

# The Africa-China Relationship and its Global Impact

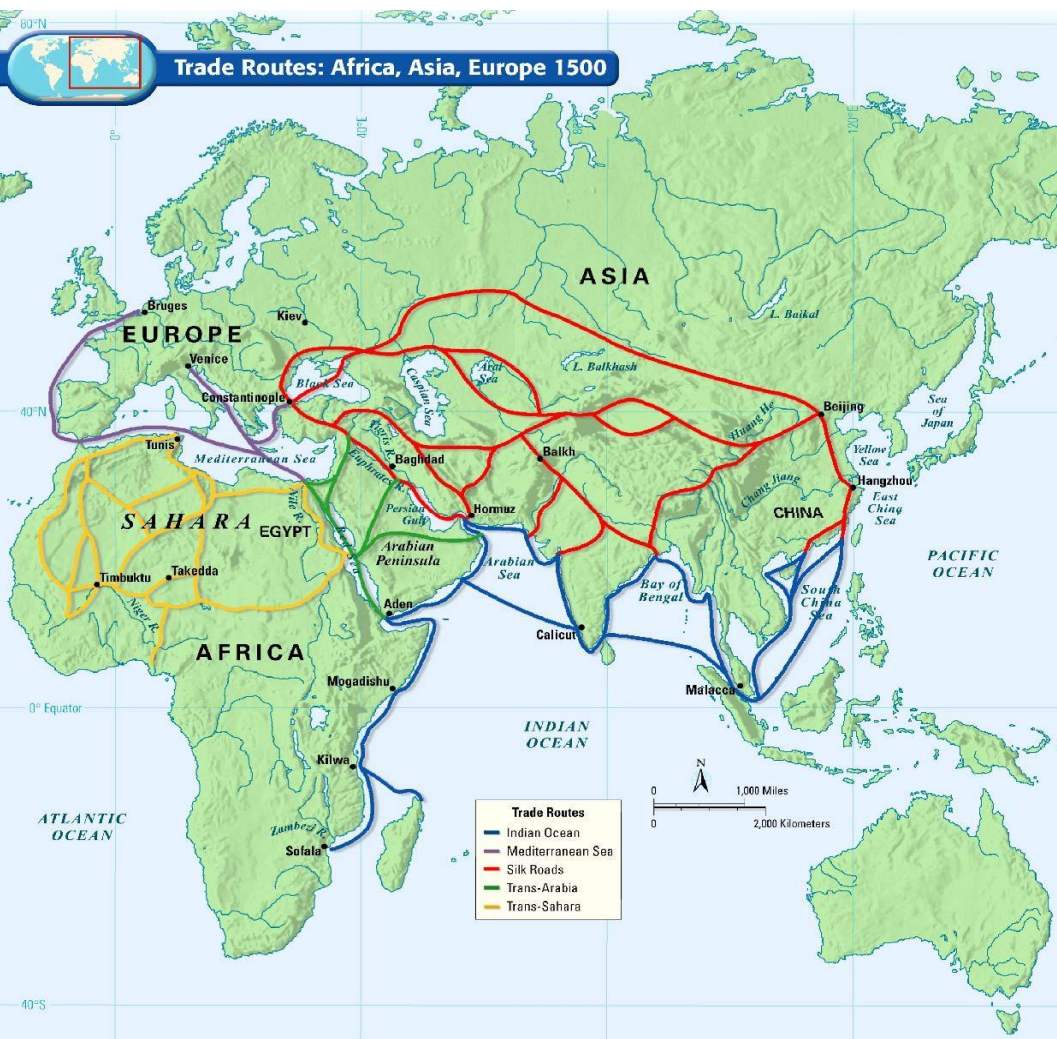
University of Pittsburgh: Asian Studies Center  
Teacher Workshop  
November 1, 2023

# Our topics

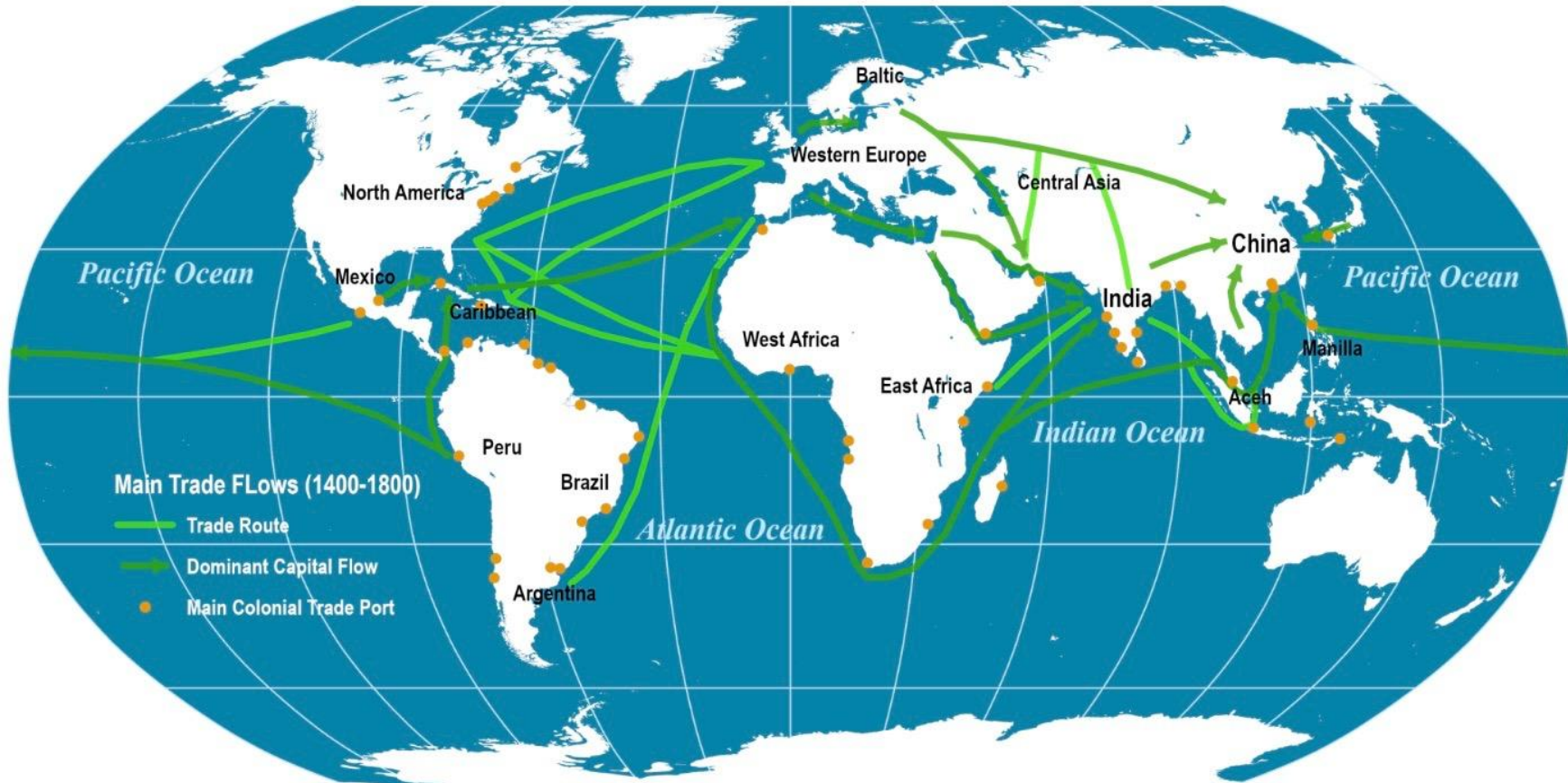
- Evolution of historic trade networks: regional to global
- Europe in Africa
- The Chinese concept of *Tianxia* as foreign policy: tribute, trade, and legitimacy
- Cold War alliances
- Africa's resources
- EU - Africa trade
- China - Africa relationships: investment, loans, trade



## Trade Routes: Africa, Asia, Europe 1500

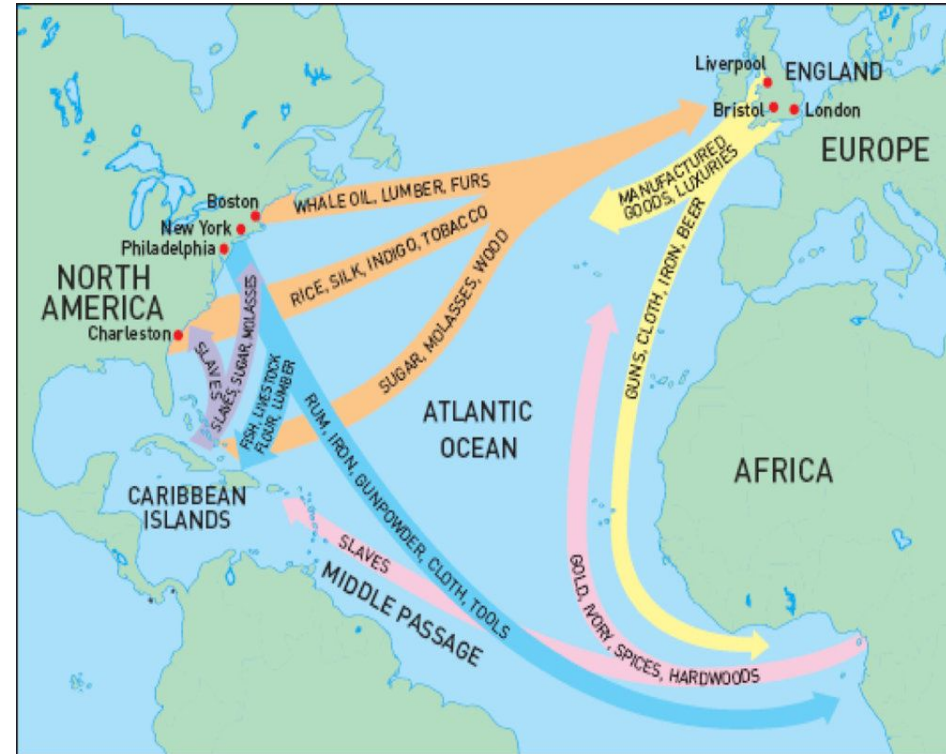
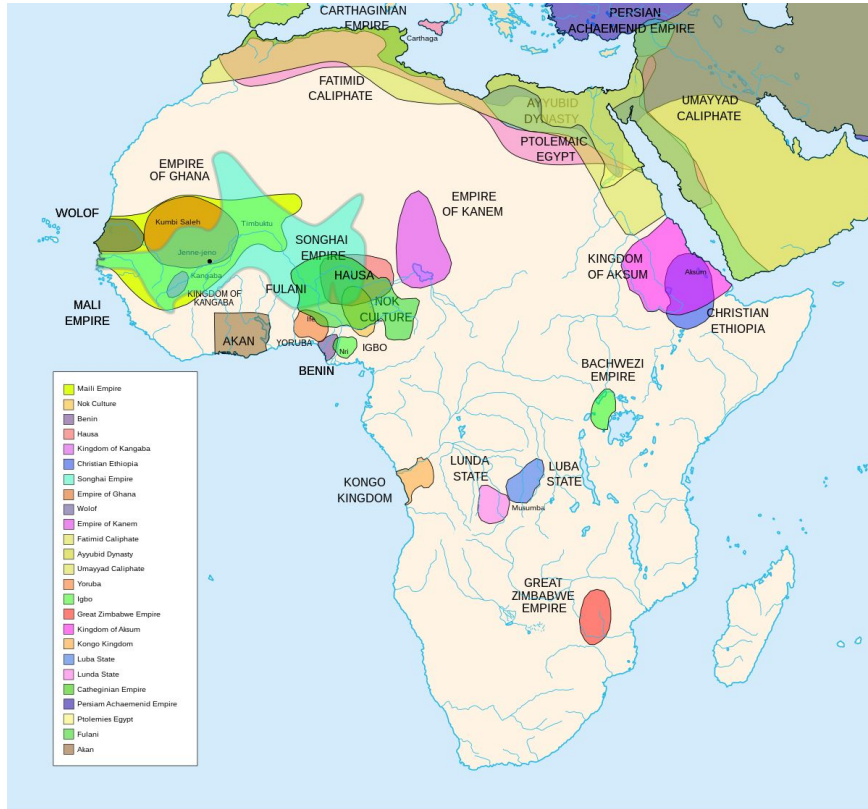


- The “Silk Road” was actually a network of routes connecting China to the Mediterranean.
- African trade routes connected to the Arabian Peninsula.
- The East coast of Africa was part of the Indian Ocean trade network and was visited by China’s Ming fleets.
- In this stage establishing ports was a high priority, not colonization.



