

## Inspiration from the Experiences of African Countries on the Silk Road to the Process of Development in Sudan

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### Will the Economic Belt and Silk Road Initiative Save Sudan from the World Bank Prescriptions Trap?

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#### Abstract

This paper reviews the experience of African countries with the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative, which was launched by the Chinese President from Astana University during his visit to Kazakhstan in 2013, the paper reflected original experiences on the ground, and how it changed the face of life in some models from these countries. The paper provides insights into the history of the development of Sino-African relations, and the course of the initiative in African countries, and presented some opinions in the written literature about this experience. The paper also, presented an evaluation of some scholars, politicians and academicians about that, and then presented examples of projects implemented in some African countries and their impact on the development of life in economic, social and developmental terms, as cross-border projects and their impact on linking relations between peoples and facilitating life, then briefly reviewing the history and development of the Sudanese-Chinese relations with a focus on the period of Islamists' rule that was displaced by the 19 December 2018 revolution in Sudan, which was characterized with great momentum due to the period in which Sudan witnessed the successful extraction of oil in commercial quantities, But Sudan did not benefit from that period and the huge money obtained. The researcher cited the reasons that prevented Sudan from benefiting from these huge funds, detailed and discussed this, then presented his visions for the future of Sudanese-Chinese relations and how to benefit from the Chinese experience for the future of Sudan by drawing inspiration from the African experience with the Economic Belt Initiative and the New Silk Road as it is open to all peoples and countries of the world, with an understanding and visions that transcend the difficult conditions of the World Bank, monetary institutions and Western banks, and constitute an alternative and a savior for poor countries from exploitation, harsh conditions, loss of freedom of choice, scratching of national sovereignty and the pressures that always fall into them when they need loans and technology from Western countries. The author concluded that, the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative, constitutes a lifeline for Sudan, if it is properly dealt with the opportunities it offers that may not be repeated soon.

**Keywords:** Africa, the New Silk Road, the Economic Belt Initiative, the Chinese experience, Sudan, the rule of Islamists, Win-Win base.

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#### Introduction:

The One Belt - One Road initiative has received wide and unparalleled international attention, as it calls for unprecedented transformations in the unipolar economic, social and geostrategic system after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the unilateral world-led leadership by the United States of America, these transformations are heading towards a multi-polar cultural world, Leading to international cooperation based on more efficient, accepting and open foundations that take into account the mutual acceptance of taking into account common interests within a framework of mutual benefit, justice, rationality and balance, in international relations, and providing reasonable opportunities for negotiation for cooperation between organizations, states and financial institutions, exchanging expertise and making technology available And advanced environmental systems without condition, and in addition to all of this, the initiative supports the links between Asia, Africa and Europe, and provides billions of dollars in investments in infrastructure.

In sum, the One Belt - One Road initiative is considered the most important event that shook the global economic and political circles, and created large areas in order to assimilate new visions and ideas that could produce a new global reality for a more hopeful and optimistic future for the peoples below the line of poverty and backwardness. Also, for the sake of more beneficial, just and cooperative relations between the countries of the North and the South, as it was imperative for the developed countries of the North, to work with China within the framework of the Belt Initiative and the concepts of participation and mutual benefit through the mechanisms on which the project and its financial institutions were based, in order to benefit from the huge

Chinese financial surplus, and to promote the prosperity and stability of Asia, Europe and Africa.

China launched the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, which is a large-scale project that aims to connect the countries of the world together, through a network of roads, railways, ports, oil pipelines, sea lanes and telecommunications networks that pass through China and 65 other countries. The Chinese government has presented this initiative as a way to improve cooperation and communication. China launched this project, which cost a trillion dollars, and has attracted an additional 8 trillion dollars since its launch.<sup>(1)</sup>

The initiative focuses on five areas:<sup>(2)</sup>

1. Coordination among development policies.
2. Establish infrastructure, facilities and networks.
3. Enhancing investment and business relationships.
4. Improving financial cooperation.
5. Intensification of social and cultural exchange

International competition for Africa is increasing and acquiring new strategic dimensions; it stores about 12% of global oil reserves, about 10% of total world natural gas reserves, and there are many natural resources. As China is a new emerging power, it was natural for the African arena to become a target for the Chinese strategic project, or part of what has come to be called the "Chinese dream", and China is well aware that the world will judge it through its international relations, specifically its relations with Africa, and therefore it is striving to make this experience successful, and to present it as a model based on respect, equality and non-interference in internal affairs.

The initiative now covers countries in eastern and southeast Africa, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, and South Africa), North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria) and inland African countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia and Zimbabwe<sup>(3)</sup>.

China invests about \$ 5 billion a year in the African continent, as it is part of the Maritime Silk Road for the Twenty-first Century.<sup>(4)</sup> The infrastructure projects target the energy sector, roads, railways and ports, and include an important 500 km road in Kenya and new railways in Ethiopia, Angola, Kenya and Nigeria<sup>(5)</sup>. In 2018, China promised African countries \$ 60 billion in investment.

