



EDITORIAL

The emerging powers in Africa debate

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Fahamu's Emerging Powers in Africa newsletter. The launch of the newsletter is significant and timely as debates and discussions on the footprint of such actors are making the daily broadsheets about the ubiquitous impact of Africa's engagement with these emerging powers from the South.

With the scholarship and argument caught between the opportunity and threat discourse, it seems that more empirical evidence and the corresponding implications this has on the daily lives of ordinary people is needed.

From this perspective, the newsletter provides a platform for African civil society actors to glean more knowledge about the Emerging powers in Africa. This is aimed at developing a coherent knowledge framework that can nurture a cohesive African CSO response on the behaviour of these actors and the role African governments play in pushing the agenda with these new role-players towards a sustainable development project across the continent.

Therefore, this first edition is devoted to a journalist study tour that was organized by the Emerging Powers in Africa project to China in April. As the four commentaries highlight perceptions about China and other actors have been informed by parochial views shaped by the Western agenda and epistemology. Seeking to break this mould, the commentaries illustrate the urgency for an African perspective, which places African agency at the centre of the debates and discussions.

We hope this newsletter enables such an agency to be harnessed and invite individuals who have a serious interest in this debate to contribute and share their activities to this knowledge project so that more information is made available. This is seen as critical towards strengthening an informed view on the topics associated with the emerging powers debates.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and welcome comments and suggestions in producing a newsletter that serves the interests of the African CSO actors.

Sanusha Naidu
Research Director
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More analysis and commentary from Fahamu's Emerging Powers in Africa Programme can be found online in Pambazuka News: www.pambazuka.org/en/category/africa_china/

COMMENTARY

Chinese Hospitality Breaks Down Barriers

Patrick Wrokpoh

ONE THING THAT may come to the mind of anyone travelling overseas is what kind of reception they would encounter on the other side. Would it be a kind and hospitable atmosphere? Or would it be one that is less flattering underscored by prejudice and derogatory attitudes, notwithstanding the language barrier. This was only my second trip to China, yet I could not overcome my nervousness since this East Asian giant is evolving constantly and I was not sure what to expect in this changing liathan.

As much as these feelings maybe true for most Africans making their way to China for various reasons, it is hard for them not to also become excited by the prospect of visiting the Middle Kingdom and witnessing the centuries of rich history, the paradoxes of imperial China existing within the crevices of a socialist/communist polity, its exquisite culture and experiencing its spectacular economy firsthand.

But perhaps the real excitement is to learn from the Chinese experience and see how African states, especially my country Liberia, recovering from the civil war and embarking upon its own post-war reconstruction can extrapolate lessons from the significant progress made by China in becoming an emerging world power. For Liberia this must be seen as a way of moving the post war reconstruction forward.

In recent years, Liberia has become one of many countries in the West African region that has seen a significant increase in the presence of a Chinese community residing there especially after Monrovia recognised the One-China Policy in 2003 in favour of Beijing vis-à-vis Taipei.

Chinese nationals can be found opening stores, shops and other businesses such as clinics in most communities across the country and from a cursory

view it seems they are integrating themselves into Liberian society and adapting to the way of life here. Some Liberians I have interacted with spoke of their experiences and engagements with Chinese owned businesses. They alluded to the polite way they have been treated and the respect, decency and humbleness shown to them by their Chinese hosts when they enter their shops and businesses. This, of course, seems to contradict some of the mainstream perceptions that we hear about regarding Chinese aloofness and insular peculiarities. Yet, it was difficult for these individuals not to question whether the Chinese in Liberia are only demonstrating an external facade of good neighbourliness and brotherhood because a) they are away from home and 2) they are seeking sympathy among Liberians to support their business goals as strangers in a foreign land?

The aforementioned questions, in addition to the ones asked at the beginning of this commentary about Chinese hospitality towards foreign visitors to their country seem omnipresent as we contemplate the Africa-China/China-Africa engagement. Indeed, I must admit that while these issues did surface from time to time as I embarked upon my trip to China as part of the Fahamu journalist study tour, it did not become an overriding concern.

Perhaps it was the intrigue of being able to visit China again that gripped my imagination. This was my second visit to the Middle Kingdom. The first was in 2008 as a guest of the Beijing International Media Centre to report on the Olympic Games for my newspaper. Having gone through the nerves of a first time visitor, this time around, I was more captivated by how the landscape changed since my last visit. But more than that I was excited by the fact that this time I would be afforded the opportunity to meet and interact with peers from my vocation as well as ordinary citizens (from all walks

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For further information on the Emerging Powers in Africa Programme, or submission of commentaries for the newsletter please email Ms Sanusha Naidu or Ms Hayley Herman.

of life) from whom I could understand Chinese social culture and daily existence from a broader perspective.

The experience was also about me representing my country. Through the various interactions, I began to realise that I was not only here to learn but I was also enabling others to learn from me about Chinese misperceptions relating to Africa. I began to understand and find questions to some of the positive and negative concerns I have heard about the Chinese and vice versa.

Reflecting on the two experiences in particular brought me to the conclusion that ordinary Chinese people demonstrated a nation in transition who were equally excited and sublime about their own history and economic rise. Yet, at the same time unsure of the outside world and what impressions were being conveyed about their country and culture. This became demonstrably evident during the visits to two universities where students gathered in numbers to hear from us about the continent and perceptions of China's image outside of its borders. These discussions really peaked my interest.

The students raised questions about some of the political issues across the continent including for example, the controversial murder of Eugene Ter-

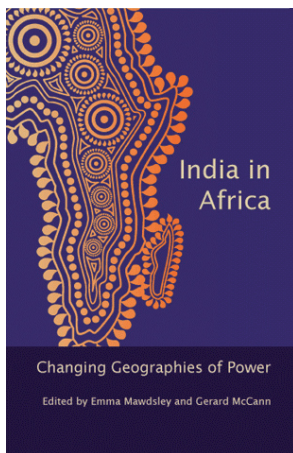
reblanche, a white supremacist leader from South Africa and the implications thereof for race relations. Or for that matter what kind of social issues underpin the lives of African youth and as Africans what we think of the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe. Clearly this resonated interest in African issues highlighted the growing need to promote exchanges between African and Chinese people.

