

THE DRAGON EMBRACES AFRICA: CAPE VERDE-CHINA RELATIONS

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Introduction

With the purpose of expanding within the international community, the People's Republic of China began in the Mao Tse-Tung Era (1949-1976) to develop a policy of internationalization and thus to seek to win the sympathy of Third World countries, supporting the anti-imperialist movements of Eastern Europe and the African Continent (Kynge 2006; Cooley 1965). The development aid policy was drawn up and implemented after the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in April 1955, bringing together Heads of State and Government and delegates from 29 Asian and African States, with the main goal of fostering economic cooperation and Afro-Asian culture. At that meeting, China intended to stand out in relation to the hegemony of the United States of America (USA) and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Since the 1960s, the African continent has been one of the largest beneficiaries of the development aid policy, since several programs, projects and actions have already been implemented in a wide range of sectors. Cape Verde is not an exception in so far as it has benefited from this aid. The Cape Verde-China cooperation goes back to the beginnings of the national liberation struggle, and this relationship was only formalized in April 1976. The cooperation in the field of infrastructure should be stressed. Among several constructions financed by China one can point out: The National Assembly, the Government Palace, the National Auditorium, the National Library, the

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Jorge Barbosa Auditorium, the Amílcar Cabral Memorial, the Poilão Dam, the National Stadium, Maternity and the Consultation Center of the Agostinho Neto Hospital and other emblematic works located in the capital of the country.

As the forty-first anniversary (1976-2017) of the economic, trade and cultural cooperation between Cape Verde and the People's Republic of China is being celebrated, it is urgent to think of the guidelines for this relationship, as well as the challenges that such cooperation imposes, particularly for the archipelago which, throughout its history, has survived thanks to the development of programs of public aid for development channeled through donations and concessional loans.

The main objective of this article is to analyze and discuss the bilateral cooperation between Cape Verde-China, focusing on the main guidelines of this relationship, taking into account the geographic, political, economic and cultural characteristics of the archipelago. To this end, the question is: what is the place it has occupied within the framework of the Sino-African partnerships? Is China's interest in the archipelago related to the fact that it presents itself as potentially favorable and serves as a continental platform for insertion into the African market? From the existing agreements, what have been the concrete results of this cooperation?

It is believed that, in order to meet the challenge of development, Cape Verde should focus on strengthening cooperation, mainly with those whose results contribute to its projection and which translate into comparative advantages in the international arena. Considering that there are few scientific productions that problematize Cape Verde-China cooperation, we seek through an interdisciplinary reading, to adopt a methodology that prioritizes the triangulation of information and data obtained from a critical view on the different existing theories and, thus making room for the use of differentiated perspectives, making available to politicians, academics, entrepreneurs and citizens a contribution considered useful for the public interest.

The Dragon in Africa: Strategic Axes of the Sino-African Relationship

Because it is a continent that has grown the most in the last decades and where the return of foreign investment is one of the highest in the world, it arouses the interest of different powers that seek it with the intention of penetrating a market of millions of consumers (Jackson 2004). China has sought to focus its attention on areas with growth potential such as education,

health, construction, financial services, consumer goods and telecommunications, thus taking a leading position, seeking to transform and develop the continent (Michel 2008).

With the intensification of trade relations with several countries in the world, China has achieved high rates of economic growth, facilitating its insertion in the international arena (Brautigam 2008). The significant increase in trade relations made China one of the main partners of the African continent, surpassing the commercial volume of France and Great Britain, losing only to the United States of America. With 70% of total trade with Africa, China leads among countries like Brazil, Russia and India (Kabunda 2011). In fact, African countries sustain much of China's demand for natural and energy resources. Angola accounts for more than half of the oil imports. Similarly, countries such as Cameroon, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan are important partners in China whereas considering the import of crude oil and its by-products. In addition, China imports gold from Burundi and Tanzania; non-ferrous metals (aluminum, bronze, copper, brass and zinc) from South Africa, Botswana and Zambia; textile fibers from Burkina Faso and Burundi; coffee and tea from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda; tobacco from Zimbabwe and Malawi and textiles from Morocco and Tunisia.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the region of Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for an economic growth around 5%, which had only been recorded in the 1960s. This points to the importance of continuously strengthening economic and trade relations between China and other African countries (Gonçalves 2010). In order to have a clearer picture of Chinese investment in the African continent, it is worth highlighting that from US\$ 911 million invested in 2000, it increased to US\$ 68 billion in 2010, particularly in South Africa, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Niger, Sudan and Zambia (Kobylnski 2012).