Additionally, it includes concessional loans and grants, and has established a special fund worth \$ 10 billion to finance its development.<sup>(6)</sup>

The African share of the opportunities that China grants to foreign students annually reaches 21%, and the UNESCO Center for Statistics confirmed that China doubled the number of African students studying in its universities from two thousand students in 2003 to eighty thousand students in 2018. According to the report, it has surpassed Britain and the United States of America, which annually accept forty thousand African students in their universities, thus China has become the second destination after France, which annually accepts its educational institutions of ninety-five thousand African students. China has also become the first destination for English-speaking African students. The Confucius Institute branches spread to teach Chinese to non-native speakers, 21 branches were established in 15 African countries, and two classes in two African countries.

Chinese medical missions in Africa have provided services to societies since the 1960s in Sudan, Mali, Niger, Guinea, and now in many African countries such as Ethiopia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Djibouti, Kenya, and others.

China has also participated with more than 2,400 Chinese soldiers in seven UN peacekeeping missions across the continent, in Mali, South Sudan, and the Sudanese region of Darfur, Western Sahara, the Congo and other conflict areas. China has also established a naval base in Djibouti to secure maritime navigation in the Horn of Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea.

The last summit of the Forum on China-Africa Relations, which was held in Beijing in September 2018, was under the slogan "China and Africa ... Towards a Stronger Society with a Common Future through Win-Win Cooperation". This summit is a milestone in international relations, especially on the economic level. The investment agreements signed during it have reached about sixty billion dollars.

Thus, the Chinese contributions to the development of the African continent are progressing every day, and it is expected that the volume of trade exchange between the two parties will increase to reach one hundred and

<sup>1</sup> Mohamed Khalil Khan and others, "China's belt and road initiative: a global model for an evolving approach to sustainable regional development", in *Sustainability*, vol.10, No.11 (16 November 2018). Available at <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/10/11/4234/htm>

<sup>2</sup> Lauren A. Johnston, "The belt and road initiative: what is in it for China?" in *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, vol. 6 No. 1 (31 October 2018) p.40-58. Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/app5.265>

<sup>3</sup> <https://african.business/african-leaders-sign-billions-in-deals-at-chinas-belt-and-road-summit>

<sup>4</sup> Vivien Foster and others, "Building bridges: China's growing role as infrastructure financier for Sub-Saharan Africa". Available at [https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRICA/Resources/BB\\_Final\\_Exec\\_summary\\_English\\_July08\\_Wo-Embg.pdf](https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRICA/Resources/BB_Final_Exec_summary_English_July08_Wo-Embg.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Silja Fröhlich, "China's Belt and Road forum: does Africa need new funding options?", 26 April 2019. Available at <https://www.dw.com/en/chinas-belt-and-road-forum-does-africa-need-new-funding-options/a-48502797>

<sup>6</sup> Efem Nkam Ubi, "How Africa can benefit from China's Belt and Road Initiative", *Financial Nigeria*, 18 June 2019. Available at <http://www.financialnigeria.com/how-africa-can-benefit-from-china-s-belt-and-road-initiative-blog-449.html>

seventy billion dollars. The Chinese companies operating in Africa in important and strategic projects, especially in the field of infrastructure, now amount to more than 3,100 companies providing more than 150,000 job opportunities.

### Literature Review.

Egyptian economist Dr. Walid Gaballah considered that the Chinese "Belt and Road" initiative is a multi-axis integration framework "among the participating countries, and emphasized that the initiative goes beyond trade to reach the level of participation in the future, whether on the cultural, intellectual or productive side.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Egyptian expert added, that the initiative is a "multi-axis integration framework based on dialogue, in which China deals with an ancient civilization that respects the civilizations of other countries and interacts with them to participate in making a better future for all, as we find China on the economic side of the initiative, making huge investments in projects." In the participating countries, which helps those countries to more employment and growth, and it leads to expanding the circle of markets and trade alliances in front of Chinese products within the framework of popular conviction among the countries of the initiative to fair the deal, and the initiative in this way can only be rejected by some of China's competitors, Those who deal according to the rule (we win, then we help you), which is the rule that has caused great suffering and a decline in the standard of living worldwide".

"The Belt and Road Initiative is the largest program of coordinating infrastructure investments in human history," says Indian-American thinker Paraj Khan<sup>(2)</sup>. For him, this initiative is essential for the development of African countries. Khan predicted that "Africa will never be the new "factory" of the world, because with the advent of robots, there will be no need for an abundant labor force, what Africa needs is an infrastructure that serves the economy to enable people to move freely on the continent in order to work, and they will not be able to do so, without roads connecting across the continent.

Oxford economist and professor Ian Golden<sup>(3)</sup> confirms that "until the end of the Cold War, the only option for African countries was to accept investments or aid from Europe and the United States or the Soviet Union, but with the Belt and Road initiative, we are now in an environment in which these countries have options." More, and you can also decide what to do, that's fine. "

With regard to the high indebtedness of African countries, which is fueled by the numerous loans granted by the Chinese, UN Secretary-General Antonio Gutiérrez says that "debt is a global problem, but the problem of global debt should not be confused with issues that may be related to some of the Belt and Road projects." "We consider this initiative to be the most important project in the world today in the context of South-South cooperation, which would contribute to establishing a fairer globalization, and it is the best way to achieve the future of common prosperity among the various countries of the world," Gutiérrez added<sup>(4)</sup>.

