France's Decline in Africa

Dr/ HADJADJ Mourad[1,*]

[1] University of Boumerdes, (Algeria)

m.hadjadj@univ-boumerdes.dz

Dr/ DJENDI Sarra [2]

[2]University of of Algiers3, (Algeria)

Sdj4193@gmail.com

Submission date: 28/09/2025 Acceptance date: 30/11/2025 Publication date: 28/12/2025

Abstract: *The African continent represents a crucial part of France policy. France's historical ties with Africa have profoundly shaped the continent's trade structure. Although three structural elements: colonial heritage, geographical proximity and the existence of the CFA franc zone—have strongly shaped trade patterns, their importance has declined over decades .Africa's strategic option and developmental challenges are being redefined by the complex transformations in twenty-first-century international relations. The present moment in international affairs suggests another opportunity to change the continent's marginal place in global political and economic power. France no longer enjoys a monopoly of influence over Africa's future development.*

This study aims to shed light on France's African relations primarily emphasizes political, economic cooperation and cultural exchange. In addition to factors that weaken and decrease its relations with African countries such as the contribution of the African awareness of the elites also the emergence of investors and partners such as China and India.

key words*: France, Africa, African elites, Competitors, mutual relations, India. Decline.*

ملخص: *تمثل القارة الأفريقية جزءًا محوريًا من السياسة الفرنسية، فقد أثرت العلاقات التاريخية الفرنسية مع أفريقيا تأثيرًا عميقًا في هيكل التجارة في القار، ورغم أن ثلاثة عناصر هيكلية - الإرث الاستعماري، والقرب الجغرافي، ووجود منطقة الفرنك الأفريقي - قد شكلت أساس التجارة، إلا أن أهميتها تراجعت على مر العقود.*

وتُعاد صياغة الاستراتيجية الافريقية وتحدياتها التنموية بفعل التحولات المعقدة في العلاقات الدولية في القرن الحادي والعشرين. ويُشير الوضع الراهن في الشؤون الدولية إلى فرصة أخرى لتغيير مكانة القارة الهامشية في القوى السياسية والاقتصادية العالمية. فلم تعد فرنسا تحتكر النفوذ على مستقبل التنمية في أفريقيا.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على علاقات فرنسا مع أفريقيا، مع التركيز بشكل أساسي على التعاون السياسي والاقتصادي والتبادل الثقافي. إلى جانب العوامل التي تُضعف وتُقلل من علاقاتها مع الدول الأفريقية، مثل مساهمة الوعي الأفريقي لدى النخب، وظهور مستثمرين وشركاء مثل الصين والهند.

الكلمات المفتاحية: *فرنسا، أفريقيا، النخب الأفريقية، المنافسون، العلاقات المتبادلة، الهند، التراجع.*

Introduction:

France's Historical and Contemporary Influence in Africa Beginning in the 19th century, France expanded its colonial empire in Africa by acquiring territories in the Sahara and West Africa. By 1914, the French empire included regions encompassing about 40 percent of Africa. Following the Second World War, anti-colonial movements grew in strength across the continent. France granted political representation to Africans through its assembly, allowing them a role in policy-making related to the colonies. In 1958, France offered colonial territories the choice between immediate independence and continued association within the "French Community" under the 1958 constitution .All territories except Guinea opted to remain part of France until gaining full sovereignty in 1960. The external balance of trade with African countries showed a substantial increase in favour of France during the 1990s, with exports growing from Ffr40.8 billion in 1990 to Ffr99.3 billion in 1997. French exports to Africa represented 17per cent of total African imports from the world and more than 10% of France's total exports in 1997. Concerning non-African exports to Africa, they only represented 24% of the total, a figure that is sensitive to currency changes. Imports from Africa played a major role in France's trade balance in 1997, with semi-finished and finished products accounting for a total of Ffr35.3 billion.

In the following years, African countries established bilateral agreements with France, facilitating cooperation in various areas and supporting the model of the French Community in the development of **the Organisation International Francophone**. Throughout this process, France maintained a strategy of maintaining its influence over former African colonies through cultural, economic, diplomatic and political means.

In the early 21st century, African migrants in France was around 15 million Francophone in Africa participate in the cultural exchange cycle between France and the continent. France's relation with Africa has remained complex and intertwined and has undergone dramatic transformations in recent years. The concept of a relationship that was based on colonialism has changed. After economic independence, France is trying to penetrate new regions in English-speaking Africa, the axis of which has inspired South Africa as one of the largest economies in Africa to compensate for the loss of its position in West Africa. One cannot deny the asymmetrical relationship between France and Africa.

The awareness of African elites, led to the decline of the French role in Africa. It helped in building relations with new regional competitors to Europe on the African continent has jeopardized old Europe's historical, socio-economic and political influence.

China's Soft Power strategies toward Africa, The Chinese foreign policy makers and government focus on Africa for their investments trough hosting several projects under the framework of **The Belt and Road Initiative**, Statistics

issued by the World Economic Forum in June 2024 mentioned that China is Africa's largest bilateral trade partner.

India's African relations, Halfway through the first decade of the new century and after years of neglected. In retrospect, it is clear that China never really left African, but its own economic transitions are arguably more dramatic than the set of political and economic liberalizations that have taken place in Africa over the past twenty-five years.

Research question:

France applied different strategies starting by the colonial one that related its country and achieve its interests globally in the past, however, the appearance of the African elite besides the giant international competitors as China and the India have made France's relation complex and challenging to apply. This paper seeks to discuss how the France –African Relations become under the various new global standards: what are the factors and parties that interferes in the decline of the French influence in Africa?

Hypothesis:

France faced a range of significant strategic challenges in its policy in Africa by the rise of awareness of the African elites. Besides, the emergence of two Asian economic powers in strategic sectors of African economies to leverage international politics, gain access to growing markets and acquire much-needed raw materials from the continent.

The study is going to be divided as follows:

The first part: It will discuss France and Africa's relations.

The second part: It will explain the rise of the African elite conscious and the partnership with other effective partners as preferred partners.