Immediately I began to feel from the students' curiosity that Africa is not alone and that people around the world want to know more about Africa, how Africans do things, and about their lifestyles in the same way as we and the rest of the world are curious about China, its culture and the future. My mind quickly shifted to the political leaders of Africa while meeting with these students. I immediately felt that the challenge now for our politicians/elites is to avoid politicking with the lives of the ordinary African people in their quest for political power because they are being watched by the world including those Chinese students who are observing the governance of our President and Prime Ministers.

Mr Wrokpoh is Associate Editor of The Inquirer in Monrovia, Liberia.

India in Africa: Changing Geographies of Power

Edited by Emma Mawdsley & Gerard McCann



- A highly original book— one of the first to set out an extended analysis of contemporary India-African relations
- Enables readers to compare India to China and other 'Rising Powers' in Africa
- Written by expert authors from Africa, India and Europe
- Of interest to academic, civil society, policy and student readerships.

Major changes are taking place in the global economy and polity. While China's relationship to Africa is much examined, knowledge and analysis of India's role in Africa has

until now been limited but, as a significant global player, India's growing interactions with various African countries call for detailed analysis of the Asian giant's influence and its relations with the African continent. In this original book, which enables readers to compare India to China and other 'rising powers' in Africa, expert African, Indian and western commentators draw on a collection of accessibly written case studies to explore inter-related areas including trade, investment, development aid, civil society relations, security and geopolitics.

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COMMENTARY

Breaking the Stereotypes of the One Dimensional View

Carole Phiri Chibbonta

CHINA IS ONE country that we hear so much about but know so little about.

The dominant views we hear on the news and in the classroom are communism, human rights, over-population, pollution, censorship and economic growth to name but a few. The western nations paint a fairly dismal picture of the most populous nation in the world.

I recently had the opportunity to conduct my first visit to China. How was it? Incredible! It changed my entire perspective about the country and compelled me to consider issues relating to China's prosperity, governance and geo-strategic role on the world stage.

Within a couple of days of arriving, I began to formulate some initial thoughts on Beijing. Despite a population of 17million people the city is very clean and safe. It is heavily congested and thousands of taxis, a string of Audi's and other high end vehicles contribute to the congestion. The infrastructure is far beyond what I expected. Whilst the city is filled with very modern mid-rise buildings construction of more buildings continues to take place virtually everywhere, an indication that the city is booming.

The highways are very new and in excellent condition and the road system seems to do a fantastic job of handling the millions of cars. Although I must admit, the weaving of cars through traffic is a daunting experience. But reassuringly there seems to some order in the chaos.

China is not as homogenous as it might seem at first or as it may often appear in mainstream media outside the country. The contradictions in calling the society either capitalist or communist are striking. There is clearly great wealth and abject poverty; people can own their own businesses but can only watch certain TV channels. Being at such crossroads between old and new, modern and traditional, communist and capitalist is what makes China interesting. But just like any country China is beset with its fair share of inherent domestic problems.

Beijing also seemed to keep the culture of China alive (as much as could be in a rapidly modernising metropolis) and eventually I witness its beauty and architectural richness. Seeing some of the big cultural landmarks like the Great Wall, the Summer Palace and Forbidden City, helped to improve my impressions of Beijing and China overall.

In fact it was during my visit to these landmarks that I learnt that as a black person I was actually like a "panda" in Beijing. I stood out obviously due to the colour of my skin but was quite amazed at

the local's attitude towards me. The Chinese people were very friendly and not once did I feel I was being judged by the colour of my skin as I have felt in some other parts of the world. Because of that I couldn't resist several requests by Chinese people to have me in their photos at these historical landmarks. And not to take lightly that a picture of me probably hangs in several households across China. The most indelible mark was left by a woman well beyond her 60's who despite the language barrier showed me how happy she was for me to oblige.

Visiting the Silk Market for the first time was an experience I will never forget. The Silk Market is a famous market in Beijing where you can buy a variety of goods ranging from clothing to jewellery, and where no fixed prices exist. The aggressiveness and bargaining skills of the store-keepers is overwhelming. In terms of bargaining, the prices were very flexible! Generally, one could bargain down to 1/8th of the starting price and sometimes even more. I never thought that the same characteristics that exist at the market in my home country (mostly in second hand clothes trading) would be prevalent in China. But here it was and you have to be a skilled negotiator to take on these sales persons who are mostly women that can communicate in fairly good English.

China is known as a country that places heavy restrictions on the media. In Zambia many conversations about China do not end without the mention of information control or censorship. Most of us wonder how a nation, in this day and age, can deny free speech and access to information.

It's no secret that the government in China controls information mainly for the sake of stability in the country. Despite being aware of internet censorship (the great firewall of China, as one colleague called it) I never knew exactly what the Chinese web browsing experience would be. As it turned out not all my perceptions were true.

While I discovered that popular social media sites like Facebook and Twitter were hard to access, it was refreshing to find that western news sites such as the BBC and British newspapers were available on certain days during my stay. A significant discovery that I am sure the Chinese government want to keep a tab on in terms of what is being reported in Western media.

It was therefore very interesting to later learn that amid all these information controls, the media at the local and provincial level in China is by and large free and actually thriving, just like in many parts of the West and across certain parts of Africa.

Reading through some copies of the Beijing Today newspaper I saw a number of things I would

not have expected in a communist country having no freedom of the press. Experimental sex education programs were being started in some schools partly because too many children were learning about sex from pornographic websites. Some Beijing taxi drivers were also demanding that private taxi firms be allowed to flourish.

In the China Daily newspaper and on CCTV9 News (China Network Television) citizens were protesting the demolition of their homes to pave way for the expansion of the Beijing city. A look around the streets also revealed a multitude of special interest magazines with the women's sector topping the list.

This change in media was put into perspective through separate discussions with academics during the course of the study tour.

It was noted that the media in China has changed from the "official party line message" into a more developed and diverse media representing a market that is similar to that of the West where newspapers jostle for circulation while television networks imitate those of their western counterparts. In these discussions, the one dimensional view of Africa in

China was attributed to this commercialisation of the media.

It is however interesting to note that these views differed from the prevailing view by some Chinese journalists that all news about Africa in the Chinese media must be good news.

