, resultant of Deng Xiao-ping's reforms. There was a redefinition of diplomatic strategy and policy for Africa, through the de-politicization of diplomacy and the Chinese approach of countries formerly neglected due to their alliance with the USSR. In 1982, the then Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Zi-yang, paid a visit to eleven African countries, and announced that the Chinese economic cooperation with Africa would be guided by four basic principles<sup>12</sup>, intended to show African countries, that the relationship between the PRC and Africa would be based on reciprocal basis, and not solely through economic assistance. Thanks to the PRC's domestic situation, and its pursuit of economic development, there was a decrease in economic assistance and Chinese aid to Africa during this period (Li, n.d; Brautigam, 2010). Moreover, with the proximity of the end of the Cold War and the subsequent Sino-Soviet rapprochement, Africa eventually lost importance strategic in the dispute between China, USA and USSR for areas of influence.

In the 1990s, however, Beijing's attitude towards Africa suffered a new shift. Politically, upon the Tiananmen Square incident, highly condemned internationally, Beijing sought African political support in order to minimize the impacts of sanctions imposed by the West. In addition to the support provided by several African countries, there was an understanding among Africans and Chinese that Western criticism was an attempt to destabilize the country's growth. Moreover, Chinese leaders realized that African states could be reliable friends in international affairs. It is during this period that the then Chinese President Yang Shang-kun, during his visit to the continent, proposed six principles in order to strengthen the Sino-Africa relationship<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, starting from

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<sup>12</sup> The four principles announced were: equality and mutual benefit; emphasis on practical results; diversity in form; and common development.

<sup>13</sup> Support of African countries endeavors in maintaining state sovereignty, opposing foreign interference and developing the national economy; respect the African countries' right to choose their own political system and development model in accordance with their own national features; it supports African states in their efforts to strengthen unity, cooperation and alliance, and solve state-to-state conflicts through negotiations; support the Organization of African Unity (OAU); support to the African countries in their endeavors to positively take part in world affairs and establish a just and rational international political and economic new order as members of equal status; Beijing would continue to support the development of friendly exchanges and various types of economic cooperation with African nations based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence.



1989, at the beginning of each year, Beijing's Minister of Foreign Affairs first official trip has been to Africa, whose goal has been to emphasize Africa's importance in the PRC's foreign policy.

Economically, the country was experiencing a period of strong economic growth. Africa's natural resources and market potential were of extreme relevance for Beijing to maintain its economic expansion. In 1993, the PRC became a net importer of oil and Africa's vast reserves gradually became an important energy source for Beijing (Yen, 2007). Thus, the decade of the 1990s showed a new momentum in Sino-African relations, with increased complexity and scope of the relations and cooperation. There was also a significant increase in Chinese aid to Africa, as well as an increase in the number of the PRC's investments within the context of improved investment environment in Africa and the emergence of Chinese businesses (Chun, 2013).

By the end of the decade, close Sino-Africa relations witnessed a new development. During his 1996 official visit to Africa, President Jiang Ze-min, in his speech at the Organization of African Union (OAU), put forward a five-point proposal for the development of the Sino-Africa diplomatic relations<sup>14</sup>; moreover, he also proposed a new mechanism aimed at promoting a long-term and stable Sino-African relationship of all-round cooperation and friendship geared towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century (MFA, 2014; Yen, 2007). Following the logic of institutionalization of measures encouraging African economies, supporting the business community and the Chinese state-owned enterprises as well as government initiatives, FOCAC was established in 2000, aimed at increasing and coordinating the Sino-African cooperation, simultaneously guaranteeing a mutual beneficial relationship.

Although the FOCAC meetings have generally been mainly centered on economic topics, Beijing's engagement with the continent has also retained some of the political elements and motivations existent at the beginning of the relationship (CSS, 2012).

FOCAC was officially launched in 2000 at a ministerial conference held in Beijing. It was attended by 44 African countries, private sector representatives and regional and

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<sup>14</sup> To promote a sincere friendship between the Africa and the PRC and become each other's reliable "all-weather friends"; treat each other as equals and respect each other's sovereignty and refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs; to pursue a common development on the basis of mutual benefit; to improve consultation and cooperation in international affairs; to look into the future and create a more splendid world.

international organizations as well as heads of state of Togo, Algeria, Zambia and Tanzania and the Secretary General of the African Union and ended with the adoption of the Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (Yen, 2007; CCS, 2010; FOCAC, 2004). As a result, in the following three years, the PRC cancelled RMB 10.9 billion of debts for 31 heavily indebted poor countries or least developed countries in Africa; set up the African Human Resources Development Fund, sponsored nearly 300 training courses and trained nearly 7,000 African professionals in fields such as diplomacy, economic management, national defense, agriculture, education, science and technology, culture and health (Embassy of the PRC in South Africa, 2012).

The second Conference of Ministers took place in Ethiopia in 2003, and was attended by the prime ministers of both the PRC and Ethiopia, six heads of state, three vice-presidents, two prime ministers, a president of the Senate, the President of the African Union Commission and a United Nations Secretary-General representative (FOCAC, 2004). Despite the participation of relevant political actors, the decisions taken in the second FOCAC were not of great importance. Among them were the strengthening of cooperation in the development of human resources and the provision of training to 10,000 Africans in various sectors, the removal of trade barriers, and the increase of the number of Chinese peacekeeping forces on the continent (FOCAC, 2004).

The third summit held in 2006 marked the real institutionalization of the Forum. Besides the participation of 41 heads of state and senior representatives of 48 African countries, FOCAC III brought together about 1,700 Chinese and African delegates. The decisions adopted in this summit clearly expressed the deepening of Sino-African relations. Under President Hu Jin-tao's leadership, Beijing had entered in a new 'strategic partnership' with Africa (CCS, 2010).

Among the new decisions made were the Chinese commitment to double its assistance to Africa between 2006 and 2009, the removal of tariffs of 440 products of Africa's least developed countries, the creation of up to five free-trade areas on the mainland and also the establishment of a development fund of US\$5 billion, in order to encourage Chinese investment in Africa, sending professionals and Chinese volunteers to African countries, as well as promoting education through the training of professionals and the increase of the number of scholarships for African students (Yen, 2007; CCS, 2010)

In the 2006 Summit, the PRC also published its white paper on African policy, entitled 'China's African Policy'. The document openly promulgated Beijing's policy objectives towards Africa, the measures to be implemented and proposals for cooperation in various sectors in the long run.

The fourth summit, held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2009, was attended by the Chinese Premier Wen Jia-bao, the heads of state and government of 50 African countries and the chairman of the African Union Commission. The action plan drawn up at this summit was even more ambitious than before. Among the key decisions were the adoption of free tariff treatment to 95% of products from the least developed countries, providing \$10 billion in preferential loans, with the inclusion of \$1 billion for small and medium-sized African companies, construction of 50 schools, the extension of 5500 scholarships from the Chinese government and the training of more than 6000 African professionals (Taylor, 2011).

The FOCAC summit of 2012 further evidenced Sino-Africa solid relationship and was attended by the PRC's president Hu Jin-tao and ministers from 50 African countries. By this time, Beijing had already surpassed the US as Africa's biggest with trade reaching a record high of US\$ 166.1 billion. This summit's most impressive outcome was Beijing's offer of US \$20 billion credit line over the next three years. Moreover, Beijing's 2012 declaration presented a six point proposal aimed at further strengthening relations between Africa and the PRC (The China Analyst, 2012): increasing political trust and strategic consensus between Africa and the PRC; enhancing and increasing cooperation between the two sides in operationalising African Union's (AU) Union Peace and Security Architecture (APSA); strengthening Beijing's cooperation with the AU and African sub-regional organizations; expanding mutually beneficial economic cooperation and balanced trade and adopting new methods in order to boost cooperation in trade, investment, poverty reduction and poverty reduction; continuing cultural exchanges between the two sides; and further strengthening cooperation between the two sides in international affairs.

Despite the similarity of these points to what has been promised in the previous summits, there are some facts emerging from FOCAC 2012 which should be mentioned. For instance, it has been given a greater emphasis on non-economic factors and the importance on people-to-people and cultural exchanges between Africa and the PRC. It

also highlighted the necessity of increasing the support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the need for capacity building and skills transfer (The China Analyst, 2012).

In March 2013, President Xi Jin-ping paid his first visit to Africa upon taking office. This diplomatic journey was aimed at strengthening friendship and deepening overall cooperation between the PRC and Africa. During the visit, Xi Jin-ping delivered a speech titled “Trustworthy Friends and Sincere Partners Forever” (Li, 2013). In his speech, President Xi stated that the PRC and Africa should work together to promote peace and development in a new era. He also emphasized four main points which should guide the PRC’s engagement with Africa, namely the importance of genuineness, real results, affinity, and sincerity (Li, 2013).

Sino-Africa relations have evolved exponentially and the current state of this relationship is almost impossible to ignore. This relationship gained a new momentum with the establishment of FOCAC in 2000, which resulted in an outstanding increase in trade between the two sides. Currently, the PRC not only is Africa’s biggest trading partner, but also an important political ally of the continent. The establishment of FOCAC has helped to strengthen the political links between the two sides. Since its establishment, FOCAC has gradually become an important mechanism for collective political dialogue and a sound platform for enhancing practical cooperation between the PRC and African countries.

As the PRC becomes a global economic and political power, African states have been aware of the opportunities arising from this relationship. Beijing, as a source of lucrative investment, developmental aid and political support, helps African countries diminish their previous dependence on the West, while simultaneously promoting the continent's nation's interests. Thus, although ignoring Beijing might not necessarily determine a state’s future, apparently the majority of African countries are not willing to disregard the PRC’s engagement in Africa and the benefits arising from this relationship (Li, 2013).

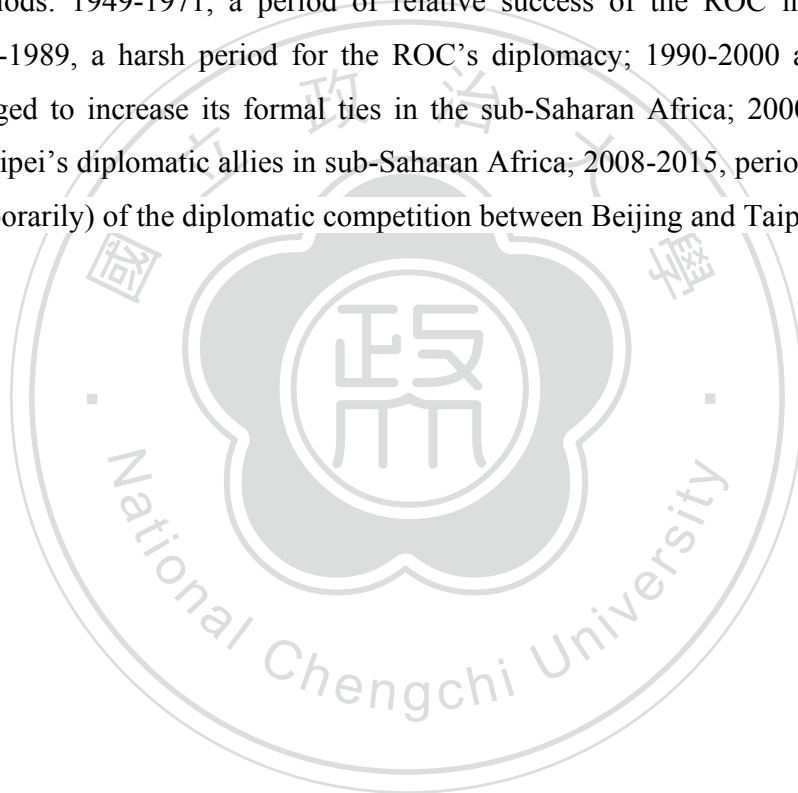
Within the ‘two China’s’ quarrel context, FOCAC has also been part of the Beijing’s ongoing strategy to squeeze Taipei’s diplomatic space. This explains why Beijing invited Taipei’s eight African allies to attend the Forum in 2000 as “observers”<sup>15</sup>. Only

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<sup>15</sup> Only the African states officially recognizing the PRC are allowed to fully participate in FOCAC and enjoy the benefits arising from the outcomes of each summit.

Liberia and Malawi accepted the invitation and interestingly, both countries would end up switching from Taipei to Beijing a few years later (Taylor, 2011). During the 2000s, the Gambia, Senegal and Chad would also cut off their ties with the ROC, all alleging that this would be a necessary move for each country's national interests<sup>16</sup>.

The following section will focus on the ROC's presence in Africa. A thorough understanding of the current situation is not possible without knowing the past of these interactions. In order to attain this aim, I decided to focus the time period of this study on the last five decades, from 1960-2014. To facilitate this analysis, I will divide it into five different periods: 1949-1971, a period of relative success of the ROC in Sub-Saharan Africa; 1971-1989, a harsh period for the ROC's diplomacy; 1990-2000 a period when Taipei managed to increase its formal ties in the sub-Saharan Africa; 2000-2008, a new decline of Taipei's diplomatic allies in sub-Saharan Africa; 2008-2015, period marking end (at least temporarily) of the diplomatic competition between Beijing and Taipei.



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<sup>16</sup> The Gambia president based its decision on "reasons of national strategic interest" (The Diplomat, 2013); President Wade justified its decision stating that "Our nation has no friends and only interests" (The China Post); President Deby stated that he had to compromise with the Chinese was "for the survival of Chad" (Taipei Times, 2006).

## CHAPTER IV

### 4. The ROC and Africa

#### 4.1 The ROC after 1949: A Brief Contextualization

At the conclusion of the civil war in 1949, the nationalist government of the ROC, as a result of its defeat against the communists, moved its seat to Taipei from Nanjing where they established the new base of their ROC. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established a new regime in Beijing in October of the same year (Wang, 1990). Since then, China has found herself with two rival governments, each claiming to be the sole legal government of the entire nation. Moreover, both the nationalists and the communists agree that there is only “one China” and that the province of Taiwan is part of that China, thus opposing to the idea of an independent Taiwan (Wang, 1990).

By the end of 1949, the Communists had the territory of mainland under their control and were preparing to complete the victory over Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government as the communist troops were on the verge of a final attack to be carried out from Fujian province across the strait from Taiwan. It seemed that the final battle to take the island would be about to happen. The majority of western countries, including the United States, were sure that the fall of Taiwan was just a matter of time. However, North Korea's attack on South Korea in June 1950 saw the US shift its stance on the ROC (Sutter, 1994). U.S intervention in the Taiwan Strait in response to the communist aggression in the Korean peninsula, denied the Chinese Communists the opportunity to totally defeat the Chinese Nationalist government on the island of Taiwan (Atkinson, 2010).

The ROC's survival was further assured with military assistance and economic aid provided by the US following the conclusion of the US - ROC Mutual Defense Treaty signed in December 1954 (Matsumoto, 2010). With these resolutions, the US established the geographical range of its defense support to the ROC, which now came to include the offshore islands and along with the main island and the Pescadores, it began to reinforce the defense capacities of the offshore islands (Matsumoto, 2010).

The power configuration in the Western Pacific region, particularly the existence of a bipolar international system, made it possible for Taipei to maintain relations with Washington and other major powers aligned with the US. The ROC became part of a regional security arrangement designed to contain the communist bloc; the pre-relations with Japan, France and the United States continued to exist (Lin, 1990). In reality, there was a widespread fear that the expansion of communism could soon produce a sort of domino effect in Asia. Thus, maintaining collective security became the main goal of the US and its allies in the region. This context provided the ROC the opportunity to continue interactions with major Western powers, despite the fact that the mutual relations were not substantial (Lin, 1990). It also helped Taipei to retain its China seat in the UN, as well as to maintain and even gain some diplomatic representation post-1949.

#### **4.2 The Period 1949-1971: Africa as a new battlefield for Chinese competition**

In the early 1960s, Africa became a new battlefield for Chinese competition. Upon the end of the civil war in 1949, which culminated with the victory of the communists over the nationalists, and the *de facto* control of mainland by the communists, the conflict between Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalists had been transferred from Chinese territory into foreign territory. The world had become the new arena in which these two contenders competed for supremacy. Several regions experienced this new Chinese competition, but as Yu (1963) suggested in the early 1960s, nowhere has the rivalry become more intense than in Africa.

In fact, relations between China and Africa before the 1960s were not substantial. Even though a Chinese consulate was established during the Qing Dynasty in 1911 in Johannesburg, the relations were minor due to the geographical distance between Africa and China (Tseng, 2008). The revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen which ended up with the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and resulted in the foundation of the Republic of China in the same year didn't have a significant impact on relations between China and Africa (Tseng, 2008).

Following the defeat of the Nationalist Party (KMT), government of the ROC, by the communists in the Chinese mainland in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and about two million

other mainlanders sought refuge on the island of Taiwan (Sutter, 1994). During the 1950s, most of the African countries were still part of the European colonial empires and therefore the continent was considered irrelevant to the ROC foreign policy regarding the voting on the China question in the UN. In reality, during this period relations with the US and the protection of the ROC's seat in the UN were the two most important ROC foreign policies objectives. Africa, as in the previous decades was neglected by the ROC government (Lin, 1990). Despite nominal relations with Egypt, which in 1956, under Nasser's leadership, decided to recognize the PRC, on the whole relations between the ROC and Africa in the early 1950s can be described as minimal, almost nonexistent (Lin, 1990). Yet, this does not mean that the ROC leaders were unconscious of the future importance of African states regarding the vote on the China issue. In fact, ROC officials knew that African countries' independence would be an inevitable event, and that their contribution and influence on the ROC's foreign relations would be too significant to ignore (Lin, 1990).

As during the previous decades neither Beijing nor Taipei had extensive contacts in the continent, Africa was in this period considered a *tabula rasa* with respect to the China issue. The majority of the new African nations held no prior bias against either Beijing or Taipei. Beijing and Taipei could thus approach Africa as a virgin and uncommitted territory (Yu, 1963).

Thus, a diplomatic campaign involving Beijing and Taipei began, with emphasis on Africa. For Taipei, this diplomatic campaign was no less than a struggle for its own survival.