The third part: It will examine the role of the regional partners and their effectiveness and successful strategies used to build healthy and mutual relations in Africa.

1- France's African relations

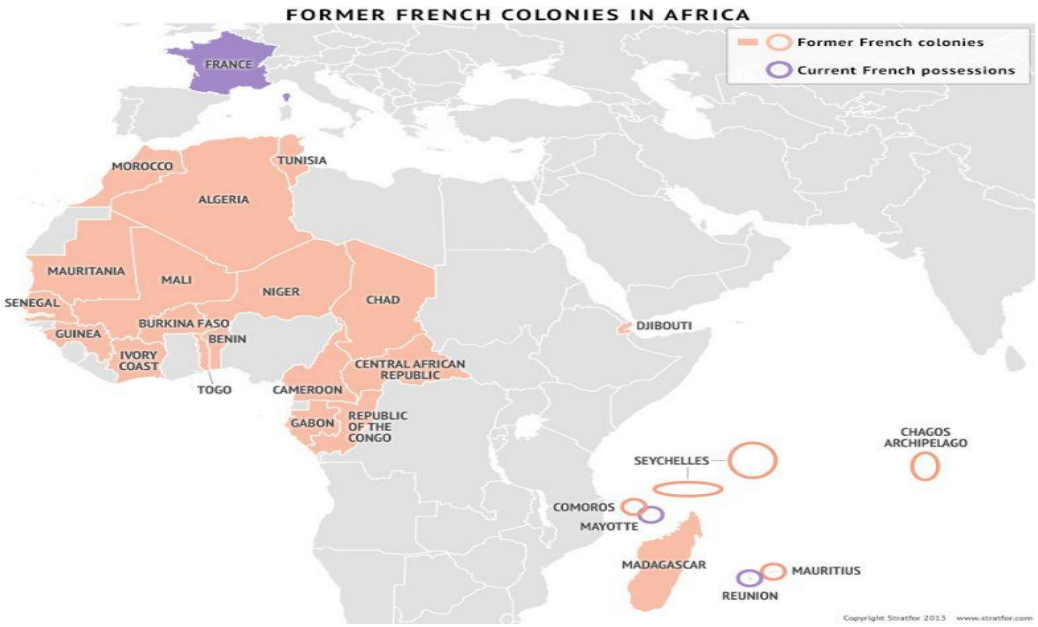
France, which has crouched on the land of Africa for centuries and because it has colonized many countries on the black continent and plundered huge wealth over the past years, it has mortgaged Africans financially by turning the currency of many countries to the franc, forcing them to pay 50 of their revenues at the French central bank. All the economies of these countries are financially hostage to France and the French influence was not limited to one side, but extended to include all the joints of government in these countries, Until recently, it was the one that controlled the selection of the leaders of these countries in a direct and indirect way has a track record of supporting coups at one time and orchestrating them at another. It was able to make some countries vital logistical bases to serve its suspicious and opportunistic interests and used them to hit everyone who contradicts the French orientation and desire and the example of Chad until

recently. Other countries were also used to extend their linguistic dominance on the black continent and made Senegal a center of francophone linguistic radiation in Black Africa. (Belessiotis, 1997, p. 12)

Colonial France for a while ago linked the economy of African countries to the African Franc a currency imposed on 14 African countries that are former colonies of France where this link came in the middle of the 20th century when these countries passed against French colonialism and the emergence of liberation movements and these countries remained permanently linked with the French franc, this link had a disastrous reflection on the economy of this state and in return, , whereby it recruits its agents through elites saturated with outdated colonial culture under the pretext of teaching and on the one hand exerting double economic pressure, strengthening loyalists and clamping down on opponents, and took advantage of the presence of its military bases in the region the coups of the Sahel –Mali –Niger and Burkina Faso countries were the beginning of an escalation of hostility to France and forced to withdraw The military presence of these countries. The African awareness of the elites was also one of the decisive factors in reducing French influence on the continent.

Trade links between France and its former colonies are especially strong, a pattern rising from their colonial relationships. Although current trade dynamics favour France, globalization is shifting patterns and opening new markets. Bilateral trade is supported by a network of governmental and financial links, including bilateral trade negotiations, financial cooperation agreements, and insurance facilities to cover financial risks in aid letters. Nevertheless, political turbulence and economic stagnation in some areas continue to create formidable challenges for French exporters. Nonetheless, the apparent economic recovery of many African countries, coupled with the rapid growth of the continent's population, makes it an increasingly attractive market for France's commercial activities. (Afonso, 2019, p. 74)

French greed was evident by plundering African wealth to operate its economic institutions, which operate 75per cents of the uranium used in French nuclear reactors comes from Niger at low prices. Colonial France wanted to stay in Africa forever with an exploitative colonial mentality after the independence of Africans and linking these countries with France with the concept of dependence –not the mentality of partnership ,cooperation and club in relations between countries all these factors leaded to the Shrinking of the French role in Africa because it became unable to provide anything to Africa, it became politically troubled and burdened with debt and inflation, so everyone around it was shaken off. (CHIKE, 2017, p. 14)



Sources: https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/france-and-its-former-african-colonies

- **France economic relations in Africa**

French multinational companies are heavily invested in the region, active in various industries such as banking, insurance, petroleum, and telecommunications. Although current trade dynamics favour France, globalization is shifting patterns and opening new markets. Bilateral trade is supported by a network of governmental and financial links, including bilateral trade negotiations, financial cooperation agreements and insurance facilities to cover financial risks in aid letters. Nevertheless, political turbulence and economic stagnation in some areas continue to create formidable challenges for French exporters. Nonetheless, the apparent economic recovery of many African countries, coupled with the rapid growth of the continent's population, makes it an increasingly attractive market for France's commercial activities. (CHIKE, 2017, p. 15)

The principal trading partners for France in Africa are Morocco, Tunisia and Libya; trade between North African countries and the former colonial powers is approximately ten times higher than the African average. There is a long history to the trade relations between the partners, reflected in the sustained pace of traditional exports well after independence, especially in sectors such as steel, automobiles and petrochemicals (Belessiotis, 1997). France is one of the largest investors in the continent, according to a study on French foreign investments at the end of the 1990s, with more than 300 firms. These firms are mainly in the