Throughout my stay in Beijing it became apparent to me that Chinese people and Africans have a lot of similarities but lack general understanding of one another. I learnt that the two sides could not understand one another simply by reading about politics and foreign policy but by understanding one another's people, culture and history. This comprehension is vital for the national interests of both Africa and China.

Therefore what I have learnt I will share with my students and colleagues to give them a broader understanding of China from my perspective. Hopefully they too can share this knowledge with some of their colleagues and most importantly it will be from an African perspective.

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Pambazuka News has, in the short time of its existence, carved a niche for itself as an important forum where Africans talk frankly among themselves and reflect on the condition of their continent and its place in the new global order.

Dr Ike Okonta, Department of Politics, University of Oxford

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Through the voices of the peoples of Africa and the global South, Pambazuka Press and Pambazuka News disseminate analysis and debate on the struggle for freedom and justice.



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COMMENTARY

China and Africa: Myths and Realities

Janet Szabo

FROM AN AFRICAN perspective, China is a vast country shrouded in myth and preconceived ideas, especially when it comes to Chinese doing business on this continent. This is largely perpetuated by the lack of real information on both sides: the Chinese need to know how they are actually perceived so that they can actively work to improve their image, and their African partners need to operate from an informed position in order to take advantage of the many opportunities offered by Chinese investment. Just how wide the gaps on both sides are was highlighted during the recent journalist study visit to Beijing.

Conversations with representatives from media and other Chinese organizations all had a common theme: a desire to learn more about Africa, a willingness to learn from Africans about how to better understand the continent and plugging the widening knowledge gap from both sides.

Media reports about China in Africa have often highlighted huge aid packages, support for pariah regimes and the ruthless exploitation of workers and natural resources in some of the poorest countries in the world and these have sparked fierce debates. China's secrecy has fuelled rumours and speculation, making it difficult to gauge the risks and opportunities in China's growing involvement in Africa.

Probably one of the better-known myths and partial truths about Chinese involvement in Africa suggests that China targets aid to African states with abundant natural resources and bad governments. In reality, China gives money to almost every single country in Sub-Saharan Africa, excluding only those that don't recognise the One China policy (that is those countries that continue to have diplomatic relations with Taiwan). According to Deborah Brautigam⁽¹⁾, there is little evidence that China gives more aid to countries with more natural resources or specifically targets countries with worse governance. China is not alone in showing its interest in Africa's natural resources, and natural resources are not the primary motivating factor for Chinese aid. Like all donors, and here the US, Russia and European countries are certainly included, China is motivated to give aid by a mix of political, commercial, and social/ideological factors. And it has doing so since the Mao regime as part of its solidarity with Africa.

Another common misconception is one that the Chinese don't hire Africans to work on their projects. This depends on how long a company has been working in Africa, and how easy it is to find appropriate local labour. Ultimately, it also depends on African governments themselves, who have the power to dictate what proportion of project staff must be local (as Angola and the

DRC have done). Brautigam also points to the stark contrast in standards of living between Chinese workers and managers in Africa, who tend to live in extremely simple conditions, and Western advisors, who more typically live in expensive housing or hotels. While Western experts may be fewer, they cost their projects a lot more.

According to Brautigam, China's way has several advantages and their experts don't cost much. In addition, their emphasis on local ownership often leads to projects like a new government office building, a sports stadium, or a conference centre. They seem to understand something very fundamental about state-building — new states need to build buildings and dignity, not simply strive to end poverty.

Over the past decades, the Chinese have also funded university scholarships, roads, bridges, mini-hydropower, and irrigation projects when other donors were not investing in these sectors. And like Japan, they see nothing wrong with using subsidies to help foster investment by their own companies; this is seen as beneficial to both sides. From the 1970s to the early 1990s, Southeast Asia's "miracle" was underwritten not only by good policies, but by Japanese investment, and Japanese aid was a partner in this. China's engagement in Africa could have similar results in at least a handful of countries such as Nigeria, Angola and DRC. There is a tendency for the Chinese to avoid local embezzlement and corruption by very rarely transferring any cash to African governments. Aid is disbursed directly to Chinese companies who undertake the projects. The resource-backed infrastructure loans work the same way.

Another popular belief is that China outbids other companies by ignoring social and environmental standards. Brautigam says that this is in many cases true but suggests that there is growing evidence of China and Chinese companies becoming increasingly sensitive to international perception on these issues and may be inching towards international standards.

Over the past few decades, China has managed to move hundreds of millions of its people out of poverty by combining state intervention with economic incentives to attract private investment. Based on its experiences and lessons at home, China is embarking on a similar programme across the continent. The key to this has been using resource-backed development loans to countries rich in mineral resources.

According to African Business magazine (2), in 2008 China replaced the US as Africa's largest trading partner, with the volume of trade reaching \$107bn, representing a tenfold increase since 2000.

With foreign direct investment rising from \$491m in 2003 to \$100bn in 2009, a twenty-fold

increase during the past decade alone, China is now not only Africa's single largest source of low-interest capital, but also—given tariff reduction—its most equitable trading partner.

Since 2004, China has concluded resource-backed deals in at least seven resource-rich countries in Africa, for a total of nearly \$14 billion. Reconstruction in war-battered Angola, for example, has been helped by three oil-backed loans from Beijing, under which Chinese companies have built roads, railways, hospitals, schools, and water systems. Nigeria took out two similar loans to finance projects that use gas to generate electricity. Chinese teams are building one hydropower project in the Republic of the Congo (to be repaid in oil) and another in Ghana (to be repaid in cocoa beans).

In a major experiment, China is helping to build special trade and economic cooperation zones in Africa. Seven such zones are planned. These include two in Nigeria; the others in Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Zambia, and, possibly, Algeria. Special economic zones were an important feature of China's early development; today, China has more than one hundred such areas. The Chinese government is very aware that these zones must be sustainable in the long term.

For decades, Chinese teams in Africa constructed agricultural projects or built factories only to turn them over to inexperienced and sometimes uninterested host governments. Once the Chinese left, the benefits of the projects declined, prompting the host governments to ask the Chinese to return. Now, Chinese companies are taking responsibility for both designing and building the zones and then managing them as businesses. Beijing will subsidize part of the start-up costs, including some of the expenses that Chinese companies incur by moving operations overseas. Several of the agencies involved in China's own successful zones are advising -- and in some cases, investing in -- the projects in Africa (3). China's venture-capital fund for Africa, the \$5 billion China-Africa Development Fund, has taken equity shares in three of the

seven planned zones. A new \$1 billion fund for small and medium enterprises in Africa, which was announced at the November summit in Egypt - the fourth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in November 2009 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt - will help African entrepreneurs set up businesses in the zones.