Sino-African relations that have been modernized over time have been established for more than a century, since most of them began with the struggle for independence of African nations (Eisenman 2015). It is important to underline the main moments that marked these relations:

In 1993 a plan was drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Chinese Economic Cooperation to explore African countries markets. In 1995, the Chinese Government made several visits to this continent, and the National Working Conference on Reforming Assistance to Foreign Countries (Keijzer, 1992; Snow, 1988) was held this year in Beijing. This meeting allowed the creation in 1996 of ten centers for investment and trade in African countries (Manji and Marks, 2007). In 1997, the Chinese enterprises, which began this process of investment and dynamism of the economy of the continent, con-

vened a Conference to discuss economic and trade cooperation with Africa in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation to rethink the aid measures to the Chinese entrepreneurs who wanted to invest in the continent (Naidu 2007).

From this date, it was decided that seminars on economic and financial management would be held twice a year, bearing in mind the importance of strengthening Sino-African relations, in fact making them worthwhile.

In October 2000, the First China-Africa Cooperation Forum (FOCAC) was held in Beijing, in which the Chinese government decided to reduce or even forgive debts of African countries amounting to US \$ 1.2 billion. In addition, it was decided that China would increase considerably in its external relations, a portion of assistance to the African continent (Hong-Ming 2004). FOCAC was attended by Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji and Vice President Hu Jintao, senior government representatives from 44 African countries and 17 regional and international organizations, particularly the presence of the Secretary-General of the African Union (AU). In addition to deciding that the Chinese government would forgive and reduce debts, two documents were approved that established the guidelines for the China-Africa relationship. The first relates to the Beijing Declaration and the second to the Sino-African Cooperation Program for Economic and Social Development.

For the last fifteen years, FOCAC has been taking place in a triennial frequency. The host has been alternately China and an African country. In December 2003, the Plan of Action for 2004-2006 was approved in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The III FOCAC was held in Beijing in 2006, where it was decided to create the China-Africa Development Fund (CAD Fund), which sought to stimulate and facilitate Chinese investment in the continent. In November 2009, it was the turn of the city of Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, to receive the IV FOCAC, where new loans were announced from China to Africa with very low interest rates, and it was also proposed to implement more than 100 projects in different sectors.

In July 2012, Beijing hosted the V FOCAC in which steps to increase progress in the strategic alliance were decided. In December 2015, Johannesburg, South Africa hosted the VI FOCAC. These meetings have proved to be extremely important for the narrowing of Sino-African relations, allowing platforms of dialogue and development in a “South-South” perspective (Mendes 2010).

China has been strengthening its partnership with African countries,

creating a huge field of opportunities involving mutually advantageous trade agreements, notably by granting loans to projects on the continent, triggering foreign direct investment and technical assistance (Hackenesch 2011).

After the end of Mao Zedong Era, China experienced a new phase in its history with the administration of Deng Xiaoping (1978-1992), founder of Market Socialism. Deng Xiaoping did not intend to expand Chinese ideology, as did the outgoing President, but to promote China's economic development from the implementation of a new model. Recognizing the importance of Third World countries for their diplomacy, the People's Republic of China turns its attention to them, aware of the possibility of diversifying their relations, seeking other opportunities for cooperation, not to rely only and exclusively on developed countries (Taylor 2009).

