

**Foreign Policy Analysis****An Overview of the Chinese Agenda: Global Sustainable Peace and Development****Hans Nibshan Seesaghur<sup>1</sup>, Ethan Robertson<sup>2</sup>**

**Abstract:** Our globalised world is prone to complex challenges affecting mankind. As an ancient saying goes- China is an old civilised nation endowed with a new mission. However, this new mission here is referred to as the “Chinese Dream” and can only be accomplished in a peaceful environment. The concept of *peaceful rise* is perhaps the most important Chinese foreign policy intended to shape the global architecture. The Chinese agenda of global sustainable peace and development is delicately interwoven with the *peaceful rise* concept, which can be plainly interpreted as an adherence to existing international norms and an obligation to respecting prevailing global norms. This paper investigates China’s agenda of peaceful rise and development to provide an in-depth and evidence-based analysis of the new policy thinking and its tenets. The study revealed that China tries to manifest the policy thinking in five major foreign policies namely: (1) Peaceful Development; (2) New Model of Major-country Relations; (3) Neighbourhood Diplomacy; (4) Cooperation with Developing Countries; and (5) Multilateral Relations. These doctrines have assisted China in establishing itself as a part of the international society and an integral part of the global system. This paper also examines the role of China at the United Nations, which is a priority for China’s foreign strategy in the new century. Moreover, this paper will discuss the challenges China will have to face in developing new standards on global governance for the 21st century. Finally, the paper will assess whether the new mission, “Chinese Dream”, is on the right path to accomplish sustainable peace and development.

**Keywords:** China; United Nations; governance; sustainable peace and development

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<sup>1</sup> PhD Candidate in Public Administration, School of Political Science and Public Administration, Wuhan University, China, Address: Wuchang, Wuhan, Hubei, 430072 China, Tel.: +8613871180628, Corresponding author: hans230@yahoo.com.

<sup>2</sup> Master’s in International Relations, Sina Corporation, China, Address: Beijing, China, E-mail: erob7891@sina.cn.

## 1. Introduction

The philosophy of *peaceful rise* has seen China emerged as a world power within a short time span (Zheng & Tok, 2015). According to Yi (2013), however, the philosophy is wearing out, and China has been implementing the concept of peaceful development. (Zheng & Tok, 2015) Since early 2000, China's fourth generation leaders have drafted foreign policies that revolved around the peaceful rise and development of China and other countries (Zheng & Tok, 2015). Chinese policymakers developed the concepts after much global scepticism regarding the rapid growth of China and its achievement of hegemonic status.<sup>1</sup> As such, many theories were probing into the "China Threat", which apparently spelt doom for the world. However, the two philosophies of peaceful rise and development reduced the apparent strain.

China is an old civilisation and has contributed immensely in shaping global history, knowledge and policies. During the Second World War, the country was utterly destroyed, and its cities and industries were badly affected. After the war, a new leadership instituted measures that helped in rapid transformation and recovery from the shackles of regression. As such, the government led by Mao Zedong established a favourable environment for the development of agriculture, services and manufacturing (Starr, 2012). Political stability, the rule of law and peace led to rapid growth and industrialisation of the country. (Starr, 2012) In the 1990s, China overtook Japan to become the world's second largest economy only to the United States. Since then, the country has maintained an unprecedented pace of economic growth with its GDP growing at an average of 7% (Chung, 2007).

Over the last few years, China's foreign policies and strategies have undergone significant changes that reflect the changing role of the country as a world power (Anthony, 2015). According to Yi (2013), China aims to provide the international community with a new global design that emphasises and promotes sustainable peace and development. Up to the present moment, China has been largely a follower due to its strict policies on non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries (Tamara, 2014). As such, the United States and the United Kingdom have been at the forefront in shaping new conventions and dictates to guide global governance (Herrington, 2011). The country is an active member of major global organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the

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<sup>1</sup> Xia, Ming. China threat or a peaceful rise of China. 3.12.2014. [www.nytimes.com/ref/college/coll-china-politics-007.html](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/coll-china-politics-007.html).