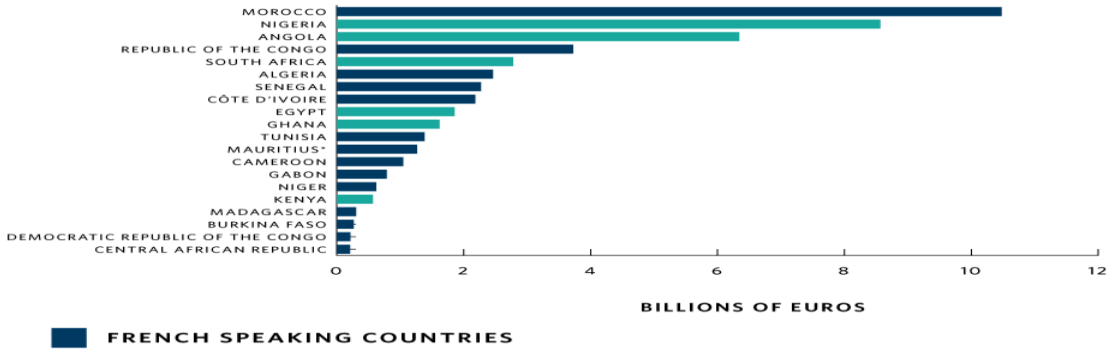
petroleum and gas sector, telecommunications, food processing, financial institutions and cement. Africa accounts for 18.5 per cent of French exports, well above that of the United States 6.8 per cent or Germany 6.0 per cent. French investment is significant: French firms have sponsored some 2,500 projects, employing over 800,000 personnel. (Edwards, 2008, p. 96)

Politically troubled France, under the pressure of its debt inflation, the loss of its political class. France is no longer the country that can offer something to Africa. The collapse is accelerating. Chad, in the past, had the status of an aircraft carrier for the French army, and was a vital logistical headquarters, until the Chadian authorities decided to end the French military presence on its territory. This decision constitutes an inability of the French army to manage its military operations in the region. The situation was made worse by Senegalese President Basserou Dioumaye's request from France to withdraw 350 soldiers from his country. France was forced to withdraw its troops from it after the military coups witnessed by those countries, which coincided with the increasing tone of popular hostility towards France and that list includes Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

The black continent is no longer the one that the world knew in the post-colonial era and France is no longer the model that Africans aspire to, in light of the rise another alternative, such as China, Russia, Brazil and India which offer different economic and trade partnerships. (Afonso, 2019)

Mali adopted a new constitution in 2023 that abandons French as an official language, Rwanda replaced French with English in schools and universities, while Togo and Gabon joined the Commonwealth in 2022. Despite this, French remains the unifying language of a number of multicultural African countries and local languages, which lack a common language at a time when 200 thousand French settle in many African countries.

FIGURE 1
French Direct Investment in Africa (2017–2020)



SOURCE: Authors calculations based on Bank of France data. See Bank of France, "Foreign Direct Investment Flows - Geographical and Industrial Breakdown - Annual Data (2000–2020) (2020 Annual Report), Bank of France, July 29, 2021, https://www.banque-france.fr/en/statistics/balance-payments/foreign-direct-investment/statistics/foreign-direct-investment-annual-series.

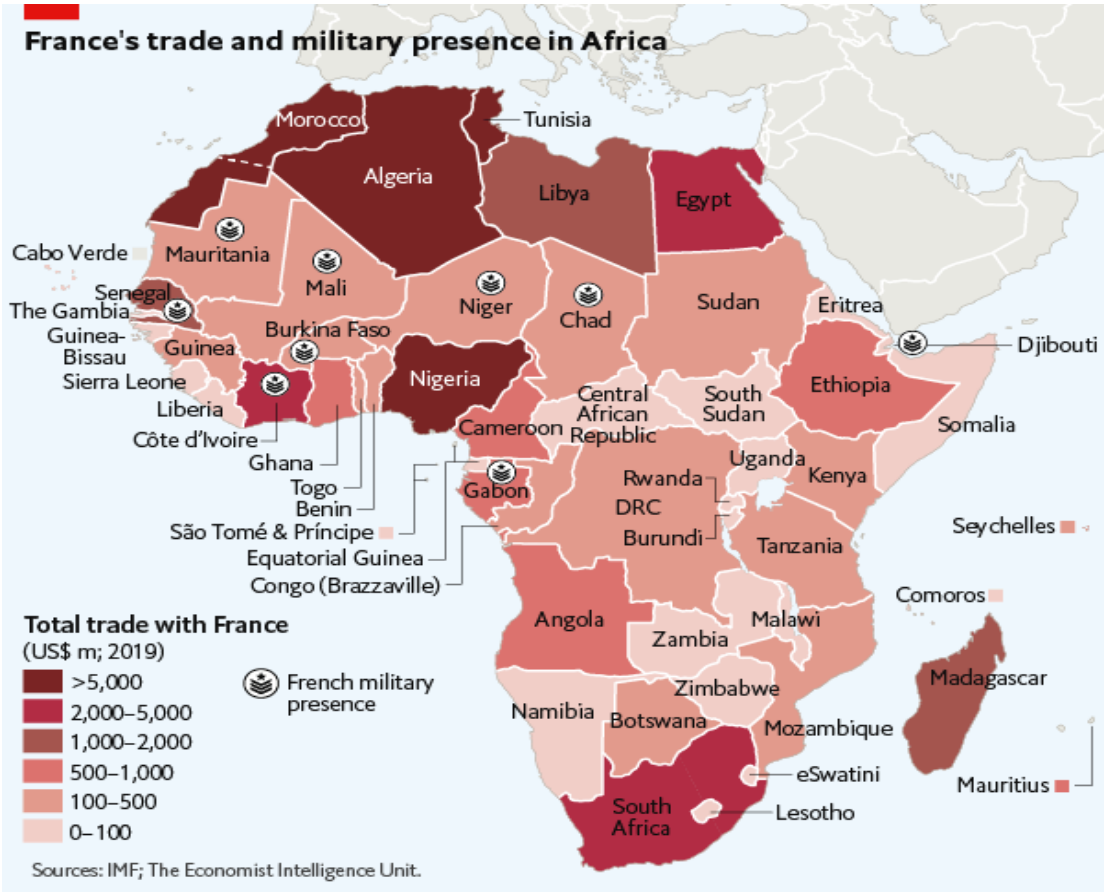
NOTE: This figure depicts the average annual net foreign direct investment that is invested in each of the respective countries. Mauritius is listed as blue, but French and English are both widely spoken there.