In fact, it is important to emphasize that the main line of Chinese diplomacy becomes the engagement with these countries, considering that they may be important allies, since they share the same interests of Beijing (Rios 2005). In the meantime, China has made clear that its intention is not to dominate or exploit, but to establish cooperation based on peaceful coexistence (Taylor 2006). The "dragon" sought to establish its cooperation with the outside world respecting five principles, which in its opinion are fundamental for a harmonious development, namely: [1] Non-intervention or interference in internal affairs; [2] The pact of mutual non-aggression; [3] Cooperation and mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; [4] Equality and reciprocal advantages; [5] Peaceful coexistence with other States (Hong-Ming 2004).

With the implementation of the reforms promoted by Deng Xiaoping, China sought to consolidate its economy by investing promisingly in Sino-African relations.

Jiang Zemin, President of China from 1993 to 2003, as Africa realized, made it clear that there was a need to adopt a new development model that prioritized a stable and, above all, versatile relationship in the long term. In order to re-dimension the relationship with the African countries, Jiang Zemin proposed five guidelines for maintaining these bilateral and multilateral relations as a way of cultivating the principle of solidarity, establishing friendships based on sincerity, cooperation and pool efforts for common development (Anshan 2007).

China's integration in 2001 into the World Trade Organization (WTO) has reopened the prospect of cooperation with African countries, thereby accelerating China's development process, making it one of the largest investors abroad (António, 2008). With the adoption of the Global Strategy program in 2002 and, therefore, the internationalization of its private and public enter-

prises, China has had positive overall results, creating a solid and necessary basis for consolidating relations with Africa.

Hu Jintao, President from 2003 to 2013, continued the Chinese policy of strong cooperation and solidarity with African countries. During his stay in power, he visited 17 African countries on four trips to the continent. In 2004, he visited Algeria, Egypt and Gabon; in 2006, Morocco, Nigeria and Kenya; in 2007, Cameroon, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Sudan and Zambia and in 2009 visited Mauritius, Mali, Senegal and Tanzania. The state visits and the other Forums held made clear the Chinese intention of not interfering and/or intervening in the domestic politics of the African countries, nor pressing them to change their political regimes. Beijing intended to use economic and political cooperation rationally to advance the political and economic agenda of the South, with a view of building a more just and equitable international order (Shelton 2006).

At the FOCAC meeting held in Beijing in July 2012, Jintao made it clear that, since China is one of the largest developing countries in the world and due to the fact that the African continent is the home of to the largest number of developing countries, the union and cooperation between the two would make sense as they account for a third of the world's population. This cooperation demonstrates a plausible justification for the unleashing of peace and development, since both China and Africa share a common destiny (Jintao 2012). Equality, sincerity, friendship and common development are the guiding principles of the relationship between the Chinese and the African (Jintao 2012). He added that China and Africa had decided to establish a new type of strategic partnership, with clear progress for both. China has also sought to strengthen its relationship within the African Union (AU) and other African regional organizations with the aim of implementing practical cooperation measures, proposing strategies to combat the international financial crisis (Jintao 2012).

China-Africa bilateral trade expanded, reaching US\$166.3 billion in 2011, three times more than in 2006. China's accumulated direct investment in Africa exceeded US\$15 billion. China's assistance to Africa has grown exponentially, especially with the construction of more than 100 schools, 30 hospitals, 30 anti-malaria centers and 20 agricultural technology demonstration centers (Jintao, 2012). China has honored its commitment by providing Africa with US\$15 billion of preferential loans. In addition, China and Africa have increased exchanges between people and culture (Jintao 2012). Jintao undoubtedly sought to build a harmonized world, establishing as strategy the construction of a future international order (Gonçalves 2010).