International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Additionally, the country is a member of regional economic blocks such as the One Belt, One Road Initiative and the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) (Yi, 2013).

This paper is divided into three core chapters that discuss China's peaceful rise and development in an iterative fashion. It provides an in-depth and evidence-based analysis of the five major policies that China deems as important in establishing a new world order. The policies are Peaceful Development, New Model of Major-country Relations, Neighbourhood Diplomacy, Cooperation with Developing Countries and Multilateral Relations. In addition, the paper analyses how the new policies fit with the United Nations' peace and development agenda. What is more, the paper will also delineate the challenges that China is bound to face while establishing a new world order. Lastly, the paper assesses whether the *Chinese Dream* mission is viable and its prevailing status in accomplishing sustainable peace and development.

This paper also seeks to answer the following questions: What is the strategy or case presented by China? Who will subscribe to the new agenda given the conditions under which the ideas were established? What implementations will China follow to pursue the said strategies, and lastly why the concept of *peaceful rise*?<sup>1</sup> (Domínguez, 2015) It is important to assess these critical questions before any meaningful discussion of the previous five policies can be assessed.

## 2. China's Peaceful Rise and Development

It is no secret that China has exhibited unparalleled growth rates and economic diversification. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States remained the sole hegemony, with unrivalled economic and military might. However over the last two decades, China has proven to be an alternative force that is capable of keeping the United States on its toes and influencing global order. (Wang & Rosenau, 2005) With this return to power, China finds itself taking up a much greater role in maintaining international peace and order.

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<sup>1</sup> Feus, T. & J. Ye. The United Nations Post-2015 Agenda for Global Development: Perspectives from China and Europe. Bonn: German Development Institute, 2014.

## **2.1. Peaceful Development**

According to Zheng and Tok (2015), one does not need a crystal ball to forecast whether China will rise in the foreseeable future. The big question in the present moment is how it will rise and impact global order. As much as the country's leadership try to fight off claims that China poses a potent threat to established global order, the possibility can be overlooked, as it was the case with Japan during the reign of Meiji and Germany during the Wilhelmina regime. (Wang & Rosenau, 2015) In the first place, China's rise has disrupted international structure and domestic order. With its continued rise, more disruptions are imperative. China's rise can only impact purposefully if the leadership manages (Zheng & Tok, 2015) to attain the very elusive equilibrium between sustainable local/domestic development and peaceful international/external environment.

Today, the international environment is characterised by interdependence among countries and accelerated economic globalisation. (Zheng & Tok, 2015) While isolation breeds poverty and underdevelopment, as is the case with North Korea, globalisation of production and financial services is a key factor that has contributed to the rise of China. As a matter of fact, China is at the centre of the aforementioned global phenomena since its continued economic superiority is pegged onto the dynamics of the international environment. Therefore, it is imperative that the country promote peace and sustainable development across the world since what happens in the rest of the world also impacts the economic well-being of China. (Wang & Rosenau, 2015) For instance, China relies heavily on the Middle East for energy security. Therefore, it would be expected that the country is an active player in the region's politics. However, it is not the case since the United States has an aggressive foreign policy towards the Middle East. The policy may impact China's economic situation since sanctions from the United States against Middle East countries may disrupt the flow of oil and gas from the resource-rich region. Even though China may want to intervene, it cannot do so because of the influence of the United States on international activities, particularly in Western countries, where China has a huge market. Such are the dilemmas that the country faces as it develops. In 2015 and early 2016, China's economic growth rate dropped causing jitters in the international community. The rest of the world was

affected by the demand for mineral ores; steel and oil had dropped causing adverse effects to other countries.<sup>1</sup>