However, the gaps in perception and reality are not only confined to Africans viewing China. This also colours the way Chinese view Africans and their continent - Africans as lazy and corrupt and the continent as a vast underdeveloped paradise teeming with exotic wildlife. The fact that these views can persist in an age of internet technology and instant information, indicates a lack of crucial factual information. Although language is a huge barrier - on both sides - China's strong grip on its media does restrict the lack of information. A journalist from the official People's Daily proudly pointed out that his publication's policy is to print only positive stories concerning Africa - this ignores one of the basic tenets of journalism and that is to provide a balanced view. Both sides need more and diversified access to information to better grasp the opportunities and challenges presented by doing business with each other and while there is the strong desire to learn more about each other, this momentum should not be lost.

Sources consulted:

- 1 - Foreign Affairs - Africa's Eastern Promise, Deborah Brautigam 5 January 2010
- 2 - African Business Magazine 2008
- 3 - Laura Freschi Published February 9, 2010 - Aid watchers.com

Ms Szabo is a International and Military researcher based with the South African Broadcasting Corporation in Johannesburg.

Launch of the Change Online Platform

Fahamu in partnership with Society for International Development (SID) and the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (SIDA) wishes to announce the launch of the Change website (www.fahamu.org/change).

The change site is an open platform for the Kenyan people and friends of Kenya to interact and share information.

The site is one of the outputs of the Change Conference held in October 2009 in Nairobi, and is aimed at increasing access to resources and encourage dialogue towards realizing change at the national level be it through

government institutions, NGOs or at the community level.

The site highlights activities taking place under the Change project of Fahamu including Citizens' Forums across Kenya and showcases documentaries including "Making Change" by Maina Kiai.

Everyone is invited to write articles to be posted on the blog as well as share your views on change in Kenya.

Please visit: <http://www.fahamu.org/change/>
Kindly forward your comments to patita@fahamu.org or paul@fahamu.org



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COMMENTARY

China: The Cultural Superpower

Muhammad Mansour

ON THE PLANE to Beijing, I had mixed inquiries and ideas about China. For instance, was Martin Jacques accurate when he argued in his influential book "When China Rules the World" that the common Western assumption is that, "to be fully modern, a nation must become democratic, financially transparent and legally accountable". Is this true of and for China? While Jacques argues persuasively that China is on track to become the world's dominant power and that, when it does, the ball will be in its court to make the rules, on its own terms, with little regard for what came before, I wonder whether his interpretation of China is an accurate one? Or is this part of the conventional wisdom that given the US's current structural weakness we must turn to another to replace Washington as the global hegemon? As I contemplated these issues, I became overwhelmingly curious about what I will encounter in China, a country that everybody is talking about as the next superpower.

China's growth rate is phenomenal. Yet it is criticised for refusing to follow the Western model of electoral politics, an independent judiciary and a freely convertible currency. But China has its own way and it seems to be working for the Middle Kingdom. In fact, its restrictive currency rules have made China the world's leading creditor, while the United States sinks ever deeper into debt. And while the United States sacrifices the lives of its soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Chinese make money in both countries without losing a drop of blood. And while the U.S. is involved in leading the world order, which requires also fighting anti-Americanism, chasing terrorists, or taking the offense against whoever or whatever is posing a threat to the U.S. or its interests, China, on the other hand, focuses only on growing its economy, not only in China, but it used the relative vacuum that the West left in Africa, and set up projects in this long-marginalized continent.

Moreover, another query that preoccupied my mind as I was making my way to China, was whether China will help Africa to be modernised on its own terms? On the plane I remembered Dr El-Baradei's statement with reference to his request for political reform in Egypt. He said "when I visited China in 1970 it was a sort of shantytowns, now it is competing with the most powerful country in the world". Therefore, China which has inundated Egyptian markets with its cheap, eye-catching products, even Islamic products like Ramadan lanterns, has become a source of admiration, and a model that makes Egyptians relive their past as once a great empire which emulated progress and development and was the envy of others like the Roman Empire. Perhaps what we are seeking as Egyptians is to restore our pride and glory and

make ourselves great again with the Chinese assistance.

In 1980, I watched in Egyptian TV, a documentary on China, and still remember when Dr Mostafa Mahmoud, a high-profile intellectual, said that one day the Chinese language will be the second language for all non-Chinese speaking foreigners. But as I arrived for the first time in China, and after interacting with many students, professors, academics, journalists and correspondents, I discovered that there are mutual cultural barriers between China and Africa.

For example, Chinese students complained about the lack of resources or outlets coming from Africa, compared to Western media, especially regarding news on Africa itself. In China, Africa is represented by only three African correspondents while in comparison China has over 20 Xinhua news agency bureaus spread throughout North and Sub-Saharan Africa, despite the fact that it is still a state media agency which expresses only governmental views. Such a lack of media resources from Africa may be due to the world's marginalization of Africa and towards news from Africa, Africa's relatively poor economy and financial resources.

Even in Egypt, the people and its media know little about Africa, nor do the education curriculums touch on African topics or people's lifestyles in Africa. Consequently, I realised that when these students inquired from our delegation about the jungles and wildlife in Africa, this is what is being conveyed by the mainstream media inside and outside China, because people in Egypt have the same impression.

Instead, both Egyptian people and the government feel superior and somehow look down on black Africans, in contrast to Western people who are considered smarter, more intelligent, more qualified for any jobs in the country, even if they do not necessarily have better qualifications. In Egypt, Africans are mostly ridiculed and treated inferior to others.

Probably, such lack of knowledge from both sides stems from geographical distance, or the lack of media existence, compared to the Western media outlets stationed in both Africa and China.

