

**DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AS THE FOREIGN POLICY TOOL OF CHOICE  
UNITED STATES AND CHINA IN AFRICA AS A CASE OF GREAT POWER  
COMPETITION**

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TOOL OF CHOICE  
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GREAT POWER COMPETITION**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data
AFRICOM	Africa Command
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
B3W	Build Back Better World
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CARI	China Africa Research Initiative
CCI	Corruption Controls Index
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CSR	combat search and rescue
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSSI	Debt Service Suspension Initiative
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
G7	Group of Seven (United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and Italy)
G8	Group of Eight
GDP	gross domestic product
GLM	generalized linear model
GNI	gross national income
GPC	great power competition
HIV/AIDS	human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HOA	Horn of Africa
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance
KDF	Kenyan Defense Forces
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	non-governmental organization
NNPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation
NPR	National Public Radio
NSS	National Security Strategy

ODA	official development assistance
ODF	official development finance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PPP	purchasing power parity
PSI	Political Stability Index
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAIS	School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins
SAP	structural adjustment programs
SEZ	special economic zones
SGR	standard gauge rail
SOE	state-owned enterprise
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TPLF	Tigray Peoples Liberation Front
U.S.	United States
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicles
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USD	U.S. dollars
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



## SUMMARY

The debate on GPC is traditionally framed within the space of security and is thus viewed through the lens of hard power and military might. This framing, however, may be counterproductive, as it has the potential to cause policy makers operating in the traditional framework to narrow their field of vision and miss how the current great powers are competing in Africa. With respect to Africa, and how U.S.-China GPC is playing out, development finance has developed as a tool of this competition.

GPC between the United States and China in Africa relies on two key points. While policy makers have traditionally viewed Africa as the next stage upon which GPC between the United States and China is playing out, this dissertation asserts that this issue is more nuanced. African nations are actively engaging in their own development and future and are not simply passive recipients of ODF. Secondly, GPC should not solely be defined within the security space, as this type of framing risks overriding other issues and aspects.<sup>1</sup> Multiple facets make up GPC and this dissertation focuses on ODF as a facet of GPC between these two countries in Africa.

The data has shown that China has given varying amounts of ODF to different countries during different years. Conversely, the United States has given sustained levels of ODF to all 48 SSA<sup>2</sup> countries examined over the 20-year period from 2000 to 2019. This

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<sup>1</sup> “Great Powers Game On: Competition & Cooperation,” February 19, 2020, Wilson Center, video, 20:14, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/watch-listen>.

<sup>2</sup> As defined by the U.S. State Department Bureau of African Affairs and excluding Somalia due to lack of data availability. “Bureau of African Affairs,” U.S. Department of State, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-political-affairs/bureau-of-african-affairs/>.

dissertation examines the total amount of ODF given by each country, and tests the motivations for ODF as it relates to GPC.

Through quantitative analysis using regression modeling and comparative case studies, in addition to survey and interview data, this dissertation examined the two contrasting approaches and what the motivations are behind these competing powers. This dissertation explored ODF as a realm of great power politics by answering whether the strategic goals of U.S. and Chinese ODF to Africa make stability or conflict more likely.

Authors have researched the impact of U.S. ODF on economic development or the impacts of Chinese ODF on development and state-based violence.<sup>3</sup> Authors have also examined factors that impact ODF from OECD countries and China, but they stopped short of comparing the approaches of the United States and China, that of sustained vs targeted ODF and ODF given to specific countries for specific reasons.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, a gap in the literature has resulted and this dissertation seeks to fill that gap. By comparing the contrasting U.S. and Chinese approaches and testing the motivations behind each country along with the characteristics and outcomes, it is possible to obtain a more complete picture of each country's involvement in Africa.

Literature has shown that while parallels exist between historic GPC in Africa and the way it is currently playing out between the United States and China, the nature of GPC Africa has shifted. A characteristic of GPC is that states will seek to maximize their relative power in relation to other states by focusing on the distribution of power within a system

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<sup>3</sup> Roudabeh Kishi and Clionadh Raleigh, *Chinese Official Finance and Africa's Pariah States*, ACLED Working Paper Series (Wisconsin: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2015), 1.

<sup>4</sup> David G. Landry, *Comparing the Determinants of Western and Chinese Development Finance Flows to Africa*, working paper no. 2018/21 (Washington, DC: China Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2018).

or restricting others from gaining power.<sup>5</sup> Historically, the United States has done so through institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, to exert power and spread influence throughout Africa. China historically has not used the same institutions and opted instead to deal bilaterally with countries when it came to development finance.

For the United States, the motivations for disbursing ODF were overall well-being, good governance, and anti-corruption combined with regional peace, security, and counter terrorism efforts. Albeit not a consistent motivation for every country, the motivations were consistent in that ODF provided to each country fell into one or multiple of those three motivations. For China, the motivations for ODF were basic mercantilist self-enrichment, securing market access, and its investments, and shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model. Similar to the United States, not all three motivations were present in every country, which was to be expected. As not all SSA nations are fraught with conflict, not all SSA nations have coastal access or natural resources.

This dissertation established a theoretical framework for examining the motivations of U.S. and Chinese ODF in Africa. Countries that had high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF demonstrated the characteristics of being strategic countries both regionally and internationally. These countries are also seen to be regional “anchors” with large economies and have a combination of coastal access, large natural resource deposits, or a combination of the two. This framework was used to test two different hypotheses through quantitative analysis and laid the foundation for the two theories additionally tested through the case study analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*.

The theoretical framework facilitated the case study selection in which countries were placed into one of the following brackets within a 2-by-2 matrix: high U.S.-low China, high China-low U.S., and high U.S.-high China, and were then selected for analysis to ensure generalization of the theory and to minimize selection biases. Djibouti was selected as the country exhibiting high levels of Chinese and low levels of U.S. ODF. Djibouti was compared with Malawi, which lay at the opposite corner of the matrix, and was reflective of high levels of U.S. and low levels of Chinese ODF. The third country, Kenya, was the strategic case study country receiving high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF.

Examining motivations by which both the United States and China give ODF enables the determination of these conditions to work in complementary or cross-purpose forms. The hypotheses developed for this dissertation were as follows. If development finance from the United States to SSA is motivated by overall well-being, good governance, and reducing regional conflict and terrorism, then it will target countries with violence, democratic development, or corruption controls resulting in UN voting alignment with the United States. If Chinese development finance to SSA is motivated by mercantilist self-enrichment, increased market access, and shifting Africa to a more Chinese centric development model, then it will target countries with low democratic development, corruption controls, and low levels of violence resulting in increased trade and UN voting alignment with China.

To summarize some of the findings from the research and analysis of the key motivations for U.S. disbursement of ODF to countries in SSA, five findings matter: a historical disbursement of ODF, poverty, population, corruption, and violence. For Chinese

ODF, three things matter: population, GNI per capita, and resources. Resources correlated with Chinese ODF offering potential support with one motivation being centered on China's need for resources, i.e., oil, which emphasizes its driver of basic mercantilist self-enrichment. The negative correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States reveals that Chinese ODF works at cross-purposes to U.S. ODF. Chinese ODF is directed in higher amounts to countries that vote in alignment with the United States in efforts to pull SSA countries away from aligning with the United States and towards itself. This attempt demonstrates an effort by China to contradict and replace the United States in terms of policy influence but not in the role of regional peace and stability.

Are these motivations complementary or antagonistic, and what does this mean for the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa? In areas, such as corruption, the research has demonstrated that the motivations work counter to one another. In areas, such as debt to GDP, countries that had high levels of Chinese ODF also saw increased levels of debt. However, counter to the “debt-trap diplomacy” mantra popular inside the D.C. beltway, debt was not found to be a motivator for Chinese ODF to African nations. In areas, such as security in Africa, the motivations for U.S. and Chinese ODF have the potential to work at cross-purposes. While aggravations in the past have occurred between both U.S. and Chinese forces in Djibouti,<sup>6</sup> the differing motivations could be closer aligned or driven apart depending on future actions. When it comes to ideological alignment in UN voting, the research demonstrates that in the case of extreme ends of the funding spectrum, the votes trend in favor of the predominant donor.

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<sup>6</sup> Garamone, “U.S. Protests Chinese Interference with U.S. Planes in Djibouti.”

In efforts to not oversell China's influence in the region as a result of its growing use of ODF as a tool of GPC and soft power to influence and shift countries to more closely align with it, a quote from a Kenyan businessman interviewed for this dissertation provides insight into the localized perspective. "Very few people [in Kenya] are waking up in the morning watching Chinese tv shows, dreaming of living in China and going to school in China. If I went outside to someone with a ticket and a visa to the US and told them to find their way, no one would say no. China is not competing from a cultural perspective. You are still looking to buy the iPhone; you are still aspiring towards an American lifestyle."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Interview conducted on April 22, 2021.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The great power competition (GPC) between China and the United States conjures up images of military might and hard power. China's aggressive posturing towards its neighbors, such as India<sup>8</sup> and Taiwan,<sup>9</sup> accompanied by its military expansion into the South China Sea<sup>10</sup> and the Arctic,<sup>11</sup> has caused the United States to focus its foreign policy more on China. How GPC is playing out between the United States and China in Africa today differs from the Cold War era.<sup>12</sup> During that time, the primary tools of competition were weapons and military might but now development finance has begun to play a more central role.

GPC is a zero-sum game; in other words, power gained by one state is lost from another.<sup>13</sup> Thereby, great powers seek to maximize their relative power in relation to other states by focusing on the distribution of power within a system or restricting others from gaining power.<sup>14</sup> Mearsheimer posits, "Great powers are rarely content with the current

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<sup>8</sup> Saheli Choudhury, "India and China's Border Dispute Will Not End Anytime Soon, Former Ambassador Says," CNBC, November 2, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/03/india-china-border-dispute-unlikely-to-end-anytime-soon-nirupama-rao.html>.

<sup>9</sup> David Sacks, "The United States and Japan Should Prepare for Chinese Aggression against Taiwan," Council on Foreign Relations, January 18, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/united-states-and-japan-should-prepare-chinese-aggression-against-taiwan>.

<sup>10</sup> Oriana Skyler Mastro, "Rising Tensions in the South China Sea," Council on Foreign Relations, May 20, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/rising-tensions-south-china-sea>.

<sup>11</sup> Swee Lean Collin Koh, "China's Strategic Interest in the Arctic Goes beyond Economics," Defense News, May 12, 2020, <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/11/chinas-strategic-interest-in-the-arctic-goes-beyond-economics/>.

<sup>12</sup> Alex Thomson, *Introduction to African Politics* (London: Routledge, 2010), 152–153.

<sup>13</sup> Dani Rodrik, "Taming the Security Dilemma," Project Syndicate, March 9, 2022, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/new-world-order-avoiding-zero-sum-competition-by-dani-rodrik-2022-03>; Michael Mazarr, *Understanding Competition: Great Power Rivalry in a Changing International Order-Concepts and Theories* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2022).

<sup>14</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

distribution of power; on the contrary, they face a constant incentive to change it in their favor.”<sup>15</sup>

It is important to recognize the characteristics of GPC to understand U.S. and Chinese engagement in Africa better. Max Weber defines power as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance.”<sup>16</sup> Beginning from the realist perspective wherein states are the actor, Mearsheimer defines great powers and their goals as the state’s desire to maximize its share of world power at the expense of other states.<sup>17</sup> Great powers do not merely strive to be the strongest of all great powers; their ultimate goal is to be the hegemon or the only great power in the system.<sup>18</sup> States pursue four strategies in the quest for power: acquire, maintain, balancing, and buck-passing.<sup>19</sup> The most common strategies used to describe rising power are balancing, which is defined as “the threatened state accepts the burden of deterring its adversary and commits substantial resources to achieving that goal.”<sup>20</sup> The other is buck-passing, which is defined as “the endangered great power tries to get another state to shoulder the burden or defeating the threatening state.”<sup>21</sup>

The debate on GPC is traditionally framed within the space of security and is thus viewed through the lens of hard power and military might. This framing, however, may be counterproductive, as it has the potential to cause policy makers operating in the traditional framework to narrow their field of vision and miss how the current great powers are

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<sup>15</sup> Mearsheimer, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Guenther Roth et al., *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 53.

<sup>17</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Mearsheimer, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Mearsheimer, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Mearsheimer, 13.

<sup>21</sup> Mearsheimer, 13.



competing in Africa. One example of this competition operating outside the space of security occurs at the United Nations (UN). China is balancing against U.S. resolutions or buck-passing to other countries that then oppose or abstain from supporting the United States on resolutions. China has also learned from its own experiences with development and has chosen to employ the use of official developmental finance in the form of export credits and foreign direct investment to facilitate development.

Development finance is one of the key tools used by GPC. One example was the Soviet Union's investment in African nations during the Cold War in an effort to balance against Western nations and disrupt the political and economic system they had established. The actors have changed since the era of Cold War competition. China has increased its investment into Africa but it has also drawn the attention and ire of Western scholars and politicians.<sup>22</sup> Development finance and the impact it has had on growth is an area of debate and has been extensively examined by scholars who have highlighted its successes and failures in its achievement of development. The later chapters detail how China is not pursuing these strategies using military force but instead is using development finance and how it has become a tool of U.S.-Chinese great power politics in Africa.

Turning the focus to Africa, and how U.S.-China GPC is playing out, development finance has developed as a tool of this competition. Historically, the United States has utilized institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank as mechanisms to exert power and spread influence throughout the global south in their favor, especially in Africa. This opinion is echoed in the U.S. 2017 National Security

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<sup>22</sup> Steve Holland and Lesley Wroughton, "U.S. to Counter China, Russia Influence in Africa: Bolton," Reuters, December 13, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-africa-idUSKBN1OC1XV>.

Strategy (NSS) with each power taking geopolitical advantages of each other with the intention of changing the international order to its favor. The United States has attached conditionalities to ODF to influence countries to adopt more “Western norms,” such as open economies and democratic institutions.<sup>23</sup> Conditionalities are defined as stipulations attached to the official development finance (ODF) to induce the desired changes by the recipient nation to the satisfaction of the donor nation.<sup>24</sup>

U.S. aid is described as “Funds or technical assistance given primarily to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries.”<sup>25</sup> This aid is in the form of grants or loans at below market rates with long repayment periods.<sup>26</sup> China includes military aid in its expenditures of aid and typically uses a combination of concessional loans, resource backed loans, and import/export credits mostly at market rates and with shorter repayment periods to facilitate development.<sup>27</sup> This aid falls under the umbrella of official development assistance (ODA), which is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as “funds and technical assistance, given on strictly limited concessional terms, primarily to promote economic development and welfare.”<sup>28</sup> Other government funding that does not qualify as ODA is categorized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as other official flows

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<sup>23</sup> Strom C. Thacker, “The High Politics of IMF Lending, *World Politics* 52, no. 1 (1999): 38–75; Randall W. Stone, “The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa,” *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 4 (2004): 577; James Raymond Vreeland, “Why Do Governments and the IMF Enter into Agreements? Statistically Selected Cases,” *International Political Science Review* 24, no. 3 (July 2003): 321–43.

<sup>24</sup> Anwar Shah, *Development Assistance and Conditionality: Challenges in Design and Options for More Effective Assistance* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 2017).

<sup>25</sup> Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 166.

<sup>26</sup> Brautigam, 165.

<sup>27</sup> Brautigam, 172.

<sup>28</sup> Brautigam, 165.

(OOF). For the purpose of this dissertation, aid (both military and economic), ODA, and OOF are herein categorized as ODF in an effort to establish an understanding that these funding flows can be tools of GPC under the categorization of ODF. This is not done in an effort to blend the types of funding together but out of an understanding that these funding flows are tools of GPC. By comparing how the United States and China approach Africa through various financial instruments, it demonstrates how both approaches operate in parallel or at cross-purposes to one another.

Cross-purposes, in this dissertation, are defined as the extent to which one policy or actors' actions undermines or works counter to that of another. Krueger examined this exact dilemma within U.S. policy specifically, and framed cross-purposes as contradictions within policy or actors.<sup>29</sup>

China historically has not used the IMF or the World Bank. Instead, it opts to deal bilaterally with countries on development finance. To comprehend one aspect of how China's approach to Africa differs from that of the United States, Lina Benabdallah offered a perspective on China in Africa today. She stated, "In order to fully understand China's foreign policy toward African states and its importance in global politics, one certainly needs to look at the financial figures, foreign aid levels, and foreign direct investments."<sup>30</sup> China's approach to develop Africa focuses on large infrastructure investments. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is one example. President Xi Jinping established it in 2013. Western nations challenged by China's increased influence in the region have labeled

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<sup>29</sup> Anne Krueger, *Economic Policies at Cross Purposes: The United States and Developing Countries* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> Lina Benabdallah, *Shaping the Future of Power: Knowledge Production and Network-Building in China-Africa Relations* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2020), 5.

China's approach as "debt-trap diplomacy"<sup>31</sup> or "rogue aid."<sup>32</sup> In expanding its reach and influence across the globe, China seeks to also establish itself as a global superpower.<sup>33</sup> China offers an alternative to the U.S. development model in Africa and its use of conditionalities for ODF. In so doing, China has gained diplomatic support and market access for Chinese goods, and ensured the supply of raw materials.<sup>34</sup>

Chinese ODF, with its "no strings attached" policy, may undermine U.S. strategic goals in Africa, and the Chinese government may be using its ODF policy to counter-balance against the U.S. presence on the continent. Africa is a region vital for continued Chinese economic, military, and political development. In viewing ODF as a tool of great power politics between the United States and China, this dissertation aims to answer three questions:

- What strategic motivations of the United States and China explain variations in ODF flows, and are these motivations similar for each great power?
- Are these motivations complementary or antagonistic?
- What do these motivations tell us about the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa?

The study of these questions impacts not only U.S. policy and operations but subsequently influences the way in which the United States distributes aid. By examining the determinants of aid through the lens of GPC, it provides insight into how both the

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<sup>31</sup> Anzette Were, *Debt Trap? Chinese Loans and Africa's Development Options* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2018); White House, *2017 National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> Moises Naim, "Rogue Aid," *Foreign Policy* 159 (2007): 96.

<sup>33</sup> Phillip Carter III, Raymond Gilpin, and Paul Nantulya, "China in Africa: Opportunities, Challenges, and Options," in *China's Global Influence: Perspectives and Recommendations*, ed. Scott D. McDonald and Michael C. Burgoyne (Honolulu, HI: Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2019).

<sup>34</sup> Meine Pieter van Dijk, ed. *The New Presence of China in Africa* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).

United States and China are operating in Africa and potentials for confrontation or collaboration.

This dissertation examines how this GPC is playing out across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a specific focus on ODF as a tool of this competition. The data has shown that China has given varying amounts of aid to different countries during different years. Conversely, the United States has given sustained levels of ODF to all 48 SSA<sup>35</sup> countries examined over the 20-year period from 2000 to 2019. This dissertation examines the total amount of ODF given by each country, and tests the motivations for ODF as it relates to GPC.

## 1.1 Background

Between 2000 and 2012, the United States provided \$57.6 billion U.S. dollars (USD) to Africa in the form of ODF.<sup>36</sup> Over the same time period, China gave \$79.4 billion (USD) in concessional loans and official finance to African governments and state-owned enterprises (SOEs).<sup>37</sup> At the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2015, President Xi Jinping pledged \$60 billion in ODF and loans to Africa. Three years later, he pledged another \$60 billion to Africa.<sup>38</sup> In 2021, he pledged yet another a \$40 billion.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> As defined by the U.S. State Department Bureau of African Affairs and excluding Somalia due to lack of data availability. "Bureau of African Affairs," U.S. Department of State, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-political-affairs/bureau-of-african-affairs/>.

<sup>36</sup> Dollar amounts collected from USAID database.

<sup>37</sup> Deborah Brautigam and Jyhjong Hwang, "Eastern Promises: New Data on Chinese Loans in Africa, 2000 to 2014," no. 2016/4 (working paper, Washington, DC: China-Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University 2016), 3, <http://www.sais-cari.org/publications>.

<sup>38</sup> Deborah Brautigam, "Beijing's FOCAC Commitments: A 'Real Story' Primer," *The China Africa Research Initiative Blog* (blog), August 20, 2018, <http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/2018/08/beijings-focac-commitments-real-story.html>.

<sup>39</sup> David Thomas, "What Did FOCAC 2021 Deliver for Africa?" *African Business*, November 29, 2021, <https://african.business/2021/11/trade-investment/what-can-africa-expect-from-focac-2021/>.

The variations in ODF, where it is going, how much is being provided, and the amounts given to each country paints a more complete picture.

Figure 1 shows the levels of ODF given by both the United States and China to the 48 SSA nations from 2000–2019. It is clear that China has expanded its investment in Africa with specific years being major investment years. For example, 2013 was the initiation of China’s BRI, which explains the large spike in investment in Africa. This spike prompts the hypothesis behind the motivations for Chinese ODF being driven by a need to secure markets for Chinese goods and establish a more China centric development model upon which recipient countries are dependent upon China for materials and support.

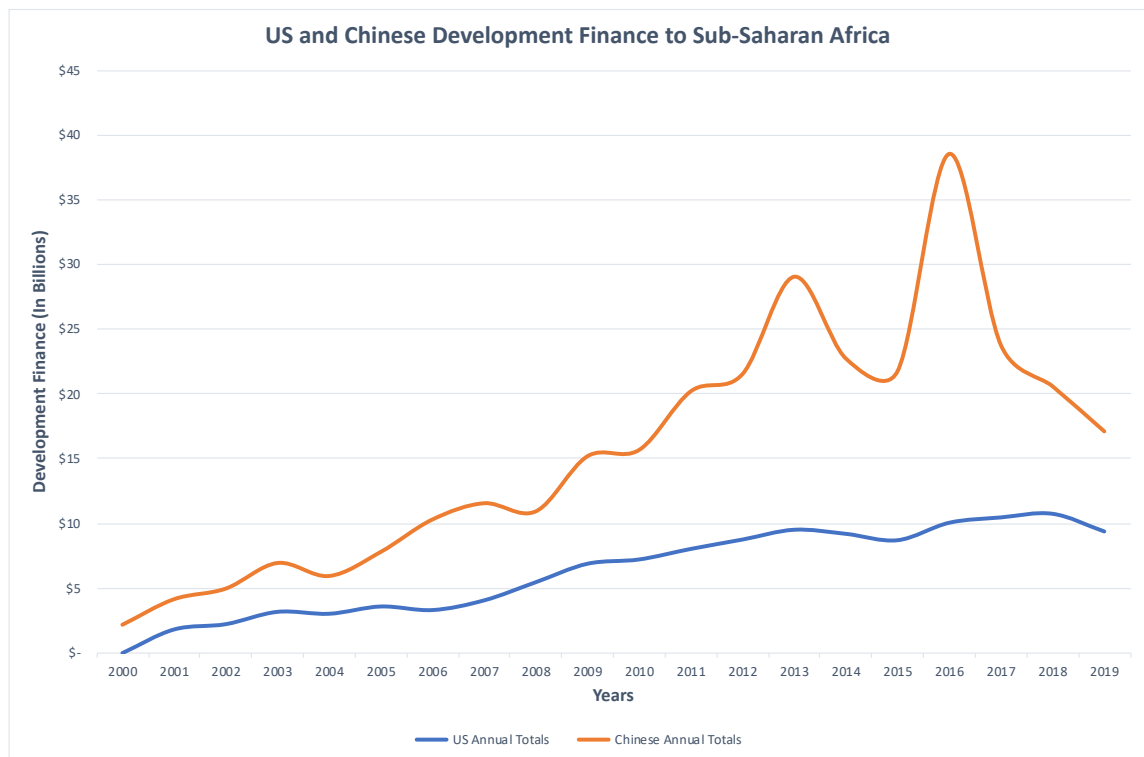


Figure 1. U.S. and Chinese ODF to SSA.