Like the United States, China needs recognition from other countries. Moreover, the country has to fulfil certain duties and responsibilities, as it is the norm when countries outpace others to become global powers. Given that countries are heavily interdependent, the first role the country has to play is acknowledging, maintaining and respecting the interdependent nature by instituting measures to facilitate peace and development (Anthony, 2015). While the peaceful rise concept provided the means to wade off scepticism, China needs to develop *soft power* to influence international politics and establish its global discourse (Zheng & Tok, 2015). It urgently needs the legitimate tools to counter the American rhetoric since the world's intellectual field is largely American-dominated. According to Grimm (2014), it is impossible for China to become a responsible power using a unique civilisation standard since it would be ineffective in breaking the American dominance. Therefore, it is imperative that the country has to nurture its specific soft appeal to match that of the United States. In fact, it has to be highly appealing so that the world can consider it as an alternative. In summary, America has a strong grip of the international intellectual field.<sup>2</sup> Feus & Ye (2014), suggest that China's leadership understands that any changes the country wishes to enforce internationally will have to emanate from the international system. While it has consistently maintained that it will never play an antagonist to the American-initiated global order, China has not put up enough effort to challenge United States' hegemonic status as the Soviet Union did. (Zheng & Tok, 2015)

Having laid the foundation, the paper will now elaborate the tenets of Chinese foreign policy and assess the likelihood of achievement of the *Chinese Dream*.

## 2.2. New Model of Major-Country Relations

As mentioned earlier, China's development has huge implications on the governance of the world. While China may have an easy time appealing to the less developed countries to subscribe to its rhetoric, major countries such as the United States, France, Russia, United Kingdom, Japan and Germany cannot be so easily convinced (Domínguez, 2015). As China's political ambitions and the economy

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<sup>1</sup>Prybyla, J. (2014). The Political Economy of Development in Communist China: China and the Market.

<sup>2</sup>Grimm, S. (2014). The China-EU Strategic Partnership on Development. *European Strategic Partnerships Observatory*, pp. 5-38.

continue to grow, so will its impacts and influences in the world. In the first place, it is important to define global governance. Wang and Rosenau (2015), define global governance as temporary control that is actively being constructed and reconstructed. Therefore, global governance is more fluid and tentative. Before the political and economic reforms of the 1970s, China was largely alienated by the West, but its economic growth has brought with it recognition. On his first visit to the United States, Chinese president, Xi Jinping suggested building a model for major-country relationships particularly between China and the United States. The principal reason is that China has often been at loggerheads with the West because of its stance regarding major world affairs. Again, having veto power and a seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the power of China as a policymaker, cannot be underestimated. For example, whilst the United States has over the years called on China to assist in implementation of sanctions against North Korea, China has maintained a reserved status and provided an economic safety net for the wayward country. As a result, UN and United States sanctions have had little success in North Korea. According to Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister, the United States and China should forge a win-win cooperation relationship, and foster friendship between the Chinese and the Americans. Xi Jinping called for a new model for major country relationships that underscores non-conflict, non-confrontational, win-win relationship and mutual respect. The following sections expound on the proposed new model for major-country relationship.

### **2.3. Neighbourhood Diplomacy**

The political elites in China have always advocated for good neighbourliness as the precursor to the peaceful rise of the country. (Lee, 2014) Senior government officials have on numerous occasions stressed the importance of companionship and friendliness to surrounding neighbours. Given that most of the Asian region is engulfed in ideological wars, China aims to promote an image of friendship and good neighbourliness especially in the Far and Middle East. This doctrine is working for China since the country has witnessed improved ties with most Asian countries over the last two decades. According to Xia (2014), China aims to show the international community that its rise is tied to the good relations it has with the wider Asian region. Therefore, it aims to create an appeal to the international community that good neighbourliness is the key to economic development since the fates of surrounding nations are inextricably entwined with those of a given country. Neighbourhood diplomacy has seen China improve ties with regional

influential trade blocks such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Yi (2013), notes that while military and other strategic alliances have had limited success between China and neighbouring countries, economics has emerged as a critical area. In fact, Chinese, ASEAN and other countries interests overlap and there is a high level of interdependence among the countries in the region. In 2015, China's trade with the ASEAN region was in excess of \$300 billion. Chinese exports to the region were double the price of the imports (Anthony, 2015). Again, in line with this doctrine, China is increasingly establishing itself as a regional stabiliser of economic development. (Zheng & Tok, 2015)