Major Global Trade Routes 1400 1800

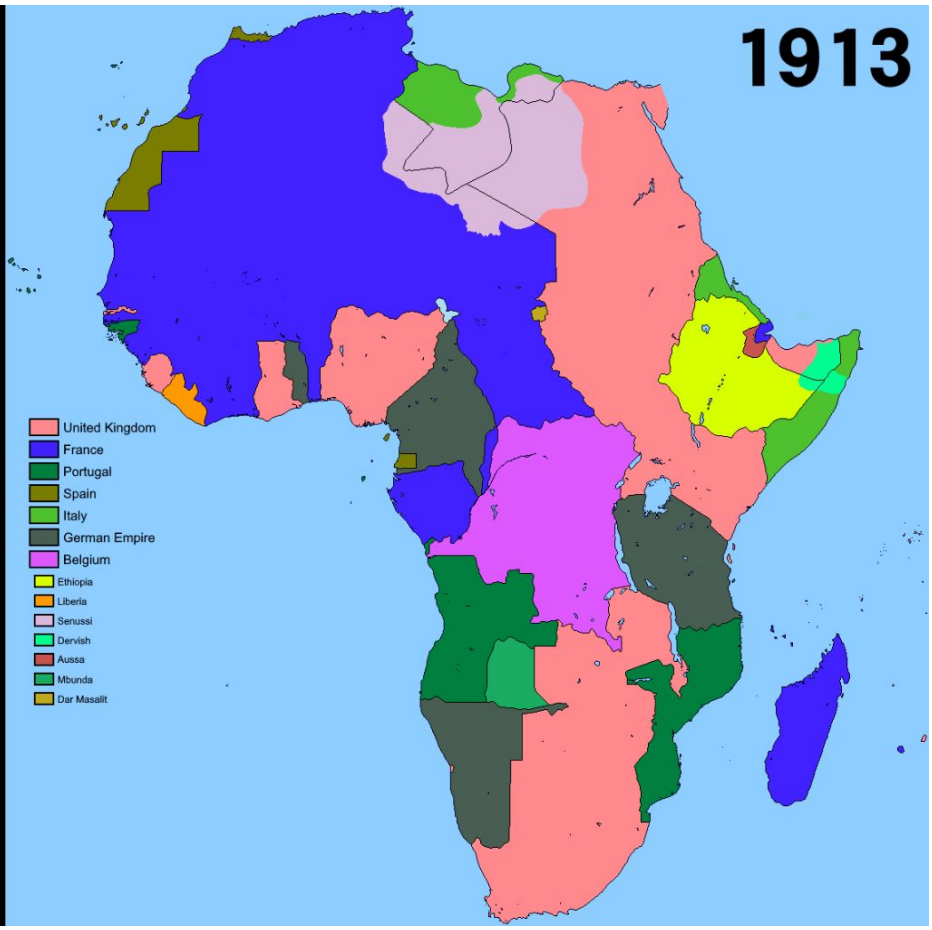
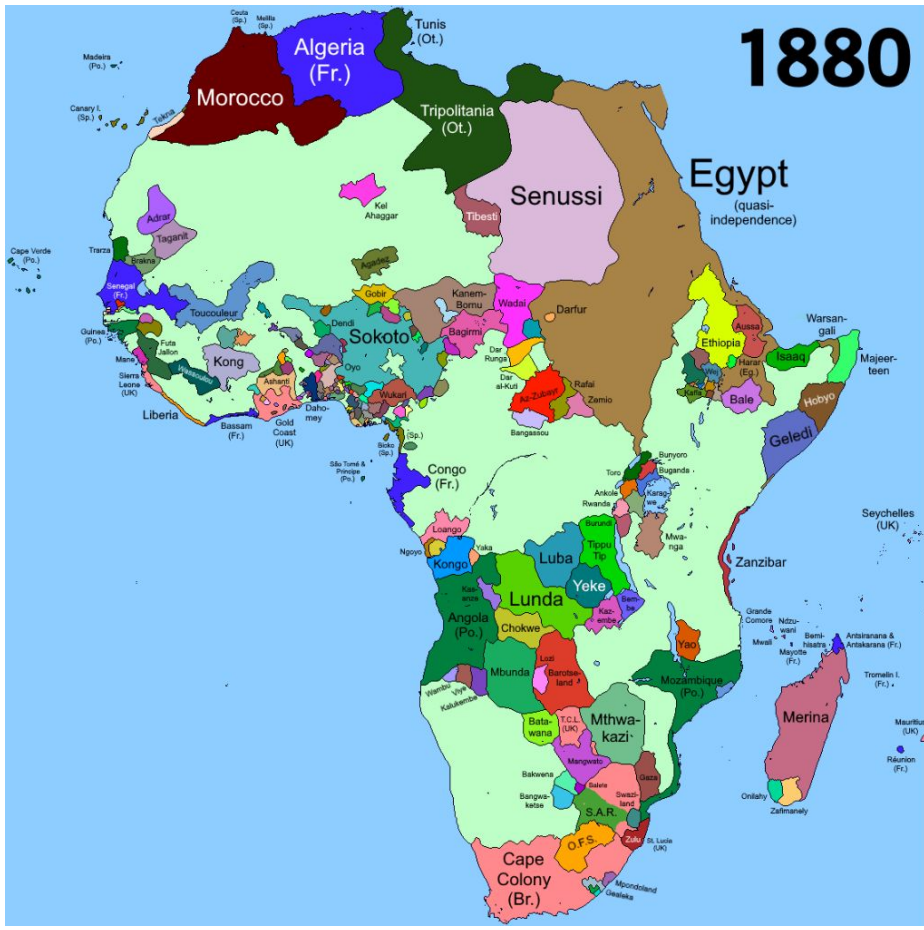
# African empires and kingdoms/ the Triangle trade



# Scramble for Africa



## The Berlin Conference 1884-85





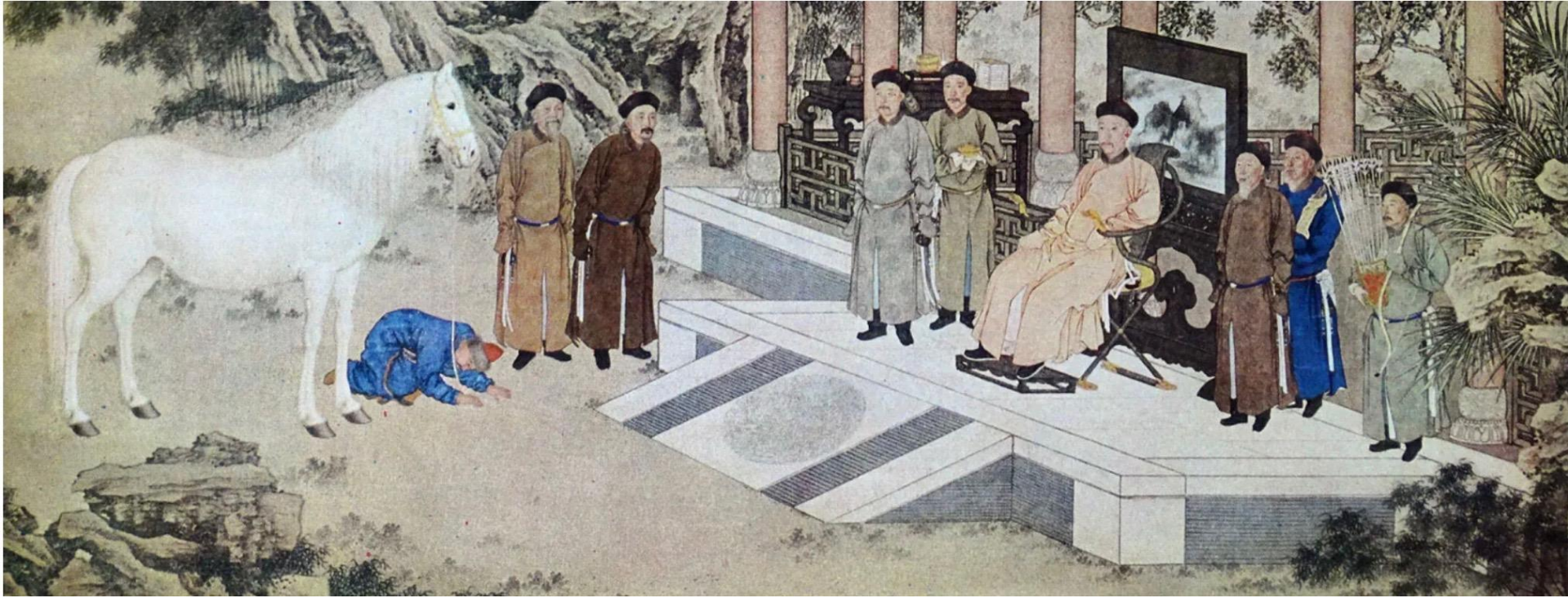
## Colonialism (1914)



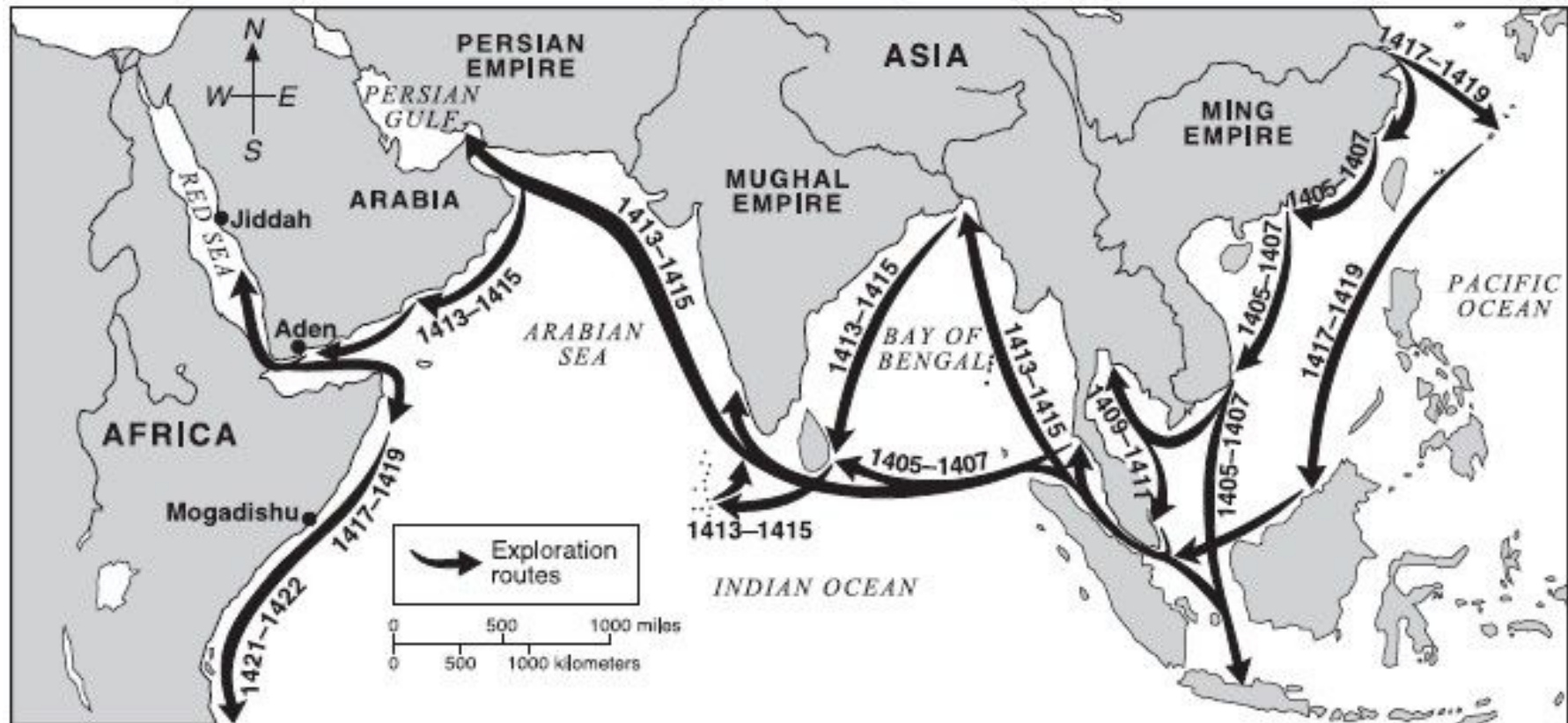
## Colonialism (1945)