China is moving toward cooperation with the African continent, with the aim of developing its trade and economic relations, especially in the field of energy and investments. China also aims to have strategic partnerships with African countries and contribute to the development of the continent, and therefore China is working to integrate Africa into the Belt and Road Initiative, with the aim of linking Africa with other continents, across the sea route, promoting international trade and developing international transportation lines and routes.

There are two associations that China is working on merging between them, one of which is the link between the industrial structure in China and the industrial development in Africa, and the second link is the link between the Chinese One Belt One Road initiative and the strategy of revitalization, recovery and development in Africa, which could pave the way for the two associations and further overlap between Africa and China. The Chinese president has mentioned his pledges to finance three high-speed railway networks in Africa, active shipping lines and regional and international airlines. More than half of the foreign aid provided by China will be directed to Africa. Lending will be increased by 10 billion dollars, as the total loans provided by China will reach 30 billion dollars, and then two billion dollars will be provided to the China-Africa Development Fund.<sup>(5)</sup>

Most of the projects are currently located in Kenya and Tanzania on the East African coast, as well as in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. More African countries are likely to sign memoranda of understanding in support of the initiative - which China may formally expand to include all of Africa. If BRI were to be formally expanded it would likely upgrade existing "Silk-Roadify" plans (Chinese and others) for transcontinental infrastructure corridors (highways, railways, and commercial districts), especially from east to west across the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Walid Gaballah, Egyptian Association for Political Economy, interview with Xinhua News Agency, Cairo, October 17, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Paraj Khan, American Economist, The Future in Asia: Global Order in the Twenty-first Century, The Second International Forum of the Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing, 25-27 April 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Ian Golden, Economist, University of Oxford, The Second Belt and Road Initiative International Forum, 25-27 April 2019

<sup>4</sup> Antonio Gutiérrez, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Second International Forum of the Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing, 25-27 April 2019

<sup>5</sup> Abdul Rahman Othman: Sino-African Relations, a Future Vision, Conference on Arab-African-Chinese Cooperation within the Framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, Center for African Research and Studies, Global Africa University, Khartoum, 2017, p. 326.

fertile range south of the Sahel - from Ethiopia through South Sudan, and Central African Republic, Chad and Nigeria, to the Francophone West Africa region, where Chinese activity has increased in recent years in sectors such as infrastructure, energy and fishing. <sup>(1)</sup>

In January 2015, China and the African Union signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the field of major infrastructure networks and industrialization processes. The Chinese concession projects in Africa are directly related to the Silk Road, as the state-owned Chinese Roads and Bridges Authority obtained the concession right for the Kenya / Kenya Railway Project and the 485 km line linking Mombasa and Nairobi, and a 440 km long line linking between Nairobi-Malaba (Uganda), linking Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda as well as extending in the future to Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. <sup>(2)</sup>

There is a huge project that China will complete in Algeria, the "Great Port" project, which will be located west of Algiers, specifically in the Hamdania region, in the city of ChercHELL in the province of Tipaza. This port will have an effective role in activating the artery of exports and imports, especially the Chinese-Algerian, and this project is considered by China as a main point for Africa and Western Europe for the easiest departure from Algeria towards Europe and the eastern Mediterranean. <sup>(3)</sup>

Tunisia has joined the "Belt and Road Initiative" and it aspires to be the ideal gateway for Chinese investments and projects in Africa and the strategic partner for China in the Arab and African region, this accession will support China's contribution to the completion of a number of development projects in Tunisia, especially major projects in the field of infrastructure. Tunisian government officials also expressed their desire to make China a first-class strategic partner, and for work to be based on supporting the opening of the Chinese market to Tunisian agricultural products, marine products and Tunisian phosphate <sup>(4)</sup>.

In addition to the importance of Egypt in Africa on the sea route, the vice president of the General Authority for the Suez Canal Economic Zone stressed the importance of achieving integration with the Belt and Road Initiative, and that Egypt signed a framework agreement with the Chinese side, represented by the port of "Qingdao" and the Chinese Development Fund on the port project, "Al Ain.elSokhna", explaining that the agreement will help to sustain and secure supply chains for the Egyptian and Chinese economies, and facilitate the entry of trade in the neighboring African and Arab countries and the Mediterranean countries to global markets, which supports trade exchange, and that the framework agreement is a cornerstone for areas of cooperation and is in the interest of achieving the initiative. <sup>(5)</sup>

Ning Jixi, vice chairman of the Chinese Reform and Development Committee, emphasized that Egypt is one of the most important pivotal and friendly countries to China in the Middle East and Africa, pointing out that Egypt's unique position makes it one of the main pillars of the "Belt and Road Initiative", which will contribute to Developing and strengthening the frameworks for economic cooperation between the two countries during the next stage, and that the Chinese industrial zone in the northwestern Gulf of Suez is one of 100 Chinese industrial zones in the African continent, stressing that the aforementioned area is the best among all regions, due to its distinguished geographical location, as well as the availability of access mechanisms to Many markets in different countries of the world, through the system of trade agreements associated with Egypt with many international markets and blocs. <sup>(6)</sup>

### **Examples of Chinese efforts to develop the African continent:**<sup>7)</sup>

During the past twenty years, China-Africa relations have witnessed unprecedented developments in their modern and contemporary history. Although the Chinese presence in Africa has been ancient since the sixties of the last century, the size and nature of these relations changed rapidly with the beginning of the nineties of the last century to keep pace with the rapid Chinese rise, in terms of quantity, quality, weight and influence on all economic and political levels.