The second spike in 2016 was headlined by a \$19 billion infrastructure development loan to Angola backed by the nation's oil exports. This example supports the hypothesis that one of the motivations for Chinese ODF in Africa is driven by basic mercantilist self-enrichment. This hypothesis is the belief that nations generate wealth by accumulating a surplus trade balance and resources that lead to large investments by China in extractive industries in Africa. Apart from these two spikes, China's flow of ODF appears to be consistent in dollar amounts to the 48 SSA nations examined from 2000–2019.<sup>40</sup> However, an examination at the country level reveals inconsistencies.

When also looking at the debt to GDP levels of some of the highest recipients of Chinese ODF a pattern emerges, in which the recipient countries are resource rich or have coastal access across Africa. This pattern prompts consideration of Chinese ODF being driven by basic mercantilist self-enrichment and increased ODF from China resulting in countries increasingly approaching debt-distress. The resource rich nations receiving high levels of ODF from China are Angola, Zambia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The coastal access countries are Djibouti and Kenya. These two countries for example have also received high levels of ODF from the United States, and therefore, provides an opportunity to conduct case studies to examine the differing motivations for U.S. and Chinese ODF to determine if they work in parallel or at cross-purposes to one another.

China has given targeted amounts of ODF to specific countries. For example, \$1.4 billion was given to Angola in 2015, and then \$19.1 billion the next year, and to Kenya

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<sup>40</sup> Based on data collected and provided by Johns Hopkins SAIS-CARI database.

\$32 million in 2012, and then \$3.7 billion in 2013. In contrast, between 2000 and 2019, the United States gave a sustained level of ODF to all 48 countries in SSA.<sup>41</sup>

Figure 2 shows the amounts of ODF given by the United States in blue and China in red on a country-by-country level for the 48 SSA nations. The shading scales go from \$8.4 million to \$13.7 billion for the United States with the top three ODF recipients being Ethiopia at \$13.7 billion, Kenya at \$11.7 billion, and Uganda at \$8.1 billion. The top three areas of U.S. development finance in SSA were emergency response, AIDS prevention and reduction efforts, and food aid.<sup>42</sup> This aid supports the hypothesis that the United States is motivated to give ODF primarily in support of good governance, humanitarian issues along with conflict prevention, and stability efforts. Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda either have all been in conflict or have neighboring countries actively in conflict. Kenya has sustained multiple attacks from Al Shabab based in neighboring Somalia that has resulted in Kenya committing troops in support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).<sup>43</sup> Ethiopia's internal conflict in the Tigray region in 2021<sup>44</sup> and Sudan's civil conflict in the Darfur region dating back to 1939 are other examples.<sup>45</sup> Stability within these countries is important for regional stability, as seen with Kenya and Ethiopia. Kenya has long been an ally for the United States in its fight against terrorism beginning with the bombing of the

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<sup>41</sup> Large spikes in U.S. aid are attributed to debt cancellation in the case of Nigeria with a \$694 million write down in 2006 and \$146 million in 2013 to Uganda to combat the spread of human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

<sup>42</sup> The author tabulated these categories from data gathered from USAID's website.

<sup>43</sup> "Conflict with Al-Shabab in Somalia," Center for Preventive Action, updated May 12, 2022, <https://microsites-live-backend.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/al-shabab-somalia>.

<sup>44</sup> Michelle Gavin, "The Conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray Region: What to Know," Council on Foreign Relations, February 10, 2021, <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/conflict-ethiopias-tigray-region-what-know>.

<sup>45</sup> Government of Sudan, "Understanding Darfur Conflict," ReliefWeb, January 19, 2005, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/understanding-darfur-conflict>.



U.S. embassy in Nairobi in 1998, and the more recent attack on the military base, Camp Simba, in Lamu in January 2020.<sup>46</sup>

Conversely, for China, the shading scales in Figure 2 go from zero to \$13.7 billion not including Angola, which received \$42.8 billion. Ethiopia was the second largest recipient with \$13.7 billion, and Zambia was third with \$9.8 billion. The top three Chinese ODF sectors were transport, power, and mining. This level of ODF validates China's primary motivation for providing ODF are basic mercantilist principles and natural resource extraction, and is the win-win solution China champions. China is thus able to secure needed natural resources for its economy while supplying the financing, and often materials and expertise for the African nation to develop its infrastructure.

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<sup>46</sup> Carla Babb, "AFRICOM Sends Top Brass to Kenya to Investigate al-Shabab Attack," Voice of America, January 9, 2020, <https://www.voanews.com/africa/exclusive-aficom-sends-top-brass-kenya-investigate-al-shabab-attack>; Travis Tritten, "Troops Reprimanded after Deadly Al-Shabaab Attack on Kenya Base," Military News, March 10, 2022, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/03/10/troops-reprimanded-after-deadly-al-shabaab-attack-kenya-base.html>.

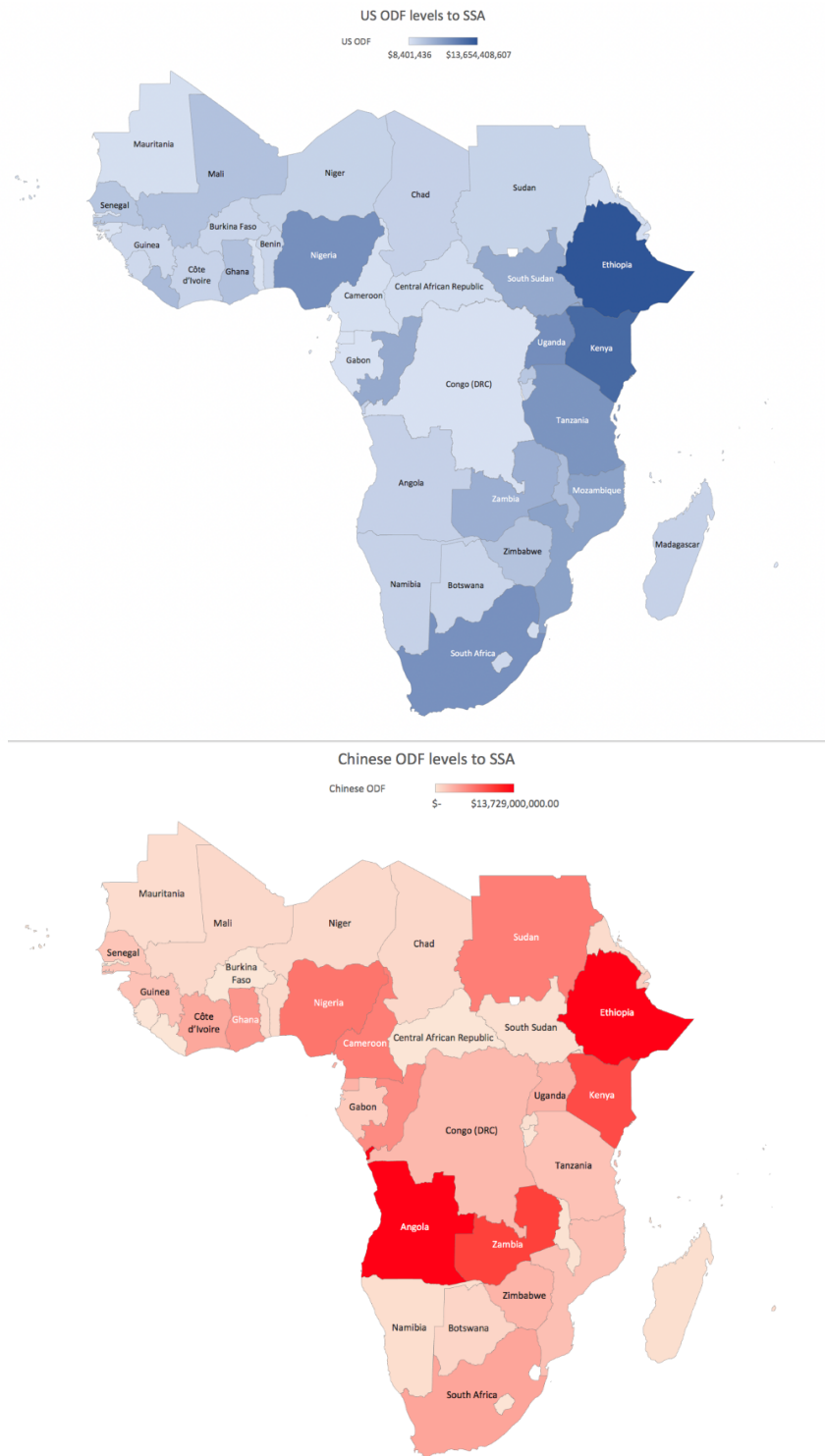


Figure 2. U.S. ODF Levels (Top) vs Chinese ODF Levels (Bottom) to SSA from 2000–2019.

Given the differing approaches, they have potential to work at cross-purposes rather than play complementary roles. With China's non-interference policy, good governance is not focused upon, which thereby potentially exacerbates regional conflict and contributes to human rights violations. Ian Taylor alludes to this situation in his work on China-Africa relations stating, "Chinese activity in Africa is...self-serving and based on economic and strategic considerations...for such reasons, China's expansion into the African continent almost certainly does not contribute to the promotion of peace, prosperity and democracy on the continent."<sup>47</sup> In doing so, China has the potential to run counter to U.S. efforts in the region and undermine stability efforts. By shifting the political landscape through development assistance, China seeks to assert itself as a regional partner and provide an alternative development model for African nations. China thus has the opportunity to reshape the strategic balance of power across Africa and through international institutions in its image, which runs directly counter to U.S. goals.

## **1.2 Research Methodology**

Through quantitative analysis using regression modeling and comparative case studies, in addition to survey and interview data, this dissertation looks to examine the two contrasting approaches and what the motivations are behind these competing powers. This dissertation explores ODF as a realm of great power politics by answering whether the strategic goals of U.S. and Chinese ODF to Africa make stability or conflict more likely.

The research and data analysis shows that the United States has provided ODF to all 48 countries examined in SSA for almost every year examined during the 20-year time

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<sup>47</sup> Ian Taylor, "The 'All-Weather Friend'?" in *Africa in International Politics*, ed. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams (London: Routledge, 2004), 99.

period of 2000–2019. China, on the other hand, has given specific amounts during specific years with most of the ODF funds being given to resource rich countries in the early 2000s. It added more and more countries after the initiation of the BRI in 2013. Additionally, no country received ODF from China until it adhered to the one China policy. Furthermore, no country received funding if it maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which offered a simple binary conditionality to countries. In 2019, only three countries of the 48 examined did not receive ODF from China. As of June 2021, only Eswatini maintains diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Examining the debt to GDP levels of some of the highest recipients of Chinese ODF reveals a pattern of resource rich nations or strategic access point countries. The resource rich nations receiving high levels of ODF from China are Angola, Zambia, and the DRC. The strategic access point countries are Djibouti and Kenya. Also, these countries receive high levels of ODF from the United States and can therefore outline the importance of determining the impacts and influences of ODF.

This dissertation also examines three case study countries to compliment the quantitative analysis described previously. The following three countries are Djibouti,<sup>48</sup> Malawi, and Kenya. Djibouti is a geographically small country with few natural resources but is strategically located and its economy reflects that reality. Yet, it has experienced large infrastructure investment by China along with the establishment of China's first

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<sup>48</sup> Some debate has arisen as to whether or not Djibouti is included in the SSA categorization. Djibouti is geographically south of the Saharan. It was historically included in the SSA region by the World Bank before moving the management of it oversight and operations to its Middle East-North Africa branch in 2000. The U.S. State Department, the Library of Congress, and the Department for International Development in the United Kingdom all include Djibouti in their lists of SSA countries. This dissertation has included Djibouti in its list of SSA countries.

military base outside its mainland in 2017. Djibouti falls within the top third of recipient African nations of Chinese ODF and its levels of ODF from China are a factor of 10 higher than that of the United States. Building on its strategic geographic location, the United States also has a base in Djibouti it established in 2001.

Malawi is a largely agrarian country with a majority of its main exports being agricultural goods, such as tobacco, tea, coffee, and sugar. U.S. ODF to Malawi outpaces that of China by a factor of 10, and Malawi falls within the top third of recipients of U.S. ODF in Africa while falling into the bottom third for Chinese ODF. Malawi also ranks towards the top of all African nations in human rights, safety, and rule of law according to the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance,<sup>49</sup> which corresponds to another motivation for U.S. ODF.

Kenya experiences large ODF inflows from both the United States and China. U.S. ODF primarily goes towards health and agriculture.<sup>50</sup> Whereas, Chinese ODF mostly goes to infrastructure development, and most notably, the standard gauge rail (SGR), a \$3.2 billion railroad connecting Nairobi to Mombasa.<sup>51</sup> These examples highlight the different policy priorities between the United States and China and prompts questions into what interactions between the two countries in SSA may possibly look like in the future.

Authors have researched the impact of U.S. ODF on economic development or the impacts of Chinese ODF on development and state-based violence.<sup>52</sup> Authors have also

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<sup>49</sup> Trends for safety, rule of law, and human rights gathered from the website: <http://iag.online>.

<sup>50</sup> Data and metrics gathered from USAID's Foreign Aid Explorer query tool: <https://explorer.usaid.gov/query>.

<sup>51</sup> Dollar amounts for ODF gathered from the Johns Hopkins SAIS-CARI database.

<sup>52</sup> Roudabeh Kishi and Clionadh Raleigh, *Chinese Official Finance and Africa's Pariah States*, ACLED Working Paper Series (Wisconsin: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2015), 1.

examined factors that impact ODF from OECD countries and China, but they stopped short of comparing the approaches of the United States and China, that of sustained ODF vs targeted ODF, and ODF given to specific countries for specific reasons.<sup>53</sup> For this reason, a gap in the literature has resulted and this dissertation seeks to fill that gap. By comparing the contrasting U.S. and Chinese approaches and testing the motivations behind each country along with the characteristics and outcomes, it is possible to obtain a more complete picture of each country's involvement in Africa. It is also valuable in a more analytical examination of the data and cases, which allows for the separation of rhetoric from data. As such, a more nuanced understanding of GPC in Africa will add to the conversation beyond the level of security space and political rhetoric.

My course of action was to run the regressions as described and use the correlation, in conjunction with case studies, to provide a holistic understanding of U.S. and Chinese GPC in Africa through the lens of ODF. I conducted interviews and surveys with regional experts and scholars and incorporated their inputs into my case studies to provide support, as well as break down their specific responses in a separate section.

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<sup>53</sup> David G. Landry, *Comparing the Determinants of Western and Chinese Development Finance Flows to Africa*, working paper no. 2018/21 (Washington, DC: China Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2018).

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In an era during which the United States seeks to maintain its position, and China seeks to elevate its own standing on the global stage, their positions within the context of GPC are dynamic. This chapter begins by outlining a basic understanding of the components of GPC and briefly revisits historical GPC in Africa to provide framing and context. However, a bulk of the remainder of this chapter focuses on how GPC in Africa is playing out between the United States and China through development finance.

GPC between the United States and China in Africa relies on two key points. While policy makers have traditionally viewed Africa as the next stage upon which GPC between the United States and China is playing out, this dissertation asserts that this issue is more nuanced. African nations are actively engaging in their own development and future and are not simply passive recipients of ODF.

Secondly, GPC should not solely be defined within the security space, as this type of framing risks overriding other issues and aspects.<sup>54</sup> Multiple facets make up GPC and my dissertation focuses on ODF as a facet of GPC between these two countries in Africa. Africans are keenly aware of being viewed merely as the latest stage for GPC between the United States and China. One example came from Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta during his trip to the White House in 2019 when he commented to former President Trump that the United States should not view Africa as a chessboard upon which the competition

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<sup>54</sup> "Great Powers Game On: Competition & Cooperation," February 19, 2020, Wilson Center, video, 20:14, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/watch-listen>.

is played out.<sup>55</sup> This viewpoint is a constant theme among African nations of not wanting to be caught in the middle of GPC and being forced to choose sides, which is demonstrated in the coming chapters.

Scholars have argued that GPC in Africa has not been a useful framework by which to view the current dilemma. Colin Legum argued in 1981 that the success of foreign powers in Africa was solely dependent on African governments and African interests.<sup>56</sup> His conclusion was that “African governments are themselves the main agents determining the level and nature of foreign involvement in their continent.”<sup>57</sup> Two examples of African governments leveraging foreign powers for their own interests are Tanzania, with the construction of the Port of Bagamoyo,<sup>58</sup> and the airport in Sierra Leone.<sup>59</sup> However, once the door is opened to the donor, be it the United States, China, or another state, it can become difficult to retract should the donors interests differ from the recipient nations.

Akindele counters the arguments of Legum in that political instability and economic underdevelopment in Africa have made it dependent on and susceptible to GPC. Akindele goes so far as to state, “An undisputed fact it that in many African states, domestic political instability, economic under-development and military weakness have created a patently embarrassing predicament of economic and military dependence on, and susceptibility to intervention by, the great power, which, in effect, limits seriously the

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<sup>55</sup> Stated by Pete Marocco, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, at the Wilson Center Africa Symposium in March 2020.

<sup>56</sup> Colin Legum, “Foreign Intervention in Africa (II),” in *The Yearbook of World Affairs—1981*, ed. George W. Keeton, Georg Schwarzenberger, and C. G. Burnham (London: Routledge, 1981), 27.

<sup>57</sup> Legum, 36.

<sup>58</sup> John Hursh, “Tanzania Pushes Back on Chinese Port Project,” *The Maritime Executive*, December 2, 2019, <https://www.maritime-executive.com/editorials/tanzania-pushes-back-on-chinese-port-project>.

<sup>59</sup> Yomi Kazeem, “One of Africa’s Poorest Countries Has Pulled the Plug on a \$400 Million China-funded Airport,” *Quartz Africa*, October 10, 2018, <https://qz.com/africa/1419253/sierra-leone-cancels-400-million-china-airport-loan/>.



freedom of action of the African states in international affairs.”<sup>60</sup> In summation, the domestic instability both politically and economically combined with military weakness has established conditions by which African nations are prone to becoming involved in GPC and that African nations’ actions will continue to be perceived by great powers through the lens of East-West cleavage.<sup>61</sup>

## **2.1 Great Power Competition in Africa**

The first GPC in Africa can be traced back to the “Scramble for Africa”<sup>62</sup> in 1884 when the Berlin Conference divided up the continent among the then great powers. The Berlin Conference was comprised of 13 European countries along with the United States that sought to carve out spheres of influence in Africa for their own benefit and for varying motivations. Fast forward over 100 years to the current GPC, dubbed, “The New Scramble for Africa,”<sup>63</sup> in which China and the United States seem to vie for influence through the tool of ODF based on differing motivations. During that time however Africa has transformed into 54 different countries each unique in their own way with their own sets of strengths, weaknesses, and differences. Just as the international landscape shifted after the Berlin conference, as new great powers arise, the landscape has shifted again.

To gain a historical geo-political perspective of previous GPC in Africa, it is not necessary to look that far back to see a pattern emerging. Authors, such as Bissell and Lawson, give historical insight into GPC in Africa dating back to the late 1950s and 1960s

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<sup>60</sup> R. A. Akindele, “Africa and the Great Powers, with Particular Reference to the United States, the Soviet Union and China,” *Africa Spectrum* (1985): 150.

<sup>61</sup> Akindele, 150.

<sup>62</sup> Basil Davidson, *The Story of Africa* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 1984).

<sup>63</sup> Pádraig Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2017).

in which the competition was between the United States and a different communist power, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Although the U.S.-USSR GPC is not the primary focus of this dissertation, GPC between these two countries gives insight into lessons learned and not learned by China and the United States, and contextualizes the work of this dissertation within the current dilemma. To reiterate from previous forewarnings, this dissertation is not an attempt to frame the GPC debate between China and the United States in Africa as a new Cold War, be it economically or militarily. Doing so would be unproductive. Framing it in this manner has the potential to introduce previous assumptions authors may have, given the historical outcomes between the two countries, and may possibly tempt policy makers into reverting to old patterns when the current landscape and opponent is much different.

Cold-War scholarship on Soviet engagement with Africa often is broken into two camps with one emphasizing the ideological focus with the other emphasizing a more geopolitical and economic realism.<sup>64</sup> Scholars argue, “The USSR and the United States engaged in an intense struggle for the “soul of Africa,” vying to win over the newly independent African nations.”<sup>65</sup> While the United States supported regimes that opposed communism, they often confused radical nationalism with communism and attributed Soviet manipulation to instances where none had occurred.<sup>66</sup> As a result, the Soviet Union

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<sup>64</sup> Maxim Matusevich, “Revisiting the Soviet Moment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *History Compass* 7, no. 5 (2009): 1259–1268.

<sup>65</sup> Matusevich, 1259–1268.

<sup>66</sup> Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War: Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the War on Terror* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2018), 3.

increased its presence in response to U.S. involvement and supported regimes that favored socialism and Soviet-style development.<sup>67</sup>

One emphasis for Soviet Union engagement in Africa was to “disrupt the political and economic system established by the European powers in Africa.”<sup>68</sup> China’s motivations parallel similar outcomes in which it seeks to shift the world to a more China centric model and away from the current Western-led model.<sup>69</sup> China shares a similar form of government to that of the Soviet Union that thereby allows it to have close ties with former Soviet-aligned countries, such as Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. All three of these countries are also some of China’s top strategic partners with Ethiopia and Mozambique being given the highest diplomatic partnership ranking by Beijing of a “comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.”<sup>70</sup>

Other motivations for the Soviet Union were to counter U.S. influence in the region by offering Africans an alternative socio-economic development model with the desire that it would draw the two regions more closely together.<sup>71</sup> This action was based on the “maximum-minimum principle” in which Africa offered the Soviet Union maximum opportunity for world influence while offering the minimal amount of risk to achieve it.<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately, for the Soviet Union, African nations instead exploited the GPC rivalry of

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<sup>67</sup> Schmidt, 3.

<sup>68</sup> Richard E. Bissell, *Soviet Interests in Africa, Soviet and Chinese Aid to African Nations* (New York: Praeger, 1980), 2.

<sup>69</sup> Frank Mouritz, “China’s Economic Coercion,” in *China’s Global Influence: Perspectives and Recommendations*, ed. Scott D. McDonald and Michael C. Burgoyne (Honolulu: Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2019), 174–89.

<sup>70</sup> *Hearing before U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Hearing on China’s Military Power Projection and U.S. National Interests*, 116th Cong, 2nd sess. 3 (2020) (written testimony of Paul Nantulya).

<sup>71</sup> Matusevich, “Revisiting the Soviet Moment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” 1259–1268.