China's sky-rocketing economic boom has had a major impact on all fields in China, China's infrastructure being more developed in some cases than in Europe. Such progress has been a source of attraction to people from different nationalities, and encouraged many African students to apply for scholarships to Chinese Universities. Dr Ahmad Zuwail, Egyptian American noble prize laureate in chemistry based in America, who, after receiving the award in 1999, became a source of pride to Egyptians, said in a television interview that he, as

Professor of Physics at the prestigious California Institute of Technology, is very proud of Chinese students who are coming to complete their studies in the United States as they are making outstanding contribution there, and schools there are passionately looking for Chinese students.

For that reason, I believe that these students going to the US and making an addition to education there are a product of state-run Chinese schools in China, and consequently, these schools, although government controlled (a cliché in Egypt that refers to low-profile schools) are much better than many schools in Africa. This could explain why many African students are enrolled in Chinese schools and not vice versa.

An Egyptian student studying in Beijing told me about her 8-year experience in the country where there are few Egyptians studying, probably due to the language barrier.

She spoke about her difficulty in learning Mandarin, and attempts to speak with a Chinese person even if she does not know them in order to practice her language skills.

She sees China as an outlet for the liberal life that she wants to experience and an opportunity to escape the social and gender strictures of Egyptian society. She feels more comfortable in China because of its liberal society despite it being socialist as she is able to move around freely, independently and without judgement or societal control experienced by women in the Arab world.

"Yes... The Chinese government is socialist, there is a black out on media outlets, you cannot open some websites, like Face book or You tube, so it sounds very much like a closed society, but

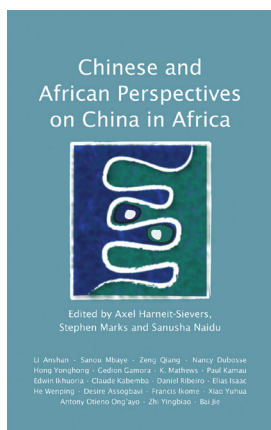
the reality is that the government removed many obstacles impeding progress, and released its grip on romantic relationships, and this could be one of the reasons for the progress in China, and all liberal societies, people will not overburden themselves with complicated relationships, romantic life here is so simple and open" she said. "As a result, China hosted Olympic games, became fully modern, developed, and in Egypt we failed in hosting the world cup, got zero, while South Africa made it, even at the cultural level, we failed to accomplish anything" she added.

Yet, after the experience I was still not convinced whether Martin Jacques was accurate to predict that China is the next superpower. Of course it has a booming economy, and it is beginning to play a more focused role with regard to global responsibilities, but there was one nagging issue that I felt was somehow lost in all of this talk about superpower status. China's cultural outreach and influence does not compare to that of the US yet. And if Beijing wants more in this regard, then it needs more investment in its cultural hegemony as a 'going global' strategy, which current indications show it is beginning to realise. But for now more needs to be done to understand the cultural practices and differences between Africans and Chinese. And here is the role for African and Chinese media to take up the opportunity.

Mr Mansour worked previously for the Japanese publication Sankei Shimbun Middle East in Cairo. He is also a freelance journalist for the Daily News Egypt based in Cairo. The Daily News Egypt is the local division of the International Tribune Division.

Chinese and African Perspectives on China in Africa

Edited by Axel Harneit-Sievers, Stephen Marks and Sanusha Naidu



- Focuses on the dialogue between Chinese and African civil society organisations rather than states
- Provides new data and real insights into the burgeoning relationship between China and Africa
- Notable contributions from African and Chinese scholars and activists

The deepening engagement of China in Africa since the end of the cold war has led to debates about the evolving nature of this relationship. Yet the focus of analysis has largely been confined to the interactions between states. Little attention has been paid to the growing dialogue between Chinese and African civil society organisations.

This collection of essays, written by scholars and activists, explores the interaction between African and Chinese non-state actors and argues that the future of Africa-China relations rests on including such voices if a robust and vibrant engagement and a meaningful relationship are to be sustained. Chinese and African Perspectives on China in Africa assesses China's activities in Africa through patterns of investment, legal cooperation, effects on the environment, trade, aid and labour links, questions of peace, security and stability, the African Union response, possible regulatory interventions and the future strengthening of an Africa-China CSO dialogue.

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COMMENTARY

Expanding India's Expertise

Jagdish Bhagwati

RECENTLY, SANJAYA BARU, the prime minister's former media advisor, sounded the alarm over how many Indian think tanks were now dependent on foreign public and private institutions the World Bank, DFID (UK), Oxfam and many others for financial support. He correctly walked away from the notion that these think tanks were, therefore, "captured" by the foreign institutions.

But a more nuanced worry is in order. Funding does constrain what you will do: this is simply a matter of prudence, not of being "bought". I will give one personal example. I was on the board of an important Indian NGO which deals with trade issues. This NGO was fully sympathetic to myriad writings by me and professors Arvind Panagariya and T N Srinivasan, among others, warning how the demands to include labour standards in trade treaties and institutions were tantamount to "export protectionism" (in the sense of seeking to raise the cost of production abroad to moderate competition). We had forcefully argued that these demands must be rejected as being driven by labour unions in the West, which were wrongly fearful of trade with the developing countries.

Having been funded by foreign agencies which wanted them to work with foreign think tanks, the Indian NGO had organised a seminar on the subject in Washington DC, under joint auspices with Carnegie. It wanted me to play a prominent role, but it had to agree to my being downgraded because Carnegie had embraced the protectionist agenda on labour standards. With foreign funding, both current and prospective, the Indian NGO felt that it had little choice and sought my indulgence. I resigned over the incident from the NGO, only to return later as I saw the difficulty in which foreign funding had placed its able director. He had integrity; he was penitent. But he had to be prudent or his NGO would be financially crippled.

I have also worked with foreign NGOs such as SA8000, which certifies firms for corporate social responsibility (CSR). But the specific choice by SA8000 of what defines CSR is not necessarily what Indian businesses should buy into, especially on demands such as the payment of a "living wage" which are likely to harm, rather than help, the assault on poverty in India. So, one would expect the Indian corporate sector, working with indigenous NGOs (which are usually small and focussed unlike gigantic NGOs like Oxfam which go everywhere like the BP oil spill) and economists, to develop and push labelling that reflects views on CSR that reflect Indian constraints and objectives.

But neither the corporate sector nor the government has done this. Meanwhile, do not be deluded that SA8000 has not received US governmental and corporate aid.

