

Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China (PRC)



Country Background: The People's Republic of China (PRC) is the world's most populated nation. It is one of the largest exporters and importers in the world, consuming a third of the world's steel and over half of the world's concrete. China has been led by the Communist Party since 1949 and is a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

China's investment in Africa, roughly \$50 billion in 2006, boosted growth rates and spurred much-needed infrastructure improvements. Some Africans welcomed this investment "China knows what it means to be poor, and has evolved a successful wealth creation formula that it is willing to share with African countries," stated a former Nigerian finance minister. But resentment against China in Africa—where many complain that cheap Chinese-manufactured goods are damaging local industry—is growing.

Western officials and human rights organizations express alarm at China's willingness to invest in countries with questionable human rights records. For example, under Beijing's policy of "noninterference in domestic affairs," China is investing in Sudan and buying its oil despite Sudan's refusal to accept UN **peacekeeping** troops in Darfur. It also conducts business with the repressive regime of Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe. These countries welcome China's cash, technology, and political protection from international pressures. Chinese purchases of Sudanese oil provide much needed income for the Sudanese government.

China is also a major supplier of weapons to the Sudanese government, which has spent \$100 million on Chinese fighter planes alone. Chinese President Hu Jintao visited Sudan in February 2007 and called on nations to "respect the **sovereignty** of Sudan." He promised to build a new presidential palace for the Sudanese president, cancelled \$80 million in debt, and announced plans to build a new road to an oil refinery partly owned by China.

International pressure was put on China to use its influence with the Sudanese government. In 2007, China assumed the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council and pushed hard to ensure that UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1769 passed. The resolution authorized the deployment of 26,000 infantry troops and police officers to Darfur. To demonstrate interest in bringing peace to Sudan, China sent 150 engineers to the Darfur **peacekeeping** mission and held an international conference on Darfur. It also designated a Special Representative for Darfur, Mr. Liu Gui-jin, who was active in diplomatic dialogue with Sudan.

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Opening Position:

- You believe the Sudanese government is a sovereign nation and therefore has the right to conduct internal affairs without the scrutiny of outside parties.
- It is your position that the governments of China and Sudan should be free to broker business agreements that are beneficial to both states.
- You believe the **ICC** has no jurisdiction in Sudan and should not prosecute any member of the Sudanese government since **Genocide** has not been proven.
- You believe that the UN should not impose sanctions on the Sudanese government.
- You do not condone the sanctions imposed by the United States on Sudanese businesses.
- You believe other countries assign all blame for the conflict to the government and do not hold the rebels responsible for their violent acts which perpetuate the conflict.
- You do support the peace process and you have a better relationship with the government than most countries. You are willing to encourage the government to reach a peace agreement.
- China is a friend to many governments on the continent of Africa and is helping to advance the economy of several African countries through investment.

Questions to Consider:

- What is the nature of China's investments in Sudan? How do China and the government of Sudan benefit?
- What does China think should be done in Darfur? Why?
- What is China's view on UN **peacekeepers** going into Darfur?
- What could motivate China to use its influence on the government of Sudan to stop the violence in Darfur?
- How are the views of the Chinese government about **sovereignty** shaped by its own experience in international relations?
- Are there limits on the **sovereignty** of nations if certain conditions are met? Why or why not? If there are limits, under what conditions can **sovereignty** be challenged?
- What are some methods of influence available to the Chinese government on this issue in Sudan?

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