<sup>72</sup> Abbott A. Brayton, “Soviet Involvement in Africa,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 17, no. 2 (1979): 253–269.

the time between the United States and the USSR and pursued their own objectives and political expediency.<sup>73</sup> This behavior links back to what Legum argued earlier. African countries will in the end act in their own best interests and will exploit great powers to achieve these means.

Akindele argued that Soviet involvement in Africa was more “political, ideological and strategic than economic” during the Cold War era and that the Soviet Union had a poor track record of economic cooperation with African nations.<sup>74</sup> As a result, the Kremlin did not utilize trade or aid heavily as a tool of foreign policy in Africa.<sup>75</sup> This approach differs greatly from China’s motivations in Africa, which are centered on trade and self-enrichment, and are exemplified by China currently being Africa’s largest trading partner.<sup>76</sup> Akindele concludes that two strands of explanation apply to Soviet engagement in Africa. The first is an East-West global strategic context with the United States whereby either country is seeking to gain “advantages” and “superiority” in relation to each other. The second is the Sino-Soviet rivalry through which both countries seek influence in the Third World.<sup>77</sup>

Lawson highlighted lessons that Khrushchev and his successors learned that China is also having to learn, “The instability of post-colonial regimes made economic aid an increasingly risky investment if the objective was to secure long-term loyalty.”<sup>78</sup> African nations have progressed since their post-colonial regimes but instability is still a factor to

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<sup>73</sup> Matusevich, “Revisiting the Soviet Moment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” 1259–1268.

<sup>74</sup> Akindele, “Africa and the Great Powers,” 134–135.

<sup>75</sup> Akindele, 134.

<sup>76</sup> Akindele, 136.

<sup>77</sup> Akindele, 136.

<sup>78</sup> Colin W. Lawson, “Soviet Economic Aid to Africa,” *African Affairs* 87, no. 349 (1988): 501.

contend with in the region. China however continues to invest with one of the desired returns on its investment being loyalty from African nations. The problem with that approach is that the relationship is beginning to sour as reports of racism towards Africans in China grow.<sup>79</sup> These reports include multiple African governments admonishing Chinese ambassadors in their countries for China's actions towards their citizens abroad as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>80</sup> This situation illustrates how quickly the tides can turn against China in the area of loyalty and that money is no substitute for loyalty.

The United States by contrast during the Cold War era of GPC in Africa was focused on the East-West dimension. Building on George Kennan's doctrine of containment,<sup>81</sup> the Soviet Union and communism were central concerns for U.S. policy makers and viewed Africa through that East-West perspective.<sup>82</sup> Kennedy summed up the U.S. view of Africa during the Cold War era by stating, "We see Africa as probably the greatest open field of maneuver in the worldwide competition between the [communist] bloc and the non-communist world."<sup>83</sup>

One example of U.S. policy outcomes and views on Africa is Angola's civil war. The United States became involved based on the perception that the Soviet Union was profiting from an unstable situation through weapons sales to the People's Movement for

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<sup>79</sup> Chun Han Wong, Joe Parkinson, and Nicholas Bariyo, "African Countries Complain of Racism in Chinese City's Pandemic Controls," *Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/african-countries-complain-of-racism-in-chinese-citys-pandemic-controls-11586808397>.

<sup>80</sup> Wong, Parkinson, and Bariyo.

<sup>81</sup> George F. Kennan, "Containment Then and Now," *Foreign Affairs* 65, no. 4 (1986): 885.

<sup>82</sup> Peter J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change*, vol. 31 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 15.

<sup>83</sup> Henry F. Jackson, *From the Congo to Soweto: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Africa since 1960* (New York: William Morrow, 1982), 25–26.

the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).<sup>84</sup> Using aid as a tool of GPC, the United States relied on funneling covert aid through Zaire and South Africa while relying on its introduction of regular forces into Angola in opposition to the MPLA.<sup>85</sup> The introduction of Soviet-backed Cuban troops into Angola, combined with framing the Angola conflict in terms of the East-West dimension, thereby justified U.S. intervention to contain perceived expansion of the Soviet Union in Africa.<sup>86</sup>

Similar to the GPC in Africa between the United States and China, the USSR saw Africa as an area of both economic benefit, as well as ideological alignment. Leading up to the Cold War, the United States had largely ignored Africa from a policy perspective and engaged primarily in efforts to contain communist expansion there. As seen today, the United States traditionally viewed Africa through the humanitarian lens and it has only been with the rise of China on the continent that the United States has again begun to engage and seek to counter China's efforts.<sup>87</sup>

These two approaches lie at either end of the spectrum with the current competitor, China, straddling somewhere in the middle, if not leaning heavily towards the "economic benefit" side. China has seemingly learned from its own experiences in Africa,<sup>88</sup> as well as Russia's and rather than picking up where Russia left off, has instead forged its own path with its own rules for its own beneficial outcome. Predicated on its non-interference policy,

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<sup>84</sup> At the time, the MPLA was fighting for Angola's independence against the Portuguese. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy toward Africa*, 36.

<sup>85</sup> Schraeder, 36.

<sup>86</sup> Schraeder, 36.

<sup>87</sup> One example is the recent establishment of the B3W (Build Back Better World) initiative focusing on infrastructure development, in direct competition to China's BRI.

<sup>88</sup> Wei Song, "Seeking New Allies in Africa: China's Policy towards Africa during the Cold War as Reflected in the Construction of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 9, no. 1 (2015): 46–65.

China has stayed away from aid and loans for ideological reasons and has sought to emphasize the aspects of mutual benefit rather than benevolence. China has seen how focusing strictly on the humanitarian and ideological aspect can lead countries to view ODF as patronizing and paternalistic in nature.<sup>89</sup> China therefore has significantly sought to promote its approach as “win-win,” similar to the emphasis the USSR placed early on, that the aid programs must be “mutually beneficial” for both the recipient and the donor.<sup>90</sup> This new approach by China is welcomed, if not encouraged, by African leaders with Dr. Oby Ezekwesili, Senior Economic Advisor for the Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative, emphasizing that if America continues to view Africa strictly in humanitarian terms, it will miss out on its booming technological growth potential.<sup>91</sup>

## 2.2 U.S. Great Power Transitions

Great power, from a U.S. perspective, has changed over time, with the current evolution of GPC occurring between the United States and China being labeled by some scholars as “the most important geopolitical development of the 21st century” because the outcome could influence the future international landscape for the next century.<sup>92</sup> Beginning with the establishment of Bretton Woods institutions, America created the “four policemen” approach through which each of the major global players at the time, America, Britain, Russia, and China, would provide security and stability within their sphere of

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<sup>89</sup> Deborah Brautigam, “A Critical Look at Chinese ‘Debt-trap Diplomacy’: The Rise of a Meme,” *Area Development and Policy* 5, no. 1 (2020): 1–14.

<sup>90</sup> Lawson, “Soviet Economic Aid to Africa,” 501–518.

<sup>91</sup> Oby Ezekwesili et al., “Is Great Power Competition a Constructive Framework for Formulating U.S. Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa?” *Center for Strategic and International Studies—CSIS Debate Series: Great Power Competition*, July 2020, <https://www.csis.org/events/online-event-csis-debate-series-great-power-competition>.

<sup>92</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?” *The National Interest* 25, no. 1 (2014): 1–40.

influence.<sup>93</sup> This approach then transitioned to the Marshall Plan and flowed into the beginning of the Cold War in which the United States sought to establish mutual self-defense agreements with Western Europe in opposition to the rise of the Soviet Union, as well as the restoration and integration of economic ties between the United States and Europe.<sup>94</sup> During this time, aid was used as a tool of GPC in which John F. Kennedy's "Alliance for Peace" program in South America sought to promote economic development and political reform, as well as prevent the spread of communism by demonstrating that ODF and GPF was not limited to Africa.<sup>95</sup>

The fall of the Soviet Union marked a drastic shift in the international affairs landscape in which the United States became the unipolar hegemonic power.<sup>96</sup> It utilized this power to advance multilateral institutions for trade and security, and in doing so, sought to bring in former rivals to establish a more normative liberal global order.<sup>97</sup> Multiple scholars advocated for this U.S. approach in an attempt draw countries like China into the liberal order in the hopes that China would transition towards democratization and open markets.<sup>98</sup> Many Americans believe that if China is democratic and enmeshed in the global capitalist system, it will not act aggressively.<sup>99</sup> Unfortunately, this transformation never happened.<sup>100</sup> Critics thereby argued that the liberal international order was a myth,

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<sup>93</sup> Bruce Jones, *China and the Return of Great Power Strategic Competition* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 2020).

<sup>94</sup> Jones.

<sup>95</sup> Carol Lancaster and Jeffrey F. Taffet, "Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 1 (2009): 229.

<sup>96</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70 (1990): 23.

<sup>97</sup> Jones, *China and the Return of Great Power Strategic Competition*.

<sup>98</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of the Liberal World Order: Internationalism after America," *Foreign Affairs* (2011): 56–68; Jones.

<sup>99</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 4.

<sup>100</sup> Kori Schake, *America vs the West* (Australia: Random House Australia, 2018).



and in reality, is a veil to hide America's imperialist aspirations or global dominance.<sup>101</sup> These conclusions are faulty in that even though the United States had sometimes broken its own rules at times, the post-war order it established was centered on cooperation and alliances, along with multilateral institutions and shared political values, and not America itself.<sup>102</sup> Americans accept this seeming contradiction between rhetoric and policy because liberalism is so deeply rooted in their culture.<sup>103</sup> The attacks of September 11, 2001 saw another dramatic shift in the U.S. position on great power.

The 9/11 attacks had a course altering effect on U.S. power competition, as well as a shift in focus within Africa. "The increasing securitization of US Africa policy after September 2001 shifted attention and resources away from some countries and toward others, and privileged military security over broader forms of human security that focused on poverty, disease, climate change, and governance."<sup>104</sup> The United States' strategic and military resources then became consumed in conflict in the Middle East for the next two decades. The United States entered a period called "forever war," in which the focus was placed on counter terrorism and security threats, existential or perceived.<sup>105</sup> America's unipolar hegemonic dominance, which began at the end of the Cold War era, began to crack, and faith in democratization, free markets, and U.S. military power began to be

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<sup>101</sup> Patrick Porter, *The Global Village Myth: Distance, War, and the Limits of Power* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015); John J. Mearsheimer, "Imperial by Design," *The National Interest*, no. 111 (2011): 16–34, [www.jstor.org/stable/42897726](http://www.jstor.org/stable/42897726).

<sup>102</sup> Schake, *America vs the West*.

<sup>103</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 27.

<sup>104</sup> Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa after the Cold War*, 332.

<sup>105</sup> Kathleen Hicks et al., "Great Power Competition" (transcript, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2019), <https://www.csis.org/analysis/great-power-competition>.

questioned as a result of the 2008–2009 global economic recession.<sup>106</sup> This situation led to the rise of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), which were not as hard hit by the Great Recession, and a transition to what we have today.

As China has continued to grow, it has sought to expand its influence and challenge U.S. hegemony by shedding its old strategy of a “peaceful rise” to a more nationalistic and assertive approach.<sup>107</sup> Ikenberry, who predicted this shift in 2011, theorized an alternative “illiberal order” or a “Beijing model” would arise and be centered on spheres of influence, mercantilist networks, and bilateral ties.<sup>108</sup> This approach characterizes much of how China is operating in Africa as it relates to ODF and is expanded upon later. Ikenberry’s theory is missing one of the key components to Chinese GPC: development finance. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap in research. Determining the impact and effectiveness of development finance as a tool of great power is useful in understanding the new paradigm, a multipolarity of powers, into which we have transitioned.

With the 2017 NSS,<sup>109</sup> the U.S. global policy transitioned to the current terrain of focusing on GPC. By framing the current landscape as GPC, the United States is moving away from an age of “forever wars.” It is now focusing on counter terrorism and security threats towards rising powers and GPC.<sup>110</sup> Scholars assert that China has “taken active

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<sup>106</sup> Ikenberry, “The Future of the Liberal World Order,” 56–68; Ronald O’Rourke, *Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress*, CRS Report No. R43838 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2020), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43838>; Xiangning Wu, “Technology, Power, and Uncontrolled Great Power Strategic Competition between China and the United States,” *China International Strategy Review* 2, no. 1 (2020): 114.

<sup>107</sup> Jones, *China and the Return of Great Power Strategic Competition*; Angela Stent, *Russia and China: Axis of Revisionists?* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 2020).

<sup>108</sup> Ikenberry, “The Future of the Liberal World Order,” 56–68.

<sup>109</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

<sup>110</sup> Hicks et al., “Great Power Competition.”

advantage of America's myopic under-attention to multilateralism to penetrate and attempt to reshape that system to its advantage."<sup>111</sup> This approach is directly reflected by China holding leadership positions in more key UN bodies than any other nation.<sup>112</sup> China is thus able to project itself as a world leader within the international community to facilitate its motivation of shifting Africa and the globe to a more China centric system and model.

Mearsheimer and Oriana Skyler Mastro both argue this approach has been a blind spot for the United States in the past and the assumption that China wants what the United States has, and will pursue it in the same way the United States has, is flawed.<sup>113</sup> Scholars argue instead that China does not consider foreign military intervention to be a good tool of power, but will instead seek to displace the United States by utilizing its position as the economic partner of choice to coerce countries into acquiescence.<sup>114</sup> This is not to say that this situation is not subject to change in the future, as China continues to expand its military presence actively both in the South China Sea and in the Indian Ocean. Turning to what the future landscape may possibly look like between the two countries, let us examine how this approach is playing out in Africa.

A common anticipated dilemma of GPC is the Thucydides Trap, which examines the relationship between two countries. In this particular case, one is a traditional hegemony and the other is a rising power, with war being more likely than not based on historical precedent.<sup>115</sup> Authors have argued that China's rise and continued involvement

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<sup>111</sup> Jones, *China and the Return of Great Power Strategic Competition*.

<sup>112</sup> Nantulya, *Testimony in Hearing before U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission*, 2.

<sup>113</sup> Hicks et al., "Great Power Competition"; Mearsheimer, "Can China Rise Peacefully?" 1–40.

<sup>114</sup> Hicks et al.

<sup>115</sup> Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

in international institutions will prevent this dilemma from happening.<sup>116</sup> While other scholars have pointed out, “the analogy does not consider additional factors such as economic interdependence and public resentment for war as additional factors preventing the possibility of conflict.”<sup>117</sup> Allison and Mearsheimer both disagree that the United States and China are headed towards a conflict, as neither one desire such an outcome. In addition, the U.S. attempts to “hedge” and “engage” China in the past have not worked, as China will seek to dominate its regional sphere of influence.<sup>118</sup> Gaining a better understanding of China’s goals and motivations is not the primary goal of this dissertation, but necessary to interpret China’s actions accurately.

## 2.3 China’s Motivations and Mentality

How China’s international politics is shaped by its internal politics offers a framework for understanding China’s motivations to providing ODF to African nations.<sup>119</sup> Duggan, Wang, and Garner have identified this notion as a starting point when examining China’s international politics.<sup>120</sup> Although not the primary focus of this dissertation, an accurate framing of what drives China’s international actions is needed, in that Chinese internal politics are driven by the motivations of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP’s)

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<sup>116</sup> G. John Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West-Can the Liberal System Survive,” *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008): 23; Zbigniew Brzezinski and John J. Mearsheimer, “Clash of the Titans,” *Foreign Policy* 146 (2005): 46.

<sup>117</sup> Wu, “Technology, Power, and Uncontrolled Great Power Strategic Competition between China and the United States,” 113.

<sup>118</sup> Graham, *Destined for War*; Mearsheimer “Can China Rise Peacefully?” 1–40; Lindsey Ford, *Refocusing the China Debate: American Allies and the Question of U.S.-China ‘Decoupling’* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020).

<sup>119</sup> John W. Garver, *China’s Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People’s Republic*, revised and updated (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Fei-Ling Wang, *The China Order: Centralia, World Empire, and the Nature of Chinese Power* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2017).

<sup>120</sup> Niall Duggan, *Competition and Compromise among Chinese Actors in Africa: A Bureaucratic Politics Study of Chinese Foreign Policy Actors* (Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany: Springer, 2019); Garver; Wang.

desire to stay in power, which thus shapes its external actions.<sup>121</sup> Garver primarily focuses on China in the context of the Asia-Pacific region, but lends invaluable insights into Chinese global motivations. The historical context behind its embracing of the USSR and shunning of the West makes it possible to understand why China is eagerly portraying itself as the antithesis to the U.S. approach in Africa. A breakdown in understanding is occurring at this juncture. As the West and the United States view the world and global actors through the traditional paradigms, China operates on the likelihood of one political party's ability to stay in power forever. Garver's analysis of Chinese foreign relations and how it is impacted by domestic politics is thorough but falls short in its examination of China's expansion into Africa. This gap in assessing how different possible motives for U.S. and Chinese ODF to SSA play out in terms of GPC is what this dissertation seeks to fill.

China's motivations behind disbursement of ODF are grounded in the desire to shift international policy perspectives in three areas: international norms, militarily, and trade.<sup>122</sup> Wang elaborates that the CCP emphasizes the Sino-centric "core values" as a superior alternative to the Western world order.<sup>123</sup> In support of Wang's ideas and building on China's desires to change the world order, Liu cites senior People's Liberation Army (PLA) officials as openly advocating for China to replace the United States as the world's foremost military power and establish a "better leader" of the whole world.<sup>124</sup>

Regarding China's efforts to influence and shape international trade, China has used its BRI as a tool through which it seeks to establish new rules to reshape the

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<sup>121</sup> Garver; Wang.

<sup>122</sup> Wang.

<sup>123</sup> Wang.

<sup>124</sup> Mingfu Liu, *The China Dream* (Beijing: China Youyi Press, 2010).

international economic order “with the intention to oppose the U.S. led existing international financial and trade regimes.”<sup>125</sup> This sentiment is echoed by Sari in stating that China’s continued involvement in Africa using aid, trade, and investment along with the aggressive introduction of the Chinese way of life, constitutes a systematic threat to U.S. hegemony.<sup>126</sup> This concept now makes it possible to focus on Africa and the way GPC between China and the United States looks like in the region: soft power in the form of ODF.

To address some of the criticisms and shortfalls of a hard power examination of GPC, Nye places an emphasis on soft power and winning people’s hearts and minds.<sup>127</sup> To frame his views generally within the GPC debate, “competition between major powers such as [the U.S.] and China for favorable perceptions in global public opinion is increasingly evident today and likely to be a pivotal feature of the emerging international order.”<sup>128</sup> By identifying and acknowledging that public perception plays a role in the ability of the United States or China to influence African nations, it can be a useful tool in determining if the donor nations’ efforts are in fact having the desired outcomes.

GPC playing out in the form of ODF is the focus of this dissertation, with voting alignment at the UN, and public perceptions offering insight as to how this competition is or is not playing out in Africa between the United States and China. Recent authors have highlighted the vulnerabilities of China’s engagement in Africa in that it works at cross-

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<sup>125</sup> Wang, *The China Order*, 213.

<sup>126</sup> Bugra Sari, “Making Sense of the New Episode of Great Power Rivalry in Africa through Neorealist Lenses: The Sino-U.S. Competition,” *Journal of Global Studies* (December 2019): 1–16.

<sup>127</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

<sup>128</sup> Benjamin E. Goldsmith, Yusaku Horiuchi, and Terence Wood, “Doing Well by Doing Good: The Impact of Foreign Aid on Foreign Public Opinion,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, no. 1 (2014): 87–114.

purposes to the U.S. goals of supporting good governance and fostering democratic institutions within African nations.<sup>129</sup> To this end, it is important to understand the differing approaches the United States and China have taken, as well as the historical context behind ODF in Africa, as it has impacted how African countries view them.

## 2.4 The U.S. Approach to Africa

Examining how both the United States and China have approached the region in the past leads to one understanding of what is currently happening in Africa with respect to ODF. Without understanding the historical context by which each country has operated, it is easy to overlook many of the nuances within the debate; “although history is not predictive, it should not be ignored.”<sup>130</sup> Historically, the U.S. approach towards aid to Africa was largely shaped by the Washington Consensus in coordination with the IMF and the World Bank taking a leading role in the lending of funds and how foreign aid was implemented and utilized in Africa.<sup>131</sup> Their approach focused on democracy, and in conjunction with liberal market institutions, sought to facilitate development, economic growth, and political stability.<sup>132</sup> These institutions however are often blamed for unsustainable debt burdens, failed policies, and politics curtailing economic growth in recipient countries.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Will Green, Leyton Nelson, and Brittney Washington, *China’s Engagement with Africa: Foundations for an Alternative Governance Regime* (Washington, DC: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2020), [https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/Chinas\\_Engagement\\_with\\_Africa.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/Chinas_Engagement_with_Africa.pdf).

<sup>130</sup> Direct quote from Dr. Margaret Kosal, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.

<sup>131</sup> May Tan-Mullins, Giles Mohan, and Marcus Power, “Redefining ‘Aid’ in the China–Africa Context,” *Development and Change* 41, no. 5 (2010): 857–881.

<sup>132</sup> Larry Hanauer and Lyle J. Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa: Drivers, Reactions, and Implications for U.S. Policy* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2014), 89–120.

<sup>133</sup> Thacker, “The High Politics of IMF Lending,” 38–75.

Cohn outlines the impact Bretton Woods institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, have had on the global South, by showing how Northern countries heavily control most of these institutions that essentially leave Southern countries at their mercy. The Northern countries tend to hold a realist view and see the South as grappling for power and influence while dismissing the notion that the Southern countries are looking to gain a foothold on the world global market to grow and develop their economies. To try to save the South from a continual downward trend, the North established eight different Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).<sup>134</sup> The United Nations Development Program established these goals in 1990 with the support of Group of Eight (G8) countries. Through these goals, the West has sought to improve the quality of life for a majority of the population in Africa by 2015.<sup>135</sup> Unfortunately the establishment of these goals led to significant criticism towards the West being depicted as acting in a paternalistic way towards African nations by keeping them “unenlightened, ignorant and in need of paternal protection from Western countries.”<sup>136</sup>

Thacker is another author who examined the motivations of aid and lending by the IMF to developing nations. He sought to find an explanation of how political factors affect interactions within the IMF. His first observation was very low rates of borrower compliance with Fund conditionality; yet, the IMF continued to lend money to the problem debtors. Second, the country representatives to the IMF are politically appointed, which contributes to the idea these individuals may be more politically motivated to achieving

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<sup>134</sup> Theodore H. Cohn, “Chapter 10: International Development,” in *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice* (Glenview, IL: Pearson Longman), 294–338.

<sup>135</sup> Cohn, 294–338.

<sup>136</sup> Brautigam, “A Critical Look at Chinese ‘Debt-trap Diplomacy’,” 1–14.



their goals than economically driven. Third, the weighted voting and decision-making procedures leave room for political influence since it is “one dollar, one vote” and Western nations are the ones contributing the most amount of dollars to the IMF.<sup>137</sup> These three observations shed light on the motivations behind the U.S. disbursement of ODF. Moreover, the conditionalities are not always consistent or effective, which has also added to some of the criticism the United States has received in its historical approach.