During 1960, 17 nations were admitted to U.N membership, 16 of them in Africa (Bellows, 1976). Between 1960 and 1962, 23 African countries gained independence (Bellows, 1976). Given this new reality Taipei engaged in a campaign of its own to win friends in Africa. According to Yu (1963) and Wang (1990) the ROC's foreign policy during the 1960s had two main goals: political (increasing the ROC's role in the international arena and recover the mainland) and economic (Taipei search for new markets). Politically, the importance of the African nations to Taipei (and for Beijing) in the 1960s lied in the number of new African countries in the UN Therefore, Taipei sought to court the newly independent African nations in order to ensure its seat on the Security Council and in the General Assembly. In 1963 Yu (1963) following the new developments



within the U.N regarding the China issue divided the General Assembly into three major groups (Table 4).

**Table 4.** The ‘China Issue’ in the UN - Three Major Groups in 1963

<p>U.S and Latin American countries except Cuba neither recognized China nor favors Its admission to the UN. By 1962, 38 nations</p>	<p>UN member of the whole communist bloc, neutral nations, western European nations, recognized Beijing. By 1962, 28 nations.</p>	<p>African nations (most of the newly independent countries). By 1962, 33 countries.</p>
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Source: Yu, 1963

Regarding group one, the ROC until 1971 enjoyed close relations with most Latin American countries (except Cuba, which immediately recognized Beijing after Fidel Castro took over the territory in 1960). The region was less politically accessible to Beijing than the rest of the developing world (Esteban, 2008). A large number of governments, under the control of military juntas, conservatives, and anti-communists, demonstrated their deep sympathy with the ROC on Taiwan. Moreover the majority of these countries were aligned with the U.S.

The second group was supported the PRC given the ideological and political affinity. In this group we can include some African nations such as Guinea (whose relations with the PRC were established in 1959), Ghana (in 1960) or Tanzania in (1961) and some Western nations such as the United Kingdom who saw the survival of its long-standing British commercial interests threatened by the ascendancy of communist China<sup>17</sup> (Wolf, 1950). For the ROC the group three, comprising 30% (of which 10% had abstained in previous years) of the total UN membership became one of great importance for the ROC’s future. The China representation issue and the future of the ROC could depend on who would be able to gain the African vote. Thus, aware of this new reality, Taipei initiated an active campaign to ensure African support for its cause.

<sup>17</sup> The UK was not willing to relinquish 'Empire rights' over its holdings in Canton, Shanghai and the Crown Colony of Hong Kong in the year of 1945. Thus London maintained a considerable stake in the PRC valued worth over £300 million.

Thus, one can say, that the starting point of the ROC's active relations with Africa began in the early 1960s (Tseng, 2008). It began with a delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attending the celebration of Cameroon which had attained its independence on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 1960. In the same year, 16 African countries had become independent and the ROC's government sent delegations to attend the celebrations of most of these countries (Tseng, 2008). From that time on, upon the gaining of their independence, every African nation not only received a delegation or a letter of congratulations from Taipei, but also an extension of diplomatic recognition and an invitation to establish diplomatic relations. In 1964, at the peak of the ROC's success in African diplomacy the number of official diplomatic relations had reached 22 African nations (Tseng, 2008).

But what were the reasons for the popularity of the ROC in the African continent during this period? One of the main reasons was the fear of communism among African leaders. The PRC had pledged support for Africa's revolution and pursuit of an anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist line of foreign policy (Lin, 1990). In other words, the PRC sought to make her anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism objectives those of the African countries (Yu, 1966). Beijing's military rhetoric was seen by many African leaders as directly threatening the stability of their own countries, a fact that benefited the ROC, which had no wish to influence African states' governments to follow a particular ideology or political system (Tseng, 2008).

Another factor influencing the newly independent African nations in supporting the ROC was the tendency that these countries had in following their former colonizer's foreign policy. In this case, Paris decision to maintain its diplomatic ties with Taipei led the African French-speaking countries to also enter into official relations with the ROC. Similarly, Liberia joined the US, its founder and chief supporter, in opposing the PRC's claim to be China's legitimate representative (Payne & Veney, 2001)

The Cultural Revolution erupting in China also had positive impacts in strengthening the ROC's position in Africa due to the radical nature of Beijing's foreign policy. Once more, African leaders were suspicious about the PRC's ability to promote stability in their countries, a fact that prompted them to choose Taipei.

However, the success of the ROC in Africa during the 1960s can not only be explained as a result of the failure of Beijing's foreign policy. In fact, Taipei took a very

proactive position during this period, which also enabled it to attain the support and confidence of the African nations. In this regard, the main foreign policy instrument used by the ROC to this end was foreign aid. The justifications for the provision of foreign aid can be traced back to the country's constitution and the foreign policy guidelines laid down by the Executive Yuan (Chan, 1997). Article 141 of the Constitution of the ROC states that the nation is in favor of “*the promotion of international cooperation*”; and the foreign policy guidelines stress the importance of “*performing will international duties, sharing international obligations, expanding international cooperation, and exercising influence in international society*” (Chan, 1997).

Thus, upon careful consideration and consultation with the US, the ROC decided to launch an aid program named “Operation Vanguard”. Agriculture became the cornerstone of this Operation since the ROC leaders believed that the newly independent African countries (highly dependent on agriculture) would need at first development in this sector. In 1961, the first large-scale agricultural technical mission was sent to Liberia. In the following year another mission was dispatched to Libya. The program focused on addressing basic human needs through the production of basic crops and staple foods. This first stage was followed by the creation of employment opportunities in livestock and poultry farming, veterinary care, handicraft markets, fishing, and aquaculture activities. The main objective of Operation Vanguard was therefore to share the ROC’s agricultural experience with African countries to assist them to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, while making use of their own manpower and natural resources (Skidmore, 2002). The ROC government sent agricultural specialists to Africa to survey the general agricultural situation in order to determine the type of assistance required. Capable individuals and agricultural technicians from Africa were also invited to Taipei to observe its agricultural projects and attend seminars (Skidmore, 2002).

From 1961 to 1970 the ROC had assisted 31 countries of which seven had no official relations with it. The results of this operation were quite positive in many African countries and an important factor in cementing the image of the ROC as an important global actor. It was also decisive in helping Taipei to keep its seat in the UN until 1971. The positive correlation between the aid program and Taipei’s foreign policy was clearly shown in the voting record of African states on the China issue in the UN (Lin, 1990). In

the 1971 General Assembly which resulted in the ousting of the ROC as the sole representative of China, fifteen African states voted in favor of the ROC, a number which consisted nearly 43 percent of the total votes cast in favor of Taipei (Lin, 1990). Authors such as Tseng (2008) and Lin (1990) argue that the ROC diplomatic overtures during the 1960s were crucial in establishing diplomatic relations with African countries, and that the “Operation Vanguard” was quite useful in promoting these relations. Yet, due to fundamental changes in the world, especially PRC’s new diplomatic practices and the US rapprochement to Beijing, Taipei had no longer enough support to secure its seat in the U.N. In this context, the ROC was about to lose its preponderance in the international arena and African countries contributed to this new reality. After 1971, the number of nations in Africa recognizing the ROC declined significantly, and since then this number has never reached more than ten.

#### 4.3 The Period 1971-1989: The ROC’s International Decline

The period from 1971 to 1989 has been known as the toughest for the ROC’s diplomacy. After 21 years striving to maintain its seat in the UN, the removal of Taipei from UN membership resulted in a process of derecognition of the ROC which was further accentuated by Washington’s decision to establish official diplomatic ties with the PRC in 1979. Between 1963 and 1975, countries with formal ties with the ROC dropped from 66 to 26 (Bellows, 1977). Africa was no exception in this trend. In 1964 the ROC was recognized by 22 African nations, this number sharply declined to eight in 1975, and in 1988 there were only three countries maintaining diplomatic relations with Taipei (Lin, 1990).

**Table 5.** Sub-Saharan Countries Recognizing the ROC in 1975 and 1988

Countries Recognizing the ROC in 1975	Countries Recognizing the ROC in 1988
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Libya</li> <li>● Liberia</li> <li>● Central African Republic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Swaziland</li> <li>● Malawi</li> <li>● South Africa</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lesotho</li> <li>● Malawi</li> <li>● South Africa</li> <li>● Ivory Coast</li> <li>● Swaziland</li> </ul>	
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**Source:** Elaborated by the author with data retrieved from: Bellows, 1977; Lin, 1990; Tseng, 2008; Wikipedia, 2015

Facing gradual international isolation, the government in Taipei sought to emphasize the strengthening of diplomatic ties with countries still maintaining official ties with the ROC and to enhance the relations with countries that had already established official relations with the PRC.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the ROC interactions with Africa were not as intense as before for two main reasons. First, Washington's recognition was seen as crucial by the leaders in Taipei, a fact that required the mobilization of the majority of the ROC's diplomatic resources in order to prevent the deterioration of these relations. Second, the majority of African nations had decided to pursue diplomatic relations with the PRC and the openness of African leaders to continue state-to-state with the ROC was almost nonexistent. Therefore, this period was marked by a certain degree of detachment between Africa and the ROC, yet it was not because the continent was no longer important for Taipei, but because of fundamental changes taking place in the world.

The end of diplomatic relations with the US in 1979 represented the loss of the last major power conferring support to an already isolated ROC. On the other hand, the PRC using its seat in the Security Council had started to enhance its international position and successfully sought out to further obstruct the ROC's re-emergence in world politics. Confronted with this reality, the ROC had to adapt itself to these new circumstances and take more pragmatic steps to modify its foreign policy strategies. That is exactly what President Lee Teng-hui did during his presidency. In the 1990s, the results of this new pragmatic approach were quite positive. Furthermore, the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown damaged Beijing's international reputation, a fact that also benefited Taipei's quest for international legitimacy. In Africa, the ROC had again space for maneuver.

#### **4.4 The Period 1989-2000: A new re-emergence of the ROC in Africa**

Taipei's re-emergence in Africa during the period from 1989 to 2000 has been linked to two main factors. The first is due to the unfavorable position of the PRC in the international arena in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square incident, which was widely condemned and to some extent delegitimized its attempts to repress the ROC's resurgence in the world affairs. The ROC leaders quickly realize that this was a new opportunity that should be exploited to the fullest, and initiated a new campaign to attract new diplomatic allies within a new foreign policy framework. This proactive approach was the second factor which allowed the ROC to break away from its continuing trend of isolation within the international system. Through the practice of "pragmatic diplomacy," Taipei tried to maintain, strengthen, and expand its informal and substantive relations with other nations, restore its membership in international organizations under names distinct from the national title, and establish formal diplomatic ties with other nations regardless of whether the ROC is recognized as the sole legitimate government of China (Niou, 1998; Tseng, 2008; Yehuda 1996).

In Africa, the first country to recognize the ROC in this period was Liberia when, on October of 1989, its government signed "The Joint Communiqué on the Reestablishment of Diplomatic Relations" with Taipei authorities. This act was followed by other African countries: Lesotho and Guinea Bissau in 1990, the Central African Republic in 1991, Niger in 1992, Burkina Faso in 1994, Gambia in 1995, Senegal in 1996, Sao Tome e Principe in 1997 and Chad in 1998. Despite the fact that some of these countries had later sided with the PRC - among them South Africa which was one of the most important allies for Taipei since the early 1980s - overall the period ranging from 1989 to 2000 was very positive for the ROC in increasing its number of diplomatic allies (Tseng, 2008). In 1997 the number of African nations officially recognizing Taipei had reached 10, the highest since 1971. The ROC was also able to gain the confidence of several other nations across the continent who allowed it to set up special delegations in countries such as Madagascar, Angola, DRC and Nigeria (Tseng, 2008).

The expansion and consolidation of such relations with African allies (and also with the friendly nations in Latin America and South Pacific) has been said to be maintained

through the provision of generous amounts of economic incentives and a broad range of development assistance (Larus, 2008; Taylor, 2002; Rich 2009; Payne & Veney, 2001). If development assistance has been one of the main instruments used by the ROC in conducting its foreign policy since the 1960s, the use of financial inducements in diplomacy has been a more recent practice whose results have been subject to some controversy.

#### **4.4.1 The ROC in Africa: The ‘Checkbook Diplomacy’ Issue**

Since 1971 the ROC has faced considerable limitations in shaping the international environment and influencing events that ultimately affect it. The issue of non-recognition led Taipei to engage in costly foreign policies that states would ordinarily avoid (Payne & Veney, 2001). Thus, in order to raise its international profile the ROC’s government has adopted during the 1990s and early 2000s the so-called ‘dollar diplomacy’. Taipei’s “dollar diplomacy” was a strategy used for over a decade based on financial inducements whose goal was to persuade countries in entering into official diplomatic relations with the ROC rather than with the PRC. For Taipei, its main motivation to engage in this sort of policies was its need to break out of the international isolation that Beijing has managed to impose on the country. In this regard, given the PRC’s ability to persuade or coax the majority of the world nations to refrain from entering into official diplomatic relations with the ROC, Taipei has only been able to engage in relations with mainly small and poverty-stricken countries. With almost nonexistent economic interactions with Beijing and no aspirations to play any influential role in the world affairs, a number of small states in the South Pacific and Caribbean, Africa and Latin America have been willing to side with Taipei in the ‘two Chinas’ diplomatic competition (Taylor, 2002).

In Africa, the record is quite impressive. In 1992 Taipei provided Niger a US\$50 million loan before recognition; the Gambia received an assistance package in 1995 worth US\$35 million, exceeding the amount granted by all the other donors to the country combined that year (Rich, 2009); in 1996, Senegal had been provided a generous aid packages after having switched from Beijing to Taipei (Taylor, 2002); on the following year, the ROC provided Sao Tome e Principe US\$30 million in aid also exceeding 50% of

its total foreign aid commitments of US\$57.3 million (Cheng and Shi, 2009). In the same year, Chadian president Idriss Déby obtained from Taipei quite a generous loan of US\$125 million in exchange for recognition (Large & Chien, 2008).

In regards to development aid Taipei continued its agricultural, handicrafts and medical missions through the International Co-operation and Development Fund (ICDF) which has been the country's main instrument in overseeing foreign aid<sup>18</sup>. Several Africa allies (e.g. Burkina Faso, Senegal, Malawi and Swaziland) have benefited from these programs a fact that helped the ROC increasing its international profile as a credible donor.

However, the generosity and vulnerability of Taipei has been used by many political leaders in an attempt to obtain the maximum amount of aid and financial rewards and strengthen their own political position. For instance, countries such as Senegal, Lesotho and Niger have switched recognition over time between Taipei and Beijing clearly aiming at drawing out extra money. In the Gambia, the tractor scandal is elucidative. In 2001, the Gambian president Yahya Jammeh, in order to bolster his political position among the population, claimed that he had provided dozens of tractors to Gambian farmers, without actually mentioning the real origin of the tractors; a similar situation happened when the ROC financed the presence of over one hundred Cuban doctors in Gambia (Taylor, 2002).

During this period, the ROC also supported other corrupt regimes such as the one in Liberia led by the infamous Charles Taylor. Although ostracized by most of the international community, Monrovia received substantial support from Taipei since 1997, when official relations between the two countries were established. Facing threats from Liberian officials to switch relations to Beijing, Taipei did not hesitate in provide roughly US\$20 million for several infrastructure projects and the political campaign of Charles Taylor (Taylor, 2002).

Despite the poverty, political insignificance and dubious nature of some regimes characterizing the ROC's African allies, the reality is that during the 1990s, the leaders in Taipei seemed to tolerate this sort of actions so long as diplomatic recognition was conferred. One must not forget that, apart from the importance that the ROC attached to

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<sup>18</sup> Aims to boost socio-economic development enhance human resources and promoting economic relations in a range of developing partner countries. It also provides humanitarian assistance and aid in the event of natural disasters or international refugee crises. This body, which operates under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) since 1989, has been crucial in strengthening and expanding the ROC's foreign relations.



diplomatic recognition of the island nation, in 1993 president Lee Teng-hui initiated a new UN campaign aimed at establishing the ROC on Taiwan as a sovereign state next to the PRC (Winkler, 2012). It also sought to pursue a new participation in other international organizations requiring statehood such as the WHO and the UN. In this regard, despite their small size and weak economies, these countries are valuable allies for Taipei (Larus, 2008). They can represent the ROC on Taiwan in these international organizations where its participations is not allowed and legitimize the ROC as a nation-state. Moreover, and more important, the vote of Taipei's allies in the UN General Assembly is equal to that of a more powerful country (Payne & Veney, 2001). In this context, the leaders in Taipei believed that the number of diplomatic allies was more important than ever, a fact that might explain a certain degree of indifference regarding the nature of some of these regimes.

Money does matter in the ROC's foreign policy as seen in the island's foreign aid programs to diplomatic allies and economic incentives in Africa. But despite the initial success resultant of this policy in winning over new African diplomatic allies in the 1990s, the majority of African states eventually shifted back to Beijing (van Loon, 2012). This has led to a case where the ROC has been said to only be able to rent friends rather than that they are buying them (Taiwan Review, 1998).

#### **4.5 The Period 2000-2008: the ROC's New Diplomatic Decline: The African Case**

The election of DPP's presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian in the year 2000 marked the end of more than half a century of Kuomintang rule on the ROC on Taiwan.

Since his election, President Chen continued his predecessor's aggressive dollar diplomacy, and actively pursued foreign relations so as to help the ROC to be treated as a state. However, unlike his predecessor, the continuation of this policy didn't bring about any positive results. In fact, while in 2000 the ROC on Taiwan had official ties with 29 states, by the end of President Chen's term in 2008, this number had dropped to only 23. Africa contributed to this decline with the decision of four states to put an end in the relations with Taipei: Liberia, in 2003, Senegal in 2005, Chad in 2006 and Malawi in 2008.

Moreover, Representation Offices in Madagascar, Angola were closed in 2001 and in Egypt and Mauritius in 2002 (Tseng, 2008).