Source: https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2022/06/will-frances-africa-policy-hold-up?lang=en

All of the above affects the hard and soft power of France in Africa, and confirms the fragility of France's control over the economy of many African countries.

France, involvement in the Ukraine crisis, has no effective political strategies regain its presence in Africa; even its traditional policy towards the continent has reached a dead end. Macron has tried to return artefacts looted from Africa during the colonial era, most recently returning artefacts to Ethiopia, but African reactions have been unexpected.

Africa, which has been a geopolitical sphere of France for decades, has become hostile towards France. France did not realize that African universities would produce elites who had the ability to think independent of French influence. These elites form a public awareness of the independence of Africa and the need to manage national resources. Africa has matured, especially among young people who are not bound by the past as they realize that France has drained their country's resources by controlling mining, oil and cash, through the African franc which necessitates placing half of the cash reserves in France and supporting dictators and corrupt elites. (Angela , M & Haishan, F, 2020)



Source:https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/18nrm0w/how_france_is_losing_military_presence_in_africa/

2- African elite conscious and other preferred partners.

Continental collective consciousness

In the memoirs of the great African leaders they mentioned that the Algerian liberation revolution was a source of inspiration for Africans because it focused on the African dimension and cleaning the continent from French colonization and the transition from political independence to economic independence.

African liberation movements

were the first step to get rid of the France Influence, the Algerian liberation revolution was a factor that spread the awareness in Africa and was a motive for the liberal movements in Africa among the liberal movements was Movement of the African party for the liberation of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands under the leader Amircal Cabral, SWAP movement founded by Samoan Jumbo to liberate Namilia and the NPLA in ANGOLA and FRELIMO to liberate MOZAMBIQUE, the national movement in Zimbabwe by the hand of Robermo Gabi and the final of the liberation movements is in South Africa by NELSONE MANDILA who gave great support for the Algerian revolution ,the diplomat, **JELOUL MELAKI**, was communicating with these movements and transform their concerns to the Algerian authorities. The support of Algeria was logistically, Military and diplomatic .Algerian's foreign policy is vital component of its soft power strategy. Algeria seeks to create positive attitudes to built political trust, support its foreign policy objectives and strengthen its global influence.

The growing consciousness of African elites was not limited to the colonial era, but extended the Post- colonial period trough The Organisation of the African Union in order to reintegrate the Sahel states into the continental system .The organisation all the time seeks regional dialogue through the conclusion of peace agreements between the conflicting African countries.

The African Union Initiative as a significant step aimed at restoring bridges of communication with the transitional leaders in the three Sahel countries Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger rough the visit that led Angolan Foreign Minister **TITI ANTONIO** to visit these countries, whose membership in the African Union is suspended due to the recent military coups.

Congo-Rwanda Peace Agreement

This agreement came in order to solve the rift between the two countries and in order to stabilize peace in the region, especially between the years of tides between the parties so-called support for armed groups this agreement came in order to stabilize security and peace in the region and to revive life between the two countries within the framework of peace and security between the two countries within Africa as a whole under the auspices of the United Nations

One of the most important clauses of this agreement talks about sovereignty, means non-interference in the internal affairs of the parties and work on forming a security coordination mechanism between the parties, including work on the integration of those who worked under the umbrella of 23 Security movement as armed groups and stop supporting these armed groups of the parties within 30 days, In addition to monitoring through another body that follows up the implementation of this mechanism

The security sector is the number one to reduce tension on the one hand and build security relations within the framework of security coordination under African auspices, even the African Union has been integrated within the framework of these follow-up and monitoring mechanisms,Algeria, in its foreign approaches, has always been working on the issue of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and peaceful political solutions, Algeria was aware of the developments of the agreement, especially under the auspices of the American and Qatari parties.

The first mechanism is a security mechanism, which is the mechanism of security coordination between the two countries in order to monitor the cessation of support for armed groups.Another mechanism is a mechanism for monitoring and accountability, but what hinders the work of these mechanisms is the lack of punishment so that there is a commitment between the parties and the agreement is prolonged and has a positive reflection on the parties.

Africans have to understand very well that we have to fall into the trap of neo-colonialism and they fought traditional colonialism.The African Union was present, but not at the forefront, during the visit of the president of Algeria and Algeria in the African Union, in the mechanism and in the international security and Peace Council

Among what hinders or affects these initiatives is the military presence, especially the military bases, and the experience in the Sahel region is the biggest proof of this, this agreement is positive because its goal is peace and security in the region, but it is necessary that the Democratic Republic of the Congo realize that this presence of military bases inside Congo must be monitored

Among the guarantees is a tripartite mechanism, and the African Union was introduced as an observer party and facilities for the implementation of this Agreement and the most important guarantee is that the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda must know that the more there is a convergence of views.

Among the most important challenges facing the two countries is the integration of the armed forces into the army or the Congolese Armed Forces, also the economic sector has a great place between the two countries and the introduction of international actors to push development and the biggest factor for the success of the agreement is the political will and the biggest challenge to the agreement is the insurgency of armed groups, which will fail the agreement, which lasts for more than three decades.

3- The role of the regional partners to build mutual relations in Africa.