During the 1997 Asian economic crisis, China played an active role in preventing the collapse of ASEAN economic block that plays a huge role in keeping the region afloat. In such times, the United States and the IMF implement draconian laws that require countries experiencing economic turmoil to devalue their currencies. Most countries expected China to devalue the RMB, which would have dealt a further blow to the economics of the region. However, China did not and it came as a relief to ASEAN nations. Once again, it exemplified neighbourhood diplomacy at its best. China went on to assist members of the ASEAN region to get back on track and resume normal operations. For example, it assisted Thailand with \$1 billion to aid in recovery from the damage sustained during the financial crisis. Furthermore, China donated about \$6 billion to the IMF to assist in IMF's programmes in Southeast Asia. Although China's failure to devalue its currency to spur recovery in the region remains debatable in the economic circles, the country has proven beyond an iota of doubt that it is a listening and caring partner that considers the interests of other countries when formulating its policies (Gebrehiwot & Hongwu, 2013). Again, China has defined the new tenets of friendship when dealing with other countries. Unlike the United States and the IMF, the country does not attach other strings that make it difficult for other countries to benefit. For example, before the United States and the IMF advance loans or grants to other countries, they usually define how such loans can be used. Furthermore, they usually insist on untainted human rights records and recognition of controversial sexuality groups, among other subtleties that make cooperation incredibly difficult. (Starr, 2012, pp. 12-88) For example, before China engaged with Africa in a much friendlier way, the United States and the IMF would give loans and grants with numerous conditions including structural adjustment programmes which ruined

African economies.<sup>1</sup> Another example is the Zimbabwean economy, which is in tatters after years of sanctioning by the American and European regimes. When China came in, it offered the country development loans without interference on internal affairs whatsoever. Additionally, on many occasions, China has gone against other countries with veto powers to oppose any harm intended upon its friends. For instance, it has opposed some punitive measures against Burma since it is a member of ASEAN and any measures to harm the country would ultimately hurt China. In a nutshell, China has not failed in this doctrine and the examples show that the country considers the interests of its neighbours when drafting its policies or when a multilateral decision is made.

The above section has discussed neighbourhood diplomacy and illustrated with examples on how China exercises good neighbourliness with surrounding, as well as geographically distant, countries. This doctrine is appealing as it is evidence-based and China can correctly attribute its success to good neighbourliness.

#### **2.4. Cooperation with Developing Countries**

Over the last one decade, China has swarmed Africa in an unprecedented way, which has left policy analysts, international media and economists awed by the move.<sup>2</sup> For too long, the continent has been sidelined by the international community and written off by the West. The only time when the West cooperated with Africa was when the latter had ulterior motives such as liaising with African governments for permission to extract oil, precious stones and precious metals. The West had maintained a foreign policy of aid, which has been revised to mutual development and reciprocity to counter the Chinese offensive.<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that all countries in Africa are developing and some such as Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria have made huge strides in development. Media pundits have labelled the mass migration of Chinese companies in Africa as selfish and evil, since there is a general assumption that China is after Africa's natural resources. Again, Rudd and Kevin (2016), highlight the danger involved in China's quest in Africa where there is political instability particular due to the *mineral curse*. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Safeworld. Conflict and the Post-2015 development agenda Perspectives from South Africa. Johannesburg: Safeworld, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP (2015). Heads of State and Government Adopt 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Global Issues Newsletter (United Nations Development Programme), pp. 6-45.

