

Regional Conflicts in Africa and Evolution of Conceptual Bases of Peace-Keeping of P.R. China

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Abstract: The study is dedicated to PR China's policy in Africa. Researchers is primarily focused on of China's position regarding numerous conflicts on the African continent and Beijing's position in Security Council which has been constantly paying attention to these conflicts. This study shows evolution of PR China's attitude to peace-keeping operations and breakaway from government-oriental approach in peace-keeping to more balanced one that considers interests of oppositional groupings.

Key words: Africa, conflicts, the People's Republic of China, united nations organization, security council, sudan, darfur, concept, peace-keeping, peace-keeping operations

INTRODUCTION

Africa, the second largest continent of the planet after Eurasia, after breakdown of bipolar system of international relation found itself in difficult situation.

After the Second World War and smash of the most reactionary regimes in Germany, Italy and Japan the process of democratization of international relations started. It became a kind of catalyst of national liberation movement of peoples of Asia and Africa. The process of decolonization of African continent began. The year 1960 became some point of no return in this process. Young independent countries of African continent substantially enriched the mosaics of Yalta-Potsdam system of international relations and endowed it with new motives. All peoples of Africa considered decolonization to be a great achievement. Africans felt great expectations regarding declaration of independence. Many of them thought that improvement of living conditions would happen almost immediately. Such expectations, though with a less extent of naivety were shared by many African leaders as well. Unfortunately, post-colonial reality appeared to be absolutely different. After obtaining independence many young independent countries faced an uneasy step of choosing model of further development. In the situation of the Cold War they appeared to be involved into struggle of two military and political blocs as for the influence on African continent. Many young independent countries associated capitalism with colonialism and thus, they tended to

choose Soviet and socialistic model of development that would consider local specifics. Other countries chose Traditional Capitalistic Model. This, Africa appeared to be broken into two parts. From the one side, active involvement of USSR and USA allowed Africa to receive financial and food aid which helped stabilize and raise living standards of local people. From the other side, this led to many conflicts in future, an active participant of which was (and still is) United Nations Organization. Another reason of such conflicts is connected with difficulties of national building. These difficulties are associated with both colonial past and traditions of pre-colonial period. Machinery of colonial control, though having various defects and flaws was based on broad experience, was served by professionals and was functioning as a well-adjusted mechanism. When it was smashed, administrative system had to be built over again. In African countries the governmental positions were taken by the people who hadn't had any experience in public administrations. As a result in the majority of countries some bulky, unprofessional, inefficient bureaucratic government machine was created which was filled with corruption, speculation and clan system. This led to internal conflicts in many countries in resolution of which participated United Nations peace-keeping forces. Another reason for conflicts that appeared between Africa countries was connected with territorial disputes. The point is that borders of the majority of African countries do not coincide with borders of settlements of tribes and ethnic groups. At Berlin conference held in

1884-1885 colonial powers randomly divided Africa on territorial units, according to their own interests only. As a result, many tribes and ethnicities appeared to be divided and vice versa, some of them were artificially united. Young independent countries inherited these colonial borders. Yet in 1960s on African continent conflicts burst out which were caused by abovementioned reasons. During all post-colonial period (starting from 1975) the continent went through 35 significant armed conflicts, >100 successful and unsuccessful takeovers, counting out minor revolts, inter-ethnic collisions and borderline incidents. During these events about 10 million of people died, the majority of which (92%) was presented by civil population.

THE MAIN PART

From the moment of China's accession to United Nations Organization, agreement of recipient country's government has been one of the key preconditions of Beijing's decision to support corresponding resolution in Security Council and take part in peace-keeping operation. Historically, China has been considering government as an exclusive legal representative of a sovereign state. This position is consistent with principle of non-intervention into internal affairs of other states. This position of Beijing often confronts it with anti-governmental forces in many developing countries. From the practical point of view this fidelity to one's principles allows to maintain good relations with governments which are potential ordering parties of peace-support missions, particularly in Africa. China often mentioned absence of agreement of recipient party a justification of its refusal to support this or than peace-keeping operation. During genocide in Rwanda in 1994, representative of PR China made no pronouncement on the vote regarding Security Council's resolution No. 929 which supposed to allow multinational peace-keeping forces under command of France to use "all necessary means" to provide aid to Assistance Mission for Rwanda; he noted that cooperation and agreement between conflicting parties in respect to actions, provided for by the Resolution were not guaranteed (UN Security Council, 1994). Right after the mission obtained success and agreement of the parties was guaranteed, China supported prolongation of the mission's mandate.