The decline of the ROC's presence in Africa is evident, yet this doesn't mean that Chen's leadership had ignored the continent's importance in its foreign relations. In 2000, President Chen made his first state visit, touring six diplomatic allies in Africa and Central America as a means of strengthening ties with these allies. With visits paid to the Gambia, Burkina Faso and Chad, President Chen became the first ROC head of state to ever visit West Africa. In 2002, President Chen led another delegation to Africa where he visited Senegal, Sao Tome and Principe, Malawi and Swaziland (Tseng, 2008). These two trips highlighted the importance given by the Chen's administration to its African diplomatic allies, and were also helpful in showing to the world that Taipei was active and wanted to be a dynamic and relevant player in the world affairs. These state visits had also a positive impact in gathering support from the African allies in the ROC's annual bid to join the UN. For instance the 2005 ROC's UN bid was supported by Gambia, Chad, Sao Tome e Principe, Malawi, Swaziland and Burkina Faso. In 2007, Taipei's African diplomatic allies - Burkina Faso, Gambia, Swaziland and Malawi - once again voiced their support for Taipei's participation in the UN.

In September 2007, Chen's administration held the first Taiwan-Africa Heads of State Summit. In the event, President Chen Shui-bian was joined by King Mswati III of Swaziland, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, President Fradique Bandeira Melo de Menezes of Sao Tome and Principe, President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi; and Vice-President Isatou Njie-Saidy of Gambia. The summit produced the 'Taipei Declaration' with five core areas singled out as priorities<sup>19</sup>, as well as an Action Plan whose Follow-up Committee for its implementation was established for its operation (Large and Chien, 2008).

Despite the dynamic diplomatic initiatives during President's Chen term, the practical results were not the most desirable in terms of the number of diplomatic allies. The loss of four African diplomatic allies during his term was a serious blow for the ROC's international aspirations and the prospects for a future reemergence of Taipei in Africa became unlikely for two main reasons: first, due to the PRC's tremendous economic and

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<sup>19</sup> Information and communication technologies, medical cooperation, trade and economic development, sustainable environment; peace and security.

political influence in Africa, which had started in early 2000s: and second, the election of KMT president Ma Ying-jeou who called for a 'diplomatic truce' with the PRC, meant to put an end in the battle for diplomatic recognition from other countries, and thus improving the relations between the two sides (The China Post, 2008).

#### **4.6 The Period 2008-2014: the Diplomatic Truce**

After losing the presidency again to the DPP in 2004, the KMT finally regained political power in the year of 2008. Its candidate, Ma Ying-jeou, became the third democratically elected president of the ROC. In his inaugural speech, the newly elected President Ma not only expressed his desire to improve economic relations with the PRC, but also declared to seek 'peace and truce' with Beijing in the international arena (The China Post 2008). In this regard, an informal 'diplomatic truce' has become the cornerstone of President Ma's foreign policy (Tubilewicz & Guilloux, 2011). The ROC is to pursue its diplomacy with the precondition of maintaining friendly and cooperative relations with the PRC (Wang, n.d). To this end, Taipei is expected to stop trying to win over Beijing's diplomatic allies and vice-versa.

The 'diplomatic truce' initiated by the Ma's administration has had positive results in stabilizing the number of Taipei's diplomatic allies. Since 2008, only one nation has cut its official ties with the ROC - the Gambia, in 2013. Yet, the PRC has so far refused to enter into diplomatic relations with the tiny African state. Beijing's response to Banjul's diplomatic move shows the emphasis it places on developing cross-Strait relations (The Diplomat, 2014). In this context, analysts have argued that the Gambia was not quite aware of the changing in relations between Taipei and Beijing, since it has been said that President Jammeh made his decision independently and without consulting either side (CCS, 2013; The Diplomat, 2014).

One positive factor of the 'diplomatic truce' is that reduces the opportunities by Taipei to engage in costly "checkbook diplomacy" with other states. National Taiwan University Professor Chang Ling-chen, cited by the Global Times stated that "since Ma Ying-jeou took office and adopted the policy of 'diplomatic truce' with the PRC, it became

difficult for these swing countries to make profits from playing both sides" (Global Times, 2013).

However, I would argue that this 'truce' has not been a good policy in solidifying relations between the ROC and its allies as since 2008, some states have expressed their wishes in switching sides. This has been the case of El Salvador, Panama and Honduras in Central America who's requests to establish official ties with PRC have reportedly been refused by Beijing (The Economist, 2009; The Diplomat, 2013). In Africa, Sao Tome and Principe President Manuel Pinto da Costa's trip to Beijing in 2014 raised concerns in Taipei as it was speculated in media outlets that this trip was aimed at preparing an eventual move towards officially recognizing Beijing.

So far, no major changes have occurred, and the number of Taipei's diplomatic allies is not expected to change, at least until the presidential elections in 2016. One thing is clear, this 'diplomatic truce' has helped the ROC in simply maintaining its official relations, without clearly promoting or solidifying them. Changes in cross-strait relations upon the 2016 presidential election (especially if the DPP wins), might result in the end of the 'diplomatic truce' and the number of the ROC's diplomatic allies may be reduced to a historical minimum. Whether or not this will happen remains to be seen, but if the ROC is willing to keep its foreign relations and expand its international space, new foreign policy strategies should be formulated in order to better address possible future changes.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

Africa has been central in the ROC's quest for diplomatic recognition. However its presence on the African continent has gradually deteriorated. The emergence of dozens of newly independent African states in the 1960s were seen by the KMT authorities on the island of Taiwan as crucial for the Nationalist government to legitimize the ROC as the sole Chinese representative in the world. Thus, Taipei, within its own limitations, initiated a fairly ambitious "Operation Vanguard" whose main goal lay in gaining the support and vote of the new African states in the China representation issue in the UN. The result of this operation during the 1960s was positive, since the ROC managed to secure its seat in the UN.

However, changes in world politics altered this scenario and in 1971 the ROC lost its seat in the UN. This major blow for Taipei was further accentuated with Washington's decision to switch diplomatic recognition to Beijing, at the expense of Taipei. This resulted in an accelerated process of derecognition of the ROC in which Africa also took part. By the end of 1980s Taipei had only three diplomatic allies in Africa.

This scenario changed again in favor of the ROC during the 1990s due to the new flexible diplomacy approach adopted by President Lee Teng-hui and the international condemnation of the PRC in the aftermath of the Tiananmen incident. During this period, Taipei, while accepting the existence of two Chinas, sought again to actively court African states through the continuation of aid provision and economic inducements. In 1997 there were ten African countries officially recognizing the ROC.

Yet, the achievements obtained in Africa during the Lee Teng-hui era were not followed by his successor, Chen Shui-bian, whose presidency was marked by the loss of four African diplomatic allies and a decrease in the overall number of nations having diplomatic ties with the ROC. But this decline in Africa does not mean that Chen's administrations had ignored the continent's importance for the ROC's international ambitions. In fact, Africa's significance was several times reiterated by president Chen and this can be proven by his two visits to the continent in 2000 and 2002 which made him the first ROC president to have ever visited West Africa, as well as the first ever Taiwan-Africa Heads of State Summit held in 2007.

With the election of KMT presidential candidate, Ma Ying-jeou, Taipei relations with Beijing entered a new era. Since 2008, President Ma has sought to improve cross-strait relations and accorded with Beijing an informal "diplomatic truce" aimed at put an end on the 'two Chinas' global competition for diplomatic allies. However this 'truce' has not impeded to loss of the Gambia, neither the desire of some other states (possibly including the African island state of Sao Tome and Principe) in switching sides.

Currently, the ROC enjoys diplomatic relations with only three African states, all of them located in sub-Saharan Africa. In the past fifty years the ROC has concentrated its diplomatic efforts mainly in the sub-Saharan region. This is mainly due to the fact that since 1949 most of North African states showed little interest in establishing close ties with

Taipei<sup>20</sup>. However, the success of these endeavors has been limited and the majority of the 49 countries composing the sub-Saharan region have refused to recognize or withdraw their recognition from the ROC over time.



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<sup>20</sup> The only exception was Libya. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1959 and would last until 1978, when Tripoli decided to recognize the PRC.

## CHAPTER V

### **5. What Are the Possible Factors Prompting Sub-Saharan African States to Withdraw or Refrain from Recognizing the ROC?**

#### **5.1 Ideology, Natural Resources Rich Countries, Pariah States, Countries with International Ambitions and Politically Unstable Countries**

The diversity and impact of each sub-Saharan state's national interests regarding the ROC-PRC competition for diplomatic recognition is undeniable. Recognizing either the PRC or the ROC has both advantages and disadvantages and therefore each African state must decide between the two in accordance with their own national interests. The PRC has increased its position and influence on the continent and this has almost eclipsed the ROC's presence in Africa. Currently the PRC enjoys official diplomatic relations with fifty African countries, whereas the ROC on Taiwan is recognized by only three states.

Therefore, by analyzing the possible reasons why sub-Saharan African countries do not or have switched recognition from Taipei over time, one must not ignore Beijing's role. In fact, I would argue that the underlying reason for countries shifting their recognition from Taipei in the last fifty decades has been Beijing's capacity to advance their national interests.

Because of the diversity that characterizes the sub-Saharan African states, this thesis proposes a layout which groups together countries with similar national interests and foreign policy goals. This study contains five groups of sub-Saharan states which have been categorized together based on how their national interests may be put at stake, if relations with the ROC were to be established. In other words, I will argue that a set of five different key national interests in Africa have been an important driving force in hampering the success of the ROC on the continent, as these national interests have had a decisive role in prompting sub-Saharan states, to 'bandwagon' towards the PRC. This structure is possible since several sub-Saharan nations share some commonalities regarding their foreign policy goals. From each group I'll select one country to be used as a case study in order to simplify this analysis, which otherwise would be extremely extensive. This approach, I believe, provides a broad and structured understanding of the potential reasons shaping

these countries' decisions in refusing or switching from Taipei to Beijing over the last decades. The five groups and respective case studies are as follows:

1. Political affinity: Countries identified with the same ideology as the PRC and therefore wanted to foster close ties with it. The case of Tanzania.
2. Countries with international ambitions: Nations aspiring to become more prominent in the international arena hence need Beijing's support. The case of South Africa.
3. Resource rich countries: Nations abundant in natural resources see the PRC as a key player in exploiting their full potential. The case of Angola.
4. Pariah States: Beijing usually supports states being subject to international sanctions and therefore African pariah states see it as an indispensable ally. The case of Zimbabwe.
5. Politically unstable countries: They need the PRC which, as a member of the Security Council, can play a significant role in solving their problems. The case of Liberia.

**Table 6.** Possible Factors Prompting Sub-Saharan African States to Withdraw or Refrain from Recognizing the ROC

Ideology	Nations with International Ambitions	Pariah States	Politically Unstable Countries	Resource Rich Countries
Tanzania, Mali, Guinea, Zambia, Ghana, Mauritius, Mozambique, Zambia.	South Africa, Senegal.	Sudan, Zimbabwe.	Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Chad, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan.	Angola, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial-Guinea, Congo.

Source: The Author



### 5.1.1 Ideology

Since the 1960s, the ‘two Chinas’ diplomatic rivalry in Africa created a new momentum; gaining the support of the newly independent African nations was seen by both, the communists in Beijing and the nationalists in Taipei, as a crucial step in their competition for the China seat at the UN. From this period onwards, the ROC faced a fierce competition from the Communist China who aspired to impose its leadership on the continent. In order to attain this goal, the PRC strived to gain an equal voice within the Communist bloc in the context of the Sino-Soviet conflict, and obtain greater international recognition as the sole legitimate government of China (Yu, 1963).

By the late 1950s and early 1960s several states in sub-Saharan Africa began to show signs of an inclination towards socialism. In this regard, one aspect in which the socialist world had considerable influence was ideology. The unifying effect and mobilizing appeal of socialism was adopted by some leaders for the purpose of solidifying fragile new states in the face of ethnic tensions and social divisions. African nationalists also resorted to socialism to denounce Western colonialism and raise awareness in the West about the needs of African countries (Thiam and Mulira, 1999; Snow, 1995).

However, there were several reasons for the adoption of socialism by the African leaders. For instance, whereas the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, believed that Socialism was already rooted within the African way of life: “*We, in Africa, have no more need of being 'converted' to socialism than we have of being 'taught' democracy. Both are rooted in our past -- in the traditional society which produced us*” (Nyerere, 1967), others seemed to have followed the socialist path due to economic and political considerations. Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah and Somalia’s President Siad Barre, for example, reportedly adopted the socialist ideology in order to get political and material support from the socialist bloc, as they were being rejected by the Western nations. Guinean President Sékou Touré socialist inclinations had to do with national survival as well since Western aid to the country had been cut; Ethiopia’s Colonel Mengistu sought to adopt the socialist model of development in order to unify his country upon the overthrow of the pro-Western emperor Haile Selassie (Thiam and Mulira, 1999).

In the two Chinas competition, sub-Saharan states with socialist leanings tended to side with Beijing. Unlike Taipei, Beijing's role in Africa from the 1960s until the mid 1970s was essentially ideologically motivated, although national interests were also a matter of concern (Taylor, 2011). According to Thiam and Mulira (1999), Africa's relevance to Beijing lay in three main considerations. First, the continent's liberation struggle was seen as an important stage in the world revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against capitalism, and therefore socialist China had the duty to support those struggles; second, the PRC's ambitions to raise its global stature, demanded that it should be present in Africa in order to compete with American imperialists and the Soviet revisionists, as well as to find support for its diplomatic aspirations. Finally, the PRC's common experience in combating colonialism in the past, placed it in a very good position to understand Africa's colonial issues and to help the continent through its process of decolonization

Thus, despite the achievements that characterized the ROC's diplomacy in this period, this did not necessarily mean a loss for the PRC (Lin, 1990). In fact, by the early 1960s the ROC had already seen several socialist sub-Saharan states such as Guinea (1959), Ghana (1960), Mali (1960), Somalia (1960), Tanzania (1964) and Congo Brazzaville (1964) siding with Beijing. In addition to diplomatic recognition, the exchange of missions and the provision of aid and military support<sup>21</sup>, Beijing also sought to strengthen its ties with African states through the establishment of "friendship treaties" and trade agreements. Three good examples are the Sino-Guinea Friendship Treaty signed in 1960 and the Friendship Treaty with Ghana signed in the following year. In the same year, a trade and payments agreement was signed with Mali. These treaties included provisions whereby both Beijing and African states agreed to develop economic and cultural relations, and laid down principles guiding the relations between the two parties (Yu, 1963; Prybyla, 1964).

The ROC's overall success in Africa during the 1960s is undisputable. However in the group of countries displaying socialist leanings, Taipei had very little success. In this case, these group of states soon tended to side with Beijing in the 'two Chinas' diplomatic

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<sup>21</sup> The reason of Chinese aid to Africa had apparently had apparently been to reduce both the US and the Soviet influence in Africa, while at the same time obtain support of the African countries in international organisations. In the Maoist period China became the only aid donor in the world whose foreign aid would often be provided to states with a higher per capita gross national product (GNP). Between 1956 and 1977 China's aid to Africa had reached the impressive US\$1.4 billion.

competition. Individually or collectively, the methods of armed struggle to achieve liberation from colonial rule, the injection of a martial spirit among the masses, political and social mobilization and regimentation, and planned economic development had been acknowledged by some African elites as viable techniques for nation building (Yu, 1966). Thus, although it might not fully explain their decision to recognize Beijing in the ‘two Chinas’ tug of war, these states’ adherence to socialism had certainly weighed in their decision. In this regard, the Tanzanian case is paradigmatic.

### **5.1.2 The Case of Tanzania**

Official relations between Tanzania (former Tanganyika) and the PRC, date back to 1961, shortly following the former’s independence. For the ROC, this relationship meant that from the beginning its aspirations in obtaining support from Dar es Salaam to legitimize itself as the sole representative of China were unlikely to be realized.

Tanzania’s interactions with the PRC, although minor in the early 1960s, gained a new momentum in the mid 1960s, and by the 1970s Tanzania had become one of the PRC’s most important allies on the continent. The explanation for such development lies in the fact that political elites on both sides had converging interests when the two states began engaging with each other (Arsene, 2009). For Tanzania, political, military and economic interests made President Nyerere look favorably toward establishing official diplomatic relations with the PRC. A supporter of the African independence movements, Nyerere sought to increase foreign military assistance in order to be able to better deal with the heavily armed neighboring states of Mozambique, Rhodesia and South Africa, still under white imperialist rule. This was in line with the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle which characterized the PRC’s foreign policy during the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, by 1964, the PRC had already become Tanzania’s main source of military support (Arsene, 2009; Bailey, 1975).

Development aid provided by the PRC during the 1960s also played an important role in strengthening the ties between the two sides. The deterioration of the Tanzanian relations with Western donors in 1965 resulted in the loss of considerable amounts of aid which were compensated by Beijing’s generous offers. In addition, the construction of

TAZARA railway, a project financed and supported by the PRC, not only helped both Zambia and Tanzania in their struggle against the white-controlled states of southern Africa, but it also gave the Tanzanian administration confidence in the PRC as a credible ally.

However, it was Tanzania's socialist agenda throughout the 1960s and 1970s that further encouraged its alignment with the PRC. At the time of independence, President Nyerere was already a staunch critique of assumptions that the Western models would not exactly be compatible with the conditions of Tanzania. In his 1962 address entitled "*Ujamaa-The Basis of African Socialism*", he expressed his aversion to the individualism of Western capitalist society and that a more desirable alternative would be the one of socialism (Nugent, 2004; Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). In his words, "no underdeveloped country can afford to be anything but socialist" (Nyerere, 1961). In this early stage, Nyerere was working through his ideas solely at an intellectual level (Nugent, 2004).

However, by the mid 1960s, Tanzania's policies had become more radical, a fact that resulted in a switch of direction in 1967. These changes were a combination of both internal and external factors. Externally, President's Nyerere was quite disappointed with his Western partners<sup>22</sup>; internally the country's economic and social conditions were deteriorating. Thus, it was this combination of reasons - some nationalist and some egalitarian in conception - that prompted Nyerere to publish the Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy on Socialism and Self Reliance. One of the major themes of this Declaration was the emphasis on self-reliance. The principle of self-reliance was given particular attention as the Tanzanian Government urged the country to rely on the efforts of its own people rather than be excessively dependent on external aid (Nugent, 2004).