<sup>3</sup>Rudd, Kevin. China's impact on regional and global order. 16 December 2013. [www.iiss.org/en/events/archive/2013-5126/december-c771/rudd-buchan-083c](http://www.iiss.org/en/events/archive/2013-5126/december-c771/rudd-buchan-083c) (accessed August 2, 2016).



other hand, China is viewed with less criticism when it contributes to establishment of long-term economic development through creation of income-generating activities and infrastructural projects. However, Yi (2013) suggested that the underlying security, political and economic reasons regarding Chinese policy on Africa remain largely unexplored. Sino-African relationships have been smooth without major disruptions and disturbances as the countries share a historical sense of victimisation by the West. Additionally, more affinity is created through their identity as developing countries.

Apart from economic development, China cooperates with developing countries to assist in developing sustainable security measures to guard against the increasing threat from crime and terrorism (Grimm, 2014). For example, it has contributed hundreds of peacekeeping troops in Africa to help in fights against insurgent groups and restore order. It understands the need for stable governments for growth and development. Again, China cooperates with Africa countries to fight pirates particularly on the east coast of Africa. For example, it has cooperated with Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa to contain Somali pirates who had made the important sea route unnavigable (Feus & Ye, 2014). The country has established itself as a naval power with capacities to patrol world waterways and to enhance peace to foster international trade.

Lastly, China entered into an agreement with other emerging powers including Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa to establish a bloc abbreviated as BRICS. The main aim is to counter the Western rhetoric and encourage cultural, commercial and political cooperation between the member countries (Grimm, 2014). Other aims are reformation of global governance structures particularly in financial and economic fields and instituting reforms in major political institutions such as the United Nations.

The above narration has shown China is seeking cooperation with developing countries for a number of reasons. While many sceptics have raised concerns over China's hidden quest for natural resources in developing countries, it is important to note that the country emphasises mutual development and reciprocity. While they have been defined on paper, China is increasingly putting them into practice going by the massive development projects being undertaken in Africa by China. While China provides the loans and the manpower, African countries pay the loans with interests and China also benefits (Feus & Ye, 2014). Therefore, there is mutual growth and development. Again, since Africa lacks the technical knowhow

to reciprocate the same in China, the two parties have established special trade concessions where African goods are exempted from certain tariffs and quotas in China (Safeworld, 2015). Since most exports from Africa are agricultural, China has made efforts to purchase higher amounts of goods from the continent to feed its huge population (Gebrehiwot & Hongwu, 2013). In some countries such as Mozambique, China has leased arable land where it farms and all the produce is taken to China. The practices exemplify reciprocity. The next section will discuss multilateral relations with other countries as part of the Chinese agenda of peaceful development (Lee, 2014).

### **2.5. Multilateral Relations**

Multilateralism is extensive in literature and application of the policy. Wang and Rosenau (2015), defined multilateralism as the practice of coordination of national policies while in groups of three or more states. However, this definition has been called into question by Lee (2014), and Tamara (2014), by referring to the definition as subsuming forms of institutions that were traditionally viewed as elements of bilateralism.(Lee, 2014) For this reason, Rudd and Kevin (2013) suggested that there must be generalised principles of conduct for multilateralism to work. In China's context, the country did not open up until its admission to the United Nations in 1972. However, after the country underwent reforms in the late 1970s, the country is more connected and integrated to the global economy than ever before. It is among the pioneers of international development and globalisation. Before 2000s, China was never willing to participate or join multilateral agreements or organisations. Today, China counts itself as a member of many multilateral agreements and organisations across the globe. The country is proposing this agenda since it has worked for it and it may well work for other countries (Zheng & Tok, 2015). For example, China has contributed to Six-Party Talks on the Korean Peninsula and has formally joined the war on global terror. Besides, the country also contributes to the UN's peacekeeping force.

Since China established economic relationship with ASEAN, it has developed the region and has become a case study for cooperation and regional integration. Many of the countries that were foes are now friends thanks to increased economic cooperation. While there are many benefits, there are also corollary issues that come with membership. (Zheng & Tok, 2015) For instance, it adheres to ASEAN code of conduct on non-members. Despite having lesser impact as a non-member, the relationship is worth maintenance owing to the value of goods traded with the

bloc. In short, China is not a reactive but a pro-active member of the current international community. (Xia, 2014) It has embraced multilateralism and appeals to other countries to join multilateral organisations or enter into multilateral agreements since they are more beneficial in the long run.