From this perspective, Thacker is able to find five economic determinants of Fund activity, with the first being the balance of payments. The balance of payments position within a country determines its participation in IMF programs. Second, the more in debt a country is, the more loans and funding it should be able to acquire from the IMF. Third, the lower per capita income a country has, the easier it should be for that country to access funds from the IMF. Fourth, having a poor credit history should decrease the chances of the individual country being able to receive a loan. Lastly, Thacker determined the U.S. dictated policy to the IMF as the major stakeholder and sometimes it was at the expense of other nations.<sup>138</sup> Through the research, the author found that the more closely a country was aligned with the United States, the more likely it was to receive a loan from the IMF. Strong evidence also showed U.S. political interests drove much of the IMF’s behavior.<sup>139</sup> This research supports the argument that when it comes to motivations behind giving ODF to nations, and specifically in Africa, security can subvert all other factors, which creates problems with the enforcement of conditionalities and the development of good governance.

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<sup>137</sup> Thacker, “The High Politics of IMF Lending,” 38–75.

<sup>138</sup> Thacker, 38–75.

<sup>139</sup> Thacker, 38–75.

Randall Stone outlines why IMF lending in Africa has failed since the IMF fails to enforce its conditions because it disregards its responsibilities to enforce them.<sup>140</sup> Stone also warned that it created a moral hazard by which long-term financing to countries that failed to reform were therefore encouraged to pursue unwise economic policies.<sup>141</sup> Additional authors had similar findings indicating that participation in IMF programs actually reduced growth in a nation.<sup>142</sup> The IMF gave loans to countries even if they did not meet the requirements.<sup>143</sup> This historical approach of reform agendas, the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in the 1980s and democratic reforms in the 1990s, are those that Africans are historically familiar with when it comes to U.S. aid to Africa.<sup>144</sup> For this reason, Africans find China's lack of conditionalities and "no-strings attached" policy so appealing. Tull echoed this sentiment by stating, "The patchy record of Western-driven reform and the wholesale economic failure of SAPs in Africa has facilitated China's rise on the continent."<sup>145</sup>

Authors have often cited conditionalities to aid as one of the reasons for failures and inadvertently causing a reduction in growth.<sup>146</sup> In Africa as well, the Washington Consensus is associated with social destabilization and substantial human suffering because of the implementation of SAPs by various nations.<sup>147</sup> No author has been more

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<sup>140</sup> Stone, "The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa," 577–591.

<sup>141</sup> Stone, 577.

<sup>142</sup> Vreeland, "Why Do Governments and the IMF Enter into Agreements," 321–43.

<sup>143</sup> Tony Killick, "Can the IMF Help Low-Income Countries? Experiences with its Structural Adjustment Facilities," *World Economy* 18, no. 4 (1995): 603–616.

<sup>144</sup> Denis M. Tull, "China's Engagement in Africa: Scope, Significance and Consequences," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 44, no. 3 (2006): 459–479.

<sup>145</sup> Tull, 459–479.

<sup>146</sup> Stone, "The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa," 577–591; Vreeland, 321–43.

<sup>147</sup> Giovanni Andrea Cornia, Richard Jolly, and Frances Stewart, ed., *Adjustment with a Human Face: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 1–2.

critical of the Washington consensus model for aid than Zambian Economist Dambisa Moyo in her book *Dead Aid* in which she states, “aid has been and continues to be, an unmitigated political, economic and humanitarian disaster.”<sup>148</sup> She argues that conditionalities attached to Western aid were hurting the process of development and justifiably. For example, by the late 1980s, the average loan from the World Bank had 60 different benchmarks and conditions.<sup>149</sup> Rajan and Subramanian, who found no systematic evidence that aid contributed to economic growth, support this viewpoint.<sup>150</sup> Moyo also discusses the “paradox of plenty” in which she states (without supporting analysis) that U.S. aid is the cause of conflict in Africa because Africa is conflict ridden and also the largest recipient of U.S. aid.<sup>151</sup> This opinion differs from Collier’s research that concludes that the causes of conflict can be broken up into greed or grievance, and that risk of conflict increases with low GDP per capita, slow economic growth, and low education levels;<sup>152</sup> all areas that aid is targeted at improving.

Poverty and conflict reduction have also been consistent themes of the U.S. approach to aid. Sen argues this theme should be examined at the personal level before trying to understand operations at the state level. Sen states that individuals’ basic needs are outlined by five interconnected freedoms: economic opportunity, political freedoms, social freedoms, transparency, and protective security.<sup>153</sup> The United States therefore

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<sup>148</sup> Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*, 1st American ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009).

<sup>149</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*, 135.

<sup>150</sup> Raghuram G. Rajan and Arvind Subramanian, “Aid and Growth: What Does the Cross-country Evidence Really Show?” *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 90, no. 4 (2008): 643–665.

<sup>151</sup> Moyo, *Dead Aid*.

<sup>152</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “Greed and Grievance in Civil War,” *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595.

<sup>153</sup> Amartya Sen, “How Does Culture Matter,” *Culture and Public Action* 38 (2004): 1–30.

focuses significantly on impacting social and political freedoms, as well as supporting transparency and fostering protective security. The difficulty with this approach is that they are difficult measures by which to quantify results, which thereby makes it difficult to categorize progress and determine success.

Serge Mombouli, the ambassador from Congo-Brazzaville to the United States, articulated some of the downfalls to this approach taken by the United States in an interview with National Public Radio (NPR). He stated that China provided tangible assistance, while the West pushed for less concrete assets: better governance. Mombouli expressed, “we need both. We cannot be talking just about democracy, transparency, good governance. At the end of the day the population does not have anything to eat, does not have water to drink, no electricity at night, industry to provide work, so we need both. People do not eat democracy.”<sup>154</sup>

Looking at U.S. policy and comparing it to today, the 2002 NSS identified South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia as “anchors” for U.S. engagement in Africa.<sup>155</sup> This selection is understandable as each of these countries play key leadership roles in their respective regions: Nigeria in Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), South Africa in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Kenya in the East African Community (EAC), and Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa (HOA) region. In the 2017 NSS, as it relates to Africa, a specific focus is on Africa’s growing economies, gaining access to new markets for U.S. goods and services, all while expanding trade and

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<sup>154</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*, 287; Tom Gjelten, “Congo and China Forge Economic Partnership,” National Public-Radio, July 11, 2007.

<sup>155</sup> Ian Taylor and Paul Williams, “Introduction: Understanding Africa’s Place in World Politics,” in *Africa in International Politics*, ed. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams (London: Routledge, 2004), 13–34.

commercial ties to create jobs and build wealth for both Americans and Africans to provide an alternative to China's "extractive economic footprint on the continent."<sup>156</sup> However, savior complex, conditionalities, and distorted government accountability, traditionally hallmarks of U.S. aid, are causing African governments to question the Washington Consensus model of aid and development, with many African leaders now turning to the rising great power on the global development stage: China.

## 2.5 The Chinese Approach to Africa

Contrasting the U.S. approach to ODF with the Chinese model, authors argue that in Africa, "China has spent several decades engaging in impressive great-power behavior while provoking hardly any innovative policies by its principal rival, the United States."<sup>157</sup> China continues to advertise to African nations that both countries are developing nations seeking to improve their positions in the world (South-South), and that the agreements, ODF, and resulting trade will be a "win-win" for both nations.

Boutin attributes China's rise in Africa to its re-emergence as a great power and that its motivations for engaging in Africa are both economically and politico-militarily motivated.<sup>158</sup> African leaders have warmed to China's "no strings attached" policy and non-interference ODF as an alternative to the Western approach. China's increased visibility and growing activity has drawn praise from authors like Moyo, but has simultaneously alarmed leaders in the West,<sup>159</sup> who draw parallels of imperial colonialism

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<sup>156</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>157</sup> Howard French, "While America Slept, China Became Indispensable," *Foreign Policy*, May 9, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/09/us-china-competition-africa-central-asia-infrastructure-development/>.

<sup>158</sup> Kenneth Boutin, "Feeding the Lion: China and Defence Development in African States," *Defense & Security Analysis* 34, no. 3 (2018): 232–248.

<sup>159</sup> Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa*.

and “debt trap diplomacy.”<sup>160</sup> Chinese aid, which targets specific projects, is seen by recipient countries as more efficient, but at the expense of governance, human rights, and the environment.<sup>161</sup> This non-conditionality nature of Chinese ODF undermines U.S. ODF efforts focused on these areas, and which, some argue, has a destabilizing effect in the region.<sup>162</sup>

China’s current strategic motivations in Africa can be understood by looking at its progression over time beginning in 1996 during Jiang Zemin’s tour of Africa in which he laid out the “Five Points Proposal” outlining China’s relationship with Africa based upon “reliable friendship, sovereign equality, non-intervention, mutually beneficial development and international cooperation.”<sup>163</sup> Then, in 1999, China expanded with the “go out” policy that focused on increasing foreign engagements in Africa.<sup>164</sup> This policy also resulted from “spatial fix” in which China used the BRI as an avenue to employ China’s excess production capacity.<sup>165</sup> Additional focus and priority were on regime “stability,” which became an important strategy for China through which the “non-interference” policy bore out, as long as the regime was stable and Chinese companies were able to “go out” and establish relationships and investment. In 2000, with the establishment of FOCAC, commercial diplomacy and the fostering of South-South relations increased. Finally, in 2015, China’s decision to send 8,000 troops in support of the UN standby in Africa in

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<sup>160</sup> Herbert Jauch, “Chinese Investments in Africa: Twenty-first Century Colonialism?” *New Labor Forum* 20, no. 2 (June 2011): 49–55; Were, *Debt Trap?*; White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>161</sup> Tan-Mullins, Mohan, and Power, “Redefining ‘Aid’ in the China–Africa Context,” 857–881.

<sup>162</sup> Naim, “Rogue Aid,” 96.

<sup>163</sup> Chris Alden, “China in Africa,” *Survival* 47, no. 3 (2005): 147.

<sup>164</sup> Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, “China in Africa,” 105–24.

<sup>165</sup> Ian Taylor and Tim Zajontz, “In a Fix: Africa’s Place in the Belt and Road Initiative and the Reproduction of Dependency,” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 27, no. 3 (October 2020): 277–295.

conjunction with \$100 million USD in military assistance to the African Union signaled an expansion of Chinese engagement in Africa and its foreign policy interests.<sup>166</sup>

Deborah Brautigam, who directs the China Africa Research Initiative (CARI) at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, has looked in depth at Chinese investment in Africa and outlined that China uses a Commodity-Secured Loan Finance model. This model was implemented in China by Japanese firms in the 1970s. Loans were given to China from Japan and the repayment of these loans was achieved through commodity exports to Japan.<sup>167</sup> Brautigam points out a similar example in Kenya, which was able to garner railway loans, and through which revenues were to be repaid.<sup>168</sup> Brautigam also states, “The point of securities like these is not for the lender (or Chinese company) to acquire ownership of an oil well, cocoa farm, railway system, or electrical grid, but to reduce the lender’s risk in a country without a good credit rating.”<sup>169</sup> While possibly not the initial purpose of these loans, they should be examined with respect to their impacts on global power competition. The case of the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka is a cautionary illustration. Additionally, commodity backed loans are not without risk, as a fall in prices may hinder African countries’ abilities to service their loans to China. For example, a large number of Angola’s loans from China are backed by oil exports, of which the price has imploded in 2020 including hovering around negative prices per barrel.<sup>170</sup> Commodity price crashes can make the countries that rely on their revenue vulnerable to

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<sup>166</sup> Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, “China in Africa,” 105–24.

<sup>167</sup> Brautigam and Hwang, *Eastern Promises*.

<sup>168</sup> Brautigam and Hwang, 17.

<sup>169</sup> Brautigam and Hwang, 17.

<sup>170</sup> “Angola’s Debt Reliance on China May Leave it Short-changed,” *Financial Times*, June 13, 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/fb9f8528-6f03-11e8-92d3-6c13e5c92914>.

Chinese debt, which is why China's approach to ODF has been labeled "debt-trap diplomacy."<sup>171</sup>

Debt-trap diplomacy is the notion that China lends to countries to entrap them in debt and secure strategic advantage over them.<sup>172</sup> The continuous example cited by scholars is Sri Lanka, struggling in 2017 to repay Chinese loans, had to sign over the Hambantota Port to a Chinese SOE on a 99-year lease to repay over \$1 billion of the \$12 billion owed.<sup>173</sup> Additionally, it was reported, "Though Chinese officials and analysts have insisted that China's interest in the Hambantota port is purely commercial, Sri Lankan officials said that from the start, the intelligence and strategic possibilities of the port's location were part of the negotiations."<sup>174</sup> Brautigam offers a harsh criticism of continually defining China's approach as debt-trap diplomacy and argues that China's motivations for ODF are not part of a grand scheme of international rule.<sup>175</sup> Critics portend that China's increased investment in Africa, primarily through its BRI "have the potential to reproduce and deepen existing pathologies within Africa's economies...while the financial commitments taken on by host governments pose a potentially serious challenge to economic sustainability of both the projects and the countries taking on debt."<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Brahma Chaellaney, "China's Debt-trap Diplomacy," Project Syndicate, January 23, 2017, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/china-one-belt-one-road-loans-debt-by-brahma-chellaney-2017-01?barrier=accesspaylog>.

<sup>172</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14.

<sup>173</sup> John Hurley, Scott Morris, and Gailyn Portelance, "Examining the Debt Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative from a Policy Perspective," *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development* 3, no. 1 (2019): 139–175.

<sup>174</sup> Maria Abi-habib, "How China Got Sri Lanka to Cough up a Port," *New York Times*, June 25, 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/world/asia/china-sri-lanka-port.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/world/asia/china-sri-lanka-port.html).

<sup>175</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14.

<sup>176</sup> Taylor and Zajontz, "In a Fix."



Additionally, with the increasing levels of debt within recipient African nations, China has placed itself in a difficult position as it pertains to debt sustainability and forgiveness. With the acceleration of the consequences of unsustainable levels of debt brought on by COVID-19, the G7 (Group of Seven (United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and Italy) enacted the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) to provide the most vulnerable countries with a reprieve. China however cannot so easily forgive or suspend debt to African nations as Liu Ying, at Beijing's Renmin University states, "Every time China commits to relieve debt in Africa, there will be an outcry and pressure domestically from people who still say that they don't have enough to eat."<sup>177</sup> This statement also speaks to the traditionally opaque nature of Chinese lending in Africa. Scholars argue that it is a twofold benefit to China. The first benefit is to shield recipient nations from comparing contracts and using the terms and agreements to leverage China for a better deal. The second is to shield levels of financial assistance from their own population. It becomes hard to justify continually investing billions in African nations when your own country has underdeveloped areas, which can place the CCP in a difficult position of prioritizing foreign countries over its own population.<sup>178</sup> With this in mind, let us now examine the motivations for China's utilization of ODF.

China's primary motivation for investing in Africa is basic mercantilist principles paired with increased market access. Alden and Tull highlight that natural resources lie at

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<sup>177</sup> Jonathan Wheatley and Joseph Cotterill, "African Debt to China: 'A Major Drain on the Poorest Countries'," *Financial Times*, October 26, 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/bd73a115-1988-43aa-8b2b-40a449da1235>.

<sup>178</sup> Eric Olander, "China's Domestic Drive Falls behind as Beijing Exports More Jobs Abroad," The China-Africa Project, February 16, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/02/16/chinas-domestic-vaccine-drive-falls-behind-as-beijing-exports-more-jobs-abroad/>.

the core of China's economic interests in Africa, and the BRI is the vehicle through which all this ODF flows.<sup>179</sup> Mouritz and Kaplinsky support this viewpoint, who point to China's need for raw materials and fossil fuels,<sup>180</sup> as well as accounting for 75–100% of global demand for aluminum, nickel, and copper.<sup>181</sup> Each of these areas is a main driver behind China's investment in Africa to enable its economy to experience continued growth. China's desire for increased market access continues to increase, and the BRI is the vehicle through which it is able to achieve it. In addition, as China's investment in Africa grows in line with its dependence on African energy resources and markets, regional instability, and anti-Chinese populism becomes less tenable, China is expected to take a more forceful role in bilateral relations.<sup>182</sup>

This approach feeds into China's second strategic motivation for providing ODF to African nations: security of growth for itself, security of access to markets, and physical security to protect its people and its investment in these countries. China sees Africa as an important export market not only for Chinese products,<sup>183</sup> but also for excess Chinese domestic industrial capacity.<sup>184</sup> Through the BRI, China is able to export its excess industrial capabilities and deploy them in Africa to build much needed roads, bridges, and ports, all while linking the infrastructure with industrial and free trade zones and effectively

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<sup>179</sup> Alden, "China in Africa," 147–164; Tull, "China's Engagement in Africa," 459–479; Larry Hanauer and Lyle J. Morris, "Implications for U.S. Interests," in *Chinese Engagement in Africa: Drivers, Reactions, and Implications for U.S. Policy*, ed. Larry Hanauer and Lyle J. Morris (Santa Monica: RAND, 2014), 89–120.

<sup>180</sup> Mouritz, "China's Economic Coercion," 174–89.

<sup>181</sup> Raphie Kaplinsky, *The Sun Rises in the East* (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 2005).

<sup>182</sup> Steve Hess and Richard Aidoo, "Beyond the Rhetoric: Noninterference in China's African Policy," *African and Asian Studies* 9, no. 3 (2010): 356–383.

<sup>183</sup> Mouritz, "China's Economic Coercion," 174–89.

<sup>184</sup> Lauren A. Johnston, "The Belt and Road Initiative: What Is in It for China?" *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 6, no. 1 (2019): 40–58.

tying African countries to China, both physically and economically. This Port-Park-City method of development is China's preferred route, as it has seen significant success through this method in its own country.<sup>185</sup> Additional infrastructure China has built to enable its second motivation is the construction of a base in Djibouti, something China had repeatedly said it would never do.<sup>186</sup> This construction poses a new dilemma for both China and the United States as the base's presence raises questions about China's future intentions and if its continued expansion in the region will remain peaceful.

Examining the third strategic motivation of China, which is to shift the world to a more China centric model, Liza Tobin's recent literature outlined Xi's vision for transforming global governance. China has been using ODF to achieve global leadership and establish a global network of partnerships centered on itself effectively working to replace the U.S. system of treaties and alliances. Tobin stated, "The international community would regard Beijing's authoritarian governance model as a superior alternative to Western electoral democracy and would credit the CCP for developing a new path to peace, prosperity and modernity that other countries can follow."<sup>187</sup> Tobin outlines how this alternative is playing out specifically in Africa in addition to ODF directly being given to the countries to develop infrastructure projects through the BRI. She highlights the dissemination of the CCP's ideas by providing education for African leaders and young elites on issues, such as party structure, propaganda work, and managing center-local

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<sup>185</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14.

<sup>186</sup> Brautigam, 1–14.

<sup>187</sup> Liza Tobin, "Xi's Vision for Transforming Global Governance: A Strategic Challenge for Washington and Its Allies," *Texas National Security Review* 2, no. 1 (2018): 1–14.

relations.<sup>188</sup> Nigeria is another example of how the transition to Chinese-centered governance and structure is influencing African nations. The Nigerian Information Minister, inspired by China's example of censorship and regulation sparked outrage when he called for the government of Nigeria to begin censoring online content.<sup>189</sup> This position is strengthened as China continues to build on South-South relationships between Africa and China.

Tobin discusses how China relies on these South-South relationships with African nations.<sup>190</sup> China emphasizes that it is itself not a former colonial power but is also a developing nation. It thus offers a contrasting approach to the United States. However, it can become problematic as China professes to be committed to respecting the choice of individual countries as it pertains to governance and development in Africa while simultaneously appearing to speak for the entire global South and community of developing nations.<sup>191</sup> Lina Benabdallah echoes these sentiments and attributes China's success in Africa to its investment in social and human capital in Africa through training and scholarship programs.<sup>192</sup>

A recent research report offers additional insight into China's third strategic motivation for providing ODF or that of promoting an alternative political model for nations built on state-led, illiberal governance. A 2015 Beijing White paper articulates

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<sup>188</sup> Yun Sun, *Political Party Training: China's Ideological Push into Africa* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 2016), 5.

<sup>189</sup> Eric Olander, "Inspired by China's Example, Nigeria's Information Minister Wants to Regulate Social Media," China-Africa Project, October 28, 2020, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2020/10/28/inspired-by-chinas-example-nigerias-information-minister-wants-to-regulate-social-media/>.

<sup>190</sup> Tobin, "Xi's Vision for Transforming Global Governance"; Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, "China in Africa," 105–24.

<sup>191</sup> Tobin.

<sup>192</sup> Benabdallah, *Shaping the Future of Power*, 5.

China's policy for Africa by outlining Beijing's desire to enlist China's closest African partners to promote its state-led development model across the region.<sup>193</sup> It also states, "Beijing views its ties with Africa as a cornerstone of its broader efforts to revise global governance structures and norms."<sup>194</sup>

As evidenced by Wang and others previously, Chinese domestic policies, which influence international decision making with the primary goal being the survival of the CCP, it becomes clear that the CCP views Africa as playing an essential role in achieving comprehensive reform of the current international system and establishing a China-led global governance regime. China is also leveraging the historical relationship between the United States and African nations against it as the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang recently intimated that African nations and China are "natural allies" because of their shared colonialist experiences and grievances with the current international system.<sup>195</sup>

China's main effort highlighting its political engagement with African nations can be seen in how China has leveraged its influence to gain support from African nations with its own diplomatic priorities, primarily at the UN.<sup>196</sup> Recent research by AidData (at William & Mary) showed that African countries that voted in alignment with China at the UN received on average an 86 percent increase in aid.<sup>197</sup> Specifically, this approach is playing out in the UN with China introducing two resolutions on human rights language and governance norms. The United States opposed both these resolutions but they passed

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<sup>193</sup> Green, Nelson, and Washington, "China's Engagement with Africa."

<sup>194</sup> Green, Nelson, and Washington.

<sup>195</sup> Green, Nelson, and Washington.

<sup>196</sup> Green, Nelson, and Washington.

<sup>197</sup> Samantha Custer, "China's Financial Statecraft: Winning Africa One Yuan at a Time?" *AidData—William & Mary* (blog), March 22, 2018, <https://www.aiddata.org/blog/chinas-financial-statecraft-winning-africa-one-yuan-at-a-time>.

due to significant African support.<sup>198</sup> Africa's support of China has also enabled China to attain leadership positions within key bodies at the UN with China currently holding four out of 15 specialized UN agencies; more than any other nation.<sup>199</sup> China's goal of winning allies seeks to deflect Western criticisms of China's human rights abuses, marginalize Taiwan, and limit the hegemonic power of the United States.<sup>200</sup> It is in large part to this approach by China that the United States has been unable to recruit any African nation to condemn China at the UN of the internment of Muslim Uighurs or heeded warnings by the United States of doing business with Huawei.<sup>201</sup> African countries that align themselves with the United States on these controversial Chinese issues will be risking billions of dollars in loans and investment from China, which makes it an easy decision for African leaders and a difficult one for U.S. leaders to overcome.