In the Arusha Declaration, it was also proposed that the rural society should remain essentially communal in nature. Nyerere contended that farming individually was incompatible with socialism and that wealth should be collectively created and shared among everyone. To this end, peasants were encouraged to live together in villages and collectively farm and assume joint responsibility of social services - thereby becoming true *ujamaa* villages (Nugent, 2004).

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<sup>22</sup> In 1965 West Germany cut its assistance to Tanzania due to the latter's willingness to have an Eastern German representation in Dar es Salaam; in December of the same year relations with the UK were severed because of the lack of London's response regarding Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence; political support from the US also declined due to the uprisings taking place in Congo.

The Leadership Code was another item included in the Arusha Declaration. The Code was aimed at preventing TANU members from becoming part of a privileged group that exploited people through hiring labor or renting property. It was an attempt to put an end on the growing gap between the rich and the poorer in the country. According to the Code, TANU members and government leaders could not own shares in any company, earn more than one salary, rent out property or run business in a private capacity (Nugent, 2004). The Leadership Code reflected Nyerere's desire for social equality which he sought to further consolidate through the provision of education for all. In the "Education for Self-Reliance", Nyerere urged a reform of the education system where everyone would have access to education and where the collective values and respect for manual labor would be highlighted (Nugent, 2004).

President Nyerere visited the PRC five times during his presidency. Since 1965 when he first visited Beijing, Nyerere had become a key supporter of the PRC's model of development which he regarded as a credible alternative model to the development system inherited from the colonial period (Bailey, 1975). Therefore, the launching of the socialist development policies by Nyerere in 1967 was in many aspects similar with the ones practiced by the Chinese. For instance, like in the PRC, Nyerere wanted to adopt a type of leadership focused on serving the people rather than being self-serving elite (Nugent, 2004). Moreover, the importance of relying on people and local cadres rather than on the State bureaucracy was also stressed.

In addition, two major parallels between the Chinese and Tanzanian policies exacerbating these similarities are worth noting. The first is the emphasis on self-reliance which had been one of the most celebrated concepts of Mao Tse-tung and highly advocated by Nyerere. The second, is the one relating to rural development. The idea of *ujamaa* villages which sought to communalize the way of life and production of the peasantry, partly owes its inspiration to the people's communes in rural areas of the PRC (Bailey, 1975).

Naturally, the similarities of Nyerere's social ideas to those operating in the PRC itself were highly approved by Beijing. The PRC's speeches and articles on Tanzania following the Arusha Declaration consistently approved of Tanzania's national development along the constructs of the Arusha Declaration (Armstrong, 1977).

Thus, as the Tanzanian state initiated its experiments of socialism, the PRC clearly became a true model for Nyerere's administration and a great supporter of his policies. What is interesting to note is the PRC's great influence in encouraging Nyerere to follow the socialist path, somewhat demonstrating Beijing's increasingly important role in international politics. Nyerere's speech in 1974 upon his arrival in Beijing to meet his counterpart Mao Tse-tung, testifies this affirmation:

*“Two things convince me that socialism can be built in Africa (...) for capitalism is ultimately incompatible with the real independence of African states. The second thing which encourages me is China. China is providing an encouragement and an inspiration for younger and smaller nations seeking to build socialist societies”* (Beijing Review, 1974).

Sino-Tanzania relations positively evolved during the 1960s and by the 1970s Tanzania had become the PRC's key ally on the continent. Thus, it was with no surprise that regarding the 'two Chinas issue', Tanzania actively supported the PRC's efforts to gain entry into the UN. At the 26th General Assembly of the UN in 1971, Tanzania was among the sponsoring countries of the resolution supporting the restoration of all China's legitimate rights in the world body (China.Org, 2006).

The solid relations between these two countries have been maintained up to now. Yet, the nature of these relations has shown a different pattern when compared to the ones of the 1960s and 1970s. While during this period they were essentially defined by ideological and political motives, more emphasis has been placed on trade. It is often said that Dodoma is a strategically important partner for Beijing due its location as an Indian Ocean gateway to the mineral-rich southern Africa. The economic impulse is arguably dominant (Jansson, Burke and Hon, 2009). These relations have been solidified through FOCAC, where Beijing has pledged the construction of several infrastructural development projects, the partial cancellation of Tanzania's debt, and a number of other trade incentives. During the PRC President Hu Jintao's state visit to Tanzania in February 2009, he announced a donation of US\$ 22 million and inaugurated a US\$ 56 million, 60,000 seat stadium financed by the Chinese government as to testify to these commitments. Currently,

Tanzania has become the PRC's leading trade partner in East Africa, with around \$3.7 billion in business in 2013 and had reached USD 2.5 billion in investments in Tanzania by the end of that same year (with nearly 500 Chinese companies doing business in the country) (The New York Times, 2014; Tanzaniainvest, 2014). This is in sharp contrast with the ROC's trade with Tanzania that in the same year only amounted roughly US\$ 133 million and US\$ 128 million in 2014 (Bureau of Foreign Trade, 2013).

In addition, this relationship has been strengthened through the exchange of official bilateral visits since 2000. In 2006, the then Prime Minister Wen Jia-bao paid a visit to Tanzania which was followed by Hu Jin-tao's state visit to the country in 2009. In 2013, Tanzania was the first country to be visited by President Xi Jin-ping during his three-nation African tour. These visits have also been reciprocated by the Tanzanian government, which has regularly paid several high level visits to the PRC. In 2000, President Benjamin Mkapa visited Beijing accompanied by his government's prime-minister, Frederick Sumaye. In 2002, Zanzibar President Karume paid an official visit to Beijing. Upon his election, President Jakaya Kikwete paid two state visits to Beijing, one in 2008 and another in 2014 (Shi and Hoebink, 2012; The Telegraph, 2013; IPPMedia, 2014).

### **5.1.3 Conclusion**

It is hard to say that the ideological affinity between Tanzania and the PRC might have been the only factor inhibiting the former to establish relations with the ROC. However the launch of socialist policies by the Nyerere's administration in the late 1960s was certainly a major factor cementing Tanzania's alignment with the PRC. In this regard, Nyerere's belief that the PRC's model of development would be the one benefitting Tanzania's society definitely had an important impact in promoting these relations. On the other hand, the socialist leanings evidenced by President Nyerere, coupled with his desire to support the liberation movements of southern Africa, and his aversion to Western capitalism, were very well seen by Beijing, which soon showed its willingness to support the Tanzanian government.

In this context of convergence of interests between the PRC and Tanzania, the latter's support of the ROC in the 'two Chinas' diplomatic competition became very

unlikely. Thus, having to decide between the PRC and the ROC, Tanzania's decision in siding with its chief supporter, the PRC, came with no surprise.

The nature of relations between Tanzania and the PRC has evolved over time. Current Sino-Tanzania relations have been characterized by significant economic interactions, in contrast with the 1960s and 1970s period which was essentially defined by ideological and political alignment between the two states. Today, Tanzania is the PRC's biggest trading partner in East Africa and the number of business between the two countries continues to flourish. Through FOCAC and the intensification of high level official visits, Beijing has pledged the construction of several infrastructure projects, trade incentives, and to partially cut Dodoma's debt, thus further strengthening Sino-Tanzania ties. Therefore, although the nature of this union might have changed considerably, Tanzania relations with the PRC seem to have maintained its significance.

Tanzania has never established relations with the ROC and the chances for a shift in the foreseeable future are near impossible. Apart from the Tanzania's natural inclination in siding with Beijing evidenced since its independence, another possible aspect further explaining this fact might also lie in Beijing's capacity to promote Dodoma's interests. During Nyerere's presidency, the PRC highly approved and supported the socialist path being adopted by the Tanzanian leadership. Presently, the considerable amount of trade between the two states and the benefits arising for Tanzania from its participation in FOCAC, have made this relationship even more valuable to be put at stake by establishing relations with the ROC.

### **5.2.1 Resource Rich Countries**

Sub-Saharan Africa is endowed with abundant natural resources. The richest region in minerals, metals and energy resources is southern Africa, an area stretching from Congo-Angola to South Africa. This region is also considered geopolitically strategic due to the Cape route. However, it is the Gulf of Guinea which draws the greatest interest from the world oil industry due to its proven oil reserves of 132.1 billion barrels, that is, nearly ten per cent of the world's oil reserves (Verma, 2012). As for the eastern region, reserves of



important natural resources, although existent, are not as abundant as the ones present in the Gulf of Guinea and central and southern Africa.

In this context, oil and gold have a prominent role, especially taking into account the following assumptions: gold, due to its high market value and its reserve value in the economic system; and oil, which is the world's main energy source and central in the majority of states' geopolitical strategies (Verma, 2012).

Sub-Saharan Africa holds 52% of known oil deposits on the continent. Nigeria, Angola and Sudan account for the bulk (86%) of that share (Alves, 2011).

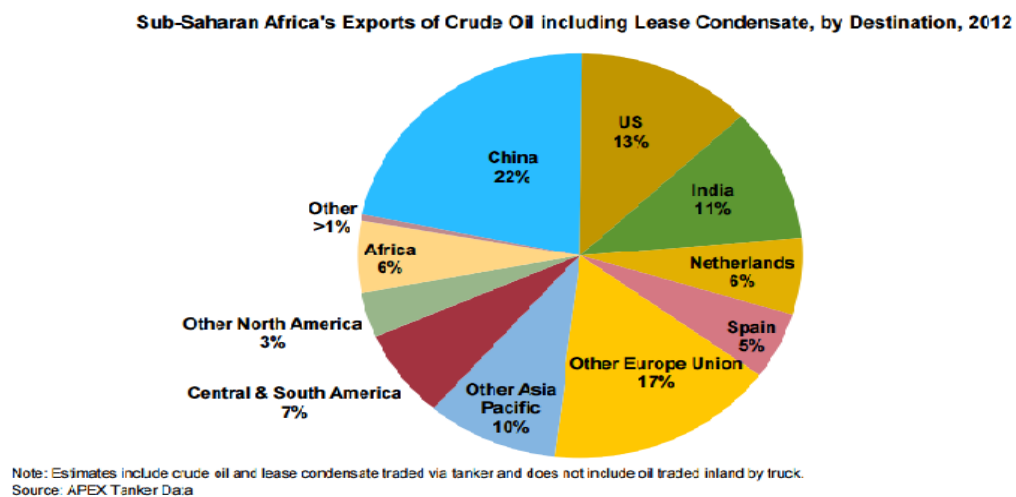
The existence of natural resources in sub-Saharan Africa, whose potential has been known by both the PRC and the ROC for many years, has never played a direct role in their competition for diplomatic allies on the continent. However, its importance is nowadays undeniable and a factor which can be helpful in further explaining why resource rich states located in this region have tended to side with Beijing at the expense of Taipei.

The PRC's engagement with Africa in the last few decades has assumed different dimensions. Unlike the ideological foundations which characterized Beijing's relations with the continent during the Cold War, a multifaceted engagement encapsulating essentially trade and related economic ties have become the prominent feature of this relationship. In this regard, the PRC's search for natural resources explains the tremendous increase in the PRC's trade and investment on the continent (Enuka, 2010; Taylor, 2006). Among the most important natural resources present in sub-Saharan Africa attracting the PRC's interest are oil, copper, aluminum, diamonds, uranium, iron ore, timber and bauxite. Of these, oil makes up 65% of the total of African exports to the PRC, with Angola supplying nearly 50% of the total, followed by Sudan supplying 25%, the DRC 13%, Equatorial-Guinea 9% and Nigeria 3% (Enuka, 2010). In 2012, the PRC was the main destination for sub-Saharan exported crude oil, with 22% of its total (Fig. 3).

In contrast with the PRC, the ROC's imports of natural resources from sub-Saharan Africa are minimal. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) the ROC imports about 85% of its crude oil from countries in the Persian Gulf and smaller portions from Angola and other countries (EIA, 2013). Despite the exploratory and production operation undertaken by the Chinese Petroleum Company (CPC) in Chad, Taipei's major exploratory and production activities have been conducted in North America

(US), Latin America (Venezuela and Ecuador) South East Asia (Indonesia) and the Pacific region (Australia) (CPC, 2013).

**Fig. 3** Sub-Saharan Africa's Exports of Crude Oil by Destination in 2012



**Source:** [http://www.eia.gov/pressroom/presentations/howard\\_08012013.pdf](http://www.eia.gov/pressroom/presentations/howard_08012013.pdf)

Asserting that sub-Saharan resource rich countries have based their decision to recognize the PRC instead of the ROC based on trade and investment factors would be a mistake. However, it is important to highlight that the advantages arising from the relationship with the PRC have brought benefits that would hardly be attained if these states had official ties with the ROC.

Severing official ties with the ROC is a necessary precondition for a state to do serious business with the PRC. In its White Paper on Africa disclosed during the FOCAC summit in 2006, Beijing asserted that if African states choose to accept the 'one China' principle as the potential foundation for the establishment and development of Beijing's relationship with African states, the PRC will coordinate positions on major international and regional issues and stand for mutual support on major issues concerning state sovereignty, trade, territorial integrity, national dignity and human rights (Pant, 2006; FOCAC, 2006).

Since it became a net oil importer in 1993, the PRC's hunt for resources, with special emphasis for oil, has escalated massively as it is reflected in Beijing's increased presence in sub-Saharan Africa's oil industry (Taylor, 2006). Despite the competitiveness

of its oil landscape, the PRC has been quite successful in securing important oil and other resources assets in the region. In this regard, Beijing holistic approach encompassing political support, trade deals, debt relief, foreign aid, financial packages, infrastructure projects together in a “business is business” and “no strings attached” fashion have helped Beijing in beating out competition (Kong, 2011). The PRC’s bilateral relations with these states are undeniably important concerning its approach towards these states. Yet, through FOCAC ministerial and heads of state summits, Beijing has strengthened its overall relationship with Africa which has also been quite helpful in further promoting its relationship with resource rich countries located in sub-Saharan Africa.

For sub-Saharan states’ governments, the PRC’s quest for natural resources in their countries has been quite welcomed for a number of reasons. First, it is helpful in driving the prices of these state’s oil and other raw materials; second, it strengthens their bargaining position as resource providers *vis-a-vis* the traditional western companies; third, Beijing’s non-interference approach in host countries’ domestic politics, allows host governments to perpetuate their governance practices and political life style; fourth, no conditionality so long as states recognize the ‘one China’ principle, which prioritizes economic gains over normative concerns in host nations; and finally, when employed, the ‘projects for oil’ case tend to shorten public administration costs required to process the loans and provide these countries with critical infrastructures which have been neglected by both western countries and financial institutions over time (Kong, 2011).

For the aforementioned reasons, the PRC’s approach towards sub-Saharan resource rich countries has been very much appreciated and a factor which has prompted both parties in engaging in an even closer relationship. This convergence of interests has allowed the PRC to become an essential partner that states endowed with natural resources in the region might not want to lose. Thus, the establishment of diplomatic relations with the ROC’s by this group of countries seems to be very unlikely, as the benefits they can obtain from the PRC would hardly be matched by the ROC. This might explain why the current diplomatic allies of Taipei in sub-Saharan Africa are all poor in natural resources with the exception of Sao Tome e Principe<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup>Sao Tome and Principe has considerable proven oil and gas reserves but exploration is yet to start. Its economy it is still highly dependent on agriculture. In 2012, Cocoa accounted for more than 90% of the Island Nation’s exports (Macauhub, 2013).

The case of Angola can be helpful in confirming this trend. Angola is Africa's top oil exporter to the PRC and the PRC is Angola's main trading partner. This has resulted in a close relationship between the two countries involving not only economic, but also political aspects, a fact which has conferred almost no space of maneuvering for the ROC to court the administration in Luanda to establish diplomatic relations with Taipei at the expense of Beijing.

### 5.2.2 The Case of Angola

The ROC has never had any sort of official diplomatic relations with Angola. In fact, in the two China's quarrel, it was the PRC who actively sought to court liberation movements fighting against the Portuguese colonial rule within the context of the Cold War and its diplomatic strategy to limit the ROC's diplomatic overtures on the continent. For the ROC, despite one reported attempt during the mid-1990s, when Taipei sent an official to Luanda with the mission of convincing the country to consider switching sides, this effort proved to be unsuccessful and relations with the PRC have been maintained up to now (Campos and Vines, 2008). In fact, the ROC relations with Angola have never reached more than an economic level. In 1992, Luanda sent its Deputy Minister of Oil to Taipei to sign a Special Agreement with the ROC, which resulted in the setup of the ROC's Special Delegation in Angola in the end of the same year, which lasted until the year 2000 (Tseng, 2008)<sup>24</sup>. On the other hand, Angola's relations with the PRC have positively evolved over time. Beijing, not only supported the country during its struggle for independence, but it has also stepped up to assist Luanda in its economic reconstruction in the post-civil war period and proved to be an important ally of Luanda in the international arena.

The PRC's interactions with Angola can be traced back to the period of anticolonial struggle through its support for the three main liberation movements fighting in the country: the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA), União Nacional para a Indêpendencia Total de Angola (UNITA), and the Frente Nacional para Libertação de

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<sup>24</sup> The end of the 1990s was considered the last period of major fighting of the Angolan civil war. According with Tseng (2008), the escalation of violence in the country in the end of the 1990s caused relations to come to a standstill. So far, no Taipei's representative office has been set up in Angola, a fact which can be partly explained by Luanda's close relationship with Beijing, and the ROC's minor economic and in-existent political interactions with Angola.

Angola (FNLA) (Campos and Vines, 2008). During the 1960s, the MPLA benefited from the political and military support provided by Beijing. However upon the Organization of African Unity (OAU) recognition of FNLA and UNITA as legitimate liberation movements, the PRC's assistance came to an end and Beijing shifted its interest to both the FNLA and UNITA.

With the end of the Cultural Revolution, the PRC decided once again to provide military assistance to MPLA. Yet, internal divisions within the Movement, coupled with Beijing's desire to balance Moscow's strong support for the MPLA made this aid very brief. The PRC's support again shifted to the FNLA and UNITA whose outcome ended up being fruitless. In November 1975, the Soviet-backed MPLA came to power and proclaimed the country's independence. (Campos and Vines, 2008). Official diplomatic relations between the two countries would only be established in 1983<sup>25</sup>. Minor interactions mainly based on defense and military cooperation characterized the Sino-Angola relationship until the early 2000s.