I have long argued, therefore, that the Indian government and corporate sector also should support our own NGOs and think tanks which then do not have to be overwhelmed by foreign-headquartered NGOs and foundations which inevitably reflect different perspectives. To win in a duel, you have to make sure that you do not use a knife against someone armed with a pistol. If the arguments of foreign foundations, think tanks and NGOs, which also have a compliant western press use your Google to see that the New York Times has run only one story, by Celia Dugger when I complained to her, on how labour standards in trade treaties are considered by the developing countries to be a protectionist threat are to be met successfully, we better support our own NGOs and think tanks.

This also means that the government must do more to draw in our NGOs and think tanks when it goes to negotiate at international meetings.

Typically, US delegations draw on several stakeholders and informed experts. With rare exceptions, the government of India permits only business institutions like CII and now FICCI, to join it. I was at the famous 1999 Seattle meeting of the WTO that erupted into protests. I was in the streets and in debates at the Town Hall with Ralph Nader and others, and on panels set up by WTO. But I was not consulted once by the official delegation. We typically go handicapped into international negotiations with just our bureaucrats: they are a fine lot but they are not supermen.

Since eminent Indians in many fields are settled abroad, it is good to see that the prime minister has also now started drawing on their talents more formally, strengthening the government's expertise in turn. I and Professor Srinivasan were drawn upon by him in 1993 to write a report on 'India's Reforms: Next Steps' for the finance ministry. This was probably the only major initiative since my being drawn in, when I was working in India, to write a report on India's trade policy and necessary reforms in 1966: a memorable dividend being that I was taken to see the then prime minister, Indira Gandhi, to talk about my report!

Today, the prime minister has set up the Global Advisory Council, drawing on overseas Indians in different fields. Minister Kapil Sibal is also engaged in several commendable steps to strengthen our capabilities in higher education, drawing carefully on possibilities of scholarly collaboration with foreign universities. One can only applaud these initiatives.

** The writer is university professor, economics and law, at Columbia University.*

This article was first released on the following website: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Expanding-Indias-Expertise/articleshow/6382488.cms>

REVIEWS

China's New Role in Africa by Ian Taylor

Hayley Herman

AT FIRST GLANCE, the chapter titles of Prof Ian Taylor's latest book *China's New Role in Africa* indicate a focus on the most topical and debated subjects within the field of Sino-Africa engagement including China's engagement in Africa's energy and manufacturing sector, human rights, arms trade and peacekeeping on the continent. Of particular importance is the introductory chapter emphasizing the need to determine the concepts of generalised terms such as "China", "Africa" and "China-Africa relations". This first chapter puts the engagement in context, in terms of political and economic relations, as well as China's development assistance to Africa but more importantly it puts the subsequent chapters in perspective. It makes the reader aware of the nuances involved in researching the current relations between China and Africa, and points to the need to understand the many complexities involved in the often generalised debates surrounding China's activities in Africa.

A number of points are constantly reinforced and become clear throughout the book. The chapters explain the complexities and evolving engagement between various Chinese and African actors. Identifying activities of Chinese government and private engagement including China's policy responses resulting from this engagement shows the evolving nature of the relationship, and the importance of understanding the challenges of the state in Africa as well as the role it has, and will, play in the future development of relations between the two sides. In particular this is brought forward within the context of China's non-interference policy in Africa.

The activities of various Chinese and African stakeholders in this engagement result in the mis-

interpretation of these activities as well as the role and responsibilities of government in this relationship. In particular, the responsibilities of African governments and the indivisible nature of public and private sectors in Africa are highlighted as keys to understanding the process in the African context. The multi-faceted relationship in the chapter three, focusing on the textile manufacturing sector in Nigeria and South Africa, explains that a comprehensive understanding of the role of domestic policy for example is needed.

The author makes clear the intention to provide a "balanced appraisal of China's engagement in Africa" (pg 3) while focusing on many of the areas that are often sensationalised in media. As noted by the author, "China" is often subjected to the blame game resulting from simplified and often superficial reports of the effects of Chinese actors in Africa. Instead, the author provides an assessment of various aspects of Chinese engagement with Africa based on extensive field research, interviews and literature to provide a rich and comprehensive understanding of this engagement.

An interesting point is noted in the concluding chapter where the author states that "civil society must play a crucial role in the new engagement with China" (pg 183). This is perhaps of particular relevance within the evolving relationship between Chinese and African actors and a topic that will warrant further detailed attention.

The book is a valuable source of information for anyone seeking a better understanding of the complexities of Chinese activities on the continent and an excellent contribution to the growing body of literature on this subject.



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RESOURCES AND LINKS

Steering Committee Meeting of Joint Africa-China Research and Academic Exchange Programme: 28-30 March 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

CODESRIA Press Release

AFRICAN SCHOLARS INTERESTED in the growing relations between their continent and China, will have a chance to debate this important topic at a meeting scheduled for March 28-30th 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya.

“It is high-time to involve the African scholars in this process, along with their Chinese counterparts,” says Professor Osita C. Eze, Director General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, and one of the scholars promoting the project on July 10th 2010 at a meeting between African scholars in Dakar. “If Africa has to become a global player we need to know and enable African policy-makers to know better who our interlocutors of other countries and regions of the world are,” adds Dr. Ebrima Sall, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA; the leading pan-African social science research council and think-tank.

The Nairobi event has been proposed by a Provisional Steering Committee (PSC), in an attempt to lend continental legitimacy to the nascent dialogue between African and Chinese scholars. The PSC represents a group of African scholars who attended the launch ceremony in Beijing, March 31st 2010, of a Joint Africa-China Research and Academic Exchange Program. This Joint Program is one of the innovative measures adopted by the 4th Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which is the main inter-governmental platform between China and Africa, held in Sharm-El-Sheik, Egypt, last November.

At the Beijing launch ceremony, African scholars supported the proposed mechanism of cooperation with their Chinese colleagues, yet called for wide consultation with their peers in the continent to ensure broad acceptance of the project across the continent. This decision was reached during a private meeting of the African caucus attending the Beijing ceremony. It was also agreed that the PSC would meet in Dakar, at the invitation of CODESRIA, to discuss the future direction and ventures of the new joint institutional mechanism.