As China continues to trumpet its ODF as a win-win for both them and the recipient nation, and maintains its non-interference policy, it not only has begun to shift the balance of power in its favor within international institutions, but across African nations as well. A recent study shows a large number of Africans have favorable attitudes towards China as both an economic model and a partner in development.<sup>202</sup> These sentiments are confirmed based on recent Pew, Afrobarometer, and BBC opinion polls stating in 2014 that 65% of Kenya, 67% of Ghana, and 85% of Nigeria held favorable views of China.<sup>203</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>198</sup> Ted Piccone, *China's Long Game on Human Rights at the United Nations* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2018); Nantulya, Testimony on *China's Military Power Projection and U.S. National Interests*, 2.

<sup>199</sup> Piccone; Nantulya, 2.

<sup>200</sup> Tull, "China's Engagement in Africa," 459–479.

<sup>201</sup> Eric Olander, "Why Would Uganda Write a Letter to Support China's Position in Hong Kong?" The China Africa Project, October 6, 2019, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/analysis/why-would-uganda-write-a-letter-to-support-chinas-position-in-hong-kong/>.

<sup>202</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14.

<sup>203</sup> Brautigam, 1–14.

African scholars have praised China's approach to ODF as bringing in new ideas towards development while the West offers nothing new for these growing countries.<sup>204</sup>

For all its praise, China's approach to ODF has definitive downsides to Africa. Taylor warns of the perils of continuous Chinese investment in Africa, and that increased Chinese presence can actually destabilize nations as autocratic regimes and dictatorial governments receive increased funding.<sup>205</sup> He argues that Chinese investment is not always a win-win and may not actually improve a nation's overall development in areas, such as education, life expectancy, and the well-being of the general population. Research by Roudabeh and Raleigh upholds this belief. They found that Chinese ODF inadvertently supported an increase in state-based violence, repression, and civilian targeting working counter to the U.S. approach.<sup>206</sup> Mouritz highlighted that the Chinese approach might not be as beneficial as intended and echoed a similar approach outlined previously by Russia when disbursing aid to African nations. That the gratitude and good will built up as an outcome of BRI projects and other Chinese investments are short lived and "debt-trap diplomacy" is no guarantee of loyalty.<sup>207</sup>

By examining the impacts of Chinese ODF in Africa on U.S. efforts and operations, it better frames the GPC debate between China and the United States in Africa. In comparing the determinants of Western and Chinese development finance flows to Africa, Landry found that Chinese aid undermined the West's attempts to support good governance "by predominately engaging with countries ruled through corruption, autocracy and

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<sup>204</sup> Brautigam, 1–14.

<sup>205</sup> Ian Taylor, "China's Oil Diplomacy in Africa," *International Affairs* 82, no. 5 (2006): 937–59.

<sup>206</sup> Kishi and Raleigh, *Chinese Official Finance and Africa's Pariah States*, 1.

<sup>207</sup> Mouritz, "China's Economic Coercion," 174–89.

despotism.”<sup>208</sup> Judd Devermont, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), echoed this belief, who stated in a 2017 Senate Armed Services Committee testimony, “I believe Chinese activities pose the greatest danger to US military access and operations...and US relations with current and emerging African leaders.”<sup>209</sup>

Other authors have advocated a need for African nations to counter China’s growing influence on the continent. Olawuyi asserts that in an effort to do so, African leaders should dictate the terms of use for infrastructure projects, to not be utilized for GPC with Western countries.<sup>210</sup> This ideal scenario has been shown to be beneficial at times. For example, the Tanzanian government halted a Bagamoyo port construction deal until China agreed to its terms.<sup>211</sup> This approach however is a difficult one because it begs the question of who will determine the nature of the use? China rarely overtly states it is in competition with the United States in Africa. It would be difficult for African nations to be able to prove that China’s operation and use of its infrastructure were directly used to support GPC against the United States. Another example is that China refers to its military base in Djibouti as a “logistical support facility.”<sup>212</sup> More often than not, it portrays itself

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<sup>208</sup> Landry, *Comparing the Determinants of Western and Chinese Development Finance Flows to Africa*.

<sup>209</sup> *Implications of China’s Presence and Investment in Africa, Testimony before the U.S. Congress, Senate, Senate Armed Services Committee. Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities*, 115th Cong., 2nd sess. (2018) (statement of Judd Devermont, Africa Program Director, Center for Strategic and International Studies).

<sup>210</sup> Damimola Olawuyi, “Assessing African Strategic Needs to Counter Undue Chinese Influence,” *Divergent Options*, July 13, 2020, [https://divergentoptions.org/2020/07/13/africa\\_counters\\_china/](https://divergentoptions.org/2020/07/13/africa_counters_china/).

<sup>211</sup> Hursh, “Tanzania Pushes Back on Chinese Port Project.” Note that talks regarding the Bagamoyo port project have been revived by President Magafuli’s predecessor, Samia Suluhu Hassan, following his death in 2020. “Tanzania President Hassan is Talking to the Chinese Again About a Port Deal in Bagamoyo. But She Might Be Too Late,” *China-Global South Project*, June 28, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/analysis/tanzania-president-hassan-is-talking-to-the-chinese-again-about-a-port-deal-in-bagamoyo-but-she-might-be-too-late/>.

<sup>212</sup> Sun Xingwei and Zhou Biao, “Gonggong tuijin junshi sheshi jianshe junmin ronghe” [Jointly Promote the Construction of Military Facility and Military and Civilian Fusion], *Zhuhainow*, December 18, 2017, <http://www.zhuhainow.com/zgjq/15652.html>.



as a benevolent partner with a win-win mindset. Ian Taylor however offers more current insight into the details of the win-win partnership China touts to African nations by stating, “When a third of Chinese companies surveyed in Africa state that they are garnering profit margins higher than 20% and that their consolidated revenues (currently estimated at \$80 billion) are expected to range between \$250 and \$440 billion by 2025,<sup>213</sup> it is clear who is benefiting the most from this ostensible ‘win-win’ partnership.”<sup>214</sup>

China has also become more confrontational to expand its sphere of influence with conflicts along the India/China border and the new National Security law passed regarding Hong Kong. China is also Africa’s largest trading partner and surpassed the United States in 2009.<sup>215</sup> African nations have also become increasingly dependent on China for their goods and services. As this linkage solidifies, it will become even more difficult for African nations to dictate terms to China. As China continues to invest in Africa, it will want to crowd out competition and protect its investment. Judd Devermont echoed caution, “There is also a risk that Chinese financing and projects will prevent other foreign firms from competing on subsequent commercial opportunities, essentially imposing a straitjacket on African governments to deal only with Chinese entities.”<sup>216</sup>

Current scholarly debates around U.S. and Chinese GPC in Africa have pointed to examples, such as China’s base in Djibouti as a microcosm of China’s growing competition

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<sup>213</sup> “Chinese Modus Operandi in Africa,” Infomineo, December 17, 2018, <https://infomineo.com/chinese-modus-operandi-in-africa/>.

<sup>214</sup> Taylor and Zajontz, “In a Fix,” 7.

<sup>215</sup> Elliot Smith, “The U.S.-China Trade Rivalry is Underway in Africa, and Washington is Playing Catch-up,” CNBC, October 10, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/09/the-us-china-trade-rivalry-is-underway-in-africa.html>.

<sup>216</sup> Smith.

with the United States in Africa.<sup>217</sup> Jean-Pierre Cabestan asserts in his research that Djibouti signals a turning point in China's foreign and security policy and allows China to protect its commerce, trade routes, and BRI interests overseas better.<sup>218</sup> Sun and Zoubir conclude that Djibouti is an example of China's "latent power," whereby China is focused on defending its geo-economic interests as opposed to safeguarding core/sovereign interests (i.e., hard power) or expanding its political interests through subversive means (i.e., sharp power).<sup>219</sup> Scholars have defined China's use of "sharp power or smart power" as an assemblage of instruments to employ sharp power to include political power, coercion, culture, language and religion, media manipulation, academia, Chinese diaspora, and inducements.<sup>220</sup> Additionally, with the introduction the G7's Build Back Better World (B3W), targeting infrastructure development in Africa being framed as "geopolitical rivalry" and "strategic competition," both countries are enacting a policy transition in Africa with China turning away from its history of "noninterference" and towards a more securitized and direct intervention. The United States is pivoting to challenge China in areas China is currently operating in, specifically infrastructure development.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "China's Military Base in Djibouti: A Microcosm of China's Growing Competition with the United States and New Bipolarity," *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, no. 125 (2020): 731–747.

<sup>218</sup> Cabestan, 731–747.

<sup>219</sup> Degang Sun and Yahia H. Zoubir, "Securing China's 'Latent Power': The Dragon's Anchorage in Djibouti," *Journal of Contemporary China* (November 26, 2020): 1–16.

<sup>220</sup> Mandip Singh, "From Smart Power to Sharp Power: How China Promotes her National Interests," *Journal of Defense Studies* 12, no. 3 (2018): 9; Christopher Walker and Jessica Ludwig, "From 'Soft Power' to 'Sharp Power': Rising Authoritarian Influence in the Democratic World," in *Sharp Power-Rising Authoritarian Influence*, ed. National Endowment for Democracy (Washington, DC: National Endowment for Democracy, 2017), 13.

<sup>221</sup> Outlined in a discussion led by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Can the BRI and B3W Coexist in Africa?" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, July 15, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/07/15/can-bri-and-b3w-coexist-in-africa-event-7666>.

Using the aforementioned literature, this dissertation seeks to identify the gaps in the literature. These authors have extensively researched the impact of U.S. aid on economic development, grouped the United States in with “The West,” and analyzed aid and its impact on development in great detail. Other authors have examined the impacts of Chinese aid on development and state-based violence, or examined GPC between the two countries, the United States and China but have failed to view it within the context of Africa. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap in the literature. Synthesizing these views and utilizing them to couch the international political economy framework via the tools of ODF in Africa within the GPC debate between the United States and China is the literature gap upon which this dissertation seeks to build.

### CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

The previous chapter offered an examination of the literature on GPC between the United States and China in Africa while offering a historical framing for GPC in Africa. The literature also examined the motivations with respect to ODF in Africa by both the United States and China. These motivations for ODF are reflective of a shift in the GPC and grand strategy from a U.S. perspective while defining China's rise as a global power. Within that framework, this dissertation seeks to answer the question of what strategic motivations for the United States and China explain variations in ODF flow, and are these motivations similar across each great power? If these motivations are dissimilar, are they complementary or antagonistic, and what then is the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa?

International relations theory is broken into two bodies of theory: liberalism and realism.<sup>222</sup> Beginning with liberalism, three theories are influential. The first one argues that high levels of economic interdependence among states make it unlikely they will fight each other.<sup>223</sup> Former President Truman echoed this sentiment in his 1949 speech to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "We must have a world in which we can exchange the products of our labor not only among ourselves, but with other nations. We

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<sup>222</sup> Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997); Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY: Suny Press, 2016).

<sup>223</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000); Edward D. Mansfield, *Power, Trade, and War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Susan M. McMillan, "Interdependence and Conflict," *Mershon International Studies Review* 41, no. Supplement\_1 (1997): 33–58; Richard N. Rosecrance, *Rise of the Trading State* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

have come together in a great cooperative economic effort to establish this kind of world.”<sup>224</sup> The second theory within liberalism is the democratic peace theory, which claims that democracies do not go to war against other democracies.<sup>225</sup> The third theory is that international institutions enhance the prospects for cooperation among states and thus significantly reduce the likelihood of war.<sup>226</sup>

Moving to the realist perspective, scholars view the international system as anarchic, with no higher authority, and states act in their own self-interests.<sup>227</sup> Realists view states as the actor, and define great powers and their goals as the state’s desire to maximize its share of world power at the expense of other states.<sup>228</sup> Mearsheimer posits that within realism, three core beliefs exist. The first belief is that states are treated as the principal actors in world politics and focus mainly on great powers within that realm.<sup>229</sup> The second belief says that realists believe that mainly their external environment influences the behavior of great powers, not their internal characteristics.<sup>230</sup> The third belief is that realists

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<sup>224</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Harry S. Truman Opening Address* (Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1949), [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/history\\_pdf/20161130\\_19490404\\_\\_Opening\\_address\\_Truman-s.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/history_pdf/20161130_19490404__Opening_address_Truman-s.pdf).

<sup>225</sup> Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds. *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996); Michael W. Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” *Liberalism and World Politics* (2014): 133–162; Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” in *Conflict after the Cold War*, (London: Routledge, 2015), 16–27; James Lee Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict: An Evaluation of the Democratic Peace Proposition* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995).

<sup>226</sup> David Allen Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner, “International Organization and the Study of World Politics,” *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 645–685.

<sup>227</sup> Riley Quinn and Bryan R. Gibson, *An Analysis of Kenneth Waltz’s: Theory of International Politics*, 1st ed. (London: Macat Library, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781912282388>.

<sup>228</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 2.

<sup>229</sup> Mearsheimer, 17.

<sup>230</sup> Mearsheimer, 17.

hold that calculations about power dominate states' thinking, and that states compete for power among themselves.<sup>231</sup>

Examining GPC between the United States and China, Mearsheimer argues that countries will seek to maximize their relative power in relation to other states in two ways. The first way is by focusing on the distribution of power within a system and the second is by restricting others from gaining power.<sup>232</sup> This attempt leads into a common anticipated dilemma within U.S.-China GPC of the Thucydides Trap, in which the rising power (China) seeks to shift the power away from the traditional hegemony of the United States.<sup>233</sup>

GPC in Africa has been shaped by key events in U.S. history beginning with the Cold War era. During the Cold War era in Africa, the United States' motivations for using ODF as a tool of GPC were twofold. Primarily, it leaned more towards the Neo-Marxist approach of seeking ideological alignment between recipient countries and the United States, and countries were forced to choose between capitalist and communist regimes. This stance resulted in proxy wars with the USSR in Africa and the United States providing aid to leaders to counter Soviet influence. Additionally, realists would argue that the United States was motivated strictly by its strategic interests in the region,<sup>234</sup> specifically minerals that thus motivated the United States to support leaders, such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (present day DRC) to secure uranium deposits for the United States.

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<sup>231</sup> Mearsheimer, 18.

<sup>232</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*.

<sup>233</sup> Allison, *Destined for War*.

<sup>234</sup> Nicholas Eberstadt and Theodore W. Schultz, *Foreign Aid and American Purpose* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1988).

This approach transitioned to the post-Cold War period and more neo-realist ideology in which the “high politics of international relations” became the focus. The ODF motivations were then shifted away from being driven strictly by national security interests and towards soft power motivations. Theorists argue that the economic dimension is an equal if not important aspect of national security. Thacker and Vreeland have examined how politics has influenced lending specifically within the IMF.<sup>235</sup> Work by Stone has examined that aspect more specifically within the context of Africa.<sup>236</sup> The approach played out in Africa through the U.S.-led SAPs resulted in wholesale economic failure in Africa.<sup>237</sup> The 9/11 attacks drastically shifted the focus of U.S. aid back towards the realist motivation of national security and towards countering transnational terrorist organizations. As terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda and Al Shabab, were left to grow so grew their reach to where their presence became a threat to U.S. national security. This shift was simultaneously coupled with an idealist bent focused on humanitarian needs and a “big push” by the U.S. government to end global poverty.<sup>238</sup> The rise of China and its expansion into the South China Sea created another shift in U.S. policy as it pertains to Africa towards the current strategy of GPC and global influence.

As the examination earlier of historical GPC in Africa detailed, the Cold War played out in Africa through proxy wars between the United States and the Soviet Union. Significant changes have occurred in the global landscape since then and events in Africa

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<sup>235</sup> Thacker, “The High Politics of IMF Lending,” 38; James Raymond Vreeland, *The International Monetary Fund (IMF): Politics of Conditional Lending* (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>236</sup> Stone, “The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa,” 577–591.

<sup>237</sup> Tull, “China’s Engagement in Africa,” 459–479; Stone, 577–591.

<sup>238</sup> William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin, 2006).

now have global implications. For example, counter terrorism and migration in the Sahel has changed politics in the European Union (EU), as well as shifted the focus of military operations for the United States. With these changes, organizations like the U.S. military's Africa Command have made a shift towards GPC, as Africa is fertile ground for competitors to take advantage.<sup>239</sup> Ebola in West Africa and the DRC, coupled with the more recent COVID pandemic, has galvanized medical responses from the United States and the EU. Piracy in the HOA region has also led to an increased U.S. maritime presence in the region, specifically in Djibouti.

David Lumsdaine argued that nations were primarily motivated by moral vision, values, and principles rather than strategic or political consideration in their allocation of ODF to nations.<sup>240</sup> However, much of scholarship does not support this assertion. Scholars have compared the motivations for aid allocation based on two divergent rationales.<sup>241</sup> The first explained the allocation of aid within the context of recipient nation humanitarian needs and the second explained the allocation within the context of donor nation foreign policy interests.<sup>242</sup> Over the time period examined (1960–1970), it was discovered that the foreign policy model consistently won out, whereby aid led to the establishment of dependency within the recipient nation and that dependency was used to achieve foreign policy objectives.<sup>243</sup> Other authors supported these findings in that the donor nations'

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<sup>239</sup> Stated by a current official knowledgeable about AFRICOM in a conference held by the Air Forces Cultural and Language Center in October 2020.

<sup>240</sup> David Halloran Lumsdaine and Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949–1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>241</sup> Robert D. McKinlay and Richard Little, "A Foreign Policy Model of U.S. Bilateral Aid Allocation," *World Politics* 30, no. 1 (1977): 58–86; Alfred Maizels and Machiko K. Nissanke, "Motivations for Aid to Developing Countries," *World Development* 12, no. 9 (1984): 879–900.

<sup>242</sup> McKinlay and Little, 58–86; Maizels and Nissanke, 879–900.

<sup>243</sup> McKinlay and Little, 58–86.



strategic economic and political objectives consistently were a primary motivator for the disbursement of ODF to recipient nations and rejected the altruistic vision of donors' motivation,<sup>244</sup> and specifically as it related to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) membership and voting.<sup>245</sup> It is notable however that much of the aforementioned literature examined the donor-recipient relationship during the Cold War era when strategic and political motivations were in the forefront in both U.S. and USSR foreign policy.<sup>246</sup>

Since the Cold War era, similar findings in research demonstrate that donor strategic interests are primary when it comes to the relationship between donor and recipient nations but also reveal the development of the good governance agenda within motivations for ODF. Research by Burnside and Dollar found that aid allocation in the 1990s favored countries with better levels of democratic development and rule of law.<sup>247</sup> Ball and Johnson found U.S. aid to be driven largely by humanitarian motivations,<sup>248</sup> while Alesina and Dollar found that good policies and property rights motivated ODF more than political or strategic motivations.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Peter J. Schraeder, Steven W. Hook, and Bruce Taylor, "Clarifying the Foreign Aid Puzzle: A Comparison of American, Japanese, French, and Swedish Aid Flows," *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 294–323.

<sup>245</sup> Ilyana Kuziemko and Eric Werker, "How Much Is a Seat on the Security Council Worth? Foreign Aid and Bribery at the United Nations," *Journal of Political Economy* 114, no. 5 (2006): 905–930.

<sup>246</sup> David Landry, "Under a Money Tree? Comparing the Determinants of Western and Chinese Development Finance Flows to Africa," *Oxford Development Studies* 49, no. 2 (2021): 149–168.

<sup>247</sup> Craig Burnside and David Dollar, *Policies, and Growth: Revisiting the Evidence* (Rochester: NY: SSRN, 2004).

<sup>248</sup> Richard Ball and Christopher Johnson, "Political, Economic, and Humanitarian Motivations for PL 480 Food Aid: Evidence from Africa," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 44, no. 3 (1996): 515–537.

<sup>249</sup> David Dollar and Alberto Alesina, "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth* 5, no. 1 (2000): 33–63.

### 3.1 Two Countries, Two Approaches

The United States has historically used aid in Africa as a tool of great power to promote overall stability, well-being, and good governance,<sup>250</sup> reduce regional conflict,<sup>251</sup> and counter terrorism.<sup>252</sup> Trade with Africa was improved through the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and was an articulated focus of U.S. policy when it was outlined in the 2017 NSS.<sup>253</sup> Following the end of the Cold War, the overarching goals of U.S. aid have been poverty reduction and global development through the outlined MDGs.<sup>254</sup> The United States and other Western nations have realized over time that development goes hand in hand with conflict prevention. Therefore, development and anti-terrorist efforts post-9/11 have risen, in tandem, to the forefront of explicit U.S. policy motives for foreign aid as it sought to combat global terrorism. The United States achieves these goals through the attachment of conditionalities. These conditionalities were focused on supporting and improving good governance even before 9/11.<sup>255</sup> Conditionalities are conditions attached to the aid or ODF to ensure the desired changes are implemented by the recipient nation to the satisfaction of the donor nation.<sup>256</sup>

Conditionalities fall within the traditional frameworks of international relations theories, such as neorealism and rationalist theory, because great power in these theoretical

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<sup>250</sup> William Easterly, "Are Aid Agencies Improving?" *Economic Policy* 22, no. 52 (2007): 634–678; William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (Landover, MD: Tantor Media, 2017).

<sup>251</sup> David H. Bearce and Daniel C. Tirone, "Foreign Aid Effectiveness and the Strategic Goals of Donor Governments," *The Journal of Politics* 72, no. 3 (2010): 837–851.

<sup>252</sup> Sarah Blodgett Bermeo, "Aid Allocation and Targeted Development in an Increasingly Connected World," *International Organization* 71, no. 4 (2017): 735–766.

<sup>253</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>254</sup> "News on Millennium Development Goals," United Nations, 2015, <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

<sup>255</sup> William F. S. Miles, "Deploying Development to Counter Terrorism: Post-9/11 Transformation of U.S. Foreign Aid to Africa," *African Studies Review* 55, no. 3 (2012): 32.

<sup>256</sup> Shah, *Development Assistance and Conditionality*.

contexts is defined as material, compulsory, or militarily.<sup>257</sup> Operating within this framework, ODF are key components of the current GPC in Africa. For example, Lina Benabdallah hypothesized, “within two decades China has surpassed Western powers influence in Africa and have done so without wars, military might or other tools traditionally attributed to great power diplomacy.”<sup>258</sup> Additionally, as the United States is no longer the only country willing to provide ODF to African nations, they are able to pit countries against each other to get the best deal for them similar to the Cold War.<sup>259</sup> China has predominantly stuck to the material component of GPC exemplified by its high levels of ODF to African nations along with materials and labor in support of infrastructure development. The United States has provided both material support targeted at humanitarian efforts and military support focused on stability.

China’s involvement in Africa is nuanced and is not easily distilled down to oil, cobalt, or even solely natural resources. For example, Eric Olander of the China-Africa Project observed, “If you think what China is doing in Africa is all good, you are missing half the story. If you think what China is doing in Africa is all bad, then you are missing half the story.”<sup>260</sup> It is necessary to understand its approach to determine how GPC between the United States and China is playing out in Africa.

China touts its “no strings attached” and non-interference policy. China states it does not attach conditionalities to its ODF like the United States nor does it seek to

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<sup>257</sup> Benabdallah, *Shaping the Future of Power*, 8.

<sup>258</sup> Benabdallah, 4.

<sup>259</sup> Matusevich, “Revisiting the Soviet Moment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” 1259–1268.