Sino-Angola relationship is nowadays very solid and three main factors might explain this reality. The first, concerns the end of the civil war in Angola in 2002, which lasted 27 years. The second is the fact that in 1993, Beijing became a net oil importer which required a new diplomatic offensive in search of energy resources. Finally, the creation of FOCAC has enabled the PRC to solidify its relations with the African countries and pursue its interests on the continent.

Currently, cooperation based on natural resources (in which infrastructure projects provided by the PRC are often included) has played a decisive role in boosting the development of economic and political relations between the PRC and Angola, and has added new and vital content to their bilateral relations (Mo, 2012). Luanda's need of infrastructures and Beijing's quest for natural resources (with special emphasis on crude oil) have allowed these two countries to engage in a very close relationship which has not only

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<sup>25</sup> Two main reasons prompted the PRC to establish formal ties with the MPLA in 1983 despite its previous support to both the FNLA and UNITA. The first, was that the PRC's support to FNLA and UNITA strained relations with its long standing friend Tanzania (a staunch supporter of MPLA), a fact which caused Beijing to pull back. The second reason has been associated to the improvement of Sino-Soviet relations in the early 1980s, and the change of leadership in the PRC (Deng Xiao-ping in 1978) and in Angola (Jose Eduardo dos Santos in 1979) (Alves, 2011; Shin, H. D. and Eisenman, 2012).

raised concerns in the West, but also provided very little space for the ROC to try to engage in diplomatic official ties with Angola.

In March 2004, the PRC's Export-Import Bank (EXIM) provided a US\$2 billion infrastructure oil backed loan to Angola on very favorable terms, a deal which came as result of Luanda's unwillingness to accept the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) conditional loan package. By 2010, the EXIM bank had extended a total of US\$ 10.5 billion in oil backed credit lines to Luanda (Corkin, 2011). These loans were targeted specifically towards facilitating public investment in the country. According to the conditions of the loans, Chinese companies are essentially contracted to undertake recommended projects and are paid directly by China Exim Bank, which writes down the contract amount against oil sales made to the Chinese government (Corkin, 2011). In 2004, Sinopec Group<sup>26</sup> managed to acquire a 50% share in deep water Block 18 which previously owned by Shell. The framework and procedures involved in the process, illustrates the critical role played by this loan and the connections at the highest level that came with it (Alves, 2011).

In 2005, The PRC provided another US\$ 2 billion loan in exchange for oil deals, which was further supplemented with an additional US\$ 1 billion in 2006. The credit, approved by the EXIM bank, included once more infrastructure reconstruction which had been destroyed during the Angolan civil war. In return, the PRC would get 10.000 barrels of oil per day.

In September 2007, a new infrastructure oil-backed loan of \$2 billion was signed in Luanda between the Angolan government and the Chinese EXIM Bank. Sonangol<sup>27</sup> became the guarantor of the loan, and its repayment was to be done with the proceeds of oil sales from Sonangol to UNIPEC (China international United Petroleum & Chemicals Co. Ltd, Sinopec group), which were to be deposited in the Angolan Ministry of Finances (MINFIN) account at EXIM Bank (Campos and Vines, 2007; Alves, 2011). This loan was followed by another three provided in 2009, totally amounting to US\$ 10 billion. The table below

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<sup>26</sup> China Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec) is one of the PRC's main state owned enterprises in the oil industry. The National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation are the other ones.

<sup>27</sup> Sonangol (Sociedade Nacional de Combustiveis de Angola) is Angola's state owned company responsible to oversee oil and natural gas production in the country.

provides a list of the major Chinese loans to Angola from 2002 to 2010 in which infrastructure projects have often been included.

**Table. 7** Major Chinese ‘resources for infrastructure’ loans in Angola (2002-2009)

Main export to the PRC	Year Loan	Pledged Amount	Provider	Major Funded Projects
Oil	2004	US\$ 2 Billion	EXIM Bank (Repaid in Oil)	Public Infrastructure
	2007	US\$ 2.5 Billion	EXIM Bank (Repaid in Oil)	
	2009	US\$ 1.5 Billion	CDB <sup>28</sup>	Public Infrastructure
	2009	US\$ 2.5 Billion	ICBC <sup>29</sup> (Repaid in Oil)	Public Infrastructure
	2009	US\$ 6 Billion	EXIM Bank (Repaid in Oil)	Public Infrastructure

Source: Alves, 2011.

The scale of the PRC’s investments in Angola is impressive and its ‘resources for infrastructures’ approach quite successful’. This strategy of swapping infrastructure projects for natural resources has been known as ‘the Angolan mode’ and it has also been adopted by Beijing in other sub-Saharan resource rich countries such as Nigeria, Gabon and the DRC (Alves, 2011). For the case of Angola, this approach not only has been very welcomed by its government as the country is still in the process of reconstruction after the nearly thirty years of civil war, but it has also provided an alternative source of investments to the traditional western partners. Unlike western countries, the PRC stance of ‘non-interference’ is highly attractive to Angola (an oppressive, dictatorial regime by any

<sup>28</sup> China Development Bank (CDB).

<sup>29</sup> Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC).

standards) as the latter does not impose any conditionality (except from the need of accepting the ‘One China’ principle) when conducting business or providing development aid to the former. Thus, the PRC has been able to largely increase its presence in Angola and in the space of approximately ten years it has become Angola’s largest trading partner (Table. 8).

**Table. 8.** Angola’s Exports by Destination between 2000 and 2011

2000		2011	
Country	Percentage	Country	Percentage
US	52.3%	PRC	42.3%
PRC	25.6%	US	22.6%
South Korea	9.1%	India	10.2%
France	5.3%	Canada	4.2%
Spain	2.7%	Italy	3.5%

**Source:** UN Comtrade, 2015; Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), 2015.

In the Angolan exports by destination, the PRC in 2000, ranked second. However, by the end of 2011, it had already surpassed the US leading the list of Angola’s top export destinations. Yet, even more interesting to see is the composition of Angola’s exports to the PRC (Table. 9).



**Table. 9** Composition of Angola's Exports to the PRC in 2012

<b>Products</b>	<b>Amount - US\$ Billions</b>	<b>Total Percentage</b>
Oil	US\$21.6	99.5%
Granite	US\$ 0.7	0.03%
Quartz	US\$ 0.2	0.01%
Wood	US\$0.06	0.00%
Sports Equipment	US\$0.02	0.00%
Scrap-Iron	US\$0.02	0.00%
Fish Oil	US\$0.02	0.00%
Scrap-Aluminum	US\$0.01	0.00%
Scrap-Copper	US\$0.01	0.00%
Electric Transformers	US\$0.01	0.00%
<b>SubTotal</b>	<b>US\$22.65</b>	<b>99.9%</b>
<b>Other Products</b>	<b>US\$ 0.02</b>	<b>0.01%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$22.67</b>	<b>100%</b>

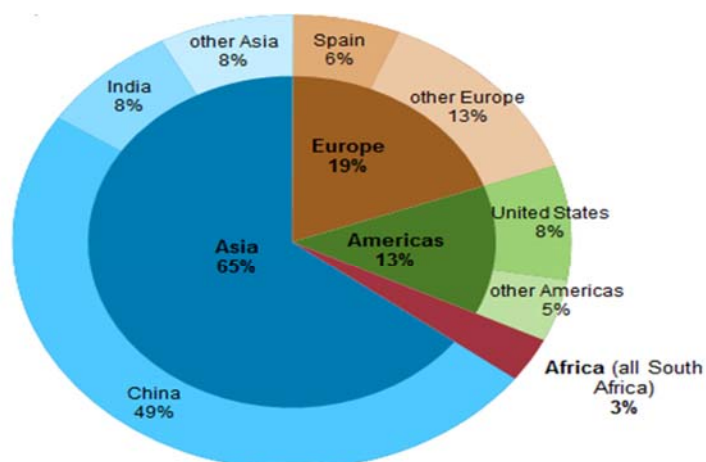
Source: UN Comtrade, 2015; IMF, 2014; Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), 2015

Table 3 shows that the composition of Angola's exports to the PRC is predominantly based on crude oil, with 99.95% of the total; the remainder is divided mainly from ores and scraps. The data shows the extreme dependence that the country has in this sector as well as the role that the PRC plays in promoting this trend.

The PRC's position as Angola's main export destination of crude oil has been maintained up to now (Figure. 4). However, another important development has occurred in

the last few years which confirm the solid evolution of ties between Beijing and Luanda. In fact, whereas Portugal had been Angola's top source of imports until 2013, yet in 2014 the PRC displaced Portugal as the top source of imports to Angola (Table 10).

**Figure 4.** Angola's Crude Oil Exports by Destination in 2014



**eia** Note: Total exports were 1.65 million barrels per day.  
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration based on Global Trade Information Services

**Source:** <http://www.eia.gov/beta/international/?fips=ao>

**Table. 10** Imports Origin of Angola in 2014 - Top 5

Country	Amount (US\$ Billions)	Percentage
PRC	3. 910. 670. 757. 00	21%
Portugal	3, 855, 224, 901,00	20%
South Africa	1, 647, 153, 855, 00	8.7%
Brazil	1, 142, 760, 012, 00	6.0%
US	938, 657, 597, 00	4.9%

**Source:** Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2015

Table 10 shows that, although by a small margin, the PRC is now Angola's top source of imports, thus displacing Portugal which had been the country's main imports' origin until very recently. It also reinforces Beijing's position as Luanda's main trading partner and an essential partner in Angola's political and economical development.

In fact, this relationship, which has undeniably been built by the PRC's resource driven economic policy and Angola's need of new sources of investment, has also been strengthened by the willingness of both sides in building closer political ties. In this case, the intensification of the number of official visits and exchanges between officials and leaders of both countries since the early 2000s, reflects the importance of this relationship attached by the two administrations and their desire to further expand their interactions beyond the economic realm.

Due to Angola's civil war and the marginal importance of the relationship for both countries until the early 2000s, official visits were rare. Yet, there were some important Chinese state visitors to Angola, such as Foreign Minister Qian Qi-chen and Vice-Premier Zhu Rong-ji, and two official visits by President Dos Santos to the PRC were undertaken ten years apart (Alves, 2011). With the end of the civil war, the number of bilateral official visits and exchanges clearly intensified as is shown in table 11.

**Table 11** PRC-Angola High Ranking Official Bilateral Exchanges (1988-2015)

Chinese government official visits to Angola		Angolan government official visits to China	
Year	Name	Year	Name
1995	Vice-Premier Zhu Rong-ji	1998	President Eduardo dos Santos
2001	Foreign Affairs	2006	Prime Minister

	Minister Tang Jia-xuan		F. Piedade dos Santos
2005	Vice Premier Zeng Pei-yan	2008	President Eduardo dos Santos
2006	Premier Wen Jia-bao	2008	President Eduardo dos Santos
2010	Vice-President Xi Jin-ping	2010	Vice President F. Piedade dos Santos
2014	Prime-Minister Li Ke-qiang	2015	President Jose Eduardo dos Santos

**Source:** Elaborated by the author with data retrieved from: Macaclub 2011; Alves, 2011; and Xinhua, 2015.

The year of 2010 was particularly intense in high level official visits, namely Angola's Vice President Fernando Piedade dos Santos's visit to Shanghai accompanied by a ministerial delegation including the Minister of Geology, Mining and Industry; Minister of Commerce; Minister of Urban Development and Construction; and Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. In the same year, the then Chinese Vice-President Xi Jin-ping visited Luanda, and signed a joint declaration to upgrade bilateral relations to 'strategic partnership', whose goal was to reinforce coordination and strengthen cooperation in all sectors (Alves, 2011). In 2014, during Prime Minister Li Ke-qiang's visit to Angola it was signed a memorandum of understanding between a Chinese company and the Angolan Ministry of Transport to build "mega-infrastructures" in the country. Moreover, Li Ke-qiang also promised a US\$ 29 million in development aid to the country (Macaclub, 2014).

As mentioned before, Taipei's current interactions with Luanda are minor, especially when compared to the scale of involvement of the PRC in the country. Despite of some purchases of oil, the ROC relations with Angola apparently will hardly evolve from

these circumstances as Angola not only seems to cherish the nature of its ‘strategic relationship’ with the PRC, but it has also provided unconditional support to the PRC regarding the ‘One China’ principle. This support can be attested, for instance, when in 2006, during Chinese Premier Wen Jia-bao's official visit to Angola, the Chinese government and the Angolan government issued a joint communiqué, in which Angola reiterated its “*adherence to the one-China policy, recognizing that the government of the PRC is the sole legitimate government representing the whole of China. The Angolan government holds that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory, reaffirming its firm support for the Chinese government's efforts for national reunification*” (MOFCOM, 2006).

### 5.2.3 Conclusion

Resource rich sub-Saharan countries have seen Beijing as an alternative partner to the traditional western countries. Their need for new sources of investment, coupled with the PRC’s desire to secure natural resources abroad, as well as its own approach of ‘non-interference’ and ‘no-strings attached’ have resulted in a close relationship which both the PRC and these countries cannot afford to ignore. This has hindered the ROC’s ambitions to be recognized by resource-rich states located in sub-Saharan Africa as such decision would immediately imply the loss of large sums of investments made by the PRC, which refuses to do ‘serious business with countries maintaining diplomatic ties with the ROC’.

The case of Angola provides significant evidences on how natural resources have laid the ground for a close relationship between Luanda and Beijing, a situation which has provided almost no space for the ROC to attempt to court the Angolan government to switch sides.

The PRC’s presence in Angola dates back to the liberation struggle period where it had supported the liberation movements fighting the Portuguese colonial rule. Official relations between the two countries were established in 1983, yet, at a very low profile until the early 2000s. For the ROC, despite one reported attempt during the 1990s aiming at convincing Angola to switching sides and the setup of a representative office in Luanda in the same period, Taipei has never been able to expand its relations with Angola to the

diplomatic level. And the expectations do not seem the best. Starting in the early 2000s, a new relationship between Angola and the PRC based on natural resources (in which infrastructure projects provided by the PRC are often included) has played a crucial role in promoting the development of political relations between the PRC and Angola, and has added new and important content to their bilateral relations. In this context, a move by Angola towards recognizing the ROC at the expense of the PRC became even more unlikely.

With the end of the civil war, the oil-rich country's needs for reconstruction were enormous. On the other side, there was the PRC, which in order to keep the pace of its domestic economic growth, engaged in a new quest for natural resources abroad, in which Angola has played a crucial role. It was in this context of a convergence of interests that the relationship between the two countries gained a new momentum. The PRC's adoption of the 'oil for infrastructures' approach, (the Angola mode) perfectly suited Angola's needs for infrastructure reconstruction, and also provided Luanda with a new alternative and reliable source of investment and development aid, with no conditions attached, which highly appealed Luanda's corrupt and dictatorial regime. The scale of investments and trade between the two countries, not only allowed the PRC to become Angola's biggest trading partner but it has also made Angola its main oil supplier in Africa.

In addition, this relationship has been further strengthened by the willingness of both sides in building closer political ties. In this case, intensive official visits and exchanges of both countries have been taking place since the early 2000; joint declarations and new agreements have been signed, clearly evidencing the desire of the two administrations to further expand their interactions beyond the economic realm.

The strategic nature in which the relationship between Angola and the PRC has evolved, makes it hard to imagine how would Taipei be able to convince Luanda in siding with the ROC at the expense of the PRC. In fact, Angola's current position as the PRC's main oil supplier in Africa, the PRC's position as Angola's main trading partner, and the increasing number of bilateral official visits of both countries, shows that Sino-Angola ties are far from becoming weak. Thus, although perhaps not fully explaining it, Angola's decision in not recognizing the ROC, seems to lie, at least in part, in the advantages brought

about by its new relationship with the PRC in which the role of natural resources has been vital.

### **5.3.1 Pariah States**

A pariah (or outcast) state is commonly defined as one whose domestic or international conduct seriously offends the international community or at least a significant number of states (Mills, Callahan, Geldenhuys, and Fabricius, 1997). The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations (1998) defines pariah regimes as “countries which by virtue of their political systems, ideological postures, leadership or general behavior suffer from widespread global condemnation and diplomatic isolation”. According to Harkavy (1981) pariah regimes not only lack diplomatic isolation, but are often faced with the absence of assured, credible security support or political moorings within the big power alliance structure. They are usually targeted by the obsessive and unrelenting opprobrium and censure within international forums such as the UN (Harkavy, 1981; Lawal, 2012). Currently, there are in sub-Saharan Africa two states which have generally been accepted as being pariah states: Sudan and Zimbabwe. Interestingly, the pariah state status which has been attributed to both Sudan and Zimbabwe, have prompted these two states to foster their ties with the PRC, a factor which might provide some explanations why Harare and Khartoum have not been interested in entering into official diplomatic relations with the ROC.

For pariah regimes the PRC represents a new source of political support, and a provider of development assistance and foreign investment. In fact, whereas Western countries have routinely condemned and even sanctioned these states, due to human rights violations, lack of democratic practices and war crimes, the PRC has instead provided them with both cash and political backing (Alden, 2007; Canning, 2007). In this case, the emergence of the PRC as a political and economic player in Africa, has offered these countries new opportunities to distance themselves from the traditional Western partners, develop a more independent foreign policy, thus minimizing the negative impacts of the coordinated set of actions imposed by Western governments and international organizations (Mitchell, 2007). In this regard, Sudan’s example should be mentioned.

Since the late 1990s, Sudan has been an interdicted area for Western oil companies as a result of the country's ongoing civil war and the genocide in Darfur. In this context, the PRC stepped into the void to become a vital player in the country's oil industry as it has provided Khartoum with means to circumvent the economic pressure exerted by the US and other Western states through their imposed sanctions. Thus, the withdrawal of Western oil companies did not mean that the country would be anxious to attract new investments. In fact, there has been a reconfiguration in trade towards the PRC in which arms and oil deals form the bulk (Canning, 2007). By the end of 2011, nearly 70% of Sudan's oil exports were going to the PRC, worth of US\$ 6.3 billion (Global Risk Insights, 2014). Apart from the large investments made by the PRC, Sudan's administration actions in Darfur and in other parts of the country have also benefited from the protection provided by the threat of the Chinese veto in the UN Security Council (UNSC) (Alden, 2007).