The current Chinese President Xi Jinping, who took over the country

after Jintao's resignation in 2013, made it clear that his intention is, above all, to establish and strengthen the relationship with Africa, reaching new heights of development. For Jinping, it is necessary to maintain high-level proximity exchanges, aware of the importance of strengthening the governance experience and increasing mutual support and understanding on issues of greatest concern to them. It is no accident that at FOCAC in 2015 the Chinese government announced a US\$60 billion financial support package in the following areas: preferential loans and export credit lines, subsidies, CAD Fund and development of African small and medium enterprises.

China has embarked on the creation of a platform called the New Silk Road Initiative or One Belt One Road to strengthen trade relations between countries with Central Asia, Russia and other regions of Europe, in this context, Africa may also play a very important role. This project includes several works of infrastructure implemented such as the railway lines linking Tanzania and Zambia, which will connect the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa and the one already opened between Addis Ababa in Kenya. The same occurred in Djibouti and Mauritania with the improvement and expansion of harbors and industrial parks.

China has certainly been backed by an internal development plan as set out in Agenda 2063. Because they expressed interest, China responded, at least rhetorically, in favor of the inclusion of African countries in the One Belt One Road initiative. As such, African countries need to provide adequate security to protect the investment environment. African governments will need to provide a favorable environment for projects to succeed, particularly as envisaged especially in the private sector, so that it can effectively play an important role in One Belt One Road (The Conversation 2017).

The Chinese Foreign Policy in the PALOP

In the context of the Cold War, China was receptive to unleash diplomatic, economic, technical and military support for the Liberation Movements in Africa, allowing the affirmation and consolidation of the newly independent countries, especially those of the Portuguese Language like Angola and Mozambique. The Chinese Foreign Policy met the need to extend its influence on the African Continent, seeking to develop relations with the newly independent African Portuguese Speaking Countries (PALOP), truly forming a united front to fight against colonialism and imperialism, revolutionizing the world based on the dissemination of its ideology. To mark its presence on the continent, China began to establish direct relations with African countries (Visentini and Oliveira 2012).

In order to explore the historical ties between Macao and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), China has decided to make this Special Administrative Region a platform for community liaison, especially for African countries, whose goal is to deepen cooperation in different sectors, making the best use of the resources of each (Macao Special Administrative Region Government, 2003). This strategy is based on the principle One Country, Two Systems, with which China intends to join its special administrative regions. This principle applies legally and institutionally in Macao and Hong Kong (Marchionatti 2012). Meanwhile, China's priority is the reunification of its territory, particularly referring to Taiwan's media case.

In strict observance of this principle, Macao has played an extremely important role in boosting institutional and trade relations between China and the PALOP countries, and in October 2003 it promoted the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Countries of Language (FCECCPLP), which was attended by government representatives from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Timor-Leste (Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region 2003). The Plan of Action for Economic and Trade Cooperation was approved at this first Ministerial Meeting, which highlighted the need to develop and strengthen economic, trade and investment relations between China and its community. Among other aspects discussed in this Plan, it was decided that, given the opportunities and challenges that the process of economic globalization imposes, the shared values and the principles of trust, equality, reciprocity, complementarity in trade, diversification of forms of cooperation and the sharing of interests should be considered (Macao Special Administrative Region Government 2003).

It was also decided that the Ministerial Meeting would be held every three years in order to deepen the relationship between the two. To date, four more Ministerial Conferences have been held, named the Macao Forum in September 2006, in November 2010, in November 2013 and in October 2016. These meetings were approved by the respective Action Plans that guide China-CPLP cooperation and which stand out in the following areas: intergovernmental cooperation, business, infrastructure, energy, natural resources, human, financial, agriculture, fisheries, livestock, education, tourism, transport, communications, sports and health (Macao Special Administrative Region 2017).