The New Silk Road and Belt Initiative was a milestone in the history of these relations, as this initiative put the train of these relations on the road, with the concepts, frameworks, horizons, and philosophies they enabled, which framed large, deep and new partnerships that gave rise to hopes and dreams for Africa with a new face

<sup>1</sup> Sabine Mokry: China owns the stage in Africa, Date released 31/8/2018, Date retrieving 22/10/2018, from site:<https://www.merics.org/en/blog/china-owns-stage-africa>

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Rahman Othman: Previous Reference, pp. 327-328.

<sup>3</sup> Abdelkader Khalil: The Belt and the Road and Algeria's Role in North Africa, The Belt and Road Initiative Media Forum is a periodic and global event, China through Arab eyes, Issue 101, 2018, p.14.

<sup>4</sup> Sanaa Clich: The Belt and Road Initiative, Tunisia, an encouraging sign for the new Chinese Silk Road path towards Africa and the Mediterranean, the Media Forum for the Belt and Road Initiative, a periodic and global event, China through Arab eyes, Issue 101, 2018, p.15.

<sup>5</sup> Maryam Adly: The Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing, Suez Canal, Silk Road Gate, publication date 5/16/2017, retrieved 20/6/2019, from the site: <https://www.wataninet.com>

<sup>6</sup> Previous reference.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.kassiounpaper.com/economy/item/32403-2017-12-16-19-11-33>

and relations in which mutual benefits, taking into account common interests and direct support To the partner, and this was reflected on the ground in what the One Belt - One Road initiative made possible, and at the top of its priorities the development of the infrastructure for the economies of the countries on the Silk Road. China proposes, through the Belt and Silk Road initiative, for Africans to achieve a "win-win" partnership, and Africa suffers from a large deficit in infrastructure, especially in streets, bridges, ports, hospitals, schools, etc. It appears as if the initiative responds to the needs of African countries, this includes preferential client credit loans and foreign aid concessional loans.

Thus, China allows African countries to possess the ability to maintain their sovereignty and the ability to resist the influence of former colonial countries and harness their capabilities for the benefit of their peoples by strengthening their negotiating position with European countries and the United States of America and their institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and others, and restores the balance of relations between them and the rest of the world.

By reviewing models of Chinese development finance in Africa, the paradoxes between it and those of Western companies emerge in terms of cost and feasibility.

#### **Ghana: Low costs of commodity-backed loans**

In 2007, an agreement was signed between China and Ghana to build a 400-megawatt hydroelectric power station on the Bui Dam in Ghana, through two separate loans from the Chinese Export-Import Bank, the first: for the purchase of Chinese equipment at a value of 292 million dollars, and the second: 270 million dollars at a price. Fixed interest of 2% (a loan with easy terms). As for the repayment of the loan, it will be through sales of cocoa beans export to China at a rate of 40 thousand tons annually during the period of the loan specified for 20 years, and it was agreed that the net income from electricity sales will be placed in an account to ensure assistance in repaying the loan. Whereas, the price of future electricity will range between 3.5-5.5 cents per kilowatt hour, in contrast, the average electricity tariff in Africa according to the World Bank was 13 cents per kilowatt hour, and therefore, the project will reduce the cost by more than double<sup>(1)</sup>.

#### **Congo: Chinese solutions versus financing hurdles: <sup>(2)</sup>**

During the period 2007-2008 it was agreed to provide a development package worth 6.2 billion dollars for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a loan for infrastructure and reconstruction projects worth 3 billion dollars, in addition to 3.2 billion dollars for a joint mining project (copper and cobalt mine), including 1, 1 billion interest-free loans, 2.1 billion dollars is a 6.1% variable rate loan.

The infrastructure loan included: 3,402 km of paved roads, construction and rehabilitation of 3,213 km of railways, construction and equipping of 145 health centres, 31 hospitals, 5,000 low-cost housing units, two universities, and other projects.

The implementation was through a joint company (Secomines Company), and the partnership ratios would be 32% for the Congo - and 68% for the Chinese companies, provided that the profits from the Secomines investment in the mining project would be used to pay off the loans, and to finance the costs of developing the mines and other infrastructure projects

Initially, the Democratic Republic of Congo was not allowed to accept unconcessional financing, as one of the conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for heavily indebted poor countries, within the framework of debt sustainability, which prompted China to provide grants of 42-64% of the infrastructure loan, and thus Inclusion in concessional financing, according to the International Monetary Fund, any loan to a country after the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, should include a grant component of at least 35%. In addition, Chinese interest rates were lower than the rates provided by European banks between 1-2 degrees.

#### **The experience of the Republic of Chad with the World Bank. <sup>(3)</sup>**

According to the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project, which is supported by the World Bank, and the World Bank had announced its intention to build an oil refinery, these pipelines transport crude oil from Chad to abroad, in return Chad imports all of its refined fuel needs, and in spite of that it has not met The World Bank makes its promises. This prompted China to build the first oil refinery in Chad as a joint venture. Ownership will be distributed (60% to China, 40% to Chad), according to the Chadian Minister of Finance and Budget, who said: (If we had submitted this request to our traditional partners, they would definitely tell us to abandon this idea.