<sup>260</sup> Stated during a panel discussion titled “What China’s Influence in Africa Means for the Continent,” Quartz Africa, October 8, 2020, <https://qz.com/africa/1915217/what-china-s-africa-role-means-for-the-global-economy/>.

influence policy creation or governmental structures to disburse aid, which has the potential to undermine the U.S. approach to ODF in specific areas but not in a broad sense. China does however have conditionalities it places on countries, but these conditionalities come at very little cost to African leaders. Instead, the cost of increasing debt is borne by the recipient country citizens who are thereby on the hook to repay the loans. China does not provide ODF to any country that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and countries that receive Chinese ODF must adhere to its “One China” policy. However nuanced as China’s engagement in Africa is, Gyude Moore, a former Liberian minister of public works issues a blunt articulation of his perception of the primary driver for China. “China is not in Africa in pursuit of friendship. China is in African pursuit of Chinese interests.”<sup>261</sup> What those interests and motivations are is what this dissertation seeks to answer.

Chinese engagement in the form of ODF offers African nations the ability to rely on Chinese finance to facilitate development in areas they would not have received from the United States, such as infrastructure. China’s finance is contingent on using Chinese firms for the construction along with a majority of materials for that construction to come from China. It does not create a free market so much as it creates a market dependent on China for its growth. Additionally, African nations, if they accept Chinese aid, no longer have to abide by Western conditionalities like good governance, democratic elections, and conflict reduction. Gyude Moore details this situation by stating, “American involvement comes with American values: protection of minorities, freedom of speech, open societies,

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<sup>261</sup> Stated during the online China-Africa Working Group as part of the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida Panel on February 18, 2021 while discussing FOCAC 2021 and COVID-19.

free trade. And so when the U.S. engages with a country, those are the terms on which it engages. Russia is not going to advocate for those. Neither will China.”<sup>262</sup>

Firstly, China’s ODF is characterized by base level mercantilist economic policies. These policies are demonstrated through China’s heavy investment in resource rich countries, such as Angola, Ethiopia, Zambia, Nigeria, and the DRC; all are in the top third of recipients among the 48 SSA nations examined.<sup>263</sup> More evidence is found in the data from 2003 to 2010 where over half of China’s investment in Africa was directed towards oil, largely to finance China’s SOEs operating in the region.<sup>264</sup> Additionally, China’s top three imports from African nations are oil, iron ore, and copper, all of which build upon and emphasize the second motivation.<sup>265</sup>

China’s second strategic motivation is securing access to markets for Chinese goods, as well as providing security for China’s investments on the continent. This motivation is demonstrated by China’s push to gain market access for Chinese goods and increased bilateral trade in addition to high levels of exports.<sup>266</sup> This subtle supply-demand relationship effectively shifts China to the center of the global economy.<sup>267</sup> That push paid off years ago. In 2009, China surpassed the United States to become Africa’s largest trading partner.<sup>268</sup> Additionally, in an effort to protect its investment in Africa, China established

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<sup>262</sup> Eric Olander, “Gyude Moore on Why Some Africa Countries Prefer to Deal with China and Russia over the U.S.,” The China-Africa Project, October 2019, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2019/10/25/gyude-moore-on-why-african-countries-prefer-to-deal-with-china-and-russia-over-the-u-s/>.

<sup>263</sup> Data collected by the author from the China Africa Research Institute (CARI) at Johns Hopkins University.

<sup>264</sup> Lauren Gamache, Alexander B. Hammer, and Lin Jones, “China’s Trade and Investment Relationship with Africa,” Executive Briefings on Trade (USITC), 2013.

<sup>265</sup> Gamache, Hammer, and Jones.

<sup>266</sup> Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, “China in Africa,” 105–24.

<sup>267</sup> Tobin, “Xi’s Vision for Transforming Global Governance,” 42.

<sup>268</sup> Smith, “The U.S.-China Trade Rivalry is Underway in Africa.”

its first military base outside of China in Djibouti in 2017. It has also become one of the top donors of troops to UN peacekeeping forces in Africa,<sup>269</sup> as well as increasing the number of private Chinese security personnel in Africa.<sup>270</sup> China has taken the economic interdependence approach combined with mercantilist self-enrichment and through this approach has gained significant economic leverage over its smaller trading partners. The economic coercion argument posits that China can then threaten to cut economic ties and coerce these countries into aligning with itself,<sup>271</sup> which leads into its third motivation.

The third motivation for China occurs through the utilization of ODF, as well as academic scholarships and governance training programs. China seeks to shift the educational and political landscape within Africa to resemble a more Chinese governance and development model.<sup>272</sup> The feeling among African nations is mutual as “Africa’s attraction to China’s development model as a potential road-map for itself is evident.”<sup>273</sup> China has already achieved support utilizing this approach within the UN as China has attained leadership positions within four key bodies in the UN, more than any other nation.<sup>274</sup> This approach has made it almost untenable for African nations to align themselves with the United States, as doing so would jeopardize billions in loans and investment from China.<sup>275</sup> As GPC grows in Africa between the United States and China, countries can feel the increased pressure to pick a side, something they are reluctant to

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<sup>269</sup> Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, “China in Africa,” 105–24.

<sup>270</sup> Paul Nantulya, “Chinese Security Contractors in Africa,” Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, October 8, 2020, <https://carnegietsinghua.org/2020/10/08/chinese-security-contractors-in-africa-pub-82916>.

<sup>271</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 390–391.

<sup>272</sup> Tobin, “Xi’s Vision for Transforming Global Governance,” 43; Sun, *Political Party Training*, 5.

<sup>273</sup> He Wenping, “The Balancing Act of China’s Africa Policy,” *China Security* 3, no. 3 (2007): 23–40.

<sup>274</sup> Piccone, *China’s Long Game on Human Rights at the United Nations*; Nantulya, Testimony on *China’s Military Power Projection and U.S. National Interests*, 2.

<sup>275</sup> Olander, “Why Would Uganda Write a Letter to Support China’s Position in Hong Kong?”

do.<sup>276</sup> As a result, African nations can continue to abstain or be absent from votes to not be perceived as directly aligning with either the United States or China. This topic is examined in detail through the case studies.

Now turning to examining U.S. motivations for ODF to SSA, the first one is overall well-being and good governance. Similar to theoretical motivations shared by Acemoglu and Robinson, poverty was a result of extractive institutions and the best way to overcome poverty was through economic growth associated with inclusive economic and political institutions.<sup>277</sup> This situation led to the “big push” effort in support of the MDGs seeking to end global poverty through economic development while supplying food aid, and improving overall health and wellbeing. In this category, one of the United States’ most successful programs in Africa, the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which was founded in 2003 and is still in existence today, has been credited with supporting over 14.6 million people in SSA.<sup>278</sup> This success was also reflected in the data of which 70% of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) funds to SSA were in the form of food aid/food security, emergency/disaster response, AIDS prevention and reduction, and improvements in governance.<sup>279</sup> These interests center on the primary motivation for U.S. ODF of overall well-being and good governance.

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<sup>276</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, “[The US must] resist framing it as part of a new Cold War because the Africans are firmly against that. They don’t want to choose between China and the United States.” “The Significance of Africa,” Center on National Security at Fordham Law, June 3, 2021, <https://www.centeronnationalsecurity.org/vital-interests-issue-77-judd-devermont>.

<sup>277</sup> Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (Washington, DC: Crown Books, 2013), 91.

<sup>278</sup> James M. Scott and Ralph G. Carter, “Distributing Dollars for Democracy: Changing Foreign Policy Contexts and the Shifting Determinants of U.S. Democracy Aid, 1975–2010,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* (2017): 1–36; “What is PEPFAR?” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, last updated December 7, 2021, <https://www.hiv.gov/federal-response/pepfar-global-aids/pepfar>.

<sup>279</sup> Authors own calculations of data from the USAID website.

The second strategic motivation for U.S. ODF in SSA is the reduction of regional conflict. This belief is echoed in the 2017 NSS in which U.S. policy articulates that the United States will partner with governments to end long-running conflicts and is willing to suspend aid rather than see it be exploited.<sup>280</sup> The goal of reducing conflict works in tandem with the U.S. first strategic motivation of improving overall well-being and good governance. Scholars have written extensively on the link between conflict and development.<sup>281</sup> The focus of the former cannot exist without the latter. Additionally, since 9/11, the United States has strongly focused on stability and governance as a lack of either or both stagnates growth, inhibits development, and offers a safe haven and recruiting tool to terrorist networks.<sup>282</sup>

This situation leads into the third strategic motivation for U.S. ODF, reduction and combating terrorism in the region. To date, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) affiliates in Mali and Niger have increased, as well as growing in Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. In conjunction, Al Shabab in Somalia has led attacks on Kenyan cities, such as Garissa, Mombasa, and Nairobi, as well as claiming responsibility for the recent attack on Camp Simba, a U.S. air base in Lamu in 2020. All these regions act as a safe haven for the spread of terrorism and represent not only a threat to exacerbate regional conflict and stymie development and well-being improvements but also affect the international community.

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<sup>280</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>281</sup> Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," 563–595; Kofi Annan, "The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa," *African Renaissance* 1, no. 3 (2004): 9–42; James Busumtwi-Sam, "Sustainable Peace and Development in Africa," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 37, no. 3 (2002): 91–118.

<sup>282</sup> Miles, "Deploying Development to Counter Terrorism," 27–60.



Building on the U.S. position in Africa, and how competition with China in the region is shaping U.S. policy, the 2017 NSS outlines the goal of expanding trade and commercial ties so that the United States can balance against China's footprint across Africa.<sup>283</sup> In the past, the United States has used ODF punctuated by conditionalities as a tool of great power politics to improve overall well-being and good governance,<sup>284</sup> reduce regional conflict,<sup>285</sup> and reduce terrorism in Africa. China's large influx of ODF has thwarted this progress and allowed countries like Djibouti to use Chinese power as a backstop to push back against U.S. interests in the region. Using U.S. ODF as a tool and measure of great power and contrasting it with Chinese ODF, with its non-interference and "no-strings attached" policy, is one way of investigating the new logic of greater power politics between the United States and China in Africa.

Table 1 on the page below compares the predictions for the two theories being tested: three motivations for Chinese and three motivations for U.S. disbursement of aid and ODF. ODF is again defined as "Funds or technical assistance given primarily to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries".<sup>286</sup> These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study.

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<sup>283</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>284</sup> Easterly, "Are Aid Agencies Improving?" 634–678; Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, 2017.

<sup>285</sup> Bearce and Tirone, "Foreign Aid Effectiveness and the Strategic Goals of Donor Governments," 837–851.

<sup>286</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*, 166.

Table 1. Observable Motivations for Two Theories.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>Chinese ODF</b>	Basic mercantilist self-enrichment	Securing markets and investments	Shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource rich countries</li> <li>• Coastal countries paired with infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade imbalance with China</li> <li>• Large population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export high levels of raw natural resources (oil, timber, minerals) to China</li> <li>• Infrastructure for extraction (power, mines, roads, ports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of finished goods from China</li> <li>• Loan repayment over forgiveness</li> <li>• Increased debt levels</li> <li>• Increased corruption</li> <li>• Increased security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China-Xinjiang vote</li> <li>• High debt levels</li> </ul>
<b>U.S. ODF</b>	Good governance, control corruption and overall well-being	Conflict prevention, peace and stability	Counter terrorist efforts
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased governance reform</li> <li>• Reduced corruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical civil/regional conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical regional conflict</li> <li>• Bordering or include conflict zones</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt reduction</li> <li>• Health and HIV investment</li> <li>• Free and fair elections</li> <li>• Open press and media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Governance improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Increased levels of internally displaced persons</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Theory of Chinese Motivations

China, with its “no strings attached” policy, has three strategic motivations for providing ODF to African nations that fall under the areas of economic, security, and diplomatic reasons for engagement. International relations theorists have recently sought to characterize China’s rise and motivations behind its approach into the following areas.

Evan Feigenbaum posited that China’s strategic behavior followed a realpolitik approach to diplomacy and use of force.<sup>287</sup> Realpolitik is the political system based on realistic, practical ideas in which governments deal in straightforward, goal-oriented ways with other governments.<sup>288</sup> Kissinger stated that statesmanship was not a one-time effort but required “constant recalibration”<sup>289</sup> and is something China has managed in Africa. Hanauer and Morris assert, “China has not maintained a static policy [in Africa]; rather Beijing has responded to both foreign and local pressures by modifying its approach to the continent.”<sup>290</sup> Other scholars have referred to China as the “high church of realpolitik” and stated that China’s contemporary leaders prize the practice of realpolitik.<sup>291</sup>

In focusing on China’s motivations, Mearsheimer argued via offensive realism, that through its quest to establish regional hegemony, China’s rise to power in Asia would not be peaceful.<sup>292</sup> Recent aggression towards neighbors, such as India and China’s actions in the South China Sea, has further supported his claims. He does assert however that China

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<sup>287</sup> Evan A. Feigenbaum, “China’s Military Posture and the New Economic,” *Survival* 41, no. 2 (1999): 71–88.

<sup>288</sup> *Dictionary*, s.v. “Realpolitik,” accessed October 2021, <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/realpolitik>.

<sup>289</sup> John Bew, “The Kissinger Effect on Realpolitik,” *War on the Rocks*, December 29, 2015, <https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/the-kissinger-effect-on-realpolitik/>.

<sup>290</sup> Hanauer and Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa*, xii.

<sup>291</sup> Yuan-kang Wang, *Harmony and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 181.

<sup>292</sup> Mearsheimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?” 1–40.

does not want to “follow in Uncle Sam’s footsteps” and that “it is unlikely that China will pursue military superiority so that it can go on a rampage and conquer other Asian countries.”<sup>293</sup>

Scholars have also argued that the undercurrent and overarching rationale behind China’s investment in Africa is predicated on the desire by the CCP to stay in power forever. Jinghao Zhou, an associate professor of Asian Studies at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, supports these motivations. He stated, “The legitimacy of the CCP largely depends on its economic performance.”<sup>294</sup> This statement is an ever-present driver behind China’s first and second motivations of self-enrichment and access to markets. These motivations are needed to continue to grow China’s economy and demonstrate legitimacy for China’s CCP. In addition to economic performance, China emphasizes symbolic victories and a desire for African leaders to show respect to Chinese leadership as being a political statement that adds legitimacy to China’s status as a global power and to the CCP as a ruling party.

China’s conditionalities have very little impact on African nations’ leadership, i.e., breaking off diplomatic ties with Taiwan, international support for China’s claims in the South China Sea, and stand in contrast to the U.S. approach. U.S. conditionalities have tended to create problems for the leaders in power in African nations, such as open elections, human rights measures, or anti-corruption advances.<sup>295</sup> By laying out the three areas in detail, the complementary and contrary nature, when juxtaposed with U.S. strategic

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<sup>293</sup> Mearsheimer.

<sup>294</sup> As stated during a forum hosted by the Joint Special Operations University titled “Great Power Competition Forum: Compound Security Threats” on November 4, 2020.

<sup>295</sup> Mouritz, “China’s Economic Coercion,” 174–89.

motivations, reveal areas in which these motivations, and thereby GPC, works in parallel or at cross-purposes to each other.

China's strategy with respect to Africa is based on eight different objectives. The first is to assure the supply of raw materials for China, including agricultural products. The second is to create a market for Chinese products and services. The third is to obtain land for agricultural purposes. The fourth is to channel the migration of Chinese people to Africa. The fifth is to gain diplomatic support from African countries. The sixth presents an alternative to the Western development model. The seventh provides an alternative to Western development cooperation, while the eighth emphasizes China's status as a superpower.<sup>296</sup> Hanauer and Morris later narrowed down these eight objectives by stating that China had four overarching strategic interests in Africa: access to natural resources, particularly oil and gas, markets for Chinese exports, political legitimacy in international fora, particularly in regards to China's principle of non-interference, "South-South solidarity," and adherence to the "One China" policy."<sup>297</sup> These outlined strategic motivations were narrowed down to the three motivations outlined in Table 1.

China's first proposed motivation for ODF described in Table 1 is basic mercantilist self-enrichment. This motivation encompasses both Van Dijk's and Hanauer and Morris's assertions that one of China's objectives in Africa is to "assure the supply of raw materials for China," and specifically oil, gas, and agricultural products.<sup>298</sup> This objective began in 1999 under the "go out" directive and is characterized by China's non-interference policy

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<sup>296</sup> van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*, 11–12.

<sup>297</sup> Hanauer and Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa*, 5–6.

<sup>298</sup> van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*, 11–12; Hanauer and Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa*, 5–6.

in which China states it will not interfere with a country's governance structure in return for ODF. Looking specifically at Africa, it was viewed by China as "high risk, high return" for Chinese companies with minimal competition from other firms.<sup>299</sup> Additionally, the Chinese culture of Guanxi, the Chinese version of "scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" enabled Chinese state-back companies to gain access quickly to largely unregulated African markets that lacked accountability.<sup>300</sup> Additional research supports this dissertation's findings in which China's main imports from Africa are primary goods, such as crude oil, minerals, and ore. Africa conversely has become a growing buyer of manufactured goods from China, which thus skews the balance of trade and economic ties in China's direction,<sup>301</sup> and feeds into its second strategic motivation.

China's second strategic motivation for providing ODF to SSA nations is for its own security; security, in the sense of gaining access to markets for Chinese goods, as well as an effort to protect its investments and expand its reach militarily. This motivation is predicated on the research by Van Dijk,<sup>302</sup> and Hanauer and Morris<sup>303</sup> that China's objectives in Africa are focused on creating a market for Chinese products and services, i.e., exports. It also supports Brautigam's findings that ODF acts as an economic instrument in supporting Chinese firms' exports<sup>304</sup> and Landry's work that demonstrated that bilateral trade with China and recipient nations had a statistically significant impact on Chinese

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<sup>299</sup> Carter, Gilpin, and Nantulya, "China in Africa," 105–24.

<sup>300</sup> J. R. Mailey, *The Anatomy of the Resource Curse: Predatory Investment in Africa's Extractive Industries*, no. NDU/ACSS-SR-3 (Washington, DC: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2015).

<sup>301</sup> Suisheng Zhao, "A Neo-colonialist Predator or Development Partner? China's Engagement and Rebalance in Africa," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 90 (2014): 1033–1052.

<sup>302</sup> Van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*, 11–12.

<sup>303</sup> Hanauer and Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa*, 5–6.

<sup>304</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*.

ODF.<sup>305</sup> China disburses ODF to countries that not only have resource benefits, such as Angola (oil) and South Sudan (oil), but also countries that can facilitate trade with China and improve market penetration in Africa, such as Djibouti, which gives coastal access to Ethiopia, and Kenya, which feeds into its first strategic motivation. What initially began as an extractive investment in Africa has diversified into manufacturing, services, trade, and infrastructure.<sup>306</sup>

Another example is that in 2017, China established its first military base outside of China in Djibouti. However, Beijing argues that it is not a base but a “logistical support facility” to be “mainly used to provide rest and rehabilitation for the Chinese troops taking part in escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and waters off Somalia, UN peacekeeping and humanitarian rescue.”<sup>307</sup> In an expansion of market access in tandem with expansion of military reach, China contributed 5,000 troops to the African Union stand-by forces. These troops’ increased military presence is in direct support of their second and first strategic objectives through which China is using the base to both support and secure its regional investments of BRI.<sup>308</sup>

China’s third motivation is to establish China’s legitimacy as a global player and a rule maker and not a rule follower by shifting Africa towards a China centric governance and development model.<sup>309</sup> This motivation by China is an aggregation of four of Van

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<sup>305</sup> Landry, “Under a Money Tree?” 149–168.

<sup>306</sup> Steve Hess, “The Role of China and Asymmetric Bargaining in Ethiopia’s Authoritarian Backsliding,” in *China’s New Role in African Politics: From Non-Intervention towards Stabilization*, ed. Christof Hartmann and Nele Noesselt (London: Routledge, 2019), 111.

<sup>307</sup> Cabestan, “China’s Military Base in Djibouti,” 731–747; Xingwei and Biao, “Gonggong tuijin junshi sheshi jianshe junmin ronghe.”

<sup>308</sup> Monica Wang, “First Place—On the Shores of Bab-el-Manded: Assessing China’s First Overseas Military Base in Djibouti and Chinese Grand Strategic Vision for the Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean,” *The Yale Review of International Studies*, June 2018.

<sup>309</sup> Mouritz, “China’s Economic Coercion,” 174–89.

Dijk's described objectives: gain diplomatic support from African countries, present an alternative to the Western development model, provide an alternative to Western development cooperation, and emphasize China's status as a superpower.<sup>310</sup> It also parallels Hanauer and Morris's research stating that one of China's overarching strategic interest in Africa was political legitimacy in international fora.<sup>311</sup> Antony Blinkin further emphasized this motivation during his confirmation hearing as Secretary of State 2020, at which he stated, "They [China] seek to become, in effect, the leading country in the world. The country that sets the norms, that sets the standards and to put forward a model that they hope other countries and people will ascribe to."<sup>312</sup>

As it pertains to models to follow, Lina Benabdallah, an expert on China-Africa relations foreign policy, stated that Africans associate economic development with freedom.<sup>313</sup> When economic development is attributed to China, China then becomes the model for political, economic, and governmental freedoms. This model runs counter to U.S. efforts to use ODF as a tool of GPC, as it offers countries the ability to rely on Chinese financing to bypass support they historically received from the United States. In summation, Gyude Moore, the former Liberian Minister of Public Works and Senior Policy Fellow at the Center for Global Development encapsulated China's motivations in one sentence. "Africa's economic importance to China is not as high as Africa's political importance to China. China does not have a lot of friends. So, for legitimacy of Chinese actions, domestic or international, China is going to continue to look to that vote rich 54

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<sup>310</sup> Van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*, 11–12.

<sup>311</sup> Hanauer and Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa*, 5–6.

<sup>312</sup> Stated to the Senate Foreign Relations committee during his Senate Confirmation hearing on January 19, 2021.

<sup>313</sup> Dr. Benabdallah during the Wilson Center Africa Symposium in March 2020.



country block.”<sup>314</sup> Deborah Brautigam and other China-Africa scholars echo these sentiments.<sup>315</sup>

Ethiopia in 2006 represents one example of African nations being able to rely on Chinese support to backstop their position. The Ethiopian government was able to “borrow power” from China to weather the international storm after contested elections in which 200 protestors were killed in post-election violence and the United States and the EU questioned the validity of the results. Due to China’s support, the government was able to ignore criticisms of the election results and avoid repercussions at the international level.<sup>316</sup> Ethiopia’s leadership then actively sought to emulate aspects of China’s development model as it viewed the developmental pathway provided by China as superior to that offered by the United States and other Western nations.<sup>317</sup> At the time, Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, “considers neo-liberal market reforms the hallmark of the West and the World Bank, but they did not generate the kind of growth Africa was looking for, while it weakened the role of the state.”<sup>318</sup>

### 3.3 Theory of U.S. Motivations

In examining strategic motivations behind the United States giving ODF to Africa, the United States uses ODF as a tool of great power to advance good governance and

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<sup>314</sup> Eric Olander, “Africa in the New Era of U.S.-China Relations,” August 11, 2020, in *The China in Africa*, produced by W. Gyude Moore and Judd Devermont, podcast, MP3 audio, 01:07:08, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/podcasts/africa-in-the-new-era-of-u-s-china-relations/>.