Specially regarding the PALOP, it should be noted that China has taken advantage of the fact that, many of these countries abound in natural and energy resources, to draw strategic partnerships to strengthen their economies, as well as to mitigate the problem of fragility in terms of bargaining

power. Angola and Mozambique occupy prime positions in this cooperation, with Angola following Russia as China's second-largest oil supplier and one of the earliest recipients of Chinese foreign aid, often taken for granted. After the civil war in 2002, Angola sees its relationship with China strengthened and consolidated since 2004 with the signing of several agreements, with which the Chinese Government pledged to cede funds to finance dozens of projects in different areas, from technological development, infrastructure and agriculture, education, health, transportation and communications. From 2000 to 2013, the Chinese government funded more than 60 projects in Angola (AidData 2017).

As far as bilateral economic and trade relations are concerned, as in the case of Chinese investment, Angola ranks first among PALOPs. Among the traditional partners in Angola such as Portugal, Brazil and Russia, China occupies a prominent position.

The other PALOP countries such as Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Mozambique have also received special attention from China as it has sought to strengthen and diversify partnerships with these countries in the field of trade and investment, focusing mainly on the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, blue economy and fisheries sector, mining, human resources and energy. The China-Mozambique relationship goes back to the liberation struggle, when Mozambique, through the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO), under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane, received diplomatic and military aid from China within the framework of the strategy aimed at avoiding its involvement in the ideological division (Taylor 2006). The relationship between China and Mozambique has intensified over time. Mozambique ranks among the five largest African timber exporters to China (Chichava 2008). This is, in turn, the largest investor in Mozambique following the neighboring country of South Africa (Macao Promotion and Investment Institute, 2015). In the first half of 2016, China was the most invested in Mozambique, with US\$ 154 million, accounting for 60% of total foreign direct investment, far surpassing South Africa, with only US\$ 45 million (Macaohub 2016).

The relationship between China and the PALOP has been one of growth, diversification and consolidation because, on the one hand, they are linked by a historical heritage and cultural legacy and, on the other hand, they share a common vision for development. China sees in PALOP an important means of security regarding the exploitation of energy and other natural resources, as well as the exploitation of a market that could reach millions of consumers. Compared with Western partners, the implementation of China's investment projects in the PALOPs has been carried out without the need for

political reforms and compliance with international standards in the areas of human rights, labor and the environment, relations are solely and exclusively aimed at promoting economic and trade cooperation.

China-Cape Verde Cooperation: The Place of the Archipelago in the Sino-African Relationship

Located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean between Africa, Europe and the Americas, roughly 500 km off the African west coast, off Senegal, Cape Verde is located between the parallels 17°12' and 14°48' N and the meridians 22°41' and 25°22' West of Greenwich. It is characterized by being a small island State composed of ten islands and several islets of volcanic origin that form a geographic area with a total area of 4030 km², occupied by approximately 539 thousand inhabitants (World Bank 2017).

As it is an archipelago with scarce natural resources, promoting its development entails increased costs for the State, making it dependent on external flows, including remittances from migrants, investments in the tourism sector and aid programs to development. It is in this context that this country's relationship with China has been of vital importance and is currently one of the most important partners in the countries of the Southern Hemisphere. China has a long-standing relationship with the archipelago, which has sought to meet these challenges through a diversified diplomacy that has sought new development perspectives and strategies for mobilizing external resources.

Conscious of its limitations, Cape Verde has sought to implement partnerships that value its island specificities, particularly its privileged geostrategic position in the Atlantic. In fact, it is one of the vocations that the archipelago has explored since its discovery between 1460 and 1462 and that served for centuries as a turntable function of the transatlantic trade.

Through an armed struggle, Cape Verde won its sovereignty in 1975, in the context of a Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde unity project, creating conditions to become viable as a nation-state. This historic milestone allowed international recognition and respect, allowing it to be included in international organizations (UN), specialized institutions (ILO), political-diplomatic concertation organizations, social, cultural, economic, (CPLP), regional (AU) and subregional (ECOWAS) organizations, as well as in financial and economic international organizations (IMF, World Bank and WTO).