China's Africa policy can be succinctly characterized as a policy of continuity and change: a policy that seeks to apply influence without interference. This relationship has gone through several changes over the years. During the cold relationship has gone several changes over the years. During the cold war era, Sino-African relation was characterized mainly by a policy of anti-Soviet rhetoric and the extension of support to the anti-Portuguese nationalist movements in Angola and Mozambique. (Paul-Saint, 2004, p. 47) Sino-African ties slowly turned a corner in the 1980's and gathered steam in the 19990s.This was evident in the dramatic shift from the political rhetoric of solidarity and anti-colonialism to a relationship founded on economic imperatives and political –security calculations. The result is that Africa has perhaps become the most significant testing ground for the expression on Chinese soft power.

According to Joseph Nye, a state's soft power rests on three key sources: political values, cultural and foreign policy. Political values such as democracy, human rights, equality and justice are fundamental and represent the core ideals of a nation. Culture acts as a supportive component, which significantly influences the nation's identity and perception, whereas Foreign policy functions as the instrument through which a country promotes its ideals and implements concrete measures. These three sources are interlinked each playing a vital role in shaping a nation's soft power. (Memoun.N.S, 2023, p. 152)

The year 2006 marked the 'year of Africa' in China's diplomacy. China's "new" African policy, adopted by the Chinese government in January 2006, describes the basic principles that should guide the new strategic partnership as follows:

First, this relationship should be mutually beneficial to all parties and must be based on sincerity, friendship and equality. This is a relationship which states China's adherence to the principles coexistence and respects African countries' independent choice of development path. Second, China's Africa engagement is based on mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity. It means that China support African countries economic development and is committed to cooperation in various forms for the prosperity of both sides. Third, this emerging relationship is premised on mutual support and close coordination, which includes a commitment from China to strengthen cooperation with Africa in mutual systems and to appeal to the international community to give more attention to questions concerning peace and development in Africa. Fourth, both parties seek to learn from each other by exploring the foundation for common development, which includes deepening exchange and cooperation in various social fields and supporting African countries by enhancing capacity-building and deepening collaboration for sustainable development (FOCAC2003)

Since 2005, China gas been engaged in an unparalleled series of diplomatic offensives towards Africa' promising more trade', cheaper loans and no political interference. In spite of suspicions on the part of western countries about China's intentions. It is beginning to play a critical role also in the political calculations and equations of the AU and several of its member states. This new engagement is bound to transform Africa's international relations in a profound way. (Al-Waleed Ahmed, 2020, p. 47)

China and the African Union

On the whole, China does not have a holistic programme of engagement with the AU, and neither does the AU have a policy framework of its own on how to engage China constructively. Rather, there is a bilateral approach that enables China on the one hand and the AU and its member states on the other to deal with each other. More importantly, China does not have same approach with all African countries. China is astute in its African diplomacy in the sense that it knows perfectly what it can get from each state. Consequently it adopts different approaches and not a one-size-fits-all approach in Africa. Furthermore, China has different levels of engagement with different countries of the continent and sometimes no relations at all. It depends on the internal dynamic and the economic strength of its African partner. Certainly for China, there is no doubt that its aid to both the AU and its member states is premised on the 'principal of sustainability and mutual benefit rather than charity. (Vines, 2006, pp. 456-485)

There is as yet no clarity about the extent to which both the AU and its member states are fully aware of China's instrumentalist and realist approach to its relations with Africa, which are usually framed within rhetoric of developmental humanitarianism. While China is constantly reassessing and adapting its policies to the shifting realities of African realpolitik , the African Union and most of its member states do not seem to have a coherent policy towards China. In fact the African Union lacks a consistent official China policy, which results in a weakening of its own and its member state's ability to negotiate with China. This lack of coherence in strategy has been recognized and has been rhetorically addressed since September 2006.When an AU expert's meeting on the subject opined that 'the African Union should be the fulcrum of the emerging Strategic Partnership and should be able to define the continent's interest more coherently and clearly'. These concerns about policy incoherence between the AU and China are being addressed through the recently signed **memorandum of understanding** (MoU) between the AU and China. This deals with several facets of their cooperation, including, but not limited to infrastructure, business negotiations, the financial and material support to the AU's peacekeeping mission in Darfur and good government. Then chairperson of the AU, Alpha Oumar Konare, during the signing of the (MoU), stated that the consolidation of the friendship between China and the African Union should be done in a respectful manner for the interest of all.In the subsequent discussion, the AU argued that Chinese involvement in Africa should not be limited to economic sector but should also seek to bring

peace and unity in conflict-ridden African countries .Consequently, China is building its peacekeeping capacity. There is now a Civilian Peacekeeping Training Center in Langfang and an International Relation Academy in Nanking; a new peacekeeping training center will open in Huairou in mid-2009 to help centralize and better coordinated Chinese peacekeeping activities. (-African Union, 2020, p. 236)

In what areas is China engaging the AU in its security-related activities?

China's commitments with the AU gave taken place, among other contexts, within the context of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).Basically, these include:

*US$11 million in aid to help with the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.
*US$1.8 million to the AU's peacekeeping mission.
*Supporting the Kofi Annan Plan in November 2006 to bring peace to Darfur.
*315 peacekeepers, engineering corps in Darfur;
*USS300, 000 to the Kenyan Red Cross in January 2008 after an AU appeal for support;
*US$300,000 to AU to assist with the Mission for peace-keeping in Somalia in August 2007.

Although Chinese involvement in UN peacekeeping operations is relatively short and dates back to the early 1980's, in 2006 China ranked twelfth in the list of troop providers.