# Tianxia 天下 - Everything Under the Heavens - Tribute system



## Voyages of Zheng He



Source: Elisabeth Ellis and Anthony Esler, *World History: Connections to Today*, Prentice Hall (adapted)



郑和下西洋600周年

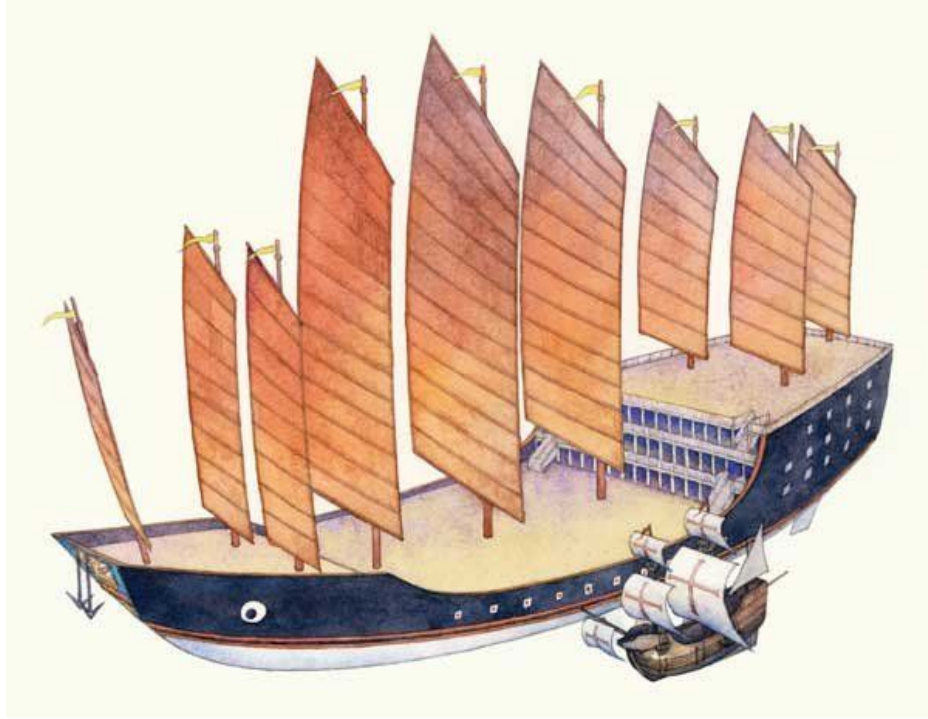
中国邮政

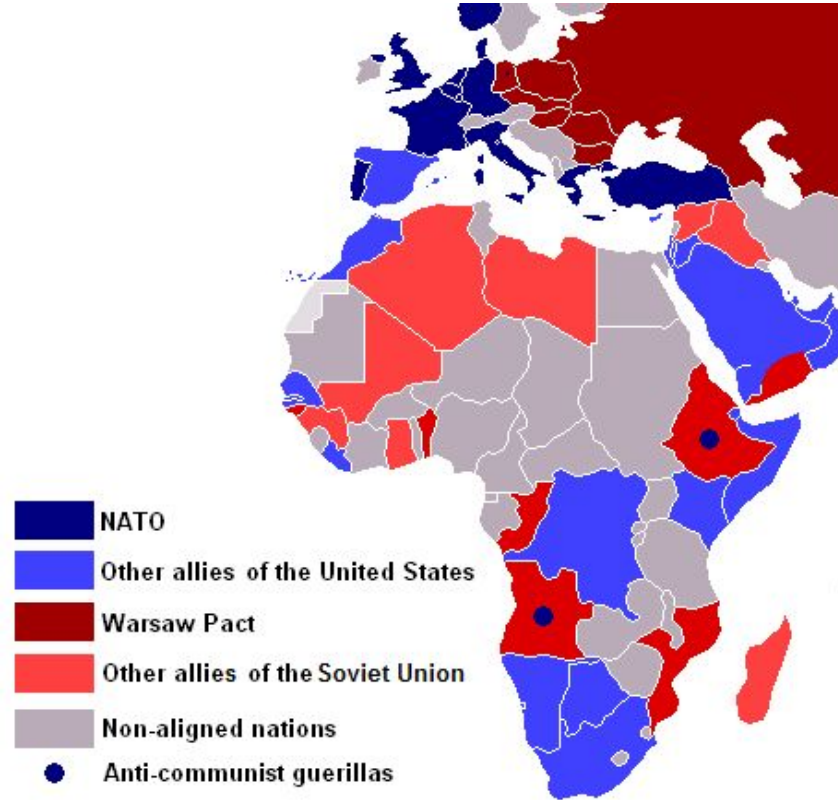
CHINA  
郑和下西洋600周年

6元



# Chinese technology: Ming fleet voyages





# TAZARA railway: China- Africa friendship in the 1970s

**“China Helped Us  
When Help Was Most Needed”**

— The Tanzania-Zambia Railway:  
A Testament to China-Africa Friendship

的时候帮助了我们  
坦赞铁路见证中非友谊





# The most abundant resource for each African country per tonne of production.

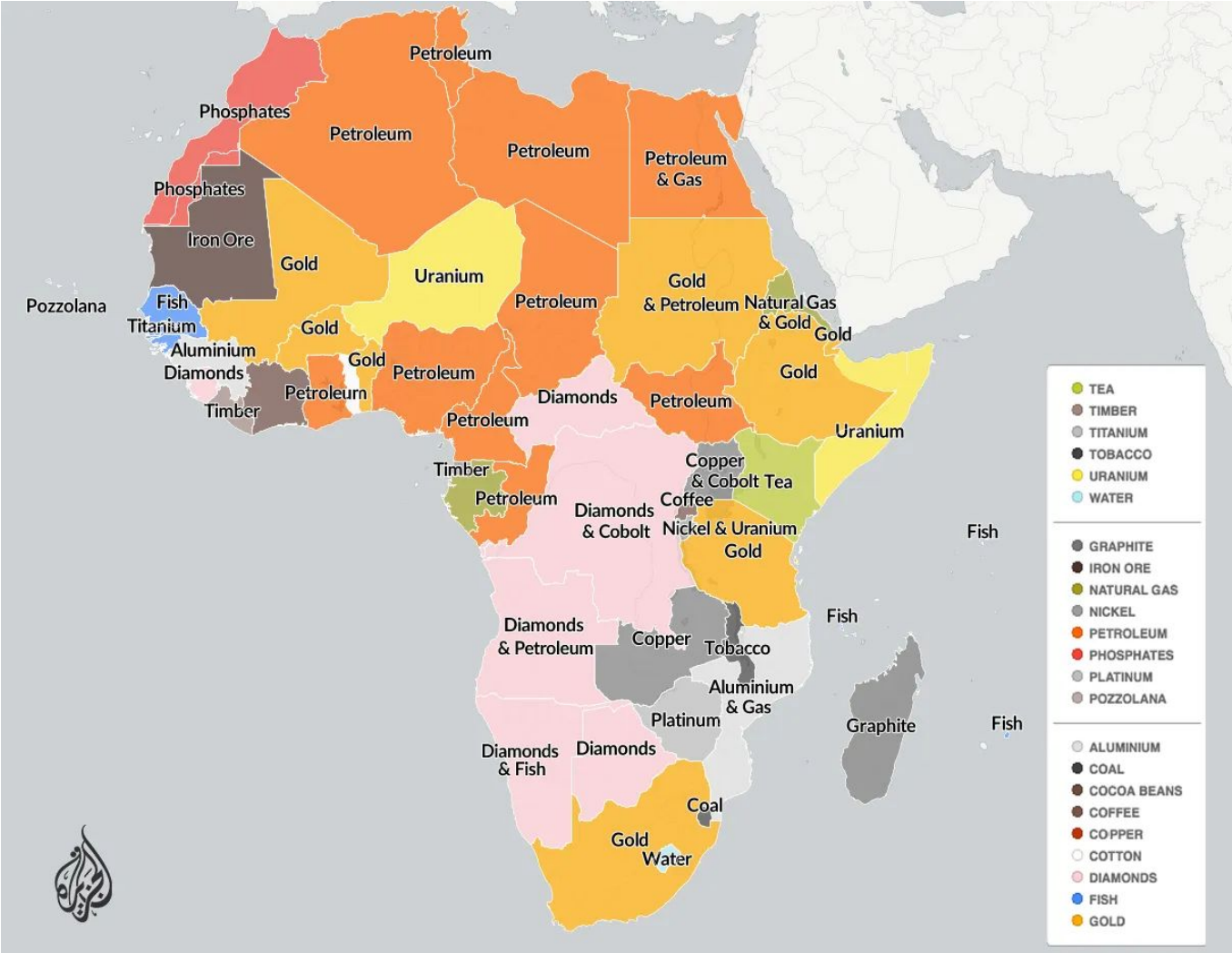


Source: The World Mining Congress (WMC), World Mining Data Summary for 2021 | Data as of 2019

@AJLabs



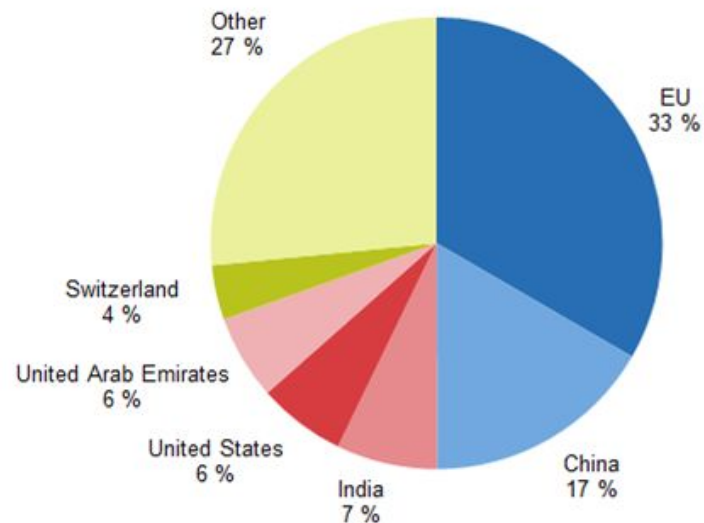
ALJAZEERA



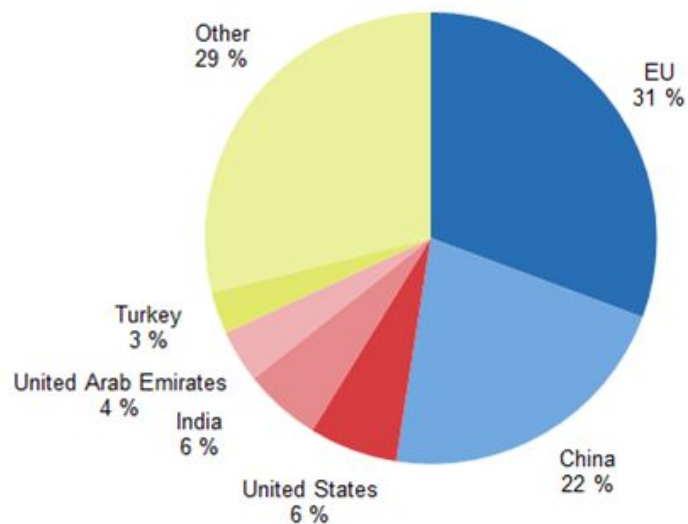
# African export and import shares with main partners, 2020