The ROC has never had any sort of official relationship with the pariahs Sudan and Zimbabwe, and presently such a development seems far from becoming a reality. Politically and economically isolated by the majority of the world's states, these countries have regularly been supported by the PRC, a factor which has strengthened their ties with Beijing and consequently further contributed to the ROC's current fragile position in the sub-Saharan Africa. The case of Zimbabwe provides good insights in this regard. Despite the sanctions imposed by Western countries against the Zimbabwean administration for undemocratic practices and human rights violations, Robert Mugabe's regime has been able to survive and even to cultivate alternative diplomatic alliances. Within its 'Look East' policy framework, Harare has successfully sought to foster closer ties with Asian states which usually tend to have ambivalent or hostile relationships with Western nations. In this respect, Beijing has played a significant role in Harare's foreign policy and making 'Look East' policy a reality (Youde, 2013).

### **5.3.2 The Case of Zimbabwe**

The PRC's support to Zimbabwe dates back to the latter's struggle against the oppressive and racist British colonial rule. The military and strategic assistance provided by Beijing to Robert Mugabe's led Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) during the



1960s and 1970s, laid the foundations for the current relationship between the PRC and Zimbabwe. In 1980, when Zimbabwe officially gained independence and Robert Mugabe became the country's Prime-Minister and official diplomatic ties between Harare and Beijing were promptly established and have been strengthened since then. As for the ROC, few if any formal contacts have been maintained with Zimbabwe. In fact, by the time Zimbabwe became an independent country, the ROC had already lost its UN seat and its vulnerable international position provided Taipei with very few options to influence the Beijing's backed Harare regime in considering such move.

For Zimbabwe, the PRC has become an essential partner. In the 1980s and 1990s the PRC provided a considerable number of aid and concessionary loans to Zimbabwe as the country was seeking to free itself from its traditional Western partners and trying to embark in a new path of economic development. In return, Harare reciprocated with high-level official visits to Beijing and by voicing its support to the PRC in the aftermath of the Tiananmen incident (Chun, 2014).

By the turn of the century this relationship gained a new momentum. Robert Mugabe initiated an active campaign aimed at suppressing opposition political parties, resorted to military squads to carry out attacks against his political opponents in the Ndebele-speaking areas of the country, and his ZANU-PF rigged elections and took steps to create an official one-party state. Moreover, his regime imprisoned and tortured its adversaries, corruption became endemic and the economy experienced significant downturns, leading to large strikes and protests (Youde, 2013). Most significantly, as a result of the land acquisition policy carried out by the Zimbabwean government; the Fast Track Land Reform Program of 2000-2002; the violence perpetrated by ZANU-PF against political opponents; the US, the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom and several other NATO member countries imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe (Chun, 2014). In addition, following the aforementioned measures adopted by Western countries, the IMF and the World Bank (WB) also decided to stop their budgetary assistance to Harare. Thus, confronted with the scenario of increased international isolation, Robert Mugabe's regime adopted the 'Look East' policy in 2003, in which Zimbabwe would prioritize its relationships with states including the PRC, Iran, Malaysia, and Indonesia (Chun, 2014). The 'Look East' policy was a deliberate turn against the West. According to Mugabe's own

words: "We have turned east, where the sun rises, and given our back to the west, where the sun sets" (The Guardian, 2005).

The PRC has responded positively to the 'Look East' policy and played a crucial role in Zimbabwe's political crisis for several reasons: its veto power in the UNSC; its non-interference approach; and its willingness to invest and promote business in the country.

In 2005 Robert Mugabe initiated its Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Drive out the Trash). Although the official statement of the regime was that this campaign was aimed at put an end on illegal housing and commercial activities on the outskirts of Harare, there are reports that Mugabe intended to punish his urban-based opponents (Brautigam, 2008). It was estimated that approximately 700.000 people had been affected. The campaign met harsh condemnation from the Zimbabwean opposition factions, but also from the international community. The UN described the operation as an attempt to drive out and make homeless large sections of the urban and rural poor, who make up much of the domestic opposition to the Mugabe regime (BBC, 2005). Yet, unlike the internal and international condemnation, Beijing publicly supported the Operation Murambatsvina by blocking a submission to the UNSC that was critical of the Operation. It has been reported that the introduction of this campaign was also aimed at protecting Chinese business interests by removing their indigenous competition (Brown and Sriram, 2009; Brautigam, 2008; Alden, 2007).

Beijing has further supported Harare in international organizations. In 2005, the PRC was the only non-African state to endorse the highly contested elections. In that same year, the US and the EU pursued further sanctions and an arms embargo against Zimbabwe. Beijing responded by signing with Harare eight wide-ranging agreements worth US\$ 1.6 billion and by blocking Western-backed UNSC sanctions against the Zimbabwean government (Brautigam, 2008; Chun, 2014). Beijing has also supported Harare's controversial land reforms including the 2005 nationalization of all farmland. In December 2003, Premier Wen Jia-bao stated, "China respects and supports efforts by Zimbabwe to bring about social justice through land reform." (Allafrica, 2003). In 2004, the PRC and Zimbabwe joined forces to block resolutions at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNHCR) that would have punished both states for several crimes and abuses (Eiseman, 2005).

In 2008, the Sino-Zimbabwe relationship witnessed another development. In that year, Beijing, partnered with Moscow, vetoed UN targeted sanctions against Harare that would have put an arms embargo on the country and instituting a travel ban and asset freeze against Mugabe and 13 senior government officials most responsible for the violence (Youde, 2013). The UNSC resolution came upon the extremely contested 2008 presidential elections in which, Morgan Tsvangirai, the opposition leader, withdrew in protest of alleged fraud and fearing to risk the lives of the ones supporting him (Thompson, 2012; Youde, 2013). In response to the political crisis being faced by Zimbabwe, the PRC consistently preferred a dialogue solution, suggesting that Zimbabwe's problems were internal and therefore should be solved by its domestic authorities and people. Simultaneously, the PRC has urged the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in trying to come up with a solution to put an end in the Zimbabwean political crisis (Chun, 2014).

In addition to the support provided by the PRC to Zimbabwe on the UNSC, the two countries have also sought to cement this relationship through frequent high-level visits and economic and military cooperation. Regarding the first, the frequency of official bilateral exchanges since the year 2000 official visits has been recurrent (Table 12).

**Table 12** High Level official visits between the PRC and Zimbabwe since 2000

The PRC's delegations to Zimbabwe	
Year	Delegation Leader
2000	Foreign Minister Tang Jia-xuan
2002	Standing Member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Wei Jian-xing
2003	Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the

	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Wan Guo-quan
2007	Chairman of CPPCC Jia Qing-lin
2010	Vice Chairman of CPPCC Wang Gang
2011	Vice Premier Wang Qi-shan Standing Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC, Central Propaganda Department Minister Liu Yun-san Foreign Minister Yang Jie-chi
2012	Vice Premier Hui Liang-yu
2013	Vice Premier Wang Yang

Zimbabwean Delegation to the PRC
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2003	Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and the leader of ZANU-PF in Parliament Patrick Chinamasa
2005	President Robert Mugabe
2008	President Robert Mugabe
2010	President Robert Mugabe
2011	President Robert Mugabe Vice President Joice Mujuru Vice President John Nkomo Vice Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara

2012	Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai
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Source: Chun, 2014

The tensions between Western countries and international institutions and Zimbabwe have also had a positive impact in the Sino-Zimbabwe economic relations. With the combination of FOCAC and the 'Look East' policy, the economic interactions between the two countries have rapidly evolved since the early 2000s. In fact, whereas through the 'Look East' policy Zimbabwe has essentially sought to further strengthen its relations with the PRC, the establishment of FOCAC in the year 2000, became a mechanism through which Harare has been able to foster its ties with the Beijing and gain a new source of investment and economic cooperation in the face of Western sanctions against its regime. According to Chun (2014), "within the FOCAC framework, relations between the PRC and Zimbabwe have been further consolidated through the PRC's credit facilities and loans to the Zimbabwean government, as well as through investment projects in different sectors of the country's economy".

Currently, the PRC is Zimbabwe's third largest trading partner after South Africa and the EU but trade between the two countries has been steadily growing since the early 1990s. It is reported that the trade volumes between Zimbabwe and the PRC increased from US\$ 56 million in 1997 to US\$ 1.1 billion in 2013 (Chun, 2014). In contrast, the ROC's trade with Zimbabwe in the same year amounted to only US\$ 25 thousand (Bureau of Foreign Trade, 2013). Like with many other of its African trading partners, Sino-Zimbabwe bilateral trade has been characterized by the export of raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods (Chun, 2014). The willingness of Beijing in doing business with Harare and the increase in trade between the two countries has certainly appeased Robert Mugabe's administration and proved that the 'Look East' policy as attained its main goal (Youde, 2013). Currently, Zimbabwe is considering to adopt the Chinese Yuan as one of the official currencies in the country within the multi currency regime adopted in 2009, a factor which help to further explain the Chinese growing influence in Zimbabwe's economy (The Telegraph, 2013).

One of the most controversial aspects of the PRC's involvement with Zimbabwe has been the one regarding military cooperation. In this case, in the face of Western arms

embargoes, Beijing has once more showed its willingness in collaborating with Harare, and provided Mugabe's regime with military equipment, training and personnel exchange during the sanctions period. The major arms sales have included 12 jets fighters and 100 military vehicles valued worth US\$ 240 million in 2004; six trainer/combat aircraft in 2005; six additional trainer/combat aircraft in 2006; 20 000 AK-47 rifles, 21 000 pairs of handcuffs and 12-15 military trucks in 2011 (Chun, 2013).

The readiness and effective political and economic backing provided by Beijing to Harare in the context of international sanctions against Robert Mugabe's regime, has naturally cemented this relationship and further helped the PRC in securing Zimbabwe's support for its 'One China' policy. For instance, when the PRC's Anti-Secession Law was promulgated in 2005, the Zimbabwean administration stated that "We in Zimbabwe fully support the decision to adopt the Anti-Secession Law which first upholds the PRC's basic policy of peaceful reunification and regards the non-peaceful means only as the last resort to stop Taiwan's independence." (Xinhua News, 2005). And, in 2010 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Sino-Zimbabwe relations, the ambassador of Zimbabwe to the PRC said, "Zimbabwe has been unwaveringly consistent in its support for the "One China" policy as well as for China's other core interests." (Chun, 2014). In 2012, during the signing of a \$180 million economic and technical co-operation agreement, Zimbabwe's Vice President, Joice Mujuru, stated that Zimbabwe adhered to the 'One China' policy. Beijing has also expressed its gratitude for Harare's adherence to the 'One China' policy, as stated by then Vice President Xi Jin-ping during his visit to Harare in 2011 (FOCAC, 2011; Chun, 2014).

### **5.3.3 Conclusion**

Zimbabwe has stood firmly by the PRC's side since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1980, and few if any formal contacts have been maintained between Zimbabwe and the ROC. This early decision of the Zimbabwean government in siding with the PRC might be explained by the latter's support to that country's liberation struggle against the British colonial rule, namely the liberation movement led by Robert Mugabe - ZANU. With Robert Mugabe's decisive victory in the presidential elections of 1980, the PRC close ties

with Zimbabwe were cemented and the chances for the ROC to convince the Zimbabwean administration in that period in switching sides became very improbable.

By the turning of the century the Sino-Zimbabwe relationship gained a new momentum. As a result a number of policies and actions undertaken by the Robert Mugabe's administration, including the growing absence of democratic practices, increased human rights violations and land seizures, triggered international condemnation of Zimbabwe and isolated the country from the international community. The Zimbabwean government's response came with the adoption of the 'Look East' policy in 2003, in which it sought to prioritize its relationships with East Asian countries, especially with the PRC and fight back its pariah state label.

The PRC has positively responded to the 'Look East' policy and provided Zimbabwe with much needed political support, especially in the international arena. In this regard, the PRC not only has vetoed Western-backed UNSC sanctions against Zimbabwe, but it has also publicly supported some of the Harare's regime controversial and internationally condemned policies such as the 'Operation Murambatsvina'. Moreover, while Western countries have stopped their arms sales to Zimbabwe and the World Bank and the IMF put a halt on their operations in the country, Beijing has countered Western initiatives against the regime by engaging with Harare in several arms deals and increased its investments, credits and loans to Zimbabwe within the FOCAC framework.

Unlike, the PRC, the ROC's international position is fragile and has little to offer to countries such as Zimbabwe. While the PRC can shield Robert Mugabe's regime from the UNSC sanctions against Zimbabwe, as it is one of the five permanent members of the UNSC, the ROC's withdrawal from the UN in 1971, left the country with very few and less appealing instruments to court regimes in need of strong political backing like the one of Zimbabwe. Moreover, the PRC has been one of the few states willing to do business with Zimbabwe and in a space of roughly ten years became that country's third biggest trading partner and an indispensable source of investment and development aid. On the other hand, the ROC's trade with Zimbabwe amounting to only US\$ 25 thousand in 2013 says a lot about the ROC's little importance in Zimbabwe's economic relations and currently nothing suggests that in the mid-term the two countries will engage in large scale economic interactions.

Thus, within this context, Zimbabwe's inclination in siding with the PRC comes with no surprise. Taking into account Zimbabwe's political and economic circumstances and the aforementioned benefits arising from its relationship with the PRC, Zimbabwe's motivations to side with the ROC seem to be extremely tenuous, and might explain why Harare has never had any ambition to shift its recognition to Taipei. Robert Mugabe's administration is surely aware that a diplomatic move towards recognizing the ROC would certainly imply that its remaining international support would rapidly fade away, a fact which would further contribute to Zimbabwe's international isolation.

#### **5.4.1 Countries with International Ambitions**

The African continent is usually seen as a continent which is constantly devastated by famines, poverty, coups, corruption and undemocratic practices. However, these cases, although existent, they should not serve as a generalization of all African states. Over time, several countries have managed to establish stable democracies and adopted developmental and economic policies which have attained positive results domestically and been acclaimed internationally. For some of these states, the aforementioned conditions have allowed them to pursue more ambitious goals, namely in the international arena, where they seek to play a more active and prominent role. Within the two China's diplomatic quarrel context, sub-Saharan states aspiring to play a more significant role internationally have tended to cut their official ties with the ROC. Taipei's vulnerable international position and lack of political clout, provides very little to these countries whose aspirations require strong political backing in international organizations and institutions which the ROC simply cannot guarantee. On the other hand Beijing's position as a permanent member of the UNSC and its status as an emerging power both economically and politically, are factors which have made the PRC a lot more attractive for the sub-Saharan countries maintaining international aspirations.

It has been argued in literature that Senegal and South Africa, two of the ROC's main former allies in Africa, have based their decision of breaking off their diplomatic ties with the ROC hoping that this move would prompt the PRC to support their ambitions to join an enlarged UNSC (van Fossen, 2012; Taylor 2002). According with these authors,



strategically, it would be unwise for both Senegal and South Africa to ignore Africa's largest trading partner as they both aspire to play a leading role in Africa leadership. Moreover, even whether or not either Senegal or South Africa can be considered the 'Spokesman of Africa', without the support of the PRC it would certainly become difficult to build credibility among African states.

The case of South Africa illustrates well this reality. Although since the mid 1970s Pretoria had become one of Taipei's major allies internationally, the end of the Apartheid and the regime change which have occurred in South Africa in the early 1990s, resulted in a new reorientation in the country's foreign policy, a fact which had serious consequences for Taipei's future official interactions with Pretoria. In reality, despite the ROC's considerable amount of investments and cooperation with South Africa in several areas, such as education, military, economy and agriculture, the opportunities that could arise from a new relationship with the PRC in political and economic terms, were ultimately seen by Pretoria's administration as surpassing the ones offered by Taipei. With new political and economic ambitions, the new government in South Africa realized that the PRC could no longer be ignored, even if relations with its longstanding ally, the ROC, had to be sacrificed.

The next section analyses the political and economic factors which led Pretoria's administration to alter its official relationship with the two Chinas.

#### **5.4.2 The Case of South Africa**

The first official contacts between South Africa and China took place in 1905 when the first Chinese Consul-General was established in Johannesburg to look after the interests of Chinese laborers in the country (Tseng, 2008). In the early 1930s, South African officials intensified links with the ROC at the same time that the new South African Communist Party (SACP), which during this period had already sided with the Soviet Union, was publicly supporting the communists' liberation of China (Alden and Wu, 2014).

In the subsequent decades, relations between the ROC and South Africa were not close. With the election of the National Party in 1948, the Afrikaner-led National Party adopted a more systemized and comprehensive racial policy towards non-whites which had also negative implications for the Chinese community established in South Africa. As

Pretoria's domestic policies were being highly criticized internationally, the ROC sought to minimize its alliance with South Africa, since its priority in this period was to avoid offending the international community and to safeguard its credibility in the UN (Tseng, 2008; Alden and Wu, 2014).

The political catalyst which pushed the ROC and South Africa into a more solid economic and political relationship with each other was that both states faced growing isolation by the international community (Grim, Kim and Anthony, 2014). For the ROC, the two major blows came in 1971, when the UN General Assembly withdrew international recognition of Taipei in favor of Beijing, and in 1979 when Washington decided to formalize relations with Beijing. For Pretoria, it was the growing international condemnation of its Apartheid regime. Yet, one should not ignore that ideological considerations also facilitated cooperation between the ROC and South Africa, since both countries were staunchly anti-communists. Eventually, as both South Africa and the ROC found themselves expelled from the international community, the two states decided to upgrade their ties to ambassadorial level in 1976 (Tseng, 2008; and Grim, Kim and Anthony, 2014).