### 3. The Chinese Agenda Challenges

The main challenge that China faces as it attempts to influence international peace and development is integration of the institutions into the world policy architecture. (Zheng & Tok, 2015) Besides, its relations with key world powers such as Japan and countries bordering the South China Sea will also impact the implementation process. Most importantly, the country will have to engage the United States at all levels. Considering the challenges, it can be said that the country faces a steep slope since the United States is likely to pressure it over its stance on Taiwan, its increasing presence and influence in Africa and attitude and policies towards the Middle East and South America.<sup>1</sup> As a result, China faces a steep learning curve since its policies have to be appealing and at the same time economically viable and promote peace in all countries including those with which it has frosty relations. China's current slate of foreign policy strategies, further discussed below, has the potential to address all of these challenges, and insure a continuation of its peaceful rise.

#### 3.1. Pursuing Peaceful Sino-US Relations

According to Patrick and Thaler (2010), there is no relationship that will be more important in shaping global governance and establishing prospects for a cooperative international community than that of the United States and China. However, the two countries have different ideologies regarding what should be done, why and how to do things. They lack understanding from policymaking to implementation.<sup>2</sup> For example, from 2009–2010, there were elevated Sino-American tensions and acrimonies regarding currency manipulation, climate change, sales of arms to Taiwan and Internet Censorship (Patrick & Thaler, 2010). The misunderstandings often led to mutual disillusionment and a lack of cooperation between the two countries. The West expects China to assume a

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<sup>1</sup> Domínguez, C. (2015). *Including Security in the Post-2015 Development Goals*. Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

<sup>2</sup>Patrick, M., and Thaler, F. (2010). *China, the United States, and Global Governance: Shifting Foundations of World Order*. Beijing: Council on Foreign Relations.

greater responsibility in solving global problems, something China seems hesitant to do. Therefore, balancing the dual identity, where on one side China is a developing country, and on the other it is a great power, will continue to strain the relationship between the country and the West. According to Chung (2007), the United States and China should read each other's strategies correctly and base their undertakings and judgements on fact. Xi Jing Ping in his statement noted that the frosty relationship between his country and the United States has been largely inspired by self-imposed bias, hearsay and paranoia. To avoid conflicts, it is imperative that the countries exercise mutual respect and seek common ground while resolving their differences. Again, since the two countries have already determined what they stand to gain out of their association with each other, they should define ways of resolving their disagreements. Yi (2013) suggested that the countries should assume a constructive approach and put up a spirited fight to transform their conflicts into areas of cooperation. Such approaches would ultimately expand consensus and enhance understanding between the two major countries. Xi also proposed mutual accommodation of each of the country's concerns, ambitions and interests and adopts the concept of greatest common ground where interests seem to be converging. With that in mind, the non-conflict strategies would improve Sino-American relations and the two can become bedrock of international stability and global peace as well as development. As an illustration, the United States was sceptical about the creation of the Silk Road Fund and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which are part of China's Belt and Road initiative China. The West construed China's efforts as attempts to create spheres of political influence in Asia. As a result, there was a baseless conflict between the countries. This principle would assist in resolving tensions between the countries at a time when any major move undertaken by any of the two raises eyebrows and disagreements. (Zheng & Tok, 2015)

### **3.2. Mutual Respect**

According to Yi (2013), mutual respect is the central foundation upon which the new model is built. It is a basic principle for the model at a time when the world is getting more diversified. In the first place, China and the United States are fundamentally different in numerous aspects. For example, the social and economic system, culture and history. However, their economic and political ambitions are relatively similar. The differences may inspire hatred and diplomatic scuffles if respect is not exercised between the two countries. Thus, it is imperative that the two countries must respect each other's social, political and economic systems and