Against this background, the Dakar meeting aimed to convene the pan-African gathering of African scholars and think-tanks working on China-Africa relations. Members of the PSC, in addition to Eze and Sall, have been drawn from the various regions of the continent, including: James Shikwati, Director of the Nairobi-based Inter-Region Economic Network; Scarlett Cornelissen, Interim Director of the Centre for Chinese Studies at Stellenbosch University in South Africa; Adama Gaye, Senegalese journalist and China-Africa Specialist; Professor Mohamed Salih, of the Institute of Social

Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands; Dr. Stephen Ngwanza, of the Institute of International Relations of Cameroon; and Dr. Mohamed Benamou, Director of the Center of Strategic Studies of Rabat, Morocco.

Close to thirty African scholars took part in the Beijing ceremony, along with representatives of the African diplomatic community. In addition, Angola’s Joao Manuel Bernardo, the Acting Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps, addressed the gathering. Also present were representatives of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation and dozens of Chinese scholars, including Professor Yang Guang, Director-General of the Institute of West Asian and African Studies, of the China Academy of Social Sciences. The event was chaired by Wu Bangguo, an influential member of the China State Council and of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party. The event was supervised by Ambassador Lu Shaye, Director General of China’s Foreign Ministry, and Secretary General of FOCAC.

The Forum on China Africa Cooperation was established in 2000, and has witnessed a rapid growth in economic relations between China and Africa. Yet in recent years, there has been an increased call for an African conceptual response to the challenges and opportunities associated with China’s engagement with the continent. Such emerging academic dialogue is recognised to shown important perspectives.

The Nairobi conference, March 28-30th 2011, will focus on the theme: Towards a New Africa-China Partnership. It will include the formal launching of a Pan-African Forum for Research and Dialogue on Africa-China Relations, in collaboration with Chinese academic institutions. It will seek to build a strong knowledge base on Africa-China relations within Africa, in order to support African policy makers in their engagement with China and the FOCAC.

CONTACTS:

For further information about this event, please contact:

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Call for Proposals and Applications

Chinese journalists to participate in African exchange programme

THE JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, is offering six Chinese journalists a 2-3 week study and work opportunity in Africa.

If you are a journalist interested in China-Africa issues, we are offering funding and logistical support to visit Johannesburg and then travel to an area of interest elsewhere in Africa to conduct research and produce an article or series of stories for publication or broadcast in China-based media.

We are offering:

- 2-3 week study and work tour to Africa
- Attendance at Power Reporting: The African Investigative Journalism Conference in Johannesburg from 1-3 November 2010
- The opportunity to travel anywhere in Africa to investigate a story that would be of interest to a Chinese audience
- Paid airfares, accommodation, conference fees, orientation tour, visas and food

Applicants should have:

- A minimum of 3-5 years experience as a journalist
- Relative fluency in English (stories can be written in Chinese)
- Affiliation to a media outlet or a reasonable expectation that work will be published
- A valid passport
- Permission from employer to travel for a minimum of two weeks from end October 2010

Please submit a brief proposal in English outlining a story you wish to cover in Africa. The topic could be related to China-Africa relations, but should be of interest to a Chinese readership. The grant covers travel to any part of Africa to enable research on the ground.

- Outline the background to a story or issues you would like to research and report on within Africa
- Provide 2-3 examples of published work

Send your application with all your contact information to Brigitte Read, Project Manager, Journalism Department, University of the Witwatersrand at email: africa-china@journalism.co.za to reach us by 20 September 2010.

Conferences and Workshops

China in Africa, Sino-Mozambican relations at a crossroads- 9 September 2010

INSTITUTO DE ESTUDOS Sociais e Economicos (IESE) and the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) co-hosted a conference held in Maputo, Mozambique.

Information on the conference can be found at the following link: <http://www.saiia.org.za/component/registrationprofevent/208/China-in-Africa--Sino-Mozambican-relations-at-a-crossroads>

Impacts of mining on the local populations and the environment in Haut-Ogooué

GABONESE NGO, BRAINFOREST, has released a new report that assesses the impact that mining, namely uranium and manganese mines, has on the country's environment and the devastation thereof on the livelihoods and health risks this poses for local communities living around these mines. For a summary of the report read:

<http://www.internationalrivers.org/en/node/5781>

Recent Publications & New Reports

Special edition of African and Asian Studies

A SPECIAL EDITION (Volume 9, Number 3, August 2010) of African and Asian Studies, guest edited by Dr Yoon Jung Park has been released. The edition focuses on China in Africa and further information can be found at the following link:

<http://www.brill.nl/aas>

China's Exceptionalism in Africa: from Rhetorical to Substantive Difference?

Written by Chris Alden and Dan Large,
25 August 2010

Article can be accessed at: <http://www.saiia.org.za/diplomatic-pouch/china-s-exceptionalism-in-africa-from-rhetorical-to-substantive-difference.html>

Useful Websites

India-Africa Connect:

<http://indiaafricaconnect.in/>

The website also provides access to *Africa Quarterly* which offers current updates on India-Africa relations, published by the Indian Council on Cultural Relations.

Macau Hub:

<http://www.macauhub.com/>

A valuable portal of information on China's relationship with Portuguese speaking countries.



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PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Africa-China NGO Dialogue

TOGETHER WITH THE China NGO Network or International Exchanges (CNIE) and in cooperation with the African People's Dialogue and the Africa and the Global South unit under the Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery programme at the Human Sciences Research Council based in Cape Town, the Fahamu Emerging Powers in Africa Programme recently co-hosted an Africa-China NGO Dialogue held on 19 August in Cape Town, South Africa.

Seminar on Capacity Building for Non-governmental organizations of Developing Countries

MS HAYLEY HERMAN, Programme Officer, participated in the programme sponsored by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, and organised by the China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) in Beijing from 28 June-17 July 2010. The programme included participation in a China-Africa NGO seminar co-hosted by CNIE and the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University titled The Role of China Africa NGOs in Implementing the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations at Zhejiang Normal University from 14-15 July 2010.

Professional Program for Leadership of Friendship-to-China Organizations in Africa

MS HAYLEY HERMAN, Programme Officer, attended the programme as an observer. The visit was sponsored by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, and organised by The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) in Beijing from 16-29 June 2010. The programme included participation in the 2nd FOCAC Seminar on China-Africa NGOs held in Beijing on 22 June 2010.