From the early 1980s onwards, the ROC-South Africa relationship witnessed substantial developments. Economic and trade relations were one of the most crucial aspects of the bilateral relations, but military and nuclear cooperation, high-level exchanges and agreements in several areas such as tourism and agriculture, also played an important role in further strengthening these ties. The strengthened engagement between Taipei and Pretoria provided incentives for entrepreneurs to set up businesses in South Africa which resulted in an exponential increase in investments from the ROC. Two-way trade grew substantially in the next fifteen years, from US\$ 30 million in 1979 to US\$ 5.8 billion in 1995 (Alden and Wu, 2014). For South Africa, these investments were vital as the country urgently needed foreign investment in the wake of growing economic and political sanctions. In this regard, despite the presence of investors from Israel, Hong Kong, and South Korea, it was the ROC's investors the ones leading in terms of amount of investment and job creation (Grim, Kim and Anthony, 2014). According to Dullabh (1994), by 1994 the factories owned by investors from the ROC were employing approximately 60 000 workers.

In 1990, with the freeing of Nelson Mandela from prison, coupled with the unbanning of the liberation movements, the political atmosphere in South Africa was changing and more states desired to establish official ties with Pretoria, including the PRC. For Tseng (2008), it was obvious that the cordial relations between the ROC and South Africa faced a new era with many challenges. For the South African business community, befriending with Beijing would signify new business opportunities and a new source of investments. Moreover, South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was also aware of Beijing's military power, as well as its political influence, as Beijing was one of the five permanent members of the UNSC a position that could no longer be ignored. However, a decision by the South African government regarding the 'two Chinas' issue was far from simple. In fact, while the PRC's emergence as a global economic and political player was generally acknowledged within the ranks of the Nationalist Party and the African National Congress (ANC), the ROC's role in South Africa's domestic affairs could not be disregarded. As a result, in the early 1990s there were two factions within the DFA with different positions regarding the 'two Chinas' issue: the first, mainly represented by the directorate for Asia and Australasia, was optimistic about the PRC's future and understood the importance of being in step with the rest of the international community regarding a permanent member of the Security Council; the second faction, was influenced by academics and other commentators who were reportedly being funded by the ROC administration to promote dual recognition (Botha, 2008). Thus, while during the early 1990s relations with the ROC were maintained, South Africa materialized its wishes of improving relations with the PRC through the establishment of the Chinese Center for South African Studies in Pretoria and the South African Center for Chinese Studies in Beijing. Within this context, Taipei tried its utmost to gain the ANC's friendship - the soon-to-be ruling party of South Africa (Tseng, 2008).

In 1993 Nelson Mandela paid a visit to the ROC aimed at better understanding the current relations between Taipei and Pretoria as well as to seek financial support for the ANC. In 1994 the ANC won the first democratic elections in South Africa and Nelson Mandela became the new President. President Lee Teng-hui attended President's Mandela inauguration and got to meet him in the following days where he was assured that the ROC-South Africa relationship was very stable (Tseng, 2008). Moreover, as upon the

elections the ANC was undergoing financial difficulties, the ROC's administration decided to approve the provision of US\$ 10 million to the ANC (followed by an additional request for US\$ 5 million) (Tseng, 2008; Alden and Wu, 2014).

As a result of the elections, former Foreign affairs minister Pik Botha was succeeded by Alfred Nzo, and South Africa's foreign relations entered a new era. For the new administration, South Africa was no longer an isolated state and it wanted to start playing a more active role in regional, continental and even international affairs (Tseng, 2008). In 1994, South Africa was finally admitted as a full member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); joined the Commonwealth on that same year; and saw the restoration of its seat in the UN General Assembly becoming reality.

In this new context, between 1994 and 1996 more than two hundred South African officials had visited the ROC. Taipei, which paid all expenses, hoped to use its economic power to prevent South Africa from downgrading its diplomatic ties with the ROC and recognizing the PRC (Payne and Veney, 2001). In order to attain this goal, the ROC also promised an increase of its investments in South Africa as well as cooperation in several other projects aimed at promoting social and economic development in the country. However, all of these efforts promoted by the ROC were made at the same time as Beijing was urging Pretoria to cut its diplomatic ties with Taipei and formalize ties with Beijing. The unwillingness of President Mandela of cutting ties with the ROC and his desire to formalize diplomatic relations with the PRC led to the 'two Chinas' dilemma, and became the first substantive foreign policy issue to be faced by the post-apartheid government (Tseng, 2008).

Whereas the ROC's flexible diplomacy favored dual recognition of the PRC and the ROC by South Africa and other countries, Beijing vehemently opposed this option. As a result, Mandela's view that Pretoria could enter into diplomatic relations with Beijing but not at the expense of ties with Taipei was unacceptable to the PRC. Thus, in this regard, the new South African administration had to be quick making a decision which should be taken on the basis of national interests and international precedent.

In South Africa it was generally agreed that the maintenance of official relations with the ROC would always hamper further developments in the interactions between Beijing and Pretoria. It should be noted that by the mid 1990s, the PRC's growing influence

in the world affairs, coupled with Pretoria's reformulated foreign policy agenda, and Taipei's fragile international position, were seriously being taken into account by the new South African government. In this respect, both the ROC and the PRC sought to exert their influence to gain Mandela's acceptance. Furthermore, intense debates were taking place throughout the country regarding the 'two Chinas' issue. In one interdepartmental meeting to assess Pretoria's real long-term interests regarding the 'two Chinas', it was concluded that Beijing was a major power and therefore, in South Africa's long-term economic and political interest, Pretoria should seek to establish official ties with Beijing and downgrade its relations with Taipei (Tseng, 2008). Moreover, the business community, highly interested in doing business with the PRC, sought to further pressure the South African government to solve the 'two Chinas' issue in favor of the PRC.

Pretoria's decision to break its relations with Taipei brought to an end twenty years of a close relationship. The move came after continuous pressure from the PRC to abandon the ROC (Taylor, 2002). For South Africa, it was now the PRC the one able best advance its interests both domestically and internationally, and therefore, siding with Beijing became imperative, even if this decision had to be made at the expense of Taipei.

Political and economic interests were at the base of this decision. Whilst it is undeniable that trade between South Africa and the ROC was important, the PRC's trade with South Africa (through Hong Kong), was totaling US\$2.7 billion by the late 1990s. In fact, Hong Kong's return to the PRC in 1997 undermined somewhat the ROC competitive advantage vis-à-vis trade with South Africa (Taylor, 2002). Moreover, the consulate of South Africa in Hong Kong has consistently served as an important information center for Hong Kong business community wishing to know about the country or expressing interest in investing in South Africa. With the return to the PRC approaching, the new South African administration became concerned that if it continued to maintain of official diplomatic ties with Taipei, Beijing could oppose the continuation of South Africa's consular presence in Hong Kong (Taylor, 2002). In addition, South African Airways (SAA) landing rights in Hong Kong could also be put at stake if relations with the ROC were to be maintained (Tseng, 2008).

Furthermore, it was widely known that the new South African administration wanted to improve its international profile and play a more prominent role in international

affairs, namely to become the ‘spokesman of Africa’. However, such aspirations came into play regarding the PRC–ROC issue when the question of enlarging the UNSC came up. If Pretoria had kept relations with Taipei, it is almost certain that Beijing would have expressed great displeasure at these circumstances and surely vetoed any attempt to promote South Africa to the Council (Taylor, 2002).

Thus, on November 29, 1996, President Nelson Mandela announced that South Africa had decided to officially grant recognition of the PRC at the expense of formal relations with the ROC (Tseng, 2008). Upon this decision, President Mandela released an official statement in which he explains the reasons behind his government's decision to breaking ties with the ROC: “In its international relations, South Africa has become an active participant within the ambit of the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as within the UN system. A permanent continuation of diplomatic recognition of the Republic of China on Taiwan is inconsistent with South Africa's role in international affairs” (Mandela, 1996). In this regard, the South African press made also favorable commentaries on South Africa’s decision. According to Tseng (2008) the *Business Day* wrote in that same year: “South Africa’s switch is primarily to do with international diplomacy and our government’s desire to become increasingly a world player - for example winning a permanent seat for Africa on the UNSC”.

Naturally, South Africa’s decision to formalize its relations with the PRC was a huge blow for the ROC, which tried its utmost to prevent this move and maintain the ties with its major ally. After a failed attempt to persuade the South African government to reconsider its decision, the ROC decided to immediately suspend its cooperation programs as well as 39 bilateral treaties, and recall its ambassador to Taipei (Tseng, 2008). However, relations between the two countries were not completely severed as both South Africa and the ROC agreed to maintain contacts at an unofficial level through the Taipei Liaison Offices in Pretoria and Cape Town and the Liaison Office of South Africa in Taiwan (Grimm, Kim and Anthony, 2014).

Since the normalization of bilateral relations in 1998, the PRC-South Africa ties have been cemented through the increase of exchanges of high-level visits. In this regard, President Mandela visited the PRC in 1999 and President Jiang Ze-min paid a visit to South Africa in 2000 to attend President Mbeki inauguration. In 2001, President Mbeki paid a

state visit to the PRC, and in 2007 hosted his Chinese counterpart Hu Jin-tao in his first state visit to South Africa. After being elected in 2009, President Jacob Zuma has paid two state visits to the PRC (2010 and 2014), whereas President Xi-Jin-ping has visited the country in 2013 (South African Government, 2007; SAIIA, 2014; China.Org, 2006).

South Africa's decision in siding with the PRC at the expense of the the ROC, clearly revealed the latter's lack of political power and further isolated Taipei in Africa and in the internationally. Upon South Africa's move, the ROC only had a few African allies left, namely Swaziland, Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe, Malawi and Gambia (Herman, 2011). According to one former Taiwanese diplomat in South Africa, for Pretoria, it became clear that its new foreign policy agenda and vital national interests would hardly be attained if relations with Taipei would be maintained: "(...) no amount of financial aid or grants could really persuade the South African government to maintain its diplomatic ties with the ROC, once South Africa had decided that its vital national interests and new foreign policy focus lay with the PRC" (Lin, 2001).

Indeed, South Africa's decision in siding with the PRC has proven to be successful in some respects. As it had aspired during the 1990s, South Africa had the chance to occupy the non-permanent seat of the UNSC from 2007-2008 and 2011-2012, which confirmed the Pretoria's role as Africa's leader with considerable impact on the continent's agenda (Grimm, Kim and Anthony, 2014). Moreover, the PRC's formal invitation to South Africa to become a full member of the BRICs club in 2011 proved that Pretoria's engagement with Beijing has been quite decisive especially regarding a more active participation in international affairs. Lastly, South Africa's role as a host of the upcoming FOCAC VI, not only reveals the country's political and economic influence on the continent, but it is also an indication that the current Sino-South Africa relations are important and stable.

In terms of economic relations, South Africa's decision to side with the PRC has also been fruitful. Indeed, while in 1992 bilateral trade between the two countries was approximately US\$ 250 million, since Pretoria announced that it would formalize its relations with Beijing, the trade volume has rapidly increased. By 2011, trade volume had already reached US\$ 11 billion. As a result, South Africa became the PRC's most important trading partner in Africa, and the PRC South Africa's largest trading partner. According to Grimm, Kim and Anthony (2014), the PRC's trade with South Africa makes

up nearly 20 per cent of the PRC's total trade with Africa. This is in contrast with bilateral trade between South Africa and the ROC which in that same year had totaled US\$ 4.8 billion (Bureau of Foreign Trade, 2011). Thus, Pretoria's engagement with Beijing not only made possible for the former to play a more active role in the international arena, but it has also brought about economic gains which could hardly be matched by Taipei, even if official ties had continued, as by the mid 1990s, trade with the ROC was about to reach its peak as a result of the small size of the ROC's population and economy (Grimm, Kim and Anthony, 2014).

### **5.4.3 Conclusion**

In the 1970s, South Africa became one of the ROC's main allies. The closer political ties between the two countries were a reflection of both Taipei and Pretoria's diplomatic isolation - Taipei since its ouster from the China seat at the UN in 1971 and the change of the US policy towards the ROC, and Pretoria for its apartheid policies. In this context, the two isolated states decided to upgrade their diplomatic relations to ambassadorial level in 1976. From this period onwards, both states engaged in a close relationship based on economic cooperation, high level bilateral visits and agreements in various fields such as tourism, military, education and agriculture.

However, South Africa's domestic changes taking place in the early 1990s, namely the end of the Apartheid regime and the subsequent election of President Mandela in 1994, put the South-Africa-ROC relationship under strain. With a reformulated foreign policy agenda and new economic goals, a new decision regarding the 'two Chinas' issue would have to be made soon. South Africa's desire to play a more active role in international affairs and its business community eagerness to do business with the PRC were decisive in this respect. For Pretoria it became clear that these two goals would hardly be achieved if relations with Taipei were maintained. While Beijing would certainly veto any attempt by Pretoria to win a permanent seat for Africa in the UNSC, the South African business community would have also had difficulties in further engaging with Chinese businesses due to the PRC's unwillingness in doing business with countries maintaining ties with the ROC. In this regard, the Hong Kong factor was also quite important. Thus, despite the



attempts from Taipei to retain its major diplomatic ally, the fact is that Beijing's assertiveness regarding the 'one China' policy and its economic and political weight were the reasons behind Pretoria's decision in breaking its ties with Taipei and subsequently enter into official relations with Beijing.

Despite the ROC's important role in South Africa's foreign policy and economic development during the 1980s and 1990s, the latter's regime change and consequent reformulation of its economic and foreign policy agenda required more than what the ROC could provide. South Africa's decision in siding with the PRC, not only meant that the ROC had only a few African allies left, but it also became clear that the ROC needed more South Africa than South Africa the ROC. Having to decide between the ROC and the PRC, South Africa's ultimate move in favor of the PRC, evidenced the ROC's lack of capacity to advance its allies political and economic interests when they aspire to become more prominent actors in world affairs.

#### **5.5.1 Politically Unstable Countries**

Africa has had an impressive record of civil wars, coup d'état, and other social-political tensions over time, factors which have significantly contributed to the continent's low level of economic development and social progress. There have been a number of complex reasons explaining this reality, including conflicts over basic resources such as water, access and control over rich minerals and other resources as well as different political agendas (Global Issues, 2010).

Within the 'two Chinas' diplomatic competition context, the political instability and social unrest taking place in some sub-Saharan African states, has had a profound impact in determining these countries' decision to either side with the ROC or the PRC. In this study, it is argued that states in conflict or on the verge of a serious political crisis and social unrest have tended to cut their ties with the ROC and subsequently entered into official diplomatic relations with the PRC. The ROC's lack of political power in the international arena, and the PRC's determination in blocking any sort of resolutions in the UNSC aimed at providing assistance and security to states enjoying diplomatic ties with the ROC, has been an important factor which has ultimately led these countries to withdraw their

recognition of Taipei. That is in line with van Loon's statement that 'a deficiency of ROC's diplomatic relations is that it is apparently unable to provide military security, making dollar incentives their only possible support for the countries undergoing domestic conflicts' (van Loon, 2012).

The most recent cases in this regard have been the ones of Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic and Liberia. Chad has been an unstable state for years, a factor which made it difficult for Taipei to maintain solid relations with Ndjamena. Dollar diplomacy was crucial when Chad shifted recognition to the ROC, but not with the shift to the PRC (van Loon, 2012). The PRC's controversial role in the Darfur conflict, and its support to the Khartoum-backed rebels with military equipment was able to pressure Chad into breaking ties with the ROC. According to Large and Chien (2008) van Loon (2012) and the Taipei Times (2006), the seriousness of the Darfur conflict and the negative impact that it could have within the Chadian territory, coupled with the PRC's promises of offering security in exchange for diplomatic recognition, prompted President Deby to make compromises with Beijing 'for the survival of Chad'.

The same has reportedly happened with CAR and Guinea-Bissau, both undergoing serious political and social turmoil in 1997 and 1998 respectively. In 1997, amid heightened ethnic tensions, a PRC's representative to the UN, as the rotating chair of the Security Council, visited the CAR from 1997, causing the CAR to switch its recognition to the PRC (Tseng, 2008). Lately, a UN peacekeeping force (MINURCA) was sent to the country.

As for Guinea-Bissau, despite the absence of credible sources explaining the exact reasons behind its decision for the move, the civil war taking place in the country by the time this diplomatic decision happened, might have been related to Bissau's expectations that Beijing could finally approve a UNSC resolution to send a UN Peace building Support Mission to Guinea-Bissau.

The ROC has undeniably been unable to secure its allies whose domestic conditions are more subject to political and social turmoil. Under these circumstances, sub-Saharan states have tended to switch sides, in an attempt to guarantee the normalization of the socio-political environment of their countries, as the political support they need, can barely be provided by the ROC. The case of Liberia is paradigmatic in this respect.

### 5.5.2 The Case of Liberia

Liberia has had formal diplomatic relationship with the ROC in three separate time periods (1957-1977, 1989-1993, and 1997-2003) over the last 55 years, making it one of the African nations whose allegiance has been most transitory between the PRC and ROC. The case of Liberia serves as an example of the ROC's tenacity in aiming to win over African allies. Following Liberia's switch to sole recognition of the PRC in 1993 the ROC refused to sever diplomatic relations and maintained its embassy in the capital of Monrovia concurrently with the operation of the PRC's embassy from 1993 through 1997.

The circumstances surrounding the most recent term of relations between the ROC and Liberia has become a controversial topic that has made the ROC more cautious in how it does dollar diplomacy. In 1997, former warlord Charles Taylor won the presidential election in Liberia, purportedly with US\$ 1 million backing for his campaign from Taipei (van Loon, 2012). Repudiated by most of the international community, Charles Taylor paid a visit to Taipei in anticipation for further financial support. Despite the ROC's government reluctance in committing substantial aid because of the chaotic nature of the country and heightened corruption within the government, threats by officials from Monrovia to switch relations to Beijing have meant that the ROC money would be secured (Taylor, 2002). Following his victory, Taylor's government proclaimed to recognize "two Chinas," leading the PRC to promptly sever its diplomatic ties (van Loon, 2012). For Taylor (2002), Liberia did quite well out of this process. During the period between 1997 and 2002, Taipei provided around US\$1.5 million for the rehabilitation of the Monrovia's port facilities; spent US\$400,000 in navigational aid for the port; committed US\$2.8 million for the repair of several generators to the Liberian Electricity Corporation; and also spent roughly US\$10 million in the rehabilitation of the Monrovia international airport (Taylor, 2002). An extra US\$4.5 million was provided to the Taylor's regime for the printing of new banknotes. Taking into consideration that by the late 1990s Monrovia's regime was being shunned by the international community due to its war crimes, human rights violations and undemocratic practices, economic support of this amount, was remarkably generous and extremely welcomed. According to Taylor (2002) such actions can only be explained by the

perceived need of the ROC to secure as many diplomatic allies—seemingly at any cost—as possible.