(%)

Exports



Imports



Source: UNCTAD

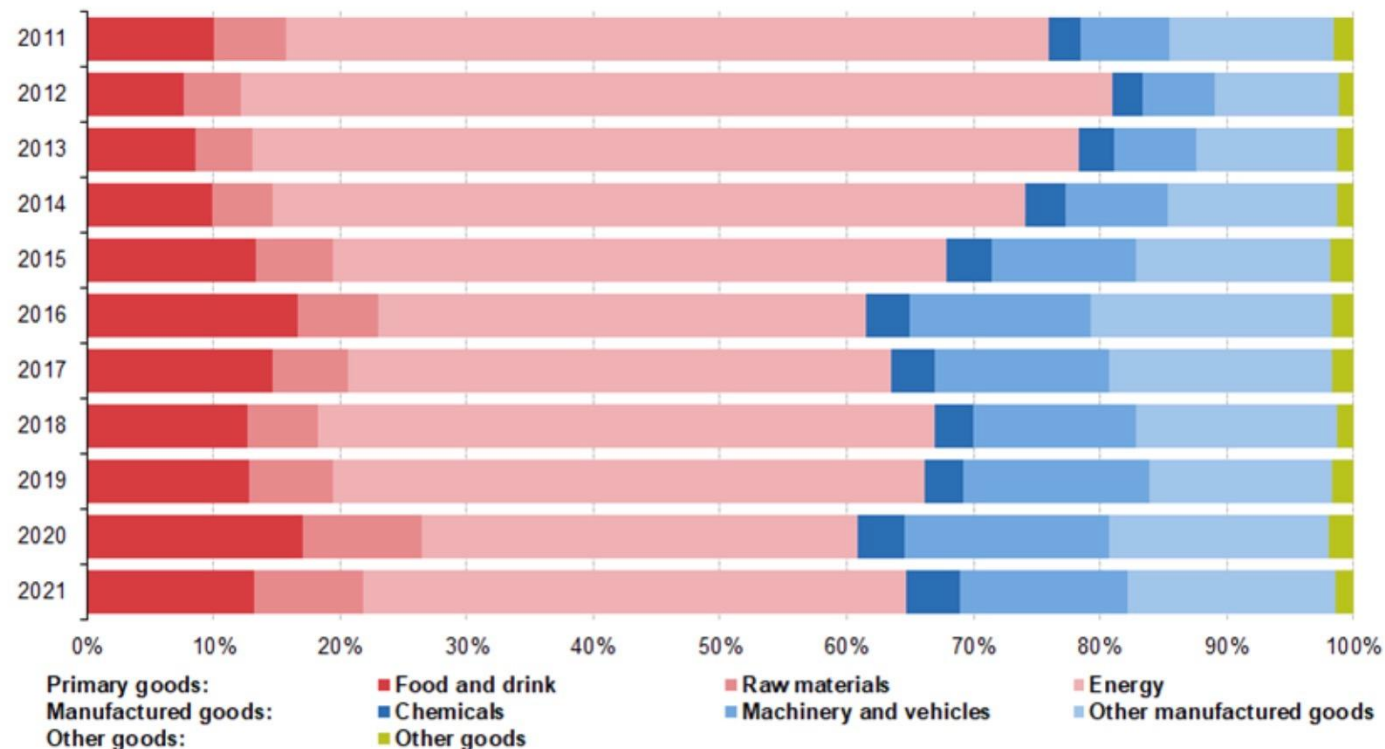
## Trade with EU: The role of history and geography

“Largely because of its proximity and energy resources, North Africa trades significantly more with Europe than does the rest of Africa. The top three exporters of **oil** from Africa to Europe – Nigeria, Libya and Algeria – are located in northern and western Africa. In addition, France’s significant role in Africa as a former colonial power helps explain West Africa’s position as the second-largest trader with Europe. On the European side, **France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium** are the largest trade partners with Africa. Not only are these countries close to Africa and home to some of the largest economies in Europe, but they were also the main European colonizers of Africa”.

*Geopolitical Futures*

# EU imports of goods from Africa by main product groups, 2021

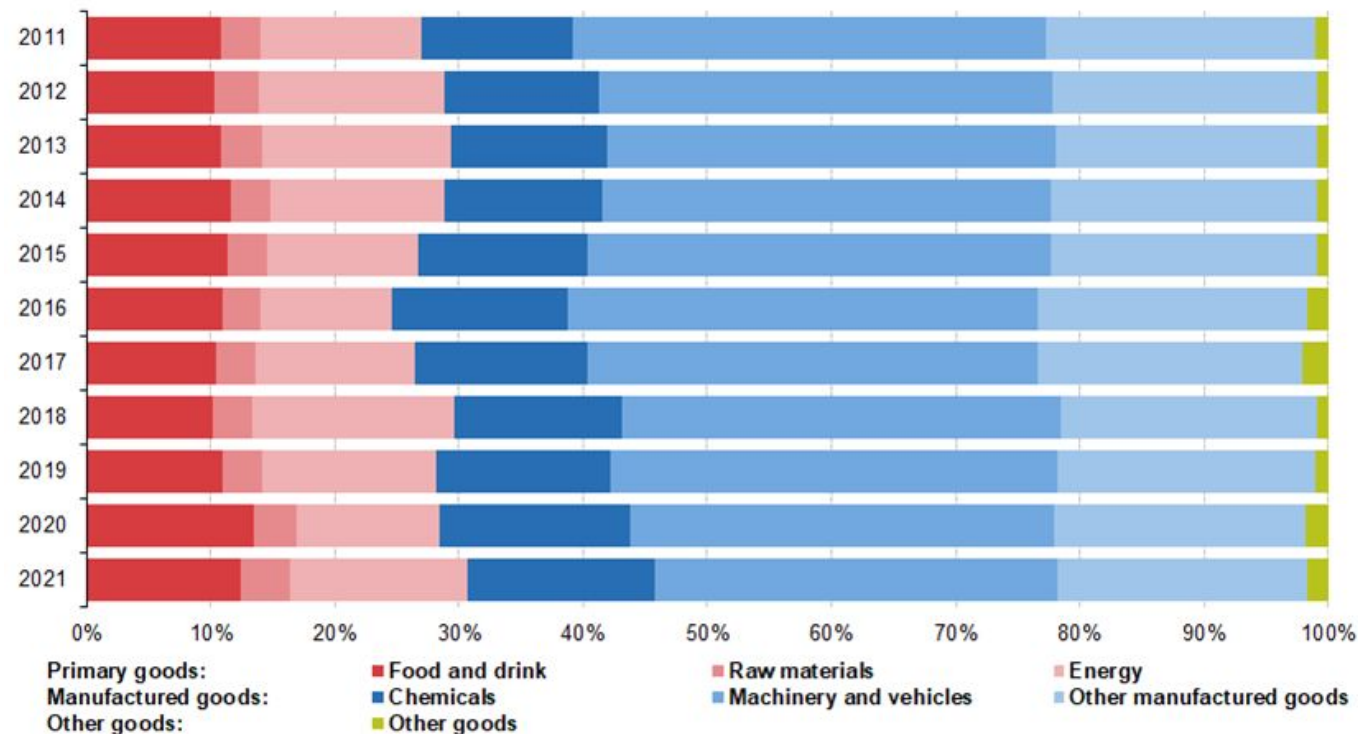
(shares of total exports in value)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-018995)

# EU exports of goods to Africa by main product groups, 2021

(shares of total exports in value)

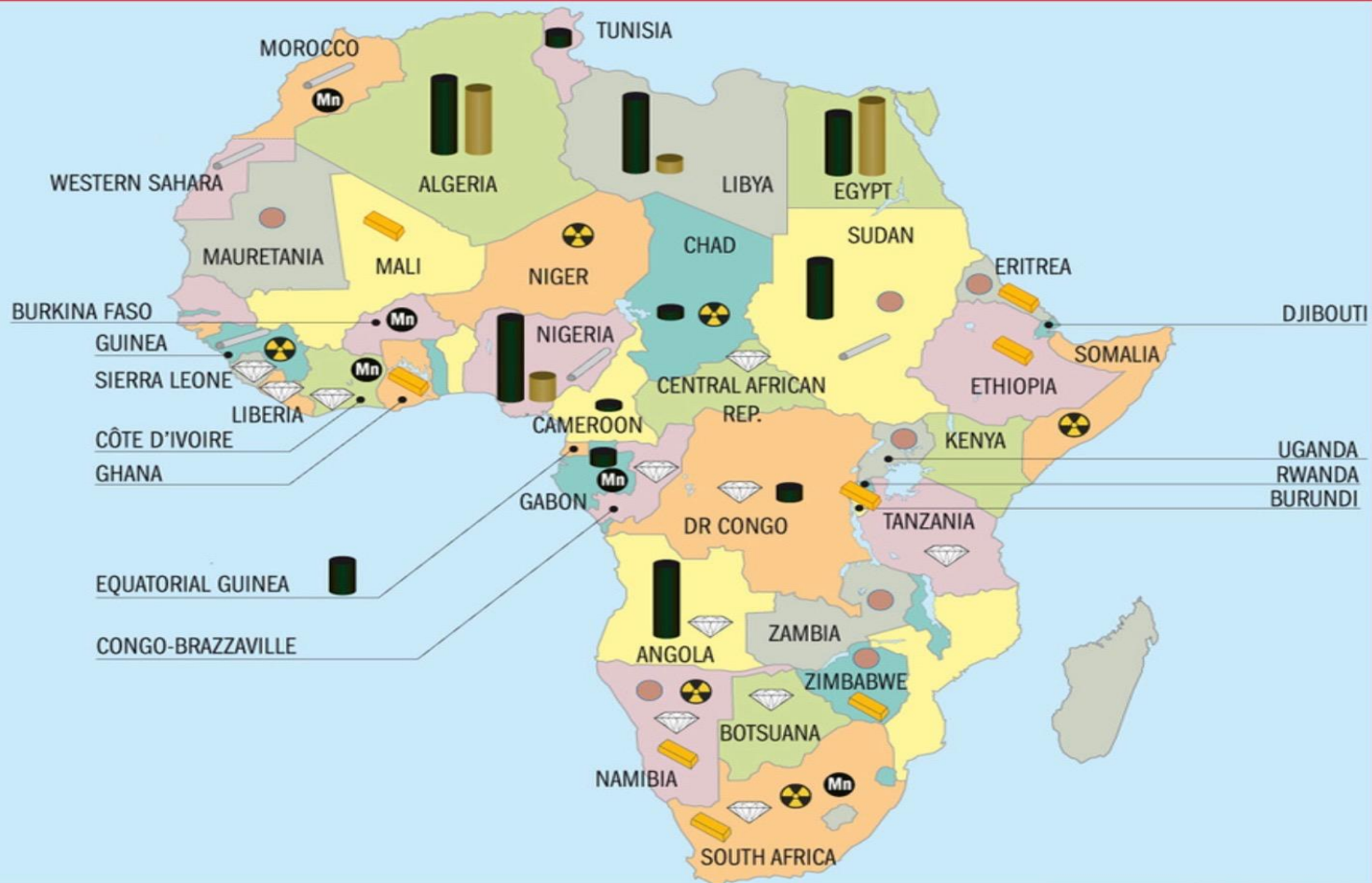


Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-018995)