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<sup>1</sup> Previous reference

<sup>2</sup> Previous reference

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.net/ebusiness/2007/1/8/>

### **China provides Africa with real development aid.**

China leads development globally through its development aid in its various forms of loans and grants, within the framework of South-South cooperation to support and assist developing countries, especially the least developed.

The Chinese foreign aid program began in 1950 and continued to expand until, since 2011, China has become the first in the world in financing development. Chinese financing is characterized by not imposing any political conditions, non-interference in the internal affairs of recipient countries, and full respect for their right to independently choose their development paths and models. Desired, in order to achieve mutual benefit and profit.

As for China, it provides various types of aid: grants - interest-free loans - soft loans (low and fixed interest rates) within the so-called official development aid, in addition to other types of official flows, which account for the bulk of Chinese financing. <sup>(1)</sup>

### **Partnership on the base (win-win):**

The African continent is no longer a hostage to the dominance of European investments, as China has a strong presence in the continent, and Chinese investments through the Belt and Silk Road initiative have contributed to the advancement of many of the continent's economies, which made China a fierce competitor against the old European colonial.

In a related context, the mechanisms of Chinese-African cooperation are not limited to making promises, but rather within the framework of China awareness of the importance of the great continent and its determination to fulfil its promises to implement the outcomes of the summit of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum, "FOCAC", which was held in Johannesburg in December 2015. <sup>(2)</sup>

### **Railways for the advancement of the continent's economies:**

Railways is one of the most important areas of cooperation between China and the African countries, in terms of the size of projects and the value of investments in them, and these projects are still continuing on a larger scale with the growth of the Chinese economy and African economies on the Silk Road. The Chinese believed in the idea that high-speed rail was the optimal strategy for uniting and strengthening ties. They adhered to this idea in line with the saying: (To become rich build a road), which is evident in the period between 1970 and 1975, they spent 500 million dollars and employed thousands of Chinese engineers and technicians to construct the "Tan Zam" railway, linking the rich copper mines in Zambia and the capital. Tanzanian Dar es Salaam, with a length of 1800 km. And China had completed within 6 years the Dar-es-Salaam Kapiri Mbushi railway line in Tanzania, which was officially inaugurated in 1975, all of which reflects the historical contributions made by China to supply the continent with the basic infrastructure in the field of railways and shows the depth and historical dimension of relations between the two sides. <sup>(3)</sup>

Today, the construction of an African railway network lies at the heart of the Chinese vision to penetrate deeper into Africa.

### **Lagos-Calabar Railway Line along the Nigerian Coast:**

After the Chinese companies completed the establishment of the "TAZARA" line, their work continued in Africa, and the railways became one of the most important areas of cooperation between China and the countries of the African continent, in terms of the size of projects and the value of investments in them. China signed with Nigeria at the end of 2014 a contract worth 11.9 billion dollars to build a railway line along Nigeria's coast on the Atlantic Ocean, and this project is the largest single contract project for China in the world, and the line will extend 1402 km and link Nigeria's economic capital Lagos in the west. And the city of Calabar in the east, and it was planned that the project would provide up to 200,000 job opportunities for Nigerians, and the line would also provide 30,000 permanent jobs if it was started <sup>(4)</sup>

### **Mombasa Port - Nairobi and East Africa Ports Railway:**

The Chinese government signed an agreement with Kenya, worth \$ 3.8 billion, to extend a railway linking the port of Mombasa with Nairobi, and then extending to the rest of East Africa. Under the agreement, the Chinese Exzim Bank will bear 90% of the cost of the works aimed at replacing the current 609 km long line dating back to the British colonial period, and Kenya bears the remaining 10%.

The project was launched in 2014 and opened in 2017. It was completed by "China Communications

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.kassiounpaper.com/economy/item/32403-2017-12-16-19-11-33>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.studies.aljazeera.net/ar/issues/2014/04/201441917164379610.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.alayam.com/Article/courts-article/407174>

<sup>4</sup> Previous reference

Construction" as the main contractor. Construction work was launched to link the largest economic city in East Africa with Kampala, Kigali, Bujumbura and Juba. <sup>(2)(1)</sup>

The agreement was signed in Nairobi, in the presence of Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Rwanda Paul Kagame, President of South Sudan Salva Kiir, President of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

East African leaders hope that China will help establish a modern railway network that would link the Burundian capital Bujumbura through Uganda and Rwanda with a line linking southern Sudan.

#### **Addis Ababa-Djibouti cross-border railway.** <sup>(5)(4)(3)</sup>

This line is more than seven hundred and fifty kilometres long and has forty-five stations. The speed of the train is one hundred and twenty kilometres per hour, and its cost is four billion US dollars. The line is constructed according to Chinese standards and with Chinese construction equipment. This line is the first fully Chinese-built railway project in terms of design, investment, financing, and equipment, materials, construction, supervision and executive management. It had been the biggest railway projects that China implements it outside its borders. Chinese companies have participated in various works with this project; The Import and Export Bank of China provided the project financing loan, which was implemented by China Railway Group Ltd, and China International Enterprise Consultants provided advisory, monitoring and management services.