<sup>315</sup> Deborah Brautigam, “What are Taiwan, China, and the United States Doing in Somaliland?” *The China Africa Research Initiative* (blog), August 17, 2020, <http://www.chinaafricarealistory.com/2020/08/what-are-taiwan-china-and-united-states.html>.

<sup>316</sup> Hess, “The Role of China and Asymmetric Bargaining in Ethiopia’s Authoritarian Backsliding,” 118.

<sup>317</sup> Hess, 118; Elsje Fourie, “China’s Example for Meles’ Ethiopia: when Development ‘Models’ Land,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 53, no. 3 (2015): 289.

<sup>318</sup> Van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*, 162.

human well-being, reduce conflict, and foster political stability that thus cements its role as a rule maker on the international stage. This motivation is supported by research that found that good governance leaped to the forefront of the foreign policy agenda for the United States following the end of the Cold War.<sup>319</sup> Work by David Landry also found that governance played a much stronger role in U.S. development finance when compared to China.<sup>320</sup> The United States achieves this finance using conditionalities that act as the enforcement mechanism and ensures the necessary changes are enacted. Conditionalities are conditions attached to the aid or ODF to ensure the desired changes are implemented by the recipient nation to the satisfaction of the donor nation.<sup>321</sup> The United States gives aid targeted at improving overall well-being, reducing poverty, and also increasing diplomatic ties but it is contingent on meeting certain milestones in reducing corruption, as well as improving the protection of human rights. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) characterizes this contingency with a missional focus on international development through poverty reduction and strengthening of democratic governance.<sup>322</sup>

The United States achieves these objectives partially through conditionalities as described in the introduction. Conditionalities fall within the traditional frameworks of internal relations theories like neorealism and rationalist theory due in part because great power and the competition therein are defined as material, compulsory, and militarily.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Landry, “Under a Money Tree?” 149–168.

<sup>320</sup> Landry, 149.

<sup>321</sup> Paul Mosley, John Hudson, and Arjan Verschoor, “Aid, Poverty Reduction and the ‘New Conditionality’,” *The Economic Journal* 114, no. 496 (2004): F217–F243; Sari, “Making Sense of the New Episode of Great Power Rivalry in Africa through Neorealist Lenses.”

<sup>322</sup> “Mission, Vision and Values,” U.S. Agency for International Development, last updated February 16, 2018, <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/mission-vision-values>.

<sup>323</sup> Benabdallah, *Shaping the Future of Power*, 8.

Traditional GPC frameworks centered on hard power projection and proxy wars overlook the more nuanced current GPC in Africa with the component being ODF and the focus of this dissertation. Since the turn of the century, China has surpassed U.S. influence in Africa without wars, military might, or other tools that have been traditionally attributed to great power diplomacy.<sup>324</sup> It has done so using “no strings attached” ODF, which lacks the traditional conditionalities that accompanied it. These preconditions and understandings are fundamental to determining the differing strategic motivations of both countries by which they disburse ODF to SSA nations.

Figure 3 examines the three motivations for U.S. ODF to Africa.

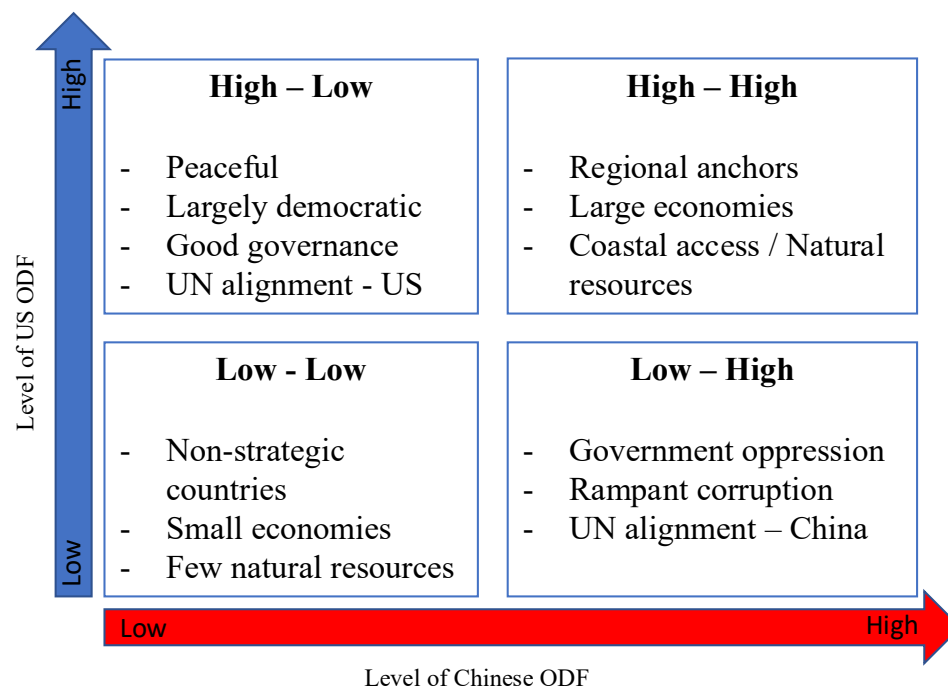


Figure 3. Theoretical Framework Chart.

<sup>324</sup> Benabdallah, 4.

The first motivation is overall well-being and good governance. Research by Burnside and Dollar also supported this motivation. They discovered a growing trend among U.S. aid agencies toward greater “selectivity” and channeling aid resources towards poor countries with reasonably good institutions and policies. An example is the Millennium Challenge Account.<sup>325</sup> Similar to motivations shared by Acemoglu and Robinson, in which poverty was a result of extractive institutions, the best way to overcome poverty was through economic growth associated with inclusive economic and political institutions.<sup>326</sup> This direction led to the “big push” effort by the United States in support of the MDGs that sought to end global poverty through economic development while supplying food aid, and improving overall health and well-being. In support of this motivation, one of the United States’ most successful programs in Africa, PEPFAR, was founded in 2003. It is still in existence today. PEPFAR has been credited with supporting over 14.6 million people in SSA.<sup>327</sup> This success, also reflected in the data, demonstrated that 70% of USAID funds to SSA were in the form of food aid/food security, emergency/disaster response, AIDS prevention and reduction, and improvements in governance.<sup>328</sup> This data highlights that the main strategic motivation for U.S. ODF is centered on the improvement of overall well-being and good governance in SSA.

The second strategic motivation for U.S. ODF in SSA is the reduction of regional conflict. This motivation gained prominence after 9/11, and more specifically, in Africa with the establishment of Africa Command (AFRICOM), which proposed the concept of

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<sup>325</sup> Burnside and Dollar, *Policies, and Growth*.

<sup>326</sup> Acemoglu and Robinson, *Why Nations Fail*, 91.

<sup>327</sup> Scott and Carter, “Distributing Dollars for Democracy,” 1–36.

<sup>328</sup> Author’s own calculations of data from USAID website.

active security to incorporate both conflict prevention and development as a “whole-of-government” approach.<sup>329</sup> This link and prioritization of regional peace and stability and ODF is outlined in the 2017 NSS. It articulates that the United States will partner with governments to end long running conflicts and is willing to suspend aid rather than see it be exploited.<sup>330</sup> The goal of reducing conflict works in tandem with the first strategic U.S. motivation of improving overall well-being and good governance. Scholars have written extensively on the link between conflict and development.<sup>331</sup> The focus of the former cannot exist without the latter. Additionally, since 9/11, the United States has strongly focused on stability and governance, as a lack of either or both of these stagnates growth, inhibits development, and offers a safe haven and recruiting tool to terrorist networks.<sup>332</sup>

This situation leads into the third strategic motivation for U.S. ODF, reduction and combating terrorism in the region. U.S. counter terrorism efforts were accelerated by 9/11, and specifically in Africa, U.S. policy blended counter-terrorism operations into the already existing “overall well-being and governance” motivation into a “winning hearts and minds effort” matching counter terrorism with small-scale development projects for local communities.<sup>333</sup> These efforts directly target a rise of ISIS affiliates in Mali and Niger, as well as the growth of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. These efforts also counter Al Shabab in Somalia, which has led attacks on Kenyan cities, such as Garissa, Mombasa, and Nairobi, and who claimed responsibility for the recent attack on Camp Simba, a U.S. air

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<sup>329</sup> Jan Bachmann, ““Kick down the Door, Clean up the Mess, and Rebuild the House”—The Africa Command and Transformation of the U.S. Military,” *Geopolitics* 15, no. 3 (2010): 564–585.

<sup>330</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>331</sup> Collier and Hoeffler, “Greed and Grievance in Civil War,” 563–595; Annan, “The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa,” 9–42; Busumtwi-Sam, “Sustainable Peace and Development in Africa,” 91–118.

<sup>332</sup> Bachmann, ““Kick down the Door,” 564–585.

<sup>333</sup> Bachmann, 564–585.

base in Lamu, Kenya. The Sahel has also seen an increased terrorist presence, currently not a good news story. All these regions act as a safe haven for the spread of terrorism and represent not only a threat to exacerbate regional conflict but also to stymie development and well-being improvements, as well as the international community.

### **3.4 Are They Competing?**

As it pertains to GPC, tying ODF to UN voting alignment is not new. Thacker found that the United States dictated policy to the IMF and that countries more closely aligned with the United States were more likely to receive funding from the IMF.<sup>334</sup> More recently, in 2018, former President Trump expressed a desire to tie aid more closely to UN voting alignment.<sup>335</sup> Previous literature has also examined the relationship between aid and votes within the UNSC as it pertains to the United States.<sup>336</sup> However, at the time of study, sufficient data on the level of Chinese finance was lacking. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap in literature. The data reflects a similar motivation for China in that China has given more aid to countries that align with it in voting at the UN.<sup>337</sup> In terms of determining if ODF in both nations work at cross-purposes to one another, UN voting alignment has proven to be a useful measure of influence and thus competition between the two countries. A report by the Council on Foreign Relations details other areas in which Chinese ODF has undermined U.S. efforts in Africa. The report highlighted that China's offerings as an

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<sup>334</sup> Thacker, "The High Politics of IMF Lending," 38–75.

<sup>335</sup> Mark Landler, "Trump Threatens to End American Aid: 'We're Watching Those Votes' at the U.N.," *New York Times*, December 20, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/20/world/middleeast/trump-threatens-to-end-american-aid-were-watching-those-votes-at-the-un.html>.

<sup>336</sup> Kuziemko and Werker, "How Much Is a Seat on the Security Council Worth?" 905–930.

<sup>337</sup> Axel Dreher et al., "Apples and Dragon Fruits: The Determinants of Aid and Other Forms of State Financing from China to Africa," *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2018): 182–194.

alternative source of funding undermined the West's efforts to curb human rights violations in Sudan and halt its engagement in genocide.<sup>338</sup> Human rights votes within the UN have been areas of competition between the United States and China with China leveraging African nations' support as it attempts to position itself as a leader of the global South and developing nations in opposition to U.S. criticisms of Xinjiang.<sup>339</sup>

### **3.5 Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

Given the following strategic motivations for the disbursement of ODF to African nations, Figure 3 also shows the theoretical framework by which to help understand the motivations along with the expected characteristics and outcomes that accompany high levels of U.S. and/or Chinese ODF. Countries with high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF are expected to have the characteristics of being strategic countries both regionally and internationally. These countries are also seen to be regional "anchors" with large economies and have a combination of coastal access, large natural resource deposits, or a combination of the two.

### **3.6 Anticipated Observables**

Countries with low Chinese ODF but high U.S. ODF are expected to be relatively peaceful countries or countries just emerging from crisis, since stability is one of the three motivations for U.S. ODF. Other expected characteristics are that the country is democratic with good governance systems in place, such as an independent judiciary with free and fair

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<sup>338</sup> Anthony Lake et al., *More than Humanitarianism: A Strategic U.S. Approach toward Africa* (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2006), 40–41.

<sup>339</sup> Eric Olander, "China Champions the Human Rights of 'Africans and People of African Descent,' in UN Squabble with the U.S.," July 14, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/07/14/china-champions-the-human-rights-of-africans-and-people-of-african-descent-in-un-squabble-with-the-u-s/>.

elections. These countries are also expected to be more aligned with U.S. voting patterns in the UN.

Conversely, SSA countries with high levels of Chinese ODF but low levels of U.S. ODF are expected to have high levels of government oppression and violence within the civilian population. Poor corruption controls in place are expected to be lacking and these countries are to be more aligned with Chinese voting patterns in the UN.

Finally, countries that receive relatively low amounts of ODF from both the United States and China are expected to be non-strategic countries with small economies and few natural resources. This dissertation does not focus on these types of countries and instead utilizes the other three quadrants upon which to select the case studies.

### **3.7 The Cost**

While this dissertation is focused on both the motivations behind U.S. and Chinese ODF along with determining if they work in parallel or at cross-purposes to one another, it is important to also address the costs of ODF for each country. Costs in the sense of what factors would deter the disbursement of aid from either the United States or China.

For the United States, conditionalities are attached to its ODF for this reason. Conditions, such as for governance and corruption, need to show that demonstrated improvements are in place before ODF will be disbursed to a country. The United States prides itself on being a transparent governance model to which the leaders are accountable to the people. This accountability also translates to stewardship of tax dollars from which ODF stems. A lack of accountability for the disbursement of dollars, or funding going to corrupt or non-democratic regimes would face negative backlash within the United States.



For this reason, good governance and anti-corruption are one of the primary motivators for U.S. ODF, and that the opposite of these motivators, poor governance and corruption, would deter ODF. Additionally, research also examined the internal drivers resulting in tradeoffs that past U.S. presidents, such as George Bush and Bill Clinton, have made as it pertains to military and economic intervention in SSA.<sup>340</sup>

Tanzania is an example of the United States' ability to tie aid to conditionalities. When President Magafuli barred teenage mothers from education, the World Bank halted a \$300 million education project loan as a result.<sup>341</sup> The U.S. 2017 NSS for Africa followed up by outlining the following priority direction with respect to the political actions, "The United States will partner with governments, civil society, and regional organizations to end long-running, violent conflicts...when there is no alternative, we will suspend aid rather than see it exploited by corrupt elites"<sup>342</sup>

For China, two drivers, internal or external, can determine the cost of supplying ODF to African nations. Internal opinion within China can be a deterrent for Chinese ODF to African nations, which is why Chinese lending has traditionally been opaque in nature; not only to hide the terms or existence of the funding from external actors but also from the Chinese public. Scholars have argued that China's political leaders are motivated by one thing: survivability of the CCP.<sup>343</sup> Should the disbursement of ODF to African nations threaten that survival at some point, it would be another, more dominant, deterrent.

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<sup>340</sup> Helen V. Milner and Dustin Tingley, *Sailing the Water's Edge: The Domestic Politics of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 211.

<sup>341</sup> Omar Mohammed, "Under Pressure from Western Donors, Tanzanian Leader Prefers Chinese Aid," Reuters, accessed March 27, 2019, <https://af.reuters.com/article/tanzaniaNews/idAFL8N1Y250N>.

<sup>342</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

<sup>343</sup> Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Externally, and more strategically, diplomatic relations with Taiwan by a country is automatic disqualification from being eligible for Chinese ODF, as it runs counter to its views on Taiwan's status as a separate country. In addition, China's non-interference policy as it relates to ODF has had a negative impact on its perception internationally, as it is viewed as providing ODF to prop up corrupt governments in exchange for natural resources.<sup>344</sup>

Both donor and recipient countries however are able to escape costs, such as nationalist resentment at home, by operating through international bodies like the UN.<sup>345</sup> All these drivers point back into supporting this dissertation's use of UN voting alignment as a dependent variable, contingent on ODF as measure of GPC between the United States and China.

### **3.8 Hypothesis**

Using Figure 3 paired with the motivations by which both the United States and China give ODF enables the determination of these conditions to work in complementary or cross-purpose forms. My hypotheses are as follows.

If development finance from the United States to SSA is motivated by overall well-being, good governance, and reducing regional conflict and terrorism, then it will target countries with violence, democratic development, or corruption controls resulting in UN voting alignment with the United States.

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<sup>344</sup> Yun Sun, "China's Aid to Africa: Monster or Messiah," *Brookings East Asia Commentary* 75 (2014).

<sup>345</sup> Axel Dreher, Jan-Egbert Sturm, and James Raymond Vreeland, "Global Horse Trading: IMF Loans for Votes in the United Nations Security Council," *European Economic Review* 53, no. 7 (2009): 742–757.

If Chinese development finance to SSA is motivated by mercantilist self-enrichment, increased market access, and shifting Africa to a more Chinese centric development model, then it will target countries with low democratic development, corruption controls, and low levels of violence resulting in increased trade and UN voting alignment with China.

## **CHAPTER 4. QUANTITATIVE DATA, METHODS AND ANALYSIS**

This dissertation examines the relationship between aid and the conditions upon which each of the great power countries, the United States and China, give aid and use it to determine if these conditions are complementary; in other words, that they work in an additive way, or contrary meaning they work in opposite fashion in which one undermines the other. Utilizing both the theoretical framework outlined in the previous chapter and regression analysis, this dissertation tests the following hypothesis to determine motivations for ODF between the United States and China to countries in SSA.

If development finance from the United States to SSA is motivated by overall well-being, good governance, and reducing regional conflict and terrorism, then it will target countries with high levels of violence or high levels of democratic development and corruption controls to improve regional stability, governance, and individual overall well-being.

If Chinese development finance to SSA is motivated by mercantilist self-enrichment, increased market access, and shifting Africa to a more Chinese centric development model, then it will target countries with high levels of natural resources, large populations, and countries aligning with China at the UN to enrich itself and its economy while also balancing against U.S. global power influence through the UN.

ODF and the determinants of aid have been examined at length within the context of development,<sup>346</sup> but are not regularly associated with GPC. ODF from the United States<sup>347</sup> and China<sup>348</sup> have been examined within the context of international political economy as it pertains to influence. Research by Blair, Marty, and Roessler found that in some cases, Chinese aid to Africa reduced the recipient nations' support for China and increased support for the United States and other Western powers.<sup>349</sup> It has also been examined as an instrument of foreign policy and using UN voting is an example of this influence. Kuzeimko and Werker concluded that countries that were non-permanent members of the UN Security Council were more likely to receive additional financing from the United States, as well as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) with which the United States has historically had great influence.<sup>350</sup>

This dissertation furthers this knowledge and joins this robust literature by connecting the two areas and examining the motivations for ODF by the United States and China as a tool of GPC in Africa. This dissertation also determines if they are working at cross-purposes, defined as the extent to which one policy or actors' actions undermines or works counter to that of another. This dissertation answers the following questions: what strategic motivations for U.S. and Chinese ODF can explain variations in aid flow, and if

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<sup>346</sup> Landry, *Comparing the Determinants of Western and Chinese Development Finance Flows to Africa*; Raghuram G. Rajan and Arvind Subramanian, "What Undermines Aid's Impact on Growth?" no. w11657 (working paper, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2005); Paul Collier and David Dollar, "Development Effectiveness: What Have We Learnt?" *The Economic Journal* 114, no. 496 (2004): F244–F271.

<sup>347</sup> Axel Dreher, Peter Nunnenkamp, and Rainer Thiele, "Does U.S. Aid Buy UN General Assembly Votes? A Disaggregated Analysis," *Public Choice* 136, no. 1–2 (2008): 139–164.

<sup>348</sup> Dreher et al., "Apples and Dragon Fruits," 182–194.

<sup>349</sup> Robert A. Blair, Robert Marty, and Philip Roessler, *Foreign Aid and Soft Power: Great Power Competition in Africa in the Early 21st Century*, AidData working paper #86 (Williamsburg, VA: AidData at William & Mary, 2019).

<sup>350</sup> Kuziemko and Werker, "How Much Is a Seat on the Security Council Worth?" 905–930.

these motivations are similar across each great power? If these motivations are dissimilar, are they reflective of efforts by each great power to balance against the other or buck-pass the responsibility or burden to other countries. What does it show concerning the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa?

#### **4.1 Methodology and Data**

This dissertation uses a mixed methods approach by combining both quantitative and qualitative research to test and add validity to the subject under study.<sup>351</sup> This chapter utilizes the quantitative approach to address the questions laid out previously and analyzes a collection of datasets compiled by the author. Regression analysis is part of the quantitative research and is a statistical method of analysis to analyze the relationship between two to more variables.<sup>352</sup> They reveal the influence of one or more independent variables on the dependent variable. The two different types of variables (independent and dependent) selected for this regression analysis are detailed in the following section. To answer the two research questions, two separate regressions were selected to be run.

The first regression was run to test the differing motivations for ODF from China and the United States, as surmised through the literature review and theory sections. The second regression was a determination of how GPC is playing out between the two nations in terms of UN voting alignment to be able to determine if the motivations were working at cross-purposes to one another.

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<sup>351</sup> R. Burke Johnson, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner, "Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1, no. 2 (2007): 112–133.

<sup>352</sup> "What is Regression Analysis and Why Should I Use It?" Alchemer, June 8, 2021, <https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/regression-analysis/>.

This dissertation also uses panel data, or data that contains observations about different cross sections over time.<sup>353</sup> In this case, the observations are ODF dollars to specific African nations from the United States and China with the timeframe of the years 2000–2019. The timeframe selected was in large part due to data availability from China. The source for the data on both ODF from the United States and China is detailed as follows. The first regression run in which ODF was the dependent variable was run as a gamma model and the rationale and explanation for this selection is detailed in the following section. The second regression in which the ratio of UN voting alignment between the three countries (United States-China-recipient nation) used a zero-inflated beta model and the rationale and justification for this selection is detailed in the second section.

From a data perspective, data from China, specifically in Africa, has been difficult to obtain historically and has been inconsistent. As with all data from China, it is also understood that given the traditional opacity behind Chinese ODF to nations, these numbers can be met with some degree of skepticism.

## **4.2 Dependent Variable 1—Measuring Motivations**

The data for both regression measures for ODF are in millions of dollars and only includes disbursed dollars by the United States and China to the recipient nation.<sup>354</sup> The rational for utilizing millions of dollars as the unit of measure is that during the regression analysis, it would be difficult to determine the impact of a singular dollar on additional variables. The inverse of determining it in terms of billions was also considered but much

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<sup>353</sup> Eric, “Introduction to the Fundamentals of Panel Data,” *Aptech Systems* (blog), November 29, 2019, <https://www.aptech.com/blog/introduction-to-the-fundamentals-of-panel-data/>.

<sup>354</sup> The dollars have been normalized to 2014 USD.

of the ODF given to recipient nations did not reach the billion-dollar threshold and would make the ability to determine motivations and if they work at cross-purposes to each other, equally as difficult as if it were a singular dollar.

The dependent variables for the first regression run are ODF dollars in millions from both the United States and China. This dissertation employs panel ODF from two difference sources. For the U.S. sample, it uses data from USAID in both the military and economic categories.<sup>355</sup> It is also defined as “funds or technical assistance given primarily to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries.”<sup>356</sup> For the Chinese sample, it uses data from Johns Hopkins-China Africa Research Initiative in conjunction with Boston University’s Global Development Policy Center.<sup>357</sup> Understanding that both the United States and China have different conceptions about how to define and categorize aid and development finance and that this topic has been detailed and debated by numerous scholars,<sup>358</sup> it is beside the point. Regardless of how ODF is given or how the donor country defines it, it can be categorized into three areas: humanitarian, military, and economic. For this dissertation, ODF encompasses these areas.