# What are China's goals?

- Resources: oil, coltan and other “conflict minerals”, diamonds, etc.
- Soft political power - (Taiwan)
- Military installations - protecting shipping/trade
- Employment for Chinese migrants (this is changing)
- Markets for Chinese goods

# Africa: Natural resources

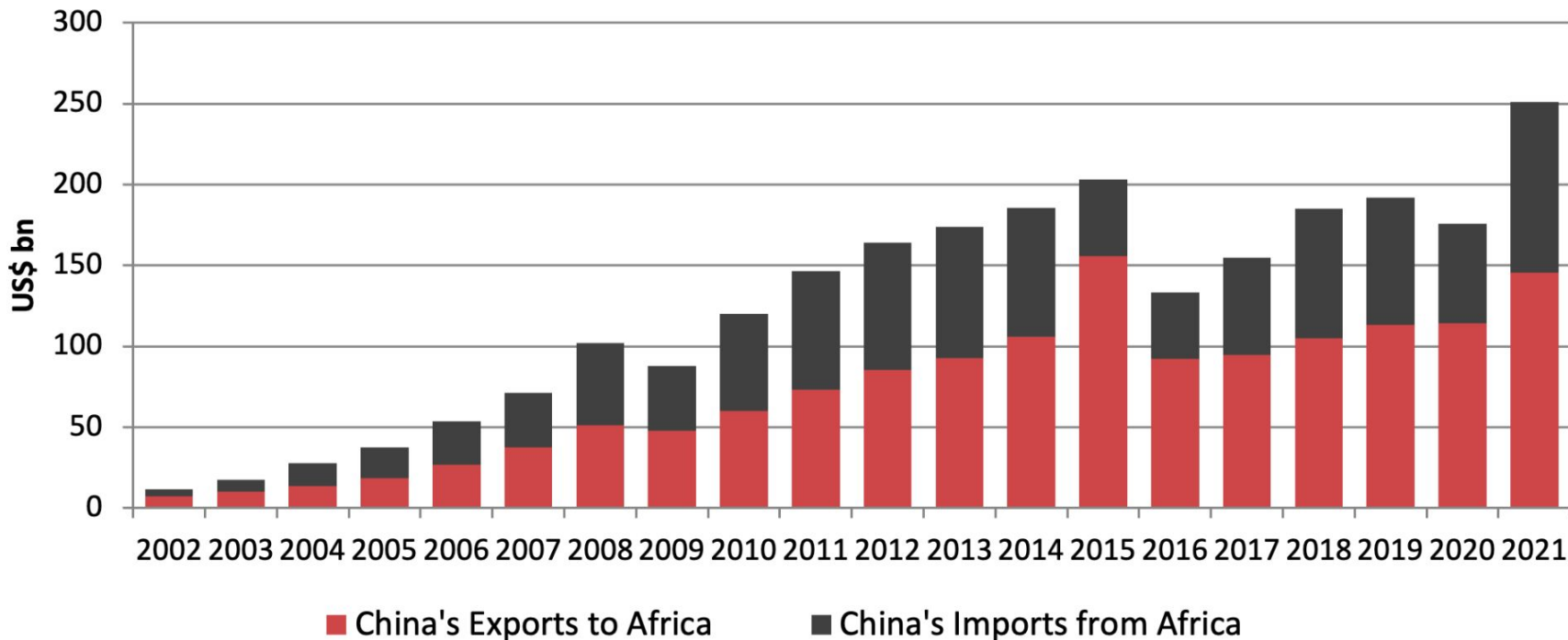


## SELECTED RESOURCES

-  Oil production
-  Gas production
-  Diamonds
-  Uranium
-  Copper
-  Manganese
-  Iron ore
-  Gold



# China-Africa Trade



April 2023

Source: UN Comtrade

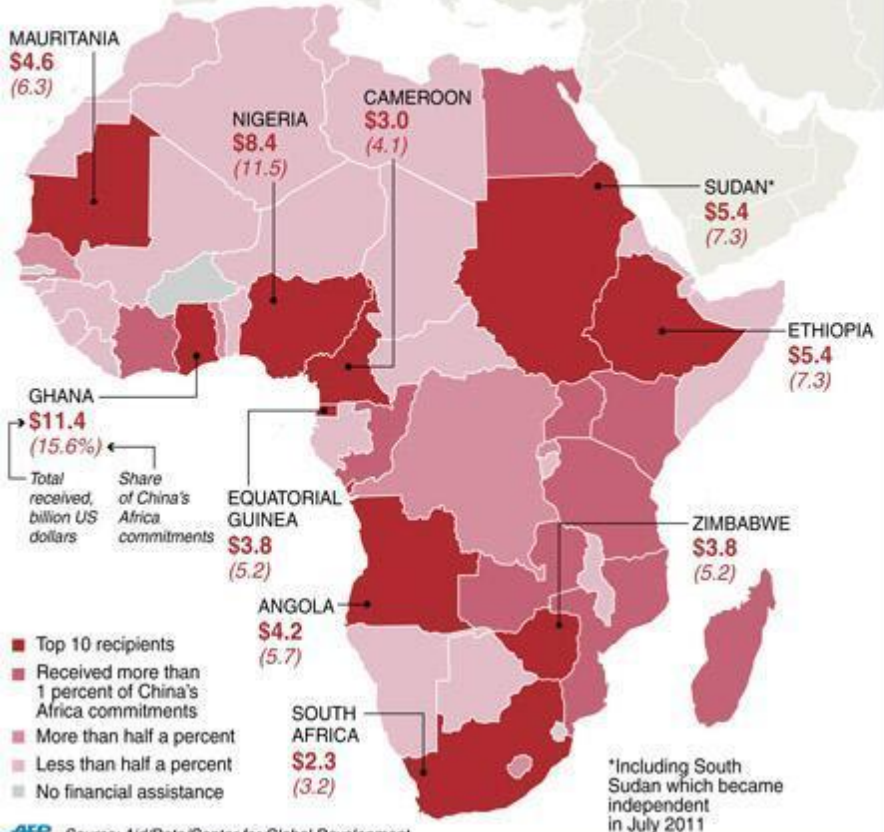
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# China assistance to Africa

During the last decade, China has been investing heavily in African natural resources, developing mines, oil wells and running related construction companies

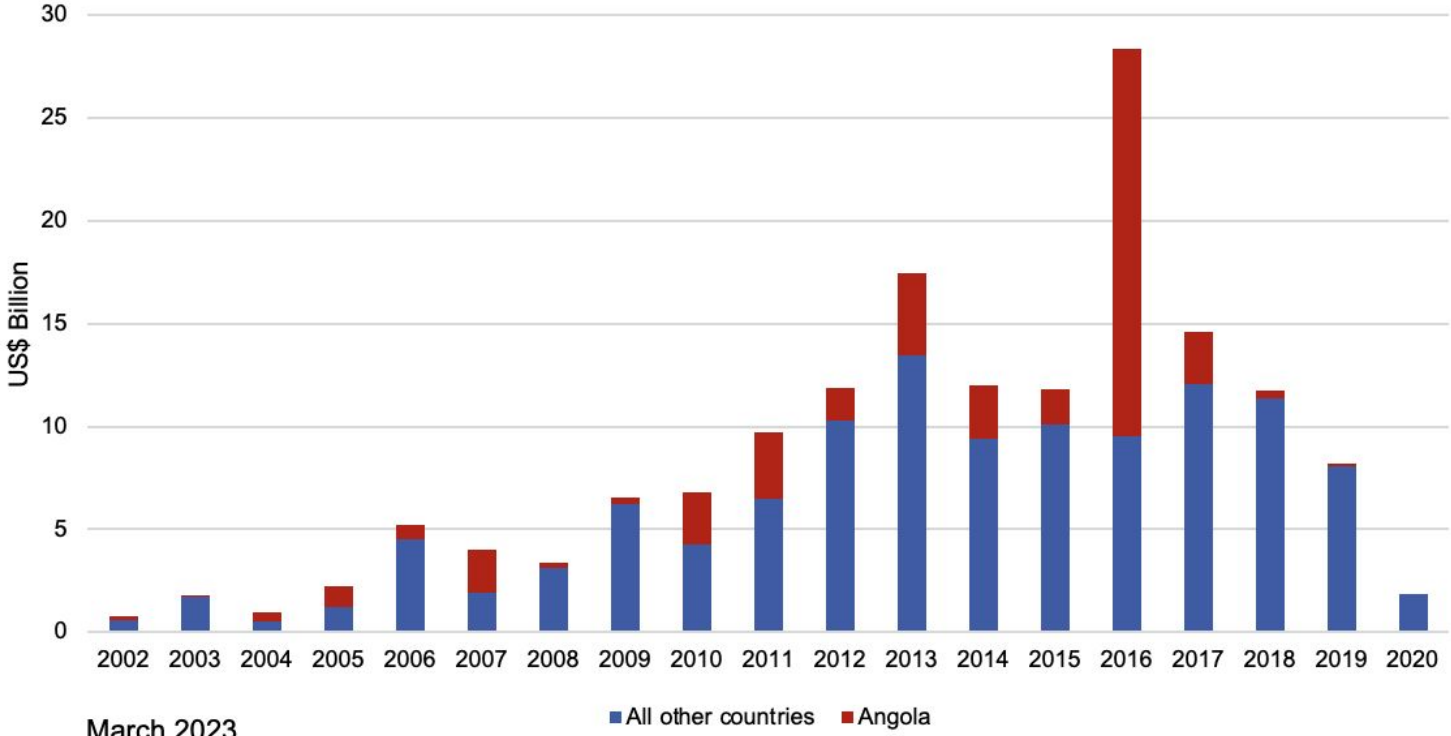
**Top recipients of Chinese finance to Africa 2000-2011**  
*Survey of media reports on 1,673 Chinese-backed projects*