During the implementation of the project, about forty thousand local jobs were created. In 2016, the joint management body consisting of the China Railway Group Limited and the China Civil Engineering Construction Group signed a contract for this line for a period of six years, after the line is finished, the number of job opportunities for locals will reach More than 2,000 jobs include freight, passenger travel, train inspection and maintenance, infrastructure.

#### **Doraleh Multifunctional Port and Djibouti Free Zone:** <sup>(6)</sup>

Construction of a multi-functional port project in Djibouti began in August 2014, with a total contract value of \$ 580 million, and the Export-Import Bank of China provides it with preferential loans. The China Construction Engineering Company Limited is responsible for buildings, and Shanghai Zhenhua Group provides "Made in China" large port facilities. The port is expected to accommodate 7.08 million tons of goods and 200,000 containers annually.

The first phase of Doraleh Port was inaugurated on May 24, 2017, and it is considered the largest port project built by the Chinese Port Engineering Company Limited in the Northeast Africa region, and the company's first water project in Africa, and it is also the company's largest water project abroad so far.

The contract value for this project, which began in August 2014, reached 421.7 million US dollars, and includes the main port of 1,200 meters in length, a workboat berth of 175 meters, the road yard with an area of 900 thousand square meters, in addition to buildings with an area of 80 thousand square meters and other Facilities The port is expected to accommodate 7.08 million tons.

#### **Lekki Free Trade Zone in Nigeria:** <sup>(7)</sup>

The Lekki Free Trade Zone is a strategic development project being implemented by the China Railway Construction Company Limited, which is considered one of the 500 largest global companies, in cooperation with the government of Lagos State of Nigeria. The Lekki area is expected to witness rapid growth in the coming years. Free trade zone located on the Lekki Peninsula in the Gulf of Guinea by the Atlantic Ocean, 50 km from the city of Lagos, with a total planned area of 165 km<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Sino-Sudanese relations:**

It is useful in tracing the historical development of Sino-Sudanese relations to refer to the historical stages between the two countries as divided and relied upon by the Sudanese researcher on Chinese affairs, Dr. Jaafar Karrar in his monumental book (Sudanese-Chinese Relations 1956-2011), and this was summed up by the journalist Osama Mukhtar<sup>(8)</sup> the Sudanese-Chinese relations, which were dated by the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in February 1959, were not even the outcome of that year, nor even the product of a meeting Leader [Zhou Enlai], the head of the Chinese State Council at the time, with the

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/aswaq/economy/2014/05/12/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/ebusiness/2014/5/11>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.arabic.china.org.cn/txt/2017-03/20/content\\_40476580.htm](http://www.arabic.china.org.cn/txt/2017-03/20/content_40476580.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.chinabelaraby.com/اديس-أباجا-خط/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dostor.org/2050539>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.arabic.people.com.cn/101460/101489/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.studies.aljazeera.net/ar/issues/2014/04/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.chinainarabic.org/?p=34924>

Sudanese leader, Ismail Al-Azhari, the former Sudanese Prime Minister, in 1955 in Bandung, during that anti-colonial demonstration. Rather, it is a product of distant centuries, its roots stretching back to two hundred years BC, where the two sides have continued since The Western Han Dynasty via the ancient Maritime Silk Road, which connected Sudan's eastern ports with the Far East.

Back then, China was importing emeralds and peridots from Sudan. Here, it must be emphasized that all the political regimes that Sudan has witnessed since its independence in 1956 have focused on developing their relations with China, and for its part, China has shown great interest in strengthening its relations with Sudan, regardless of the regimes that governing Sudan.

In the current era, the period of Sudanese President Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri's rule [1969-1985] was the period in which relations between the two countries were strengthened and witnessed cooperation in various fields, including the cultural field, where they exchanged artistic and sports teams. The Sudanese and Chinese moods are similar in the five-stage singing scale, and China also established the Sudanese Acrobatic Group, which is the product of Chinese acrobatics and the only one in Africa. The cultural and artistic effects of this period are still stuck in the minds of the Sudanese, as it is what shaped the image of China in the hearts of the Sudanese through what they saw from the works of Chinese teams on the stage of theaters and television screens, and this cultural dimension is what the Chinese President Xi Jinping is interested in now, which is the introduction of China to the world through its cultural heritage. .

As for the period of the three democratic rule in Sudan - Elected civilian governments- the relations did not witness a noticeable development, and this may be due to the short life span of the governments in these periods and the Sudanese parties' preoccupation with the internal political struggle between them.

Then came the period of Islamist coup rule from 1989 until its demise with the people's revolution, in December 2018, the period of Islamists' rule was the longest in the history of relations between the two countries, which has nearly lasted for thirty years.

It is also worth noting that the Chinese medical mission in the city of Abu Ushar in the state of Gezira in Sudan has been providing services since the 1970s without interruption and is still continuing.

China's contributions to the infrastructure of the Sudanese economy in the field of roads and bridges were basic and strategic, such as the road linking the main port In Port Sudan city to Khartoum the capital of Sudan, Kosti Bridge on the White Nile, Hantoub and Rufaa bridges on the Blue Nile and others. The Friendship Hall, which is the largest conference hall in Sudan and one of the largest conference halls in Africa, the new presidential palace, the Friendship Spinning and Textile Factory, and its great contribution in JIAD Group for Industries and others, are important additions to this historical summary as reference models.