Although, China initially used the concept of Sudanese agreement for peace-keeping in order to keep back the beginning of deployment of UNO operation in Darfur it was Beijing who helped obtain the agreement of the government to hold such operation (UN Security Council, 2006). When in 2004 the situation spiraled out of

control, the main aim of PR China was to maintain good relations with Sudan's government. China exploited its position in Security Council in order to defend Khartoum from sanctions and other punitive measures, pressing the point that the conflict was an internal affair of the country and any peace-keeping operations could be provided only in case Sudan's government accepted it (Crisis Group, 2008). Through to adopting resolution No. 1769 in July of 2007 China sequaciously abstained from voting regarding all resolutions about Sudan, trying to reduce their influence and minimize chances on deployment of peace-keeping operations (IBIDEM). Such position (besides China, Russia, Qatar, Algeria and Pakistan abstained) became a powerful signal to Sudan's government and impeded deployment of peace-keeping operations that were able to defend non-combatant population in Darfur.

Step by step Beijing was able to stabilize its relations with Khartoum in order not to be considered by world community as a power, assisting Sudan's government which interfered with supply of humanitarian aid to citizens of Darfur. At the end of 2006 China started pushing Sudan government for adopting three-stage plan on deployment of peace-keeping operations (IBIDEM). On the 13th of September, 2006, Premier of the State Council of the PRC Wen Jiabao pronounced that he was "very concerned about unstable situation in Darfur" and confirmed his support of performing peace-keeping operation. Also, Beijing required the president of Sudan Khafi ali Nafi to provide explanation of conflict escalation. Vice President of PRC Zeng Qinghong also mentioned that UNO mission in Darfur was not disrupting position of Sudan's government and recommended to start "meaningful negotiations" that would touch upon possible form of that mission (IBIDEM). On the 31st of July, 2007, on the last day of chairmanship of China in Security Council there was adopted a resolution that sanctioned joint mission of UNO and African Union in Darfur for support of execution of peace agreement, signed in 2006. China made everything to help final version of peace-keeping plan being adopted during its chairmanship in Security Council. This allowed eliminate some particularly hard and fast provisions of initial variant of the resolution which related to threat of imposing new sanctions against Sudan.

However, government-oriented peace-keeping approach of Chinese government limited its actions in the course of conflict's solution due to its unwillingness to cooperate with opposition movements. In particular, Justice and Equality Movement demanded that Beijing's troops would leave Darfur's territory and endangered the security of Chinese peacemakers during attack against oil

deposit in South Kordofan in October, 2007. After USA criticized threats to peacemakers, the Movement took their threats back but other rebel groups made it clear about their negative attitude towards participation of China in development of oil sector (Large, 2008). On the 18th of October, 2008 nine Chinese oilers of Chinese national oil and gas corporation were kidnapped and five of them were later killed in South Kordofan. These threats to Chinese peace-makers in Sudan form part of much more complex position of rebellion against peace-makers, who go beyond the scope of peace-making activity. Since Beijing did not have direct contacts with such rebellion groups, it had to base upon USA in this issue which deprives him of a certain policy stroke and bring it into unfavourable position. This complicates conflict-solving efforts, the escalation of which is favourable for non-governmental subjects and opposition powers or for those places where state power is distributed among several parties. That's why China started adopting its government-oriented approach to peace-keeping operations. In 2005 PRC established contacts with national-liberation movement of Sudan and gradually fortified them by means of several bilateral visits, provision of help in restoration of South Sudan and opening of Consulate general in Juba (IBIDEM). The reasons for Beijing's changing of its position are obvious: the most part of oil deposits, being developed by Chinese companies are located on the south of Sudan.

DISCUSSION

For a long period of time, starting from its foundation, PRC has criticized any peace-making operations under the auspices of the United Nations, considering this organization to be an instrument of the USA for intervening into internal affairs of other countries, Such position of Beijing was principally connected with Korean war of 1950-1953 when international armed forces under the auspices of the United Nations (the most part of them was formed by militaries of the USA army) were fighting on the side of South Korea against DPRK which obtained substantial aid from Chinese militants.

At the beginning 1980s Deng Xiaoping's reforms led to changes in foreign policy as well. Beijing realized the

necessity of more active participation in international organizations which were able to help providing economical reforms. Gradually, Beijing started taking part in peace-making operations, providing limited political and financial help in their deployment.

In November, 1988 PRC became the member of the Special Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, dedicated to peace-making operations. That was the beginning point for direct participation of Chinese militaries in peace-making operations (in the Middle East, in Cambodia in Namibia).

CONCLUSION

In the 21st century China takes active part in peace-making operations. In December of 2008 2146 Chinese militarists and civil specialists took part in peace-making operations in various regions. At the same time the concept of peace-making itself is changing. Beijing is departing its previous government-oriented approach and is paying more attention to oppositional powers in conflicts where it is required by the interests of China.

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