In April 1976, one year after independence, Cape Verde formalized its diplomatic relations with China, that was one of the first countries to estab-

lish an Embassy in Cape Verde, based in the city of Praia, island of Santiago. Although Cape Verde established a Consulate General in Hong Kong that represented it in Asian diplomacy, it only formally established an embassy in Beijing in 2001, and in 2005 appointed the first Ambassador to China, Diplomat Dr. Júlio César Morais.

Although Cape Verde has one of the best rankings (122nd) on the Human Development Index (HDI) between the PALOP and the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, it is at the bottom of the list of priorities of the Chinese Foreign Policy, due to its limited market and lack of natural and energetic resources that have motivated much of China's interests in the continent. Thus, the question is what are the real interests of China in Cape Verde? It is necessary to understand that Cape Verde is at the political, economic and social level one of the most stable countries of the continent and that it cultivates a policy of peace with reflections in its political system that is complemented with a privileged geostrategic position in the Atlantic, especially in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), being the thirty-sixth largest in the world. Because it occupies a geopolitical space that favors it between the Atlantic shores, the archipelago ends up generating attraction and arousing interest in the establishment of different partnerships (Madeira 2016; Amante da Rosa 2007).

The country has sought to find the means to face the structural challenges. Therefore, it has been focusing on strategic sectors such as service provision, industrialization, the blue economy and tourism, which have margins of growth, allowing gradually achieving the long-awaited sustainable development. Despite the structural constraints such as geographical discontinuity, cyclical droughts, scarce population and precarious natural resources, successive governments in Cape Verde have succeeded in building a democratic state with the support and solidarity of their development partners, eliminating underdevelopment with a view to build a promising and sustainable society (Morais 2015).

In fact, since the independence of Cape Verde, the foreign aid granted to Cape Verde in the granting of grants and concessional loans has had structuring macroeconomic effects. The archipelago has been prioritizing the intensification of its relationship with China, focusing on programs, projects and actions in strategic areas demarcated in the transformation agenda of the country. These initiatives are aimed at transforming Cape Verde into a secure and competitive service platform in the Middle Atlantic, close to major African markets and the main sources of raw materials considered strategic (Morais 2015). It is no coincidence that several documents have been signed which contemplate a number of strategic projects, with which Cape Verde hopes, of course, to create the conditions to project the partnership with Chi-

na to new heights (Morais 2015).

With the establishment of the Macao Forum in October 2003, bilateral relations between China and Cape Verde have seen significant progress, intensifying contacts in economic, cultural and technical-institutional cooperation. In fact, Cape Verde has hosted three Entrepreneurs' Meetings for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries in the city of Praia, on the island of Santiago. The first in 2008, the second in 2012 and the third in June 2017 that had as its central theme the Promotion of Opportunities for Economic Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries. It should be noted that Macao Special Administrative Region (Macao SAR) has served as a platform for the rapprochement and dissemination of Cape Verde in the Pearl River Delta (Morais 2015).

The contribution of the Macao SAR is relevant, since it made Cape Verde a known country, because until the recent past, China was unaware of the size and location of the archipelago (Morais 2015). It is noteworthy that, following the formal signing in 1976 of the Cape Verde-China bilateral relationship, substantial improvements have been achieved, with the subsequent signing of several legal agreements, including the following:

In 1977, the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement; in 1982, the Cultural Cooperation Agreement; in 1998, the Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Reciprocal Investments; in 1999, the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement; in 2005, the Cape Verde-Macao Visa Suppression Agreement; in 2007, the General Agreement on Cooperation in the Defense Sector; in 2008, the Framework Agreement on Concession Loan Concession; in 2009 Agreement of Joint Commission of Economic, Commercial and Technical Cooperation and the Agreement of Cooperation in the Area of Historical Heritage; in 2010 the Cape Verde-Macao SAR Services Agreement and the Macao Convention on the Avoidance of Double Taxation; in 2013 the Agreement of Legal-Judicial Cooperation Cape Verde-MSAR; in 2014 the Suppression of Visas in Diplomatic Passports and Service Passports; in 2015 the Agreement Establishing a Mechanism for Political and Diplomatic Consultations and in 2016 the Cooperation Agreement for the Implementation of the "Safe Cities" Project.