It was not long before Charles Taylor came under fire with accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in relation to his participation in the Sierra Leone Civil war. In 2003, through the combined efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the international community, Taylor was forced to resign, paving the way for a political transition and presidential elections in 2005 (Moumouni, 2014). After Taylor fled, Liberia's transitional government once again shifted recognition back to the PRC, a decision that was influenced by the PRC's threat to vote down a US\$250 million budget for the dispatch of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) (van Loon, 2012; Tseng, 2008, Moumouni, 2014). Under these circumstances, Monrovia had to make a decision regarding the 'two 'Chinas' issue. Liberia's transitional government was surely aware that the continuation of its official relations with the ROC would be very harmful for the country's stability, as the PRC's threats were not merely rhetoric. In fact, the PRC has used its veto in the Security Council eight times since 1971, of which two were aimed at punishing the ROC's diplomatic allies (Holland, 2012). In 1997, the PRC vetoed a resolution which would have sent peacekeepers to aid Guatemala's peace process. The PRC's UN Ambassador Qin Hua-sun justified the veto on the basis of Guatemala's diplomatic alliance with the ROC, stating that Taiwan was "a major question of principle" bearing upon the PRC's sovereignty, and that "no state's peace process should be at the expense of another state's sovereignty" (IPS, 1997). In 1999, Beijing vetoed the extension of UN observers to Macedonia and closed its embassy in the country, as Macedonia had entered into official relations with the ROC after an alleged promise of a US\$1 billion in investments (Holland, 2012). In this respect, it is not difficult to understand Liberia's decision to side with the PRC. For Monrovia it was clear that any attempt aimed at maintaining its relations with the ROC could have had disastrous consequences. The need of approval by the PRC in the UNSC regarding the dispatch of the UNMIL became a matter of national concern. Peace and security had become more relevant issues for the country's future than the money being provided by the ROC, whose recipients had often been Liberia's corrupt political elite interested in using this money in dubious personal and political activities. For instance, upon investigation into Charles Taylor's bank accounts at

the Special Court for Sierra Leone at The Hague, it was revealed the ROC had transferred over US\$20 million into Taylor's personal account which were officially designated for medical and social aid programs, but conversely were used for arms deals. Coming under fire following these revelations, the ROC responded that it was under tremendous pressure from Taylor to provide such financing in order to maintain diplomatic relations, and that it accordingly ended dollar diplomacy (van Loon, 2012).

Monrovia's decision to cut its ties with Taipei in 2003 upon Charles Taylor departure has also been linked to the support provided by the PRC to opposition factions in Liberia. According to Richard Lin, Executive Director of the Africa-Taiwan Economic Forum, by the time Charles Taylor fled to Nigeria, the PRC was already strongly supporting politically and financially Liberia's transitional government and lately the Unity Party, whose presidential candidate, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, came to power in 2005. Thus, it was with no surprise that, following the presidential elections in 2005, the Liberian Senate and House of Representatives each passed the Resolution No. 001 of the 52nd Legislature, which 'confirms and reaffirms its total commitment to the 'one China' policy (Moumouni, 2014). This resolution made the new policy extremely strict, so much so that on the following year, when former house speaker Edwin Melvin Snowe suggested a possible severance of Monrovia's diplomatic relations with Beijing, the newly elected President Johnson-Sirleaf promptly denied the allegation and Snowe was eventually forced to resign (Moumouni, 2014).

For Liberia, the PRC's position as a permanent member of the UNSC made it vital in the approval of the UN resolutions aimed at promoting the normalization of the socio-political environment in the country. Beijing's status as an emerging power and its outstanding growing levels of investment and development aid to other developing countries, were additional incentives that the country's new administration could no longer ignore (Moumouni, 2014).

In fact, since the normalization of the Liberia-PRC relations, the PRC's development aid to Liberia has been rather significant, covering several socio-economic sectors such as education, infrastructure, debt cancellation, agriculture and health care. Additionally, the number of exchange of high level visits grew significantly. In 2006, the newly elected President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf paid a state visit to the PRC. In the same year

the PRC's foreign minister Li Zhao-xing visited Liberia, and Liberia's Foreign Minister, Thomas Yaya Nimely, visited Beijing in the end of 2006. In 2007, President Hu Jin-tao paid a historic state visit to Liberia reciprocating President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's state visit to the PRC in 2006, the first visit to Liberia by a head of state from the PRC (Embassy of the PRC in Liberia, n.d). In 2010, the vice Minister of Commerce in charge of Foreign Aid and Foreign Economic Relations of the PRC, Mr. Fu Zi-ying visited Liberia, and in 2011, Liberia's Foreign Minister paid an official visit to Beijing (Liberia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010).

. The trade volume between the two countries has also witnessed impressive growth rates. In 2001, when Liberia was still recognizing the ROC, trade with the PRC was US\$ 141.5 million. However, upon the establishment of official relations with Beijing at the expense of Taipei, two-way trade grew exponentially and by 2011 it had reached US\$ 5 billion (Moumouni, 2014). These numbers make the PRC Liberia's major trading partner followed by the EU, the US and Ivory Coast (MOCI, 2013). They are also an indicator that apart from the political factors which primarily motivated the transitional governments to cut ties with the ROC and enter into official relations with the PRC, economic factors have also weighed in the decision. One must not ignore the fact that during the period Liberia maintained relations with the ROC, despite the money provided by the later to the former in order to secure diplomatic recognition, trade between the two countries was rather insignificant. On the other hand, perspectives of an increase in trade and investments by the PRC if relations between the two countries were established, proved to be an important incentive, which coupled with the political dimension, further legitimized Liberia's transitional government decision to break ties with the ROC and consequently siding with the PRC.

### **5.5.3 Conclusion**

Liberia enjoyed diplomatic relations with the ROC in three different time periods in the last five decades. Its back-and-forth movement between the 'two Chinas' started in 1977, when Monrovia cut off its ties with Taipei in favor of Beijing. Relations have come

to an end in 2003 when Liberia's transitional government signed a Joint Declaration and a Memorandum of Understanding in which it once again recognized the PRC.

The circumstances surrounding the most recent term of relations between the ROC and Liberia have highlighted the ROC's lack of political clout, especially when one of its allies is in need of strong political support. It also revealed that the dollar diplomacy practiced by the ROC during the mid 1990s and early 2000s had its limitations as it does not guarantee a state's allegiance permanently.

Dollar diplomacy represented a very effective instrument for obtaining diplomatic standing in Liberia for a certain period of time. In this regard, both the ROC and PRC were willing to provide financial incentives to Liberia while other donor countries withdrew or were standing aside. However, political instability proved to be an insurmountable obstacle that the ROC's financial backing alone could not resolve and finally resulted in a necessary shift of allegiance to the PRC in order to achieve peace following the decline of Charles Taylor. In this case, Beijing's position as a permanent member of the UNSC could help Monrovia to provide what Taipei could hardly offer: social-political stability through the approval of the US\$250 million budget for the dispatch of the UNMIL. Moreover, the economic benefits that could arise from the normalization of relations with the PRC were an additional incentive which should more than ever be taken seriously.

So far, taking into account Liberia's current stable domestic situation, significant bilateral trade volume, as well as stable political relations with the PRC reflected by the sound development of the exchange of high level visits, Monrovia's decision to side with Beijing at the expense of Taipei, has apparently met the country's most vital interests. For the ROC, it became clear that 'money diplomacy' has its own limitations, especially when the recipient country is facing a socio-political crisis which requires strong political backing. In this respect, Liberia's awareness of the ROC's lack of political clout in the international arena, and its urgent need to solve its domestic problems, prompted Monrovia to ultimately side with Beijing, which not only had the capacity to help bringing back peace and security to the country, but also to become influential actor in the restoration of Liberia's weak socio-economic structures.

## CHAPTER VI

### 6. Conclusion

The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine the relations between the ROC and Africa, and in particular, to try to bring new insight on the possible reasons shaping sub-Saharan states decisions to withdraw or refrain from recognizing the ROC. As it has been indicated throughout this project, the ROC has been facing fierce competition from the PRC over time. As an emerging political and economic power and with a growing regional presence in Africa, the PRC's capacity to advance sub-Saharan countries' interests has motivated a great majority of these states to side with Beijing at the expense of Taipei. For the ROC, this fact has put its diplomatic presence in Africa at risk. The current number of its diplomatic allies on the continent has reached its lowest since 1988, when it was also recognized by only three African countries.

The end of the civil war in 1949 and the ROC's government relocation to the island of Taiwan marked the beginning of the diplomatic 'tug of war' between the two Chinas. In its pursuit for international recognition to assert its legitimate status in the international community, and desire to maintain its seat in the UN, the ROC tried its utmost to secure diplomatic recognition throughout the globe. It was in this context that Africa had, by the early 1960s, become a new battlefield for Chinese diplomatic competition due to the growing number of newly independent states. During this period, it is undeniable that the ROC performed quite well in Africa, as the majority of African countries regarded the ROC as the sole legitimate representative of China. Yet, the situation changed drastically after 1971 when the UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 recognized the PRC as the sole legitimate representative of China in the UN and expelled the ROC representatives from the organization. From 1971 onwards, Taipei has seen its number of diplomatic allies drastically reduced, a situation which was further exacerbated upon Washington's decision to enter into official diplomatic relations with Beijing in 1979.

As the numbers have shown in this study, African countries have actively participated in this process. While in 1969 the ROC was recognized by 22 African states, currently this number has been reduced to only three. Under the Beijing's so-called 'One



China' policy, states had to make a choice to either side with the ROC or the PRC. With regard to the effects of this policy, this thesis applied the Neorealist theory and its 'bandwagon behavior' to better explain the possible reasons prompting sub-Saharan states to withdraw or refrain from recognizing the ROC over time. In this context, an examination of sub-Saharan states political reality became imperative. Upon a careful analysis, it became evident that the proposed layout of grouping countries with similar national interests and foreign policy goals, matched Waltz's concept of balance of power in the neorealist theory in which states tend to display a group behavior (bandwagon) around the state which is characterized as leading, as this is beneficial for their interests. This study has indicated that a set of five different key national interests in the sub-Saharan Africa have been an important driving force in hampering the success of the ROC on the continent, these are: ideology, natural resources, international political ambitions, domestic political instability and the pariah condition of some states. These have been factors leading several sub-Saharan countries to 'bandwagon' towards Beijing, thus further contributing to the ROC's increasing marginalization in Africa. Upon careful research of the proposed group of countries and respective case studies, two patterns became evident. Whereas the pariah states and natural resource rich countries, have indirectly refrained from recognizing the ROC, ideology, political instability and international political ambitions, on the other hand, seem to have been factors directly influencing these group of states to withdraw or refrain recognition from the ROC.

For pariah states and resource rich countries, there is no concrete evidence supporting the idea that their political and economic needs have been the main factors prompting Zimbabwe and Angola to refrain from recognizing the ROC. Yet, Zimbabwe's need of the PRC's political backing at the UNSC against sanctions imposed by Western countries, and Angola's eagerness to benefit from the PRC's business approach with no conditions attached and emphasis on resource deals in exchange for infrastructures, are important factors prompting these states to enhance their relationship with Beijing. Surely aware of Beijing's assertiveness regarding the 'one China' policy, both the Zimbabwean and the Angolan government know that siding with the ROC would ensure further international isolation and a considerable loss of much needed investments. As these countries are hardly in a position to afford such circumstances, any pariah or resource rich

country's diplomatic move towards recognizing the politically weak and less economically powerful ROC, seems to be very unlikely.

As for states founded on a particular ideology, countries with international ambitions and politically unstable states, this study has determined that these three factors had a more direct role in prompting this group of states to withdraw or refrain from recognizing the ROC. Regarding circumstances of ideology, the socialist leanings of several sub-Saharan countries were quite influential in their decision to side with the PRC. In the case of Tanzania, its developmental model, self-reliance principle, and the introduction of the *ujamaa* villages of the 1960s and 1970s owed its inspiration to the socialist PRC, a fact which prompted President Nyerere to foster close relations with Beijing. Taking into account the role that ideology played during the Cold War period and Nyerere's desire to legitimize its policies through support obtained from the PRC, these facts strongly support the idea that ideological considerations had a major influence in Tanzania's decision to side with the PRC instead of the ROC.

Sub-Saharan countries with international ambitions have tended to withdraw their recognition from the ROC due to the latter's inability to promote these countries' interests in the international arena. In the case proposed, this study has shown that South Africa's reformulation of its foreign policy agenda upon the end of the Apartheid era, namely a desire to play an important role in world affairs, played a key role in Pretoria's decision to switch sides. Aware of the ROC's inability to provide much needed strong political backing, establishing official relations with the increasingly powerful PRC became imperative for Pretoria if it wanted to expand its international profile. In order to attain this goal, Mandela's administration decided to terminate its official relations with Taipei in 1996 and subsequently granted official recognition to Beijing.

In the case of politically unstable countries, this thesis has determined that domestic politics can seriously affect relationships with Taipei. For Liberia, economic aspects became less important than those of security and stability. This fact, not only evidenced the limitations of the ROC's dollar diplomacy, but it has also made clear that its obscure international status could do very little to solve Liberia's problems. Eager to put an end to the country's civil war and stabilize its social-political environment, Monrovia's new

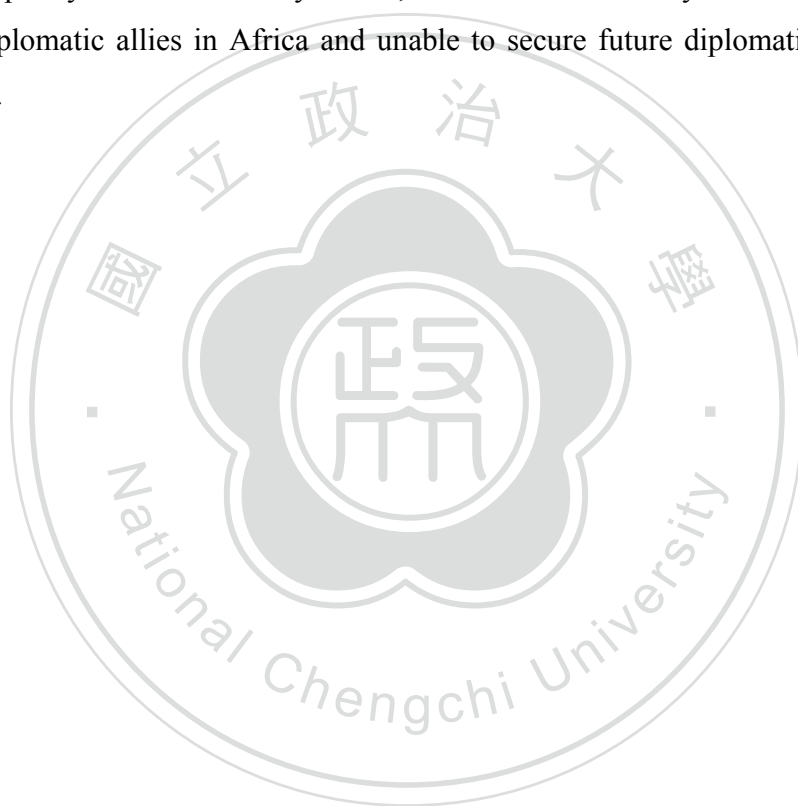
administration felt compelled to cut its ties with the ROC, and side with the only ‘China’ that could help bring peace to the country, the PRC.

This project has shown that in the analysis of relations between the ROC and sub-Saharan states, the PRC is a decisive element. Through its commercial, economic and military capacity, its permanent seat in the UNSC, and the establishment of FOCAC, Beijing has in the last few decades been able to increase its presence in Africa and nearly ‘pushed Taipei out of the continent’. The PRC not only has been able to secure official recognition from the majority of sub-Saharan states, but it has also been able to engage in very close relationships with these states through an increase of businesses and the intensification of high ranking official visits to Africa. This study has indicated that in four of the five cases analyzed, the PRC has become that state’s main economic partner. In the case of Zimbabwe, the PRC ranks third, but trade between the countries is growing at an accelerated pace. Additionally, high ranking official visits have allowed the strengthening of bilateral relationships and served as a mechanism for the PRC to increase its regional presence in Africa and to further hamper any diplomatic overture from the ROC on the continent. Interestingly, no African country has shifted its ties from the PRC to the ROC since 2000.

Currently, the ROC’s presence in Africa is shaky and its future presence on the continent is uncertain. The Gambian case indicated that even under the ‘diplomatic truce’ between the ROC and PRC, the ROC’s diplomatic allies seem eager to establish official relations with the PRC. Regarding the three remaining allies, this study has also indicated that in the mid-long term, new diplomatic switches might occur. If Sao Tome and Principe’s vast oil reserves are proven, the island country might consider siding with the PRC in the hope of obtaining the same benefits as the other sub-Saharan resource rich countries. The recent establishment of a Chinese business office in the island country might be a sign in this regard. In Burkina Faso, the recent political and social unrest which resulted in the overthrow of the long-serving leader Blaise Compaore has left the country under military control and future relations with the ROC uncertain. In this case, the past lessons from Liberia or Guinea-Bissau should definitely not be disregarded. Finally, the Kingdom of Swaziland has been the ROC’s most loyal diplomatic ally. Yet, as democratic waves sweep across Africa, no one can guarantee that King Mswati III’s absolute monarchy

will endure eternally. Although presently unlikely, any possible regime change taking place in the future will surely require a revision of Swaziland's foreign relations. For the ROC, this might have critical implications to its longstanding relationship with Swaziland.

All things considered, despite the ROC's efforts over the last fifty years to increase its number of diplomatic allies in Africa, the reality is that under the current circumstances, the space to conduct its foreign policy on the continent has become extremely reduced. Unless domestic changes take place within the PRC politics, of which the abolition of the 'one China' policy would be a key factor, the ROC will hardly be able to retain its remaining diplomatic allies in Africa and unable to secure future diplomatic alliances on the continent.



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