the paths chosen by the people. For example, while the United States is a great multiparty democracy where the will of the people reigns, China is a unitary socialist, one-party state, which allows no competition from other factions. While the United States promotes American-defined principles on good governance and democracy, it must respect China's leadership system and not criticise it for mutual respect to be effective. Similarly, major countries ought to respect each other's core concerns and interests and seek common grounds when faced with controversial issues. Mutual respect is also critical at a time when the old bi-polar model established by their predecessors is becoming obsolete in the modern world. (Zheng & Tok, 2015) As such, mutual respect would facilitate revisiting the models and updating them to reflect the current statuses of the countries. Xi suggested that the new model should not have a ceiling but must have a bottom line. That is, since the countries are growing and becoming increasingly diversified, there must not be a cap or a ceiling that would limit development of other models of relationships in new fields. (Yi, 2013) However, there must be a bottom line in the new models beyond which major countries must not cross lest they offset the delicate balance among the participating countries. As such, all loopholes for conflict and confrontation can be sealed through mutual respect.

### **3.3. Non-Confrontation**

According to Yi (2013), non-confrontation is a pre-requisite for the new model since history has shown that confrontation between emerging and established powers can turn tragic. However, in this age where people are in communities with shared interests, nations are getting interconnected and the benefits of confrontation are far outweighed by the costs. According to Grimm (2014), there is need for the United States and China to increase and maintain candid, in-depth and timely communication and strategic dialogue. The importance of the aforementioned functions can never be underestimated since they can aid in solving a plethora of mistrusts and misunderstandings that can lead to confrontations. By implication, they would assist in creating of mutual trust and at the same time prevent misjudgement and misreading. Prybyla (2015) suggests that this principle is fundamental in the relationship because the United States needs to take accurate views of China's undertakings and strategic intentions to avoid subjective interpretations.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the United States will cease to perceive

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<sup>1</sup> Prybyla, J. (2015). *The Political Economy of Development in Communist China: China and the Market*.

every action taken by China as a threat to the United States. Yi (2013) noted that this principle would act as a constant reminder that China is a developing country that cannot threaten the United States' supremacy. (Prybyla, 2015) Feus (2014) draws attention to the territorial troubles in the Far East where China is embroiled in many territorial disputes. China has been accused by the United States of being aggressive towards other countries, particularly regarding the South China Sea. Furthermore, the country has territorial disputes with Japan regarding ownership of islands in the Sea of Japan (Prybyla, 2015). The United States has confronted China on numerous occasions regarding treatment of other countries, especially in the South China Sea, where the latter claims ownership to half of the sea. The sea is an important trade route, hosting half of the world's trade volumes. This is an area that is likely to arouse confrontation especially with increased United States air and naval patrols. In 2015 and 2016, the United States has increased its presence in the sea and China has consistently criticised it for the activities, which the latter construes to be interference. While China maintains that it just it has to be cautious to safeguard its development interests, security concerns and most importantly, sovereignty, continued offensives in the region are likely to nullify the impacts of the new model since the United States will be compelled to intervene to ensure global order. As a result, the non-confrontation principle will have to be defined extensively to determine enforceable and non-enforceable contexts.

#### **3.4. Win-Win Cooperation**

While the previous three principles are more focused on building a strong foundation for the model, win-win cooperation is intended to turn the vision of cooperation into a reality. There is high potential and an enormous need for bilateral relations and cooperation in all fields. If the two countries can work together, global challenges can be solved easily since the two countries have great influence. For example, the United States has tried and failed on numerous occasions' times to contain the nuclear threat posed by North Korea. The main reason is because China does not cooperate with the United States in sanctioning the nuclear-armed and wayward country. China is North Korea's largest trading partner and a key source of aid. (Wang & Rosenau, 2015) Although China wishes to cooperate, it expresses fear that if it were to sever the relationship with North Korea, the latter would collapse and its citizens would move to the Chinese border and create humanitarian crises. However, if the two countries cooperated, they would establish a framework that would compel North Korea to halt its programmes and have minimal impacts on the well being of China. Besides, there

