

GREAT DECISIONS DISCUSSION GROUP
(WWW.BEDFORDNY.COM)

KATONAH VILLAGE LIBRARY
May 14th, 2013
10:15 A. M. – NOON

China In Africa: Savior or Self Interest

Topic Leader: Joe Adams

AGENDA

10:15: Kickoff

- Welcome and Introduction of Guests & New Participants
- Administrative Items
- Topic Leader Presentation
- Group Discussion
- Annual Luncheon – Trattoria Lucia, Bedford Village

CHAPTER MOTTO - “DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT FONDNESS FOR DISPUTE OR DESIRE FOR VICTORY” – BEN FRANKLIN

SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- September 17, 2013
- October 8, 2013
- November 12, 2013
- December 10, 2013
- January 7, 2014
- January 21, 2014
- February 11, 2014
- March 4, 2014
- March 18, 2014
- April 1, 2014
- April 15, 2014
- April 29, 2014
- May 13, 2014

TODAY’S TOPIC

As China's internal economy has mushroomed, its appetites for fuel, food and raw materials have grown commensurately. To a great extent, Africa has been the place the Chinese have gone to satisfy them.

But, Africa also has a population of just over one billion and the Chinese see it as a natural market for their products. China passed the U.S. as Africa's largest trading partner in 2009. Three years later, China trade with Africa was at twice the level of U.S. trade.

On the diplomatic side, China sees Africa as an important source of political support on the world stage. Where China has just one vote in the United Nations General Assembly, African nations have 54, and China has aggressively courted those nations for a broad agenda of goals. After two decades of Chinese influence, only four nations in all of Africa still recognize Taiwan as an independent nation.

China's military has also has a significant presence in Africa. In addition to being a major supplier of arms to the conflict-prone governments of sub-Saharan Africa, the People's Liberation Army has supplied military training to a number of African nations and the Chinese navy has begun discussions with several east African countries to establish supply bases to enable it to maintain and expand operations in the Indian Ocean.

But, perhaps more important than any economic, political or military involvement, China has increased its influence in Africa simply by paying attention. Its leaders frequently visit the continent and maintain contacts with local leaders. Its foreign aid (even to some of the continent's most repressive regimes) has been generous, and 18,000 Chinese medical personnel have served in 46 different African nations. China has also invested in cultural centers in 22 countries to expand local knowledge of Chinese culture and history, while tens of thousands African students have been awarded scholarships to Chinese universities. The official Chinese government news service has established more than 20 bureaus on the continent, some in countries where it is the only source of international news. More than a million Chinese nationals now live and work in Africa.

Our discussion will examine the influence China is exerting in Africa, the extent to which it can improve or restrict the quality of life of the African communities in which it is investing and whether the Chinese economic and political systems can serve as models for African nations. We will look at how Chinese presence in Africa can affect its impact on the rest of the world.

Is China's growing influence in Africa a partnership of equals or a new model of economic imperialism? Can the Chinese economic model be exported to Africa? Does China want to export its success? Is China a positive or negative influence on the lives of Africa's native population? What U.S. interests are affected by China's inroads in Africa?

SUGGESTED READINGS

- **China in Africa: Savior or Self Interest** by David Shinn, Chapter 7 of the FPA 2013 Briefing Book. (Two copies are available at the Katonah Library Reference Desk for use in the library.)