In addition to these agreements, other initiatives to leverage the commercial relationship and cultural exchange between the two countries, such as donations and concessional credit lines, protocols and projects, stand out. China has financed several projects in Cape Verde, including: cement plant in the municipality of Santa Cruz, loan agreements for social housing projects, E-GOV II - Electronic Governance project, through the installation of local network in schools, public institutions and hospitals, the Technological

Center of Cape Verde. In July 2017, it was announced the construction of the new Campus of University of Cape Verde, with sixty-one classroom that allows to welcome 4,890 students. The new University Campus will have five auditoriums, thirty-four laboratories, eight computer rooms, eight reading rooms, a library, cafeterias, a sports hall and a multipurpose space with a capacity of 654 seats.

In 2015, the Government of Cape Verde signed an agreement for the construction of a Resort in the City of Praia by Macao Legend Development Ltd., headed by Macao's David Chow. The Cape Verde Integrated Resort & Casino project, which is estimated at around 250 million euros, is one of the largest ever in Cape Verde with a direct impact on the national economy. For David Chow, this project proves to be of extreme importance in two senses. Firstly, it is to be welcomed that a local company, in this case Macao Legend Development Ltd., has taken advantage of the role that Macao has played as a platform in the connection between China and the CPLP countries; Secondly, in coordination with One Belt, One Road Chinese policy, the MSAR has assumed an important position as one of the cities of the Maritime Silk Road, allowing local small and medium-sized enterprises to develop cooperation with external partners (Macao Tribuna Journal 2015).

In addition, David Chow as the President of the Legend Globe Investment Company, signed with the Cape Verdean Ambassador in Beijing, Dr. Tania Romualdo, on behalf of the Government of Cape Verde, a memorandum of understanding to open a credit institution in Cape Verde called the Sino-Atlantic Bank, considering that the financial sector has been strategic for the economic development of the archipelago. These investments demonstrate the role that Chinese entrepreneurs play in China's growing involvement with Cape Verde and, in general, with Portuguese-speaking African countries. China has provided conditions for its companies to find the necessary stability in the archipelago, using it as a strategic point to reach other expanding regional markets.

Since the 1990s, a significant number of small Chinese investors have come to Cape Verde, that have opened businesses in the sector of the commercialization of clothing and other accessories. Over time, there has been a substantial increase in these types of activity and, as a result, the Chinese have begun to diversify their businesses, particularly in the wholesale and retail trade in food, construction, auto parts, car rental, maintenance and repair of motorcycles, mechanics, carpentry, locksmithing, grinding and aluminum industry.

In addition, it is worth mentioning several initiatives that have encouraged the rapprochement and exchange between the archipelago and the

People's Republic of China. The Cape Verde-China Friendship Association (AMICACHI) was created in 2011 and is characterized by a Cape Verdean non-governmental organization whose aim is to strengthen ties of friendship and cultural exchange between Cape Verde and China. Between 2011 and 2012 the University of Cape Verde formalizes partnerships with the Chinese provincial universities, reinforcing cooperation in the field of human resources training and professional training.

The construction of educational establishments, as well as the considerable increase in scholarships for Cape Verdean students who wish to pursue and continue their higher education in Chinese universities, demonstrate China's commitment to co-ordinate with the Cape Verdean government towards the education sector. In 2015, the University of Cape Verde signed a Protocol for the installation of the Confucius Institute in Cape Verde, one of the first in the country, to encourage the promotion of Chinese language and culture with the University of Foreign Studies in Guangzhou.