In addition, hundreds of Sudanese students at various university levels are studying today in Chinese universities, most of whom are university professors who are studying for doctorate degrees in various disciplines, especially agriculture, veterinary, medicines and engineering studies.

The extraction of Sudanese oil by China during the period of the Islamists' rule was a milestone in the history of the relations between the two countries.

What is being blamed on Sudan is its failure to benefit from the petroleum period funds to upgrade the agricultural and animal sector, on which the Sudanese economy was depend before oil was extracted, which led to the deteriorating economic situation now after the scarcity of oil revenues. Emphasis must now be placed on imparting China's vast experience and advanced technologies for its development process.

The factors that hindered benefiting from the Chinese experience of development during the period of the Islamists' rule:

In fact, the period of Islamists' rule in Sudan, which lasted for thirty years, deepened the manifestations of backwardness, whether at the level of national income, per capita income, health and education; which made Sudan a quagmire of poverty, disease, ignorance, illiteracy, violence and civil wars.

#### **The most important reasons that hindered development in Sudan during the period of the Islamists' rule:**

1. Civil wars and insecurity caused the loss of investment opportunities, the disruption of projects and the destruction of the environment necessary to attract investors, which led to people losing their jobs, the spread of unemployment and marginal unproductive work on a large scale, disrupting production processes and weakening state institutions.
2. In light of the absence of political stability in Sudan during that period, the country lost the available growth opportunities and aid efforts, grants and loans provided by states and international institutions.
3. Sudan is one of the countries with the highest concentration of corruption, according to Transparency International reports. Small elite controls the state, political and administrative positions are considered a source of wealth. The names of political leaders always appear in the leaks of smugglers, money laundering, or on the list of people wanted internationally on charges of financial corruption, and because corruption paralyzes the work of the state, the state apparatus does not use loans, grants and humanitarian aid effectively, but rather a small group of senior employees exploits the granted support



for their own benefit, Its impact does not reach development or public services..

4. Illiteracy rates are widespread in Sudan, especially in conflict and war areas. Many of the children lack access to basic education in the absence of the state's role, and the state itself suffers from the migration of specialized competencies, while development needs education and knowledge, Production and innovation. The country has fallen into an unlimited cycle of development problems, and the misuse of international aid funds in strategic and sustainable projects.

The December 2018 revolution is now entering its second year, and the transitional government, led by Dr. Abdullah Hamdok, is facing a grinding economic crisis, with inflation rising to more than 265%, and the local currency exchange rate against the US dollar in the black market rises to more than 285 pounds, and the international community does not provide the promised aid to overcome the crisis. . In fact, the international community is watching as the transitional government in Sudan tries to run a country that was completely plundered by the Islamists and left an empty treasury. The transitional period in Now Sudan is in a fragile situation and the economic dilemma seriously threatens it, although Dr. Abdullah Hamdok, upon his appointment as prime minister, declared that Sudan urgently needs ten billion dollars to stop the accelerating economic collapse, but all the conferences that were held to help the transitional government, (Conference Sudan's partners in June 2020 in Berlin, and the Friends of Sudan Conference in Riyadh in August 2020), these conferences could not collect more than one billion eight hundred million dollars, and this amount, despite its smallness, did not reach the treasury of the Central Bank of Sudan, because a large part of these amounts are ddeferred promises.

In fact, the economic blockade imposed by the United States of America on Sudan for more than a quarter of a century and placing it on the list of countries sponsoring terrorism has affected production and economic growth in addition to the inability to make external understandings, borrow and benefit from international donor institutions. Despite the abolition of the economic blockade of sanctions in February 2017, obtaining grants and loans was associated with removing Sudan from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism, which caused to a large extent the deterioration of the Sudanese economy, the inability of Sudan to benefit from natural resources, and contributed to the collapse of the infrastructure, Airlines, railways, and seaports by depriving them of spare parts, modernization and maintenance. The removal of Sudan's name from the list of countries supporting terrorism that occurred in January 2021 opens the door wide for Sudan's integration into the world after many years during which international institutions refrained from providing grants and loans. The name of Sudan on the list was previously a risk to investors, and despite the removal from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism, the positive impact of this requires months, provided that radical reforms within the local economic system are urgently initiated that provide the investor with full opportunities. Khartoum needs a rapid recovery of its economy, which is on the verge of collapse, and perhaps bankruptcy, and the national currency has lost 90% of its purchasing power. The crisis now necessitates the Chinese option through the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative in conjunction with the path of returning to the international community to save the economy facing unprecedented suffocation due to the reluctance of the international community to provide significant aid to Sudan despite promises made after the overthrow of the Islamic regime. Dealing with the Chinese option must be based on a free and effective political will and decision, as the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative is able to provide investments that would revive the Sudanese economy, especially in the areas of infrastructure, the most important of which are transportation and rapid transfer, railways, airports, agricultural investments and industries. Transformational agricultural and value-added exports and open doors for investment. In the field of energy exploitation and mining, including natural gas and solar energy, in addition to increasing oil production, exploring oil reserves, digging new wells, establishing oil refineries, achieving self-sufficiency in hydrocarbons and exports, and mining gold, which has been confirmed with huge reserves in Sudan. China's experience in oil and energy infrastructure projects in Sudan during the past years has succeeded in extracting Sudanese oil, but for the reasons we mentioned in the context of this article, Sudan has not been able to employ these successes in its development goals.