are other major issues in which dual participation in finding solutions can produce better and actionable results. As a matter of fact, both countries have been victims of some of these problems such as terrorism, cybercrime and effects of climate change. (Domínguez, 2015) Co-operation between China and the United States in such instances would lead to brainstorming and in so doing; better and longer-lasting solutions can be achieved. Currently, the countries have partisan approaches to global matters, particularly regarding foreign policy in the Middle East and development in Africa. While the United States floated an aid and assistance policy in Africa, China established a mutual growth and development foreign policy that has seen Chinese firms infiltrate the African continent. (Grimm, 2014) Meanwhile, the United States has consistently sanctioned some Middle Eastern countries such as Iran and Iraq for partisan interests. The United States' perception of the Middle East as a terror hotspot is the main reason China has been hesitant to get involved in regional politics. On the other hand, China eyes the region for its massive endowment of energy resources such as oil and gas. When the two countries work like that, chances for mutual benefits and win-win cooperation are reduced.

According to Gebrehiwot and Hongwu (2013), both countries must show commitment to growing their cooperation if this model strategy is to work. Besides, the outcomes of their win-win progress should not only benefit China and the United States but also the rest of the world. Grimm (2014) noted that such a project would require efforts from a wide range of players such as politicians, policymakers and a host of others. Additionally, there is need for persistent political commitment, political resolve and tireless efforts from the two nations.

The above section discussed at length the proposed new model for major country relationships. While there are many considerations to look into before it can become a reality, there are much more issues than meet the eye. As such, the United States and China will have to define the extent to which the model can be applicable particularly regarding confrontation. The next section will discuss neighbourhood diplomacy as one of the tenets of sustainable peace and development.

#### **4. China at the G20**

China is an active member of the Group of 20 (G20), which is an international forum for the world's 20 largest economies. These forums are usually attended by

the representatives of the governments (mostly heads of states) and their central banks governors. The forum was established in 1999 with the aim of reviewing and promoting discussions of policy issues relating to promotion of international stability of the financial systems. As such, it is a multilateral organisation since countries approach financial issues with bi-partisan perspectives. China recognises that some issues are better solved when a few of the most powerful countries meet instead of ironing out such issues at global levels. Nevertheless, agendas encompassing issues such as more often than peace building, sustaining prosperity and sustained growth across the world occupy the priority list. In short, China is not a reactive but a pro-active member of the current international regime. It has embraced multilateralism and appeals to other countries to join multilateral organisations or enter into multilateral agreements since they are more beneficial in the long run.

The upcoming G20 Summit at the beginning of September will be an important indicator of China's position in the global order. Many of the topics to be discussed at the forum, including trade issues like oversupply, are directly related to the country and its interests. It is in China's power to use all facets of the foreign policy strategy outlined above to ensure that results are in line with its foreign policy goals.

## 5. Conclusion

While the West has been increasingly calling for reforms in the United Nations, China has consistently advocated for the body to remain the bedrock of multilateral response to challenges. The Chinese agenda perfectly fits in the UN's mandates and provides promising areas for possible collaboration. As an illustration, the UN undertakes massive global peace operations and has specialised agencies for social development. China's agenda is a reflection of UN peacekeeping programmes and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (Feus & Ye, 2014) The agenda of global sustainable peace and development is pegged on the concept of the *peaceful rise* of China. It paints the picture of the world under Chinese hegemony as the country assumes larger roles in international affairs. Drawing from the literature, the agenda is simply a commitment to adhere to prevailing international norms and a commitment to respect international architecture, while in pursuit of hegemonic status. However, China has to gain recognition from other



countries if its mission is to succeed. Until then, *peaceful rise* remains rhetoric irrespective of the noble intentions behind it.

On the other hand, the *Chinese Dream* is on the right path of accomplishing international sustainable peace and development. Whilst the United States' grip of world affairs remains strong, China has managed to appeal to countries in Africa and Asia without playing second fiddle to the United States. The dream remains alive and is on the right path. Only if China can manage to establish soft power in the international arena, then shall the *Chinese Dream* be achieved.

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