Sino-Zambian bilateral ties

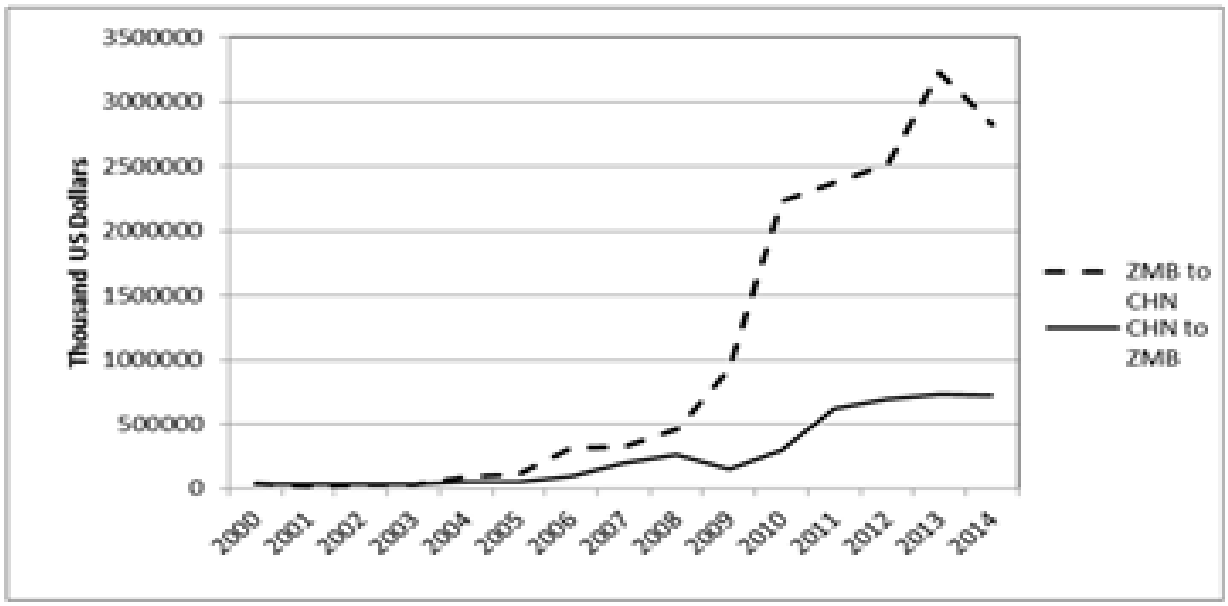
The Sino-Zambian bilateral relationship has flourished, despite policy and ideological shifts in both countries. Not surprisingly, all the three presidents who have run Zambia since the country attained political independence from British colonial rule in 1964 have fondly referred to Zamia's relationship with China as an 'all weather' friendship.

Sino-Zambian economic relations span the entire trade, investment and aid spectrum and conform to a clearly discernible pattern that reinforces Beijing's policy of acceleration China's economic growth and helps to satisfy its huge appetite for resources to fuel this growth.

One of the most comprehensive datasets on the nature of Chinese development cooperation with Zambia.By2006, China had committed itself to financing about forty development cooperation projects in Zambia. Some of these were extensions of ongoing bilateral agreements between the two countries, over the period 1967-2006 the loans amounted to 1,413.79 million renminbi (RMBY) . (-African Union, 2020, p. 263)

A further round of development cooperation agreements between China and Zambia was announced by President Hu Jintao during his February 2007 visit to Lusaka. These included construction of a football stadium in Ndola and a hospital in north-western Province, establishment of an agricultural demonstration center and an anti-malaria center, construction of two schools in rural areas, supply of anti-malaria drugs, provision of about forty scholarship

tenable in China, training seminars and workshops in China for about three hundred people per year, provision of Chinese agricultural experts, young Chinese volunteers and doctors and a loan for construction equipment .In addition to project aid, China has also granted debt relief to Zambia. Zambian's debt to China was said to stand at US$217million as of 12December 2006, making China the highest non-Paris Club provider of loans to Zambia. (World Bank, Macroeconomic Prospects and Poverty Index-Algeria: Macroeconomics, Trade and Investment Global Practice Sector, 2020)



Source: Author's based on UNCTAD Trade Statistics
Note: data was computed based on merchandise trade by trading partner and product based on three digit level SITC Revision 3 commodity classification

https://pubs.sciepub.com/wjssh/2/2/5/index.html

China's Angola political and economic cooperation

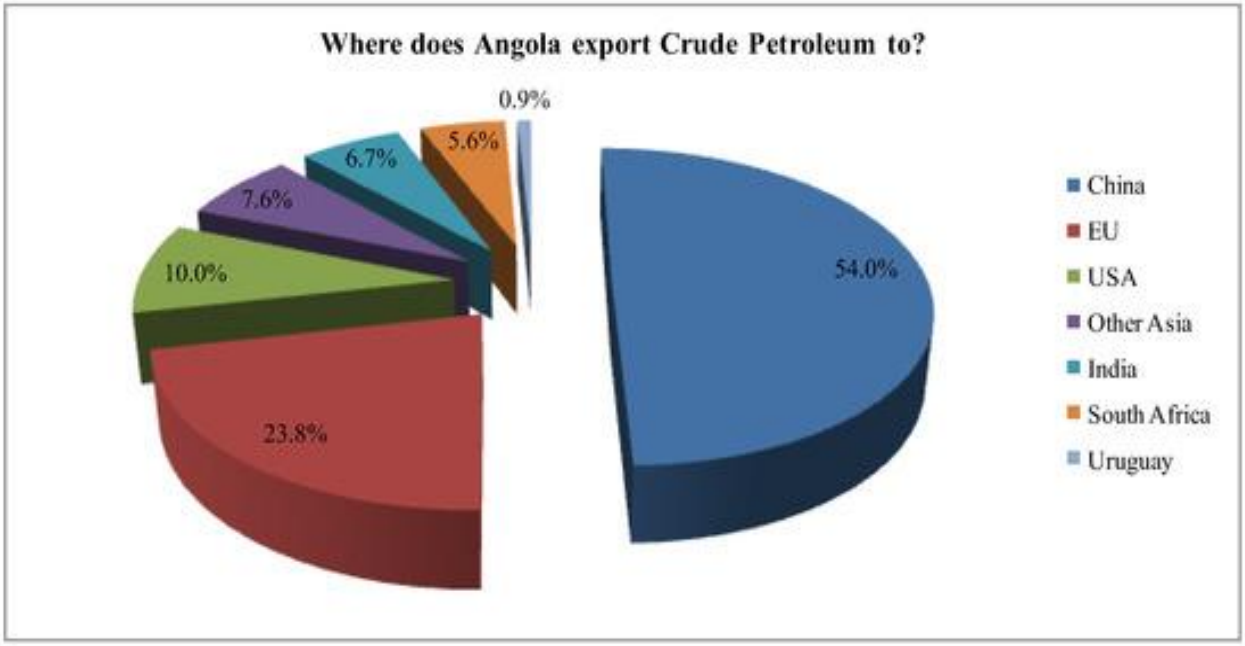
China's involvement in Angola dates back to the early years of the anti-colonial struggle through its support for the three major liberation movements in the country: the MPLA, UNITA and the FNLA. At that time the Cultural Revolution was raging in China and relations were defined by cold war politics. Angola had become China's second –largest trading partner in Africa (overtaking South Africa) by the end of the decade, mostly because of defence cooperation.