In the same previous context, it is possible to benefit from the great experience of agricultural cooperatives in China that provide agricultural products and job opportunities for farmers in rural areas and the outskirts of cities, as part of the efforts to eradicate poverty, these cooperatives aim to increase the cultivated area in the countryside and help ensure food security. .

China is sharing its experiences with countries located along the Belt and Road Initiative to address water shortage and provide large agricultural areas, for self-sufficiency production and export to countries along the Belt and Road, using the latest new technologies for agricultural industry and combating desertification.

These cooperatives include horticultural products, dairy farms, fish and poultry farms, meat products and forest products.

Sudan is characterized by an abundance of arable land and surface water, in addition to rain water.

Agricultural cooperative societies can provide job opportunities for young graduates of faculties of agriculture, veterinary medicine and economics, and these are the groups most suffering from high

unemployment rates at present. It is also possible to take advantage of the "Silk Road" to increase Chinese investments, increase the volume of trade between Sudan and China, and develop Port Sudan, which falls under the Belt and Road Initiative. Port Sudan is an important and strategic location, and it is one of the most important ports that serve the Economic Belt Initiative and the New Silk Road, and in return it is a port for all West African countries, and economic reports estimate that about 70% of the global trade volume that comes to the countries of the Middle East and Asia passes through the Red Sea. Port Sudan can be developed to be the largest port in the Red Sea in terms of capacity and movement, and it can be linked via railways to reach West Africa and Ethiopia, thus becoming one of the sources of foreign exchange earnings for Sudan, in addition to helping to open new transport lines, and reduce the costs of transporting imports. . For East, Central and West African countries. All of these projects could be implemented through the B.O.T (1) system, as China has done in many African countries.

In addition to all this, and in the context of benefiting from the Chinese experience, hundreds of Sudanese university graduates at the master's and doctoral levels gained great experience and skills and prepared research drawn from the Chinese experience that could be a good asset and an advisory body could be formed from them providing the Sudanese government with insights about the Chinese experience in Development, especially in the field of agricultural cooperatives, entrepreneurship and various forms of engineering.

### **Discussion and conclusion.**

It is difficult to conceive of the Sino-Sudanese relations except through the inspiration of the African countries 'experience with the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative, of which we have presented successful models. Sino-Sudanese relations - especially the economic components - still have time to develop. Likewise, relations are expected to develop in the short and medium term, and Sudan has wide and great opportunities through the Belt and Silk Road initiative adopted by China, through creative inspiration from the experience of African countries on the new Silk Road, which we described as successful. Because it leads to sustainable growth, improvement in social and economic infrastructure, an influx of new investments, and more economic trade relations. However, arriving at a real scenario whereby "everyone is a winner", especially for Sudan, depends on several important elements:

- The Sudanese government must truly have the political will, the active desire, and the ability to inspire the African experience on the new Silk Road .
- The ability of the Sino-Sudanese relationship to transform or achieve the targeted Sudanese capacity development in the fields of education, health and agriculture, and to accelerate that process.
- The ability to develop Sudanese technological capabilities and raise their capabilities, especially in the field of extraction, processing of its natural resources and adding value to them. Interpreting the benefits of interaction so that Sudanese citizens benefit from them through improving economic, environmental and political conditions.
- Sudan, after the December 19, 2018 revolution, has become an open field for companies and investors from all over the world, and there is no doubt that Chinese private sector companies and their experience in Sudan will have the best luck, and this pushes Chinese private sector companies to take the initiative and seize opportunities to invest in various sectors of the Sudanese economy.
- It is important to improve the investment law in Sudan in a way that encourages and stimulates foreign investors and provides incentives, adequate guarantees and easy conditions for investment.
- Breaking the monopoly on trade and investment between China and Sudan within a narrow framework of companies and individuals, paving the way for investors and small businessmen, and benefiting from the Chinese experience, especially in the field of mixed economy and cooperative farms.
- The ability to provide facilities, effective incentives, protection and legal guarantees for the activities of the Chinese government and the Chinese private sector in Sudan.

In fact, the speed with which the projects of the Economic Belt Initiative and the New Silk Road are descending on all parts of the world does not give an opportunity to take a breath and follow up, as every moment is new and events on the ground change directly, and what is happening today on the Silk Road, is not like tomorrow, especially for those who miss For everything, and at the same time, everything is available without restrictions or conditions, on a golden rule (win - win), everyone benefits and there is no loser, but as we have explained, this is done in a rapid manner and does not give an opportunity to take a breath, and

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<sup>1</sup> The term "B.O.T" is the abbreviation of the English phrase BUILD OPERATE TRANSFER, which means build, operate and transform. Its content is the assumption of a private investor after being licensed by the state or the competent government agency to construct and build any of the infrastructure projects from his own resources, provided that he takes over the operation and management of it after its completion for a certain concession period that usually ranges between 30 or 40 years, during which he obtains the costs that it is borne by it in addition to achieving profits through the revenues and fees paid by the users of this project, and after the expiry of the concession period, the project with its components is transferred to the state.

opportunities on the Silk Road do not wait for the late. This includes the fact that, the Economic Belt and New Silk Road initiative establishes a new world that is more cooperative and more just, at least in the eyes of the people with no chance of development

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