The Ministry of Education and the Confucius Institute of the University of Cape Verde signed a cooperation protocol in 2017 to introduce the Mandarin Language in the 2017/2018 academic year as an optional foreign language in the Cape Verdean Teaching System, in order to build opportunities and thus allow for greater cultural approximation.

Cape Verdean government officials have sought to make clear that the archipelago's intention is to maximize and strengthen the relationship with China. Therefore, in 2004, 2006 and 2012 the former Prime Minister of Cape Verde, José Maria Neves, made several official visits to China. Between 2007 and 2010, it was the turn of the former President of the Republic of Cape Verde, Pedro Piros. Cape Verde, for its part, received the official visit of Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan in 2009.

Cape Verde, in its relationship with China, presents itself strategically as a country with high geopolitical value that distinguishes itself from other spaces, making possible the geographical approximation to important geopolitical and geo-economic zones, particularly in the African continent (Madeira 2015). Taking advantage of its position within regional and international organizations, Cape Verde should enable the expression of a new international identity, aware that it will survive being useful in the global context. The archipelago, as a country that tends to need more aid than it can effectively offer, needs to cooperate and interact with other states in order to overcome its structural weaknesses that hinder its development.

Final Notes

By prioritizing cooperation outside the traditional North-South axis, the Chinese government sought to make room for the development of large investments in infrastructure projects and production resources through agreements between African national governments and Chinese state-owned enterprises. China had as its fundamental intention to establish a strategy, which in its view could be called “win-win” or mutually beneficial relations, respecting sovereignty and non-interference (Zhao 2004).

Both China and Africa have a vested interest in consolidating this relationship, for China, the African continent is in favor of the natural resources exploitation as well as strategic opportunities for trade expansion, development and diversification in regional markets. Africa, on the other hand, sees in the “dragon” the opportunity to obtain financing and support funds for its development and the reinforcement of its political weight in the international panorama. Although the African continent is not the main priority of Chinese diplomacy, it has in practice increasingly attracted the attention of successive Chinese governments, considering that it is important to assert common commercial and political interests in order to stimulate the development.

The Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP), in the framework of Sino-African cooperation, have received special attention, due, on the one hand, to the cultural and historical links between them, since the Macao Special Administrative Region was administered by Portugal, during approximately four centuries, being part of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), and, on the other, for the opportunities that PALOP offer commercial and investment.

Cape Verde’s remarkable path since its independence in the PALOPs has attracted interest from international institutions and organizations, as well as from world powers, who have sought out the archipelago in order to deepen and strengthen relations and cooperation in various fields. China has undoubtedly been one of the partners that has contributed the most to the archipelago gaining confidence in its potential, despite the territorial scarcity and insularity that have made socio-economic development more unbalanced. It is considered fundamentally necessary to establish strategic alliances and cooperation with other States, institutions and regional and international organizations, so that Cape Verde can overcome the geoeconomic deficit by being open to the foreign market, thus strengthening the role of facilitator in international trade with a focus on sectors such as tourism, blue economy, agriculture, fisheries, industry and service provision.

Cape Verde's geo-strategic position is a potential, since it allows it to play a key role in the North and South Atlantic, particularly regarding its importance as an intercontinental link of political, commercial, economic, financial and economic relations. cultural activities.

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the main issues raised by the cooperation between China and Africa. Particularly, it focuses on the guidelines of the Cape Verde-China relationship that is in itself a durable and multidimensional one. To achieve these objectives, it is necessary to adopt an interdisciplinary methodology, prioritizing the cross-reference data obtained from bibliographical and documentary research, allowing a critical reflection. Although Cape Verde enjoys political stability, which is complemented by a climate of legal and institutional security, it is believed that China's interest in the archipelago is mainly economic and commercial, as it serves as a logistics platform in the African region.

KEYWORDS

Cape Verde; China; Cooperation; Bilateral Relations.

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