Book launch of Prof Deborah Bräutigam's *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*

THE FAHAMU EMERGING Powers in Africa Programme co-hosted the book launch with the South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA) Western Cape Branch on 26 May 2010 at the Institute for Security Studies in Cape Town, South Africa. Prof Bräutigam provided a comprehensive overview of the content of her book, following her extensive field research in Africa and China. Furthermore she emphasized that China's engagement in Africa has been informed by China's own experiences engaging with Japan on its development

path. Additional insights and further information on the book can be found on Prof Bräutigam's blog available at the following link:

<http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/>

African journalist study tour to Beijing

ORGANISED BY THE Fahamu Emerging Powers in Africa Programme, four African journalists were selected to participate in a study tour to Beijing from 26-30 April. The participating journalists have maintained linkages with networks established since the tour, producing a number of articles for publication in ChinAfrica magazine. An overview of the study tour can be found at the following link:

http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/africa_chinal/64235

Special symposium at Syracuse University- Africa and China in the 21st Century: The Search for a Mutually Beneficial Relationship

THE FAHAMU EMERGING Powers in Africa Programme co-hosted the special symposium with the Africa Initiative of Syracuse University, held at Syracuse University, New York from 8-10 April 2010. A summary of proceedings can be found at the following link:

http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/africa_chinal/65425

Conference/Workshop Attendance**China-Africa Civil Society Forum on Peace and Development**

MS SANUSHA NAIDU attended and presented at the Forum, jointly hosted by Saferworld (UK) and the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Development and the African Peace Forum, in Beijing from the 2-4 June 2010. A workshop report can be found at the following link:

<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/smartweb/media/news-article/492>

Launch of Joint Africa-China research and academic exchange programme

MS SANUSHA NAIDU, Research Director, attended and presented at the launch of the programme in Beijing from 30-31 March 2010. Further details on the programme can be found at the following link: http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/africa_chinal/63705

Call for Applications: Journalist Study Tour to India 2010

THE FAHAMU EMERGING Powers in Africa Programme is pleased to announce a call for applications for its Journalist Study Tour to India. Four successful applicants will be chosen to participate in a 6 day study tour. African media professionals in print, broadcast, radio and online fora throughout Africa are encouraged to apply for this study tour. African lecturers from journalism schools and media programmes on the continent may also apply.

1. Introduction

There is a growing need for independent inquiry and investigation into the engagement of India in Africa from African media sources- this as media coverage has been largely dominated and influenced by Western media reports. This becomes particularly important as Indian corporate interest, aid, bilateral trade and investment in Africa continues to grow. Furthermore, India will host the forthcoming India Economic Summit in November 2010, while the second India-Africa Forum Summit will take place in Africa in 2011 following the first Summit concluded in April 2008 in India. These events will provide important outcomes related to both India and Africa's development path, with consequences relevant to both Africans and Indians alike. Within this context the need for greater collaboration and interaction amongst African and Indian media will become ever more pertinent.

The Fahamu Emerging Powers in Programme is therefore pleased to announce a call for applications for its Journalist Study Tour to India. Four successful applicants will be chosen to participate in a study tour to India that aims to:

- Strengthen the capacity of African media commentators on India's engagement with Africa
- Facilitate greater understanding of perceptions of India in Africa, and vice versa
- Expand on knowledge amongst African media of India's political, economic, societal and media landscape
- Create an opportunity for African media organisations and journalism schools to develop long-term relationships, collaborations and exchanges with representatives from Indian media organisations and institutions
- Provide a platform to facilitate the implementation of capacity building projects and greater media coverage amongst African media on India's activities in Africa
- Include greater media participation in discussions and advocacy in India and in Africa about India's role in Africa
- Include visits to various Indian media organisations, associations, research institutes and journalism schools.

2. Call for Applications

Media professionals in print, broadcast, radio and online fora throughout Africa are encouraged to apply for this study tour. Lecturers from journalism schools and media programmes in Africa may also apply. Applicants must:

- Provide frequent reports to their national, regional, or local print media, radio, television channels or online fora on topics related to India's activities in Africa; or lecture at a journalism school or training programme at a higher education institution in Africa
- Have 8- 10 years experience as a journalist or journalism lecturer
- Be fluent in English
- Have a valid passport and comply with their country's visa criteria for travel to India.

The following costs will be reimbursed:

- Return ticket, economy class to India
- Accommodation in India for the duration of study tour,
- Visa costs,
- Meals and transport for duration of study tour.

The study tour will take place in November 2010.

Applications close on 24 September 2010 and successful applicants will be notified by end of September 2010.

3. Requirements

All applications are to be submitted electronically and must include:

- A current resume including professional work history
- A 500 word article on a topic that is currently relevant to the India-Africa engagement
- A brief proposal in English outlining a story you wish to cover in Africa related to Africa-India relations and that will be of interest to your target audience
- A letter of recommendation from your organisation head/faculty head . If journalist applicants are not employed directly through a media organisation, please provide a letter of support from the organisation to which you are affiliated, including your relationship to the organisation
- A letter, signed by your (affiliate) organisation or faculty head, motivating how participation in the study tour will benefit your professional work and the work of your organisation. This should include an action plan detailing how your experience in India will be incorporated into further capacity building and knowledge development within your organisation/ journalism school in the three months following completion of the study tour
- Provide samples of three or four professional pieces of written work/manuscripts that have



been printed or broadcast in the last 12 months; or an outline of courses taught if a lecturer in a journalism school/programme.

- Please ensure that all documents are compressed and/or zipped in compressed files to ensure all applications can be uploaded.

4. Concluding Remarks

A contract will be signed by participants requiring the following obligations to be met following conclusion of the tour:

- Produce a commentary piece for the Fahamu Emerging Powers in Africa Newsletter based on their experience in India incorporating topical

- issues related to Africa-India relations
- Make regular contributions on civil society issues for publication in the Fahamu Emerging Powers in Africa Newsletter
- Provide a follow up report detailing the implementation and outcomes of a capacity building activity completed through the participants (affiliate) organisation or journalism school within three months of completing the study tour.

*Please direct all queries and applications to:
Ms Hayley Herman - Programme Officer
Emerging Powers in Africa Programme
Email: hayley@fahamu.org*



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