Increased political activity between Angola and China has enabled bilateral economic ties to progress quickly .China's EximBank is increasingly making use of this deal structure 'known by the World Bank as the 'Angola mode' or 'resources for infrastructure –whereby repayment of the loan for infrastructure development is made natural resources. According to the World Bank, these loans offer on average an interest rate of 3.6 percent, a grace period of four years and maturity of twelve years. The only unique thing about the 'Angola mode' is that Chinese engagement gas been quick and loans have been large.

Commercial trade between China and Angola has grown remarkably in recent years. Crude oil represents over 95 per cent of all Angolan exports and it is also China's main Angolan import. Over the six years, China has been the second-largest importer of oil from Angola.

Engaging China through developing-country alliance. This is located within key multilateral institutions and through the engagement of African and other developing countries in various alliances that include China. This is where China's self-identification as a developing country provides an important basis for other developing countries to engage, collectively with Beijing. This has long been expressed in G77+China grouping of some 132 developing countries within the framework of the UN, dating back to the 1970's. Their coordinated intervention are particularly evident and formally registered in joint declarations in ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council of the General Assembly) and in Key UN social and economic agencies. (Narlikar, 2006, p. 23)

The interventions of G77+China in meetings of specialized UN agencies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Programme(UNDP),however, also often reflect the differing situations and divergent strategic approaches within the large number and wide range of developing countries participating in this 'common platform' of the developing countries. Despite this, the 77+China succeeded ,for example, in producing a comprehensive on joint proposal on technology transfer for the UN framework Convention on Climate Change(UNFCCC) in 2008.Thus,the G77+China alliance exhibits both the countervailing collective potential of developing countries in relation to the dominant countries and the complexities inherent in reaching common positions within such an economically and politically divers group of countries . (Morphet, 2004, p. 517)



https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/10/8/2936

At the outset, it must be made clear that India is not a newcomer to Africa. On the contrary India and Africa enjoy a long-standing historical relationship. Contracts and trade between the two sides have been noted as extending beyond British colonialism. Following independence, India saw its role in the international system as championing in struggles of anti-colonialism and anti-racism. Like , China India played a critical role in the Bandung Conference on 1955 which led to the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement and used the occasion to promote and strengthen Asian-African solidarity.

Using the historical platform as a way to consolidate contemporary relations with Africa, India's current foreign policy relations with the continent are about reinventing and rejuvenating the old relationship. While China can make the claim that it has never enslaved or colonized Africa, India can also premise its relationship with the continent on the same moral high ground.

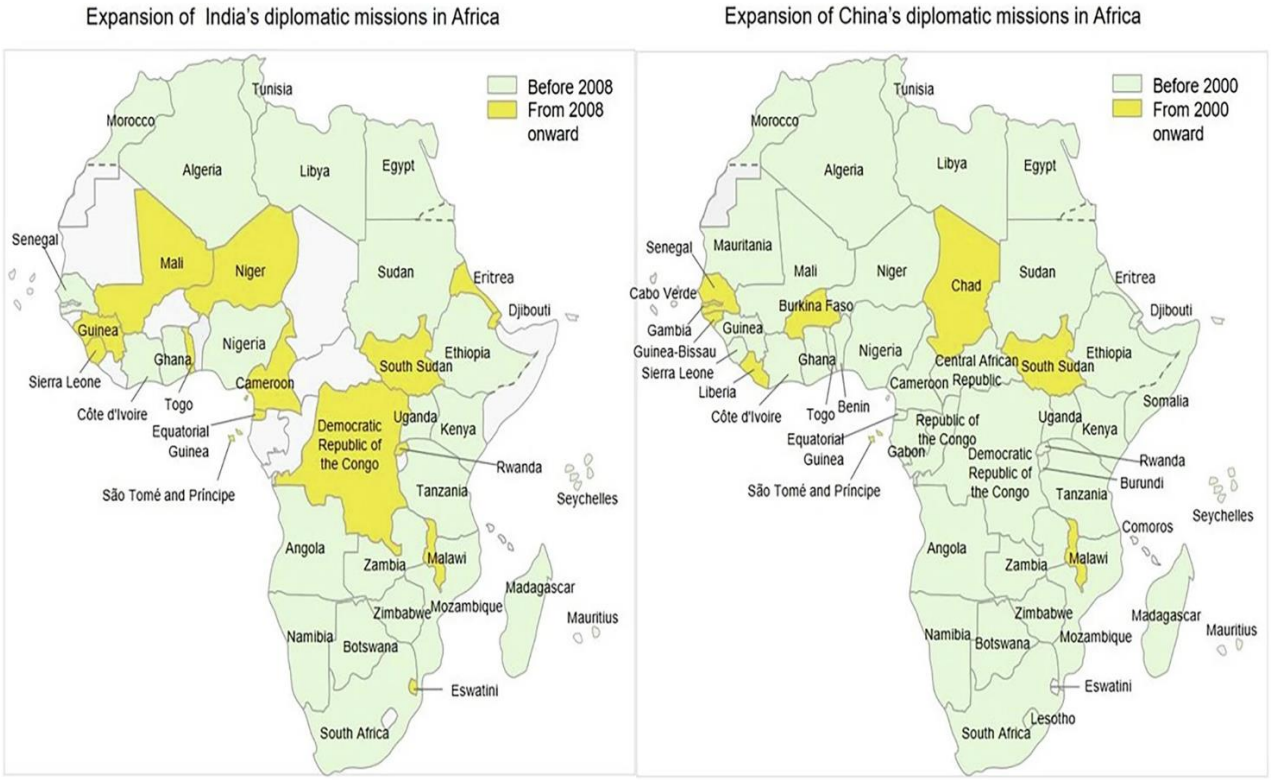
India's Africa strategy is based on the 'quest for resources, business opportunities diplomatic initiatives and strategic partnership', which is seen in the emerging trade, investments and developmental assistance relations that Delhi is crafting with African countries. Oil and gas are India's overriding preoccupation in achieving energy security.