## Billion-dollar projects

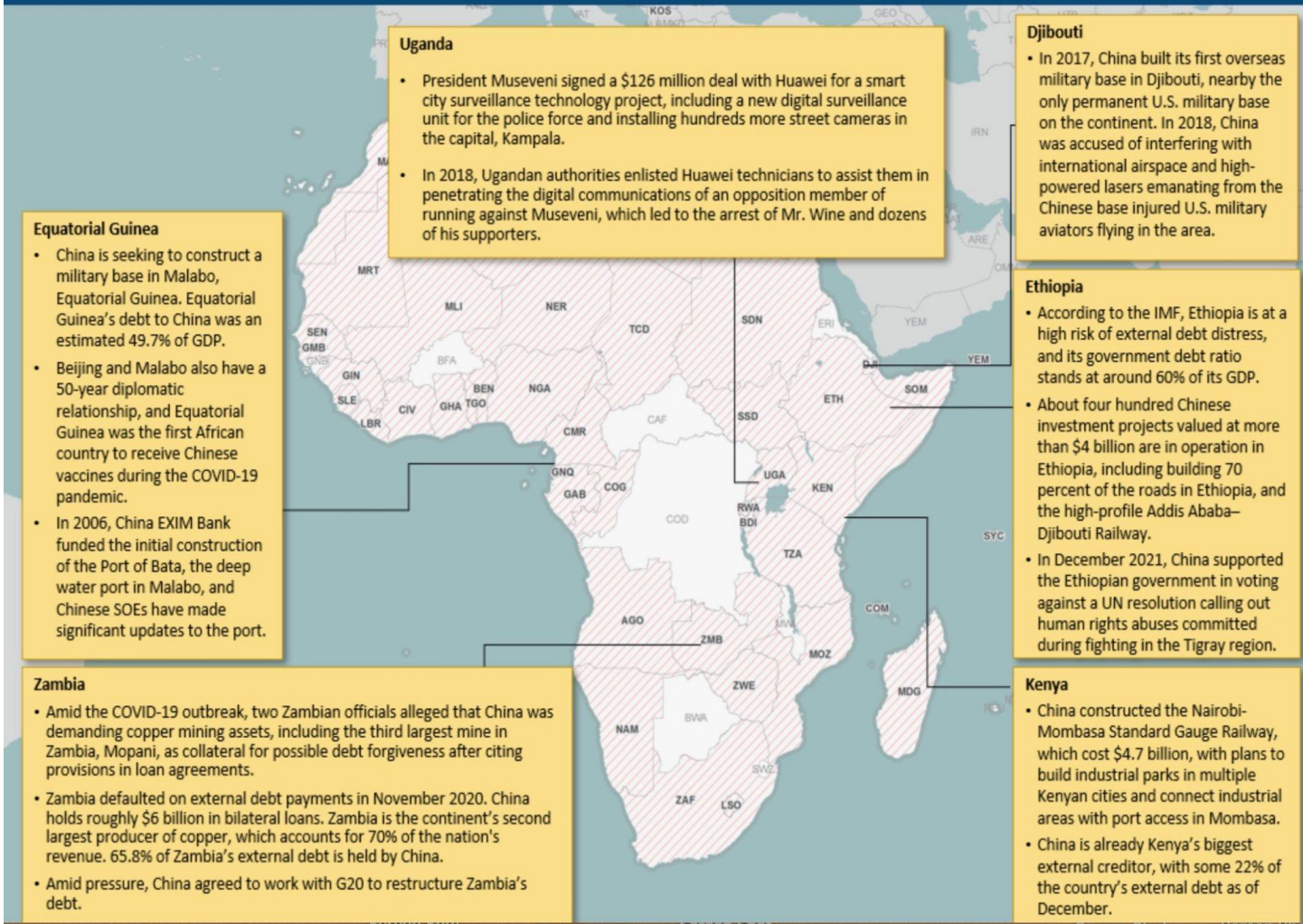
- Ghana, 2010**  
Concessionary loan  
**\$5.49 billion**
- Nigeria, 2006**  
Infrastructure in exchange for preferential oil right bidding  
**5.38**
- Mauritania, 2006**  
Oil exploration, sewage systems, iron mine, road  
**4.04**
- Ghana, 2009**  
Loan for oil and road projects  
**3.0**
- Equatorial Guinea, 2006**  
Oil-backed loan  
**2.69**
- Ethiopia, 2009**  
Loan for dam construction  
**2.25**
- South Africa, 2011**  
Financial cooperation agreement  
**2.25**
- Angola, 2004**  
National Rehabilitation Project  
**1.51**
- Madagascar, 2008**  
Hydroelectric construction  
**1.42**
- Sudan, 2007**  
Railway construction  
**1.38**
- Angola, 2009**  
Agriculture development  
**1.20**
- Zimbabwe, 2004**  
Powerplant construction  
**1.01**

# Chinese loans to Africa



March 2023

# Africa (Sub-Saharan)



**Uganda**

- President Museveni signed a \$126 million deal with Huawei for a smart city surveillance technology project, including a new digital surveillance unit for the police force and installing hundreds more street cameras in the capital, Kampala.
- In 2018, Ugandan authorities enlisted Huawei technicians to assist them in penetrating the digital communications of an opposition member of running against Museveni, which led to the arrest of Mr. Wine and dozens of his supporters.

**Equatorial Guinea**

- China is seeking to construct a military base in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Equatorial Guinea's debt to China was an estimated 49.7% of GDP.
- Beijing and Malabo also have a 50-year diplomatic relationship, and Equatorial Guinea was the first African country to receive Chinese vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In 2006, China EXIM Bank funded the initial construction of the Port of Bata, the deep water port in Malabo, and Chinese SOEs have made significant updates to the port.

**Zambia**

- Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, two Zambian officials alleged that China was demanding copper mining assets, including the third largest mine in Zambia, Mopani, as collateral for possible debt forgiveness after citing provisions in loan agreements.
- Zambia defaulted on external debt payments in November 2020. China holds roughly \$6 billion in bilateral loans. Zambia is the continent's second largest producer of copper, which accounts for 70% of the nation's revenue. 65.8% of Zambia's external debt is held by China.
- Amid pressure, China agreed to work with G20 to restructure Zambia's debt.

**Djibouti**

- In 2017, China built its first overseas military base in Djibouti, nearby the only permanent U.S. military base on the continent. In 2018, China was accused of interfering with international airspace and high-powered lasers emanating from the Chinese base injured U.S. military aviators flying in the area.

**Ethiopia**

- According to the IMF, Ethiopia is at a high risk of external debt distress, and its government debt ratio stands at around 60% of its GDP.
- About four hundred Chinese investment projects valued at more than \$4 billion are in operation in Ethiopia, including building 70 percent of the roads in Ethiopia, and the high-profile Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway.
- In December 2021, China supported the Ethiopian government in voting against a UN resolution calling out human rights abuses committed during fighting in the Tigray region.

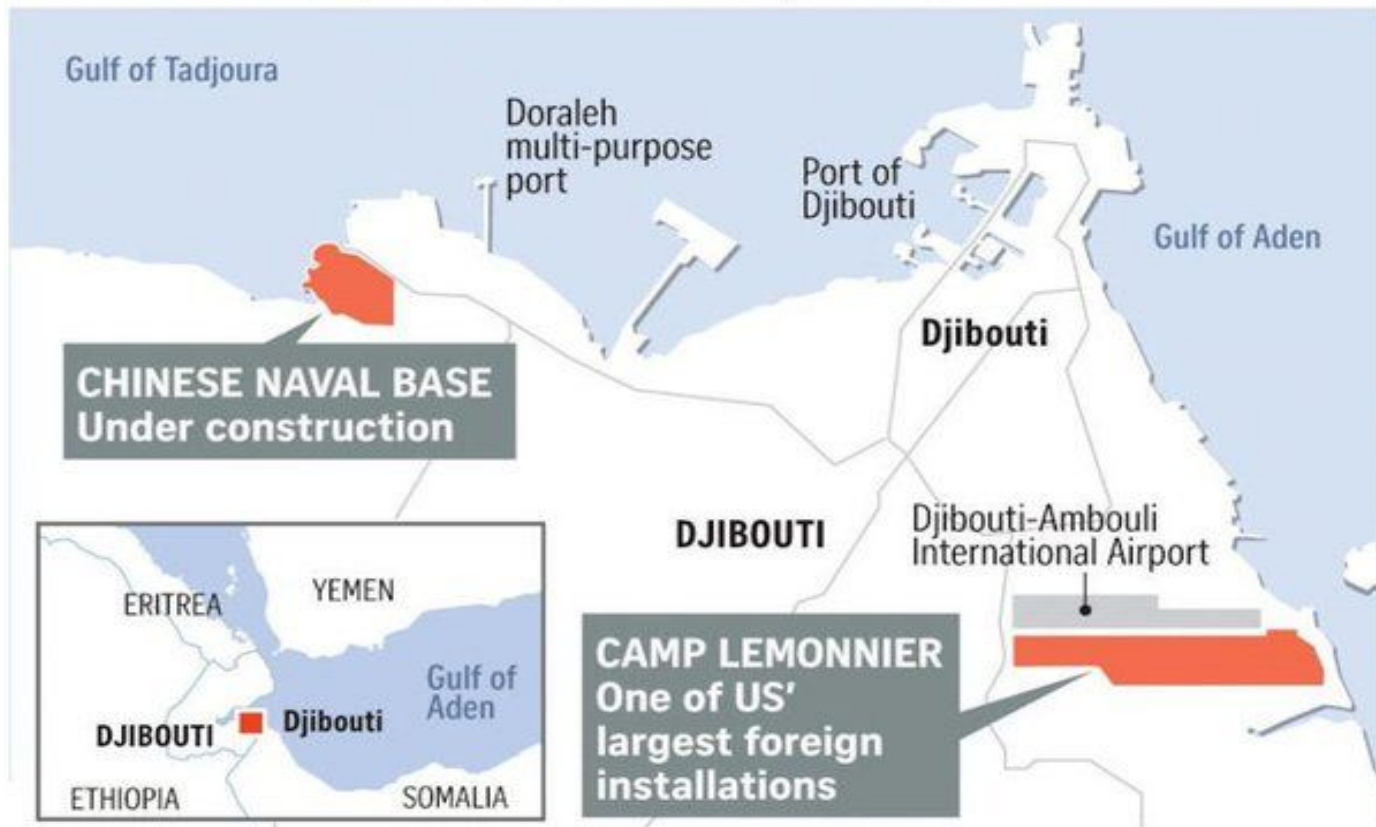
**Kenya**

- China constructed the Nairobi–Mombasa Standard Gauge Railway, which cost \$4.7 billion, with plans to build industrial parks in multiple Kenyan cities and connect industrial areas with port access in Mombasa.
- China is already Kenya's biggest external creditor, with some 22% of the country's external debt as of December.

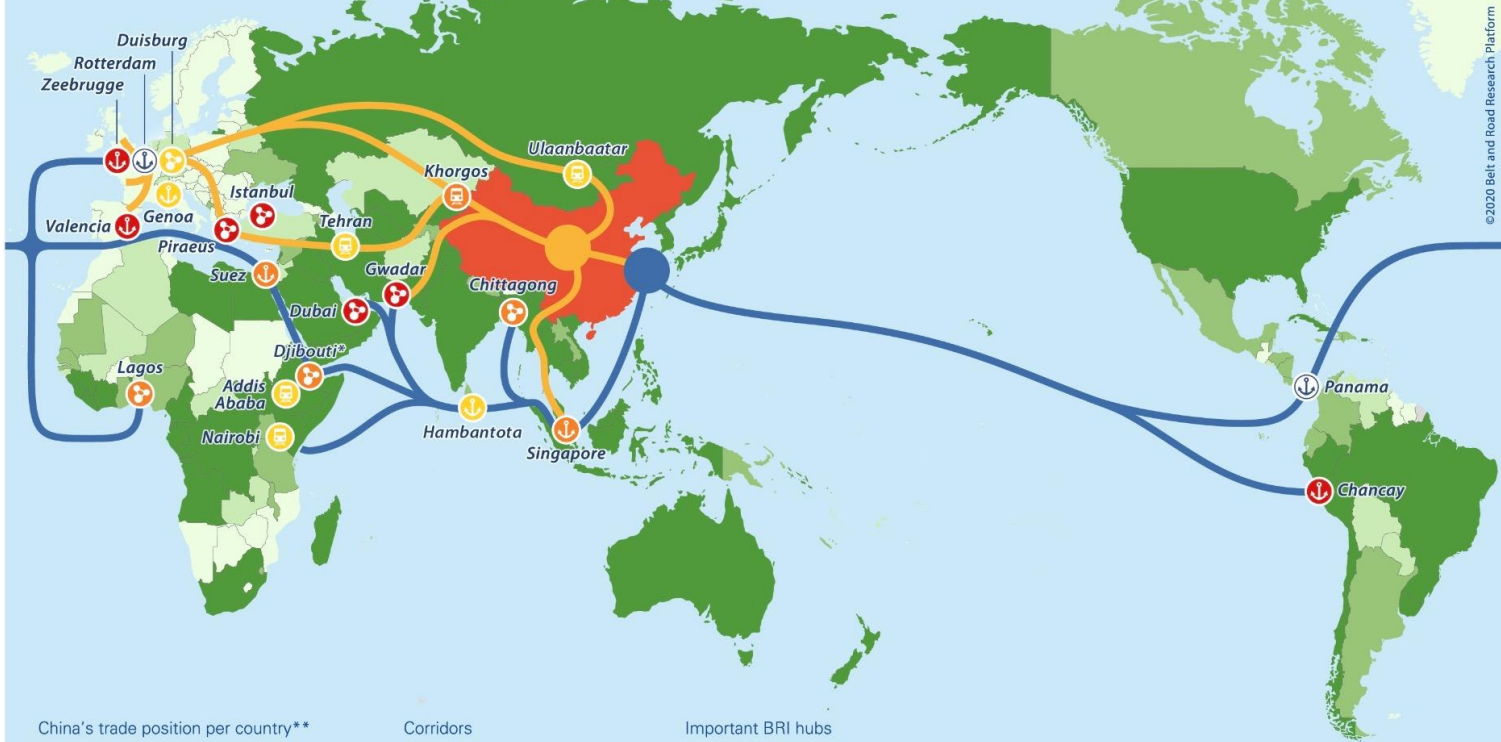


The Belt and Road Initiative needs guaranteed access to the Suez Canal.