With only 0.4 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves and no significant oil discoveries since the 1970, India's oil needs have to be sourced externally. Future projections are that by 2030 India will become the world's third-largest consumer of energy, ahead of Japan and Russia·To achieve a sustained growth rate of 8per cent until 2031/32 India's primary energy supply must be three to four times its2003/04 levels,

while its electricity capacity must increase by five to six times.As a result the Indian government gas embarked on a policy of energy diplomacy. So, Indian's energy footprint in Africa is becoming increasingly apparent. (Angela , M & Haishan, F, 2020, p. 89)

Even though it may appear that India is sleepwalking in Africa ,especially in terms of its trade partnerships and that its trade with Africa is still a fraction of China's, the signs are that Delhi is awakening to the reality that Africa is a strategic partner/market and a priority in its global commercial expansion. India-Africa trade jumped from US$967 million in 1991 to approximately US$25 billion in 2007.

Africa's share of India's total exports rose from 2.2per cent in 1999/91 to 8.1 per cent in 2006/7, while the concomitant rise in the continent's share of India's total import almost doubled from 2.4 per cent during the same period Africa is significant. In five years, India's export to Africa grew by 120per cent compared to 76 per cent export growth with the world. (Belessiotis, 1997, p. 90)



Source: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-025-05279-9/figures/4

On the other hand, Indian imports from Africa are mainly primary goods, with oil accounting for the largest share followed by gold and other mineral commodities.

The footprint of Indian companies Indian companies are also beginning to make significant strides in term of Africa's non-oil resources .In Zambia Vendanta Resources has a USS 750 million copper-mining investment, in Liberia and Nigeria Arcelor Mittal has a USS900 million management project for iron ore reserves and a USS 30 million steel refinery respectively.

The Tata Groups has the most extensive presence in the continent. Operating in Ghana, Mozambique, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda, the group claims to employ over seven hundred people in Africa. According to the group's profile, its activities range from infrastructure development, energy and hospitality services to financial, communication and automotive outputs.

Apart from the business investments, India has become a significant development partner to the continent. India has been a significant contributor to the UN's global peacekeeping mission. Dating back to the UN's first mission in the Congo in 1960, India gas retained its reputation of deploying forces to all UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. India the third largest contributor of peacekeeping operations in Africa. India's historical ties with Africa as well as its contributions to UNPKO give it a chance to promote itself as an emerging significant political and economic actor committed to peace and stability in the international arena.

Conclusion

Disaggregating France's Africa policy remains a complex exercise given that the relationship has been masked by the Asian competitors as China and India .By strengthening the integration of African economies into global markets; globalization threatens the dominant position held by France and other European Union countries, especially on the export side. For France, the growth of Asian trade and investments has entailed. The overall impact China's and India's engagement in Africa has been positive in the short term. So, the future of France's trade relations with Africa appears favourable, with opportunities for growth available on the continent, although many of the political and economic challenges remain the most promising markets are in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Nigeria and South Africa. With the strong entry of the Chinese dragon and the growing influence of Russia, if France continues to think that it is the main Western player in Africa, it will have to face a challenge from within the West itself, represented by Britain, Germany, and the United States. So, if they do not coordinate with France, they will open the way for another player, which is Turkey. France must adopt new strategic policies based on partnership, not control .The competition for influence in Africa has become fierce in light of the rise of countries with huge financial investments that Unconditional political influence. In this regard, African countries must establish a social and cultural strategy and strengthen the African mechanisms as the African Union to protect themselves and enlarge their cultural and commercial activities based on political, economic, cultural and historical considerations.

References :

1. Belessiotis, T. and Carone, G. "A dynamic analysis of France's external trade." 1997.
2. Afonso, H. and Vergara, S. "Exporters in Africa: What Role for Trade Costs?." .2019
3. CHIKE, O. S. E. G. B. U. E. "The Political Economy of Nigeria's' Trade Performance under Cotonou Agreement." .2017
4. Edwards, L. and Balchin, N. "Trade related business climate and manufacturing export performance in Africa: A firm-level analysis." 2008.
5. Paul-Saint,M.A,Chinese investment in Africa :between commitment and interest ',Géoplitique africaine,available at www.african-geoolitics.org show.aspx?Articled=3701.2004.
6. Vines,Ampaih and Naidu.The scramble for resources :African case studies',South African Journal of International Aggaires,13 (1),Summer Autumm.2006.
7. Memoun.N.S, and Imran Ali Sandano. China in Africa :the soft power of media development,Africa development,2023.
8. Books .and Ji Hye Shin. China's influence in Africa: implication for the united States, 2006,Backgrounder, 1916, Heritage Foundation, Washington, DC, 22February.
9. African Union, 'Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi signs MoU with Chairperson Konare to strengthen

10. Technical and economic cooperation between China and the AU Commission, Press release no.oo5/2008.
11. Mwanawina,I . 'An assessment of Chinese development assistance in Africa : Zambia, Study commissioned by the Africa Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD).2007.
12. Narlikar, A. 'Fairness in international trade negotiations :developing countries in the GATT and WTO, World Economy,2006.p29.
13. Morphet,S. 'Multilateralism and the non-aligned movement :what is the global South doing and where is it going ?,Global Governance,2004.p 517.
14. Madan,T.'India, **Energy Security Series,Bookings Institute,Washington,DC,November**,available at www.brookings.edu/fp/research/energy/2006 india.htm.
15. Sharma ,D.and D.Mahajan .'**En ergising ties :the political of oil,South African Journal of International Affaires,special issue :India in Africa**,2007.p37.
16. Ahmed,S. **New economic opportunities beckon Indian industries**, Economic times,November,2006.