## Chinese and US bases in Djibouti



Source: THE NEW YORK TIMES STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS



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China's trade position per country\*\*

- China is trade partner #1
- China is trade partner #2
- China is trade partner #3
- China not a top 3 trade partner
- No data

Corridors

- Major BRI overland corridors
- Major BRI maritime corridors

Important BRI hubs

- Port
- Railway
- Multimodal

- Mainland Chinese majority stake
- Mainland Chinese minority stake
- Other type of Mainland Chinese involvement
- Involvement by Hong Kong-based company

\* This is China's sole military base outside of China

\*\* Based on IMF Direction of Trade Statistics 2018: Exports (FOB) + Imports (CIF) with China per country, relative to other countries

The Belt and Road Research Platform is an initiative of:  
LeidenAsiaCentre & Clingendael China Centre

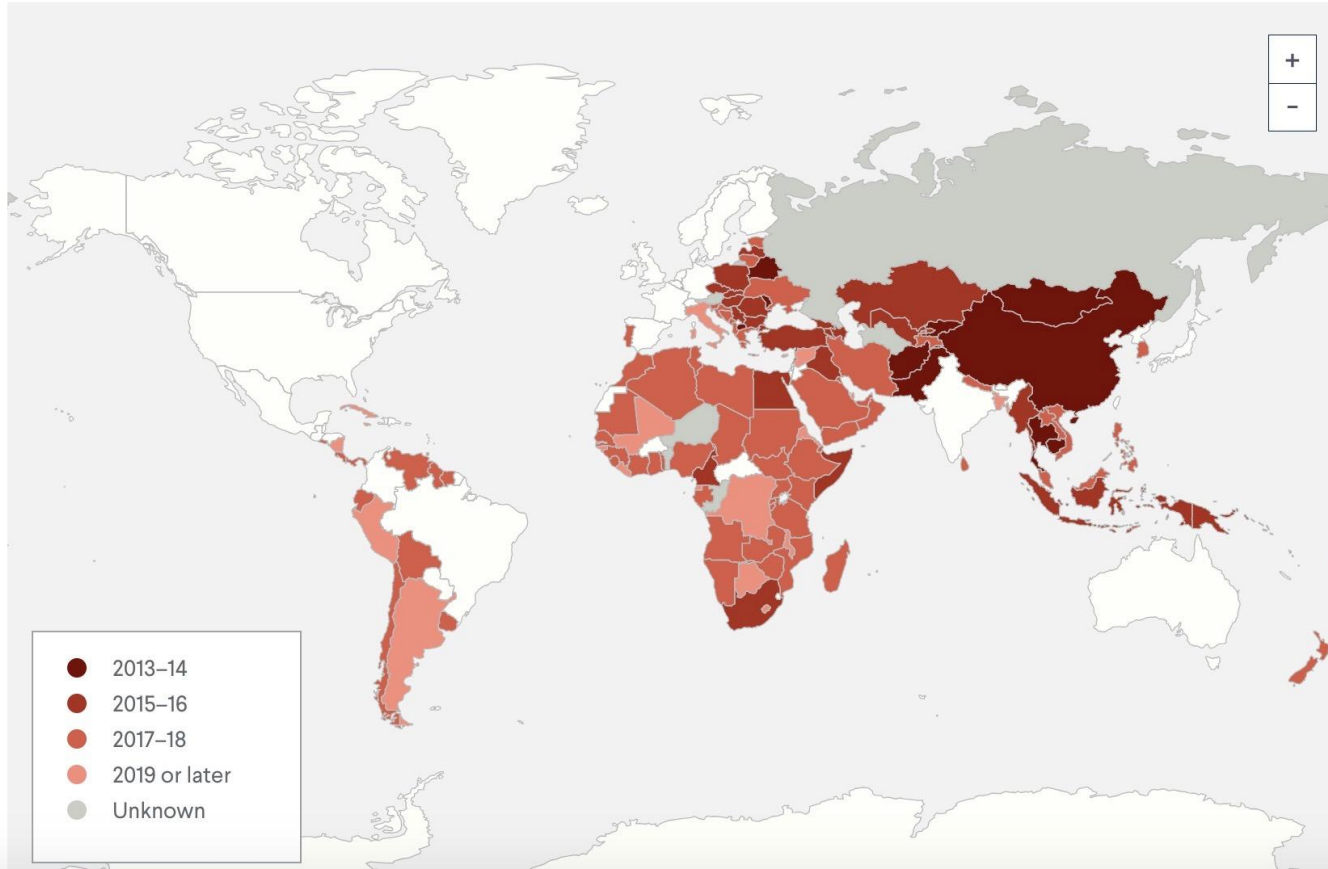


# The Belt and Road Initiative Has Gone Global

Official BRI participants by year of joining

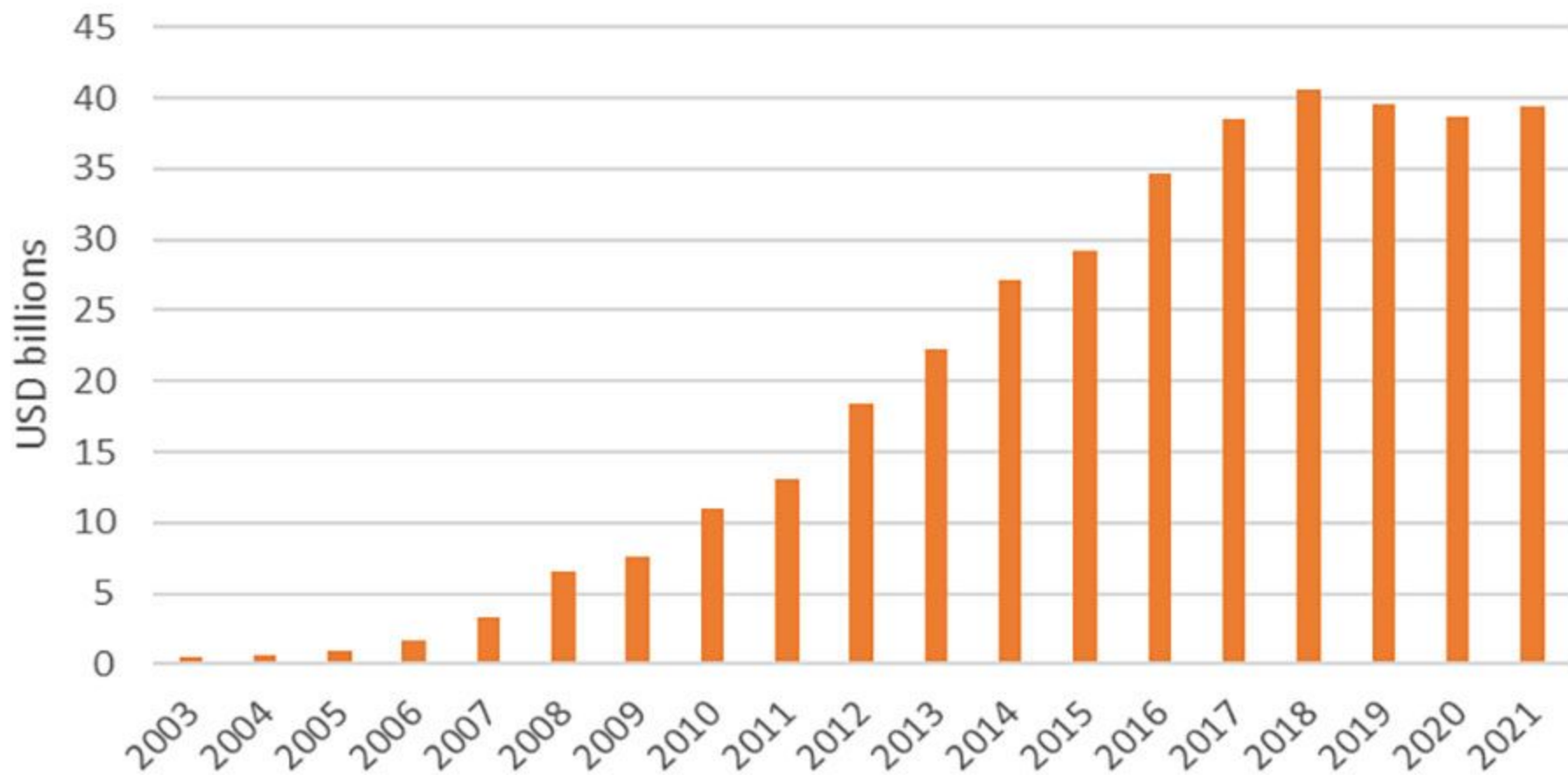
Map

Table

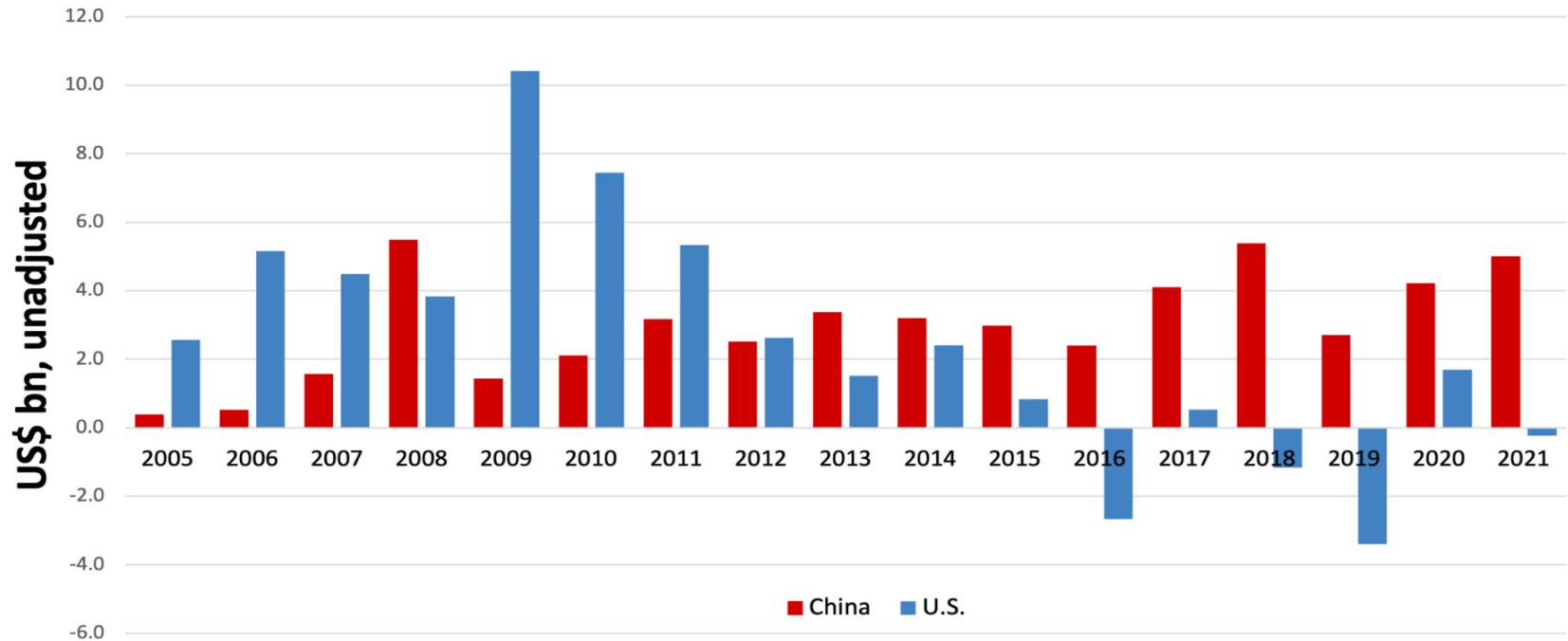




## Chinese FDI (stock)



## Chinese FDI vs. US FDI to Africa, Flow



April 2023

Source: CARI analysis of data  
from [The Statistical Bulletin of China's  
Outward Foreign Direct Investment;  
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis]

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# Perceptions of China in Africa | 36 countries | 2014/2015

## China ranks 2nd



- as a development model (after the U.S.)
- as greatest external influence (after the former colonial powers)

China is a “somewhat” or “very” positive influence in their country:

# 63%

(average all countries)

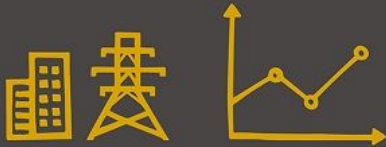
Top factors contributing to:

• a **positive**

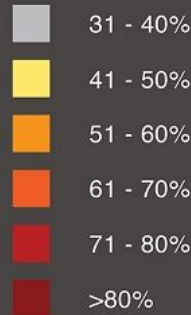
image of China:  
Investments in infrastructure  
and business development

• a **negative**

image of China:  
Poor quality  
of products



Key

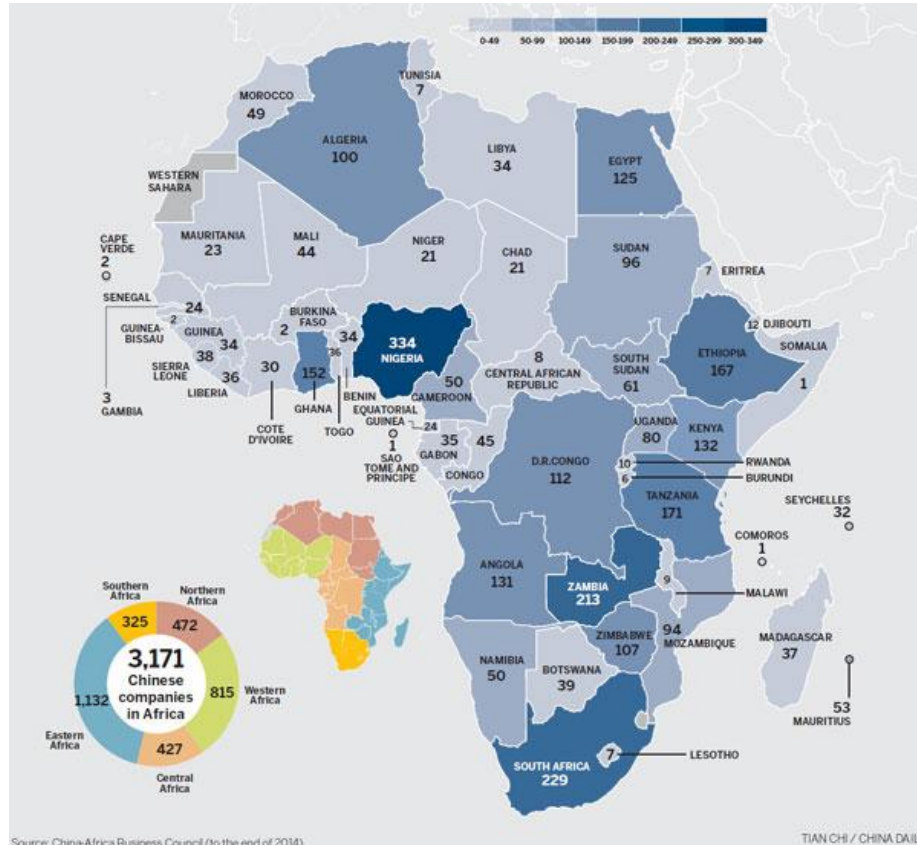


**AFROBAROMETER**

# Chinese temporary workers vs. permanent

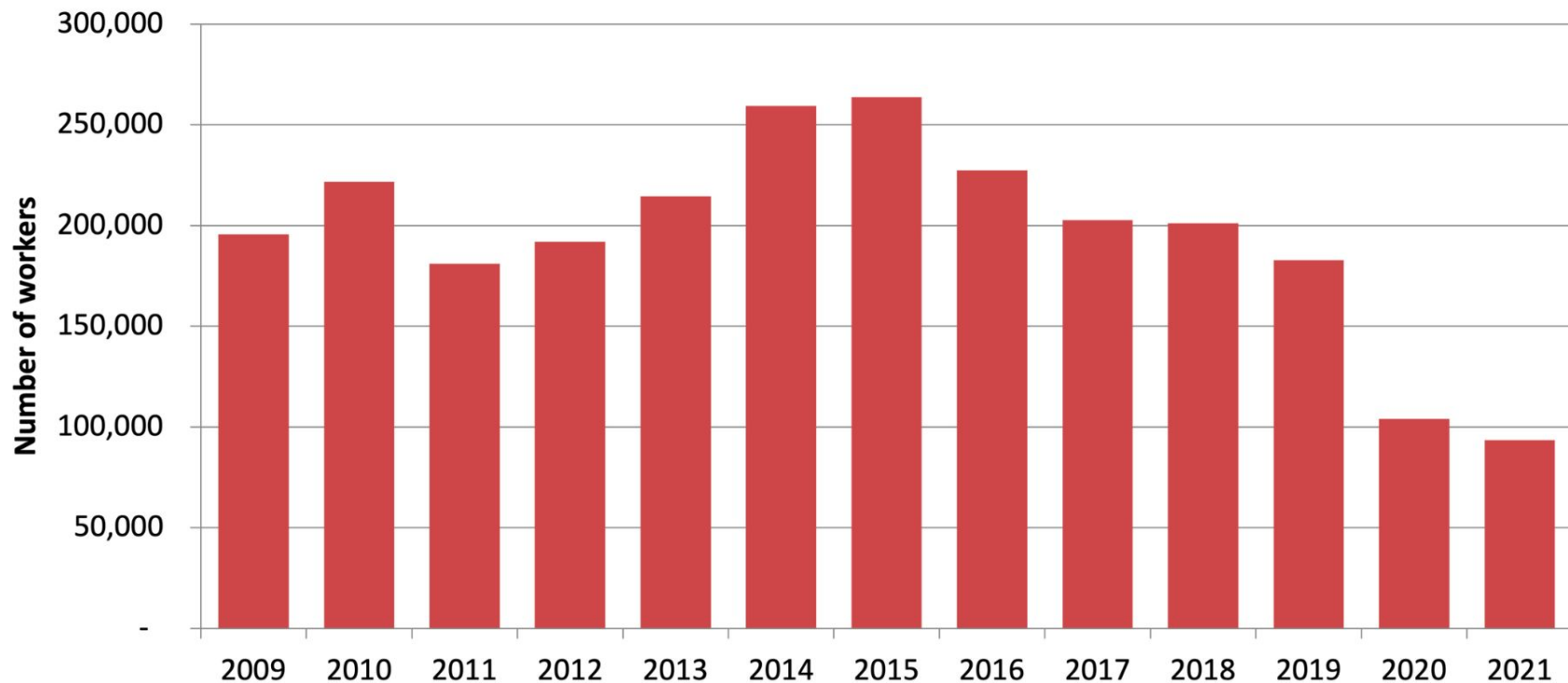
- The employment of Chinese workers on African engineering projects continues to decline. This is partly due to rising labor costs in China but also arguably reflects the pressure from African governments responding to popular resistance to the importation of workers.
- **Over the past 20 years there's been remarkable growth in China-Africa links because of increased trade and investment. As a result there's also been a great deal of movement of people between China and African countries.**
- **It's estimated that there are now about 500,000 Africans in China, while the the number of Chinese in the 54 African countries ranges between one and two million.**

# Chinese companies in Africa



The number of Chinese workers in Africa has tapered off significantly.

## Number of Chinese workers in Africa by end of year



April 2023

Source: National Bureau of  
Statistics of China

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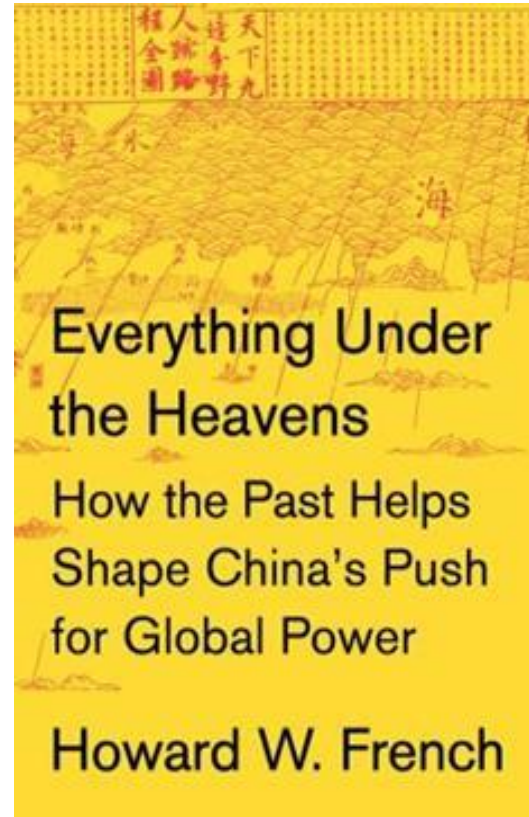
  
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# Is China's behavior in Africa like European Imperialism?

“Imperialism, for me, inevitably involves some form of foreign domination, which results in substantially altering the target population or polity; either gradually or suddenly it loses the ability to resist...What has been called China's embrace of Africa clearly does not involve colonies. Beijing's strides thus far, moreover, have unquestionably been peaceful, and for the most part welcomed by the governments of Africa, even though here it should be said there are growing signs that for some, the honeymoon is over.”

Howard W. French in *China's Second Continent*

# Howard French's books





# RESOURCES: Maps

China Regional Snapshot: Sub-Saharan Africa

<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/china-regional-snapshot-sub-saharan-africa/>

Mapping Africa's Natural Resources

<https://medium.com/@ajlabs/mapping-africas-natural-resources-8fc6407ca5f9>

European imperialism in Africa

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scramble-for-Africa-1880-1913.png>

African Independence map: **Figure 3. Map of African independence. African Studies Center, Michigan State University.**

<https://oxfordre.com/oxford/fullsizeimage?imageUri=%2F10.1093%2Facrefore%2F9780190277734.001.0001%2Facrefore-9780190277734-e-111-graphic-003-full.gif&uriChapter=%2F10.1093%2Facrefore%2F9780190277734.001.0001%2Facrefore-9780190277734-e-111>

# More maps

African Independence map:

**Map of African independence. African Studies Center, Michigan State University.**

**<https://oxfordre.com/oxford/fullsizeimage?imageUri=%2F10.1093%2Facrefore%2F9780190277734.001.0001%2Facrefore-9780190277734-e-111-graphic-003-full.gif&uriChapter=%2F10.1093%2Facrefore%2F9780190277734.001.0001%2Facrefore-9780190277734-e-111>**

Africa: Cold War alliances map

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cold\\_War\\_Africa\\_1980.PNG](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cold_War_Africa_1980.PNG)

# Resources: Charts

China Global Investment Tracker

<https://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>

China Africa Research Initiative: Johns-Hopkins University

<http://www.sais-cari.org/data-chinese-workers-in-africa>

The History of European-African trade

<https://geopoliticalfutures.com/the-history-of-european-african-trade/>

Tribute system image

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/tributary-system#/media/1/604819/278493>

# Resources: images

Giraffe image

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/peculiar-story-giraffes-medieval-china-180963737/>

Tribute system image

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/tributary-system#/media/1/604819/278493>

Ming Fleet

**Recreation of the Treasure Fleet** Ward 吴德赛, Sarah. (2006). Chinese Whispers: Zheng He's Treasure Ships in the context of Chinese Maritime Policy in the Ming Dynasty. 10.13140/RG.2.1.1666.5201.

Ming fleet stamp

<https://www.britannica.com/summary/Zheng-Hes-Achievements>

# Global Investment Tracker

This is the link to the site I used following the slide show.

<https://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>

# Contact information

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