The regression was run as a gamma model based on the notion that ODF, as a dependent variable, can go from zero to infinity; as theoretically, the amount of ODF a country can disburse is unlimited. The generalized linear model (GLM) for the gamma distribution is most commonly used in modeling continuous, non-negative, and positively

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<sup>355</sup> According to the USAID database on ODF data.

<sup>356</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*, 166.

<sup>357</sup> “Chinese Loans to Africa Database,” Global Development Policy Center, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.bu.edu/gdp/chinese-loans-to-africa-database/>.

<sup>358</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*, 166–172; Landry, “Under a Money Tree?” 1–20; Brautigam and Hwang, “Eastern Promises.”



skewed data<sup>359</sup> The ODF data typically are as such. The gamma model also accounts for the zero values in the dependent variable to accommodate for years in which either the United States or China did not provide aid or ODF to one of the nations examined.

#### 4.3 Dependent Variable 2—Measuring GPC

Scholars have argued that within bodies, such as the UN, China has sought to “soft balance” against U.S. efforts to limit its foreign policy successes.<sup>360</sup> Scholars have historically used UN votes to measure foreign policy preferences.<sup>361</sup> Between 1998 and 2012, Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten found that 75 published articles used UN votes to measure national preferences of countries.<sup>362</sup> Thacker found that the United States dictated policy to the IMF and that countries that were more closely aligned with the United States were more likely to receive funding from the IMF.<sup>363</sup> In 2018, former President Trump expressed a desire to tie aid more closely to UN voting alignment.<sup>364</sup> Previous literature has also examined the relationship between aid and votes within the UNSC as it pertains to the United States.<sup>365</sup> At the time of study, however, sufficient data on level of Chinese finance was lacking and this gap in literature is what this dissertation seeks to fill.

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<sup>359</sup> Xin Chen, Aleksandr Y. Aravkin, and R. Douglas Martin, “Generalized Linear Model for Gamma Distributed Variables via Elastic Net Regularization,” arXiv:1804.07780 (April 20, 2018): 1–16.

<sup>360</sup> Joel Wuthnow, *Chinese Diplomacy and the UN Security Council: Beyond the Veto* (London: Routledge, 2013), 7.

<sup>361</sup> M. Margaret Ball, “Bloc Voting in the General Assembly,” *International Organization* 5, no. 1 (1951): 3–31; Arend Lijphart, “The Analysis of Bloc Voting in the General Assembly: A Critique and a Proposal,” *The American Political Science Review* 57, no. 4 (1963): 902; Bruce E. Moon, “Consensus or Compliance? Foreign-policy Change and External Dependence,” *International Organization* 39, no. 2 (1985): 297–329; Richard Vengroff, “Instability and Foreign Policy Behavior: Black Africa in the U.N.,” *American Journal of Political Science* 20, no. 3 (1976): 425; Bruce M. Russett, “Discovering Voting Groups in the United Nations,” *The American Political Science Review* 60, no. 2 (1966): 327–339.

<sup>362</sup> Michael A. Bailey, Anton Strezhnev, and Erik Voeten, “Estimating Dynamic State Preferences from United Nations Voting Data,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 2 (2017): 430–456.

<sup>363</sup> Thacker, “The High Politics of IMF Lending,” 38–75.

<sup>364</sup> Landler, “Trump Threatens to End American Aid.”

<sup>365</sup> Kuziemko and Werker, “How Much Is a Seat on the Security Council Worth?” 905–930.

Research by Dreher et al. found that China has given more aid to countries that align with it in voting at the UN.<sup>366</sup> Wuthnow demonstrated that China has used its influence at the UNSC to clash with the United States' strategic and normative goals.<sup>367</sup> Flores-Macías and Kreps support this viewpoint. They examined the policy consequences of China's commercial relations in Africa and Latin America from 1992 to 2006 and found that the more a state traded with China, the more likely it was to converge with China on foreign policy issues and diverge from the United States.<sup>368</sup> Chinese ODF has also undermined U.S. efforts in Africa, as detailed by a report from the Council on Foreign Relations that highlights China's offerings as an alternative source of funding, which undermined the West's efforts to curb human rights violations in Sudan and halt its engagement in genocide.<sup>369</sup> Human rights votes within the UN have been areas of competition between the United States and China with China leveraging African nations' support while attempting to position itself as a leader of the global South and developing nations in opposition to U.S. criticisms of Xinjiang.<sup>370</sup>

Therefore, as a measure of GPC between the United States and China, this dissertation utilizes UN voting data from the General Assembly provided by Erik Voeten,<sup>371</sup> along with the author's own additions.<sup>372</sup> Bailey, Streshnev, and Voeten

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<sup>366</sup> Dreher et al., "Apples and Dragon Fruits," 182–194.

<sup>367</sup> Wuthnow, *Chinese Diplomacy and the UN Security Council*, 10.

<sup>368</sup> Gustavo A. Flores-Macías, and Sarah E. Kreps, "The Foreign Policy Consequences of Trade: China's Commercial Relations with Africa and Latin America, 1992–2006," *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 2 (2013): 357–371.

<sup>369</sup> Lake et al., *More than Humanitarianism*, 40–41.

<sup>370</sup> Olander, "China Champions the Human Rights."

<sup>371</sup> Erik Voeten, "Data and Analyses of Voting in the UN General Assembly," in *Routledge Handbook of International Organization*, ed. Bob Reinalda (Rochester, NY: SSRN, 2013), 1, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2111149>.

<sup>372</sup> The UN voting database provided by Voeten only went up until 2014. The author added in the remaining voting alignments for each of the 48 nations from 2014–2017 from the U.S. State Department archives on UN voting alignment.

calculated an ideal point estimate for votes at the UN from 1946 to 2012. The shortcoming of this variable for use in this dissertation was that the data did not extend over the timeline of the study, 2000 to 2017. The author, however, using this data set as a foundation, constructed the dependent variable as a ratio of voting alignment with either the United States or China by each of the 48 SSA nations. The rationale for using this variable was based on the knowledge that if the variable was measured as the total vote numbers or the change in votes year to year, it would difficult to determine if the increase or decrease in votes with the United States were in direct competition to China.

Voeten categorized the UN votes into U.S. alignment and not aligning with the United States. Not aligning with the United States did not necessarily mean alignment with China. This dissertation builds on this research. It adds in two ways: adding in “alignment with China” as another category, and adding three years (2015–2017) of voting data. The four resulting categories of alignment within UN votes were U.S. alignment, Chinese alignment, aligns with both the United States and China, and non-align/abstain from voting. Each singular resolution vote was categorized into one of these four categories and the total votes were tabulated for each year, which resulted in the calculated alignment ratio.

Research has found that U.S. aid had no impact on United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) votes, as the resolutions were not deemed important enough for the United States to use its resources to influence outcomes,<sup>373</sup> and that UNGA votes were less strategic.<sup>374</sup> This lack of importance is largely due to the understanding that the United

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<sup>373</sup> T. Y. Wang, “U.S. Foreign Aid and UN Voting: An Analysis of Important Issues,” *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1999): 199–210.

<sup>374</sup> David B. Carter and Randall Stone, “Democracy and Multilateralism: The Case of Vote Buying in the UN General Assembly,” *International Organization* 69, no. 1 (2015): 1–33.

States does not have high stakes in most issues put to a vote within the UNGA.<sup>375</sup> The United States is more likely to invest in securing alignment—and care about countries that do not align with it—for votes important to U.S. interests.<sup>376</sup> These votes deemed important by the U.S. State Department are votes that the U.S. State Department declared it lobbied other countries to support.<sup>377</sup> These votes are typically a smaller subset of the total UNGA votes, i.e., in 2016, the State Department report marked 14 of the 99 UNGA votes as important.<sup>378</sup> They are resolutions showing the correlation between U.S. foreign aid and voting patterns as high.<sup>379</sup> Important UNGA votes can also be viewed as Chinese efforts to balance against U.S. influence and buck passing to other countries to advocate on China’s behalf, as was seen in the Xinjiang vote, whereby Cuba’s UN representative wrote the statement in support of China’s policies.<sup>380</sup> There is “good reason to believe that China will lobby extensively in [the] UNGA on certain issues it deem[s] important,”<sup>381</sup> while conversely understanding that votes the United States deems politically important are likely also significant to other great powers, including China.<sup>382</sup> On this basis, to understand better how the United States and China were competing using ODF, and if they were able

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<sup>375</sup> Wang “U.S. Foreign Aid and UN Voting,” 199–210; Sarah Rose, *Linking U.S. Foreign Aid to UN Votes: What Are the Implications?* (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2018), [https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/linking-us-foreign-aid-un-votes-what-are-implications\\_0.pdf](https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/linking-us-foreign-aid-un-votes-what-are-implications_0.pdf).

<sup>376</sup> The U.S. State Department began classifying UNGA votes as important in 1984. Wang, 199–210.

<sup>377</sup> Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten, “Estimating Dynamic State Preferences from United Nations Voting Data,” 430–456.

<sup>378</sup> Rose, *Linking US Foreign Aid to UN Votes*.

<sup>379</sup> Wang, “U.S. Foreign Aid and UN Voting,” 199–210.

<sup>380</sup> Catherine Putz, “Which Countries Are for or against China’s Xinjiang Policies?” *The Diplomat*, October 9, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/2020-edition-which-countries-are-for-or-against-chinas-xinjiang-policies/>.

<sup>381</sup> Wen-Chin Wu, Ronan Tse-Min Fu, and Hsin-Hsin Pan, “China’s Economic Weight on the Scale of Sino-U.S. Confrontation—Evidence from the United Nations General Assembly Voting Data,” in *Political Economy of International Organizations Conference*, 2016.

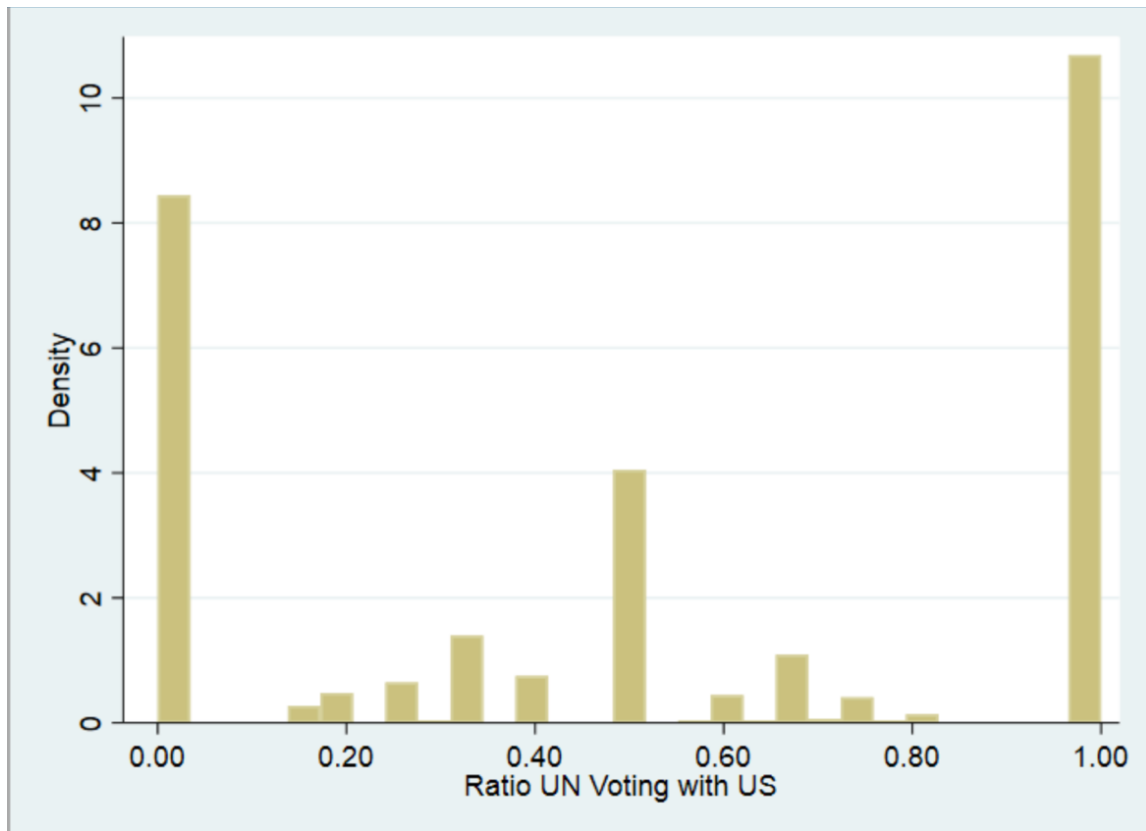
<sup>382</sup> Dreher et al., “Apples and Dragon Fruits,” 182–194.

to use ODF as a tool of GPC to align countries to itself, the important UN votes were used as the variable.

Analysis of this data demonstrated that over the 20-year period from 2000 to 2019, not a single African nation voted “no” in alignment with the United States for UN votes pertaining to Cuba, Palestine, Israel, globalization, and UN Human Rights Counsel reports. This vote was consistent across nations regardless of the levels of ODF they were receiving from the United States. These votes can be seen therefore as votes in which no amount of ODF from the United States would move the needle on their decision. These resolutions also had little impact on African nations in terms of consequences if they voted for them, thereby making them easy for African countries to oppose the United States on and difficult to determine UN voting motivations. Additionally, as countries consistently opposed the United States on these issues, it could distort the data in which an opposition to the United States in these areas could be conflated as a vote in favor of China’s position when it would be opposed to the United States regardless of China’s position on these votes. These votes pertained specifically to Cuba, Palestine, Israel, globalization, and UN Human Rights Council reports and were removed from the analysis.

For this regression, a zero-one inflated beta model was used as the voting alignment data was concentrated around the zero (alignment with China) and one (alignment with the United States) shown in Figure 4. A normal beta regression measures the dependent variable on the interval of (0,1) meaning that years in which a country aligned only with China for all votes (zero) and years in which a country aligned only with the United States

for all votes (one) would be undefined in the model.<sup>383</sup> A zero-one inflated beta regression measures the dependent variable on the [0,1] interval ensuring that all UN votes are therefore included in the model.



This figure shows the distribution of the ratios of the votes for all votes from the 48 SSA nations from 2000–2017. A ratio of 1.00 shows 100% alignment with the United States and a 0% alignment with China by a country’s vote. A 0.00 ratio shows a 0% alignment with the United States and a 100% alignment with China by a country’s vote.

Figure 4. Histogram of UN Voting Data.

<sup>383</sup> David Muchlinski, “Swords and Plowshares: Property Rights, Collective Action, and Nonstate Governance in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1920–1948,” *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 4 (2021): 1373–1387.

#### 4.4 Independent Variables

The first motivation for Chinese ODF laid out in the theoretical framework was basic mercantilist self-enrichment, as demonstrated by China targeting resource rich countries, such as Angola (oil) and the DRC (cobalt) to enrich itself and meet its growing demands for raw materials. Conversely, for the United States, natural resources have not been a motivator for ODF but should countries like Liberia (diamonds) fall prey to the “resource curse,”<sup>384</sup> in which natural resources lead to and fund conflict, U.S. ODF would be expected to facilitate regional peace and stability. To capture these motivations along with reflecting the characteristic of African nations examined, the first independent variable included in the analysis was resources as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP).

China was able to use aid and development finance from Japan to establish a manufacturing foundation contributing to the growth it has experienced.<sup>385</sup> Scholars have cautioned that sustained levels of aid contribute to “Dutch Disease” within a recipient country thereby negatively impacting exports and growth.<sup>386</sup> Scholars have stated that as it pertains to Africa, China has sought to export its model of development to other countries through its use of ODF.<sup>387</sup> To determine if this level of aid was a motivator for China and if in fact, it led to exports within a country, exports of goods and services as a percentage of GDP was added as a variable to the analysis.

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<sup>384</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “Resource Rents, Governance, and Conflict,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 4 (August 2005): 625–33.

<sup>385</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*.

<sup>386</sup> Rajan and Subramanian, “Aid and Growth,” 643–665; Raghuram G. Rajan and Arvind Subramanian, “Aid, Dutch Disease, and Manufacturing Growth,” *Journal of Development Economics* 94, no. 1 (2011): 106–118.

<sup>387</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*.

To test the “debt trap diplomacy” motivation for Chinese ODF, in which China is perceived to be saddling nations with unsustainable debt burdens to seize strategic assets in the recipient nation, the debt to GDP ratio was included as an independent variable. Additionally, resources, governance, corruption, and violence prevention were all identified as motivations for U.S. or Chinese ODF in the theoretical chapter and were added as variables to test these motivations.

The first motivation for U.S. ODF, as detailed in the theoretical framework, is overall good governance, anti-corruption, and overall well-being. Good governance is a measure of “both the extent and the quality of governance in African countries.”<sup>388</sup> Therefore, two indicators were selected. The Political Stability Index (PSI) was used as the first indicator and is defined as the “perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism.”<sup>389</sup> This index ranges on a scale from -2.5 (least stable) to 2.5 (most stable). The second indicator is the Corruption Controls Index (CCI) as an independent variable in the regression. Both the CCI and PSI come from the World Bank and are a subset of the Worldwide Governance Indicators. The CCI is defined as the “Perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as “capture” of the state by elites and private interests.”<sup>390</sup> This index ranges on a scale from -2.5 (most corrupt) to 2.5 (least corrupt).

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<sup>388</sup> Landry, “Under a Money Tree?” 1–20.

<sup>389</sup> “Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: Estimate,” World Bank, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/political-stability-and-absence-violenceterrorism-estimate>.

<sup>390</sup> “TCdata360,” World Bank, accessed March 10, 2021, [https://tcdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/hc153e067?country=BRA&indicator=364&viz=line\\_chart&years=1996,2017](https://tcdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/hc153e067?country=BRA&indicator=364&viz=line_chart&years=1996,2017).



The second U.S. motivation, regional peace and stability, led to the inclusion of a violence variable in the regression. The data for the variable are sourced from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) database and is specified as violence against civilians resulting in death. Violence against the civilian population would be an important driver for U.S. ODF and would be expected to display a correlation between the two.

The UN voting alignment, with either the United States or China as detailed previously as a dependent variable, was included as an independent variable in the first regression. It was included to determine if UN voting alignment was a motivation for either of the countries in their disbursement of ODF.

Research by Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland demonstrated a robust positive relationship between World Bank development projects received by a country and its temporary membership in the UNSC.<sup>391</sup> To determine if the correlation was based on UN voting alignment or the fact that the recipient nation held a temporary seat on the UN security council, a dummy variable for UNSC membership was included as a variable. Dreher et al. created a database of dummy variables for UNSC membership and this database was utilized in this dissertation.

In addition to gross national income (GNI) per capita, two other variables were added to reflect the characteristics of African nations examined in the research. The two other independent variables added were GNI per capita (adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP)) and population.<sup>392</sup> The motivation was to determine if ODF was only

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<sup>391</sup> Axel Dreher, Jan-Egbert Sturm, and James Raymond Vreeland, "Development Aid and International Politics: Does Membership on the UN Security Council Influence World Bank Decisions?" *Journal of Development Economics* 88, no. 1 (2009): 1–18.

<sup>392</sup> Landry, "Under a Money Tree?" 1–20.

motivated by development or if additional motivations were behind the reason the United States and China provide ODF to SSA nations.

Both regressions included aid given the previous year by each country (aid lagged 1-yr) as an independent variable to determine if aid was consistently dispersed over time in that countries that received it one year also received ODF the following year or if it was year specific. Table 2 shows the data aggregated for ODF to SSA.

Table 2. Data Aggregated on ODF to SSA.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
US aid & ODF (In millions USD)	864	111.47	178.01	0	999.57
Chinese aid & ODF (In millions USD)	829	163.73	810.39	0	19144.73
Debt to GDP (%)	784	58.55	60.24	0.5	720.73
Resources (% of GDP)	841	12.54	12.21	0.001	84.24
Population	852	9,567,653	18,500,000	41,693	191,000,000
Political Stability Index	806	-0.501	0.884	-2.7	1.28
Corruption Controls Index	807	-0.622	0.614	-1.83	1.22
GNI Per Capita (Current USD)	825	3996.9	4960.63	420	28750
Exports (% of GDP)	794	32.74	21.37	4.43	158.27
ACLED Violence	762	158.1	534.25	0	5,958
UN Voting with US	852	0.528	0.416	0.00	1.00
UN Voting with China	852	0.377	0.398	0.00	1.00
UN Security Council Member	864	0.049	0.215	0.00	1.00

One observation from the summary statistics as it pertains to GPC between the United States and China is the average ratio for which the 48 SSA nations voted in alignment with them. The average in which countries aligned with the United States at the UN was 52.3% of the time. Meanwhile, the same subset of countries voted in alignment with China on average 37.7% of the time. This percentage is understandable since the United States has given sustained levels of ODF to all the 48 African nations over the 18-

year period examined and the expectation that it would lead to greater alignment between recipient nations and the United States.

#### **4.5 Analysis**

Based on research and subsequent data analysis, it has shown that the United States has given aid to all 48 countries examined in SSA for almost every year examined in the 18-year time period. China has given specific amounts during specific years with most of the ODF funds being given to resource rich countries in the early 2000s and adding on more countries after the initiation of the BRI in 2013. Additionally, no country received aid from China until it had adhered to the one China policy or if it maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan. As of 2017, only five countries of the 48 examined did not receive ODF from China: Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Príncipe. However, to date, only one country of the 48 examined does not receive aid or ODF from China, Eswatini. The primary reason is that Eswatini refuses to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan, seen as an ally for over 50 years.<sup>393</sup> Table 3 shows the regression analysis from 2000–2017 of ODF for all 48 SSA countries.

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<sup>393</sup> Nick Noack, “All of Africa is Now Competing for Chinese Money. Except for One Country,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/09/03/all-africa-is-now-competing-chinese-money-except-one-country/>.

Table 3. Regression Analysis on ODF for All 48 SSA Countries from 2000–2017.

<i>For All Countries from 2000-2017</i>				
	<i>US Aid &amp; ODF<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Chinese Aid &amp; ODF<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>US Aid &amp; ODF (Country Effects)</i>	<i>Chinese Aid &amp; ODF (Country Effects)</i>
US aid & ODF (lagged 1-yr)	0.0044*** (0.0004)		0.0044*** (0.0008)	
Chinese aid & ODF (lagged 1-yr)		0.0001 (0.0002)		0.0001 (0.0001)
Debt to GDP (%)	-0.0005 (0.0007)	-0.0046 (0.0040)	-0.0005 (0.0008)	-0.0046 (0.0074)
Population <sup>‡</sup>	0.4733*** (0.0373)	1.1334*** (0.1405)	0.4733*** (0.0870)	1.1334*** (0.2111)
Resources as a % of GDP	-0.0134** (0.0041)	0.0276* (0.0131)	-0.0134 (0.0098)	0.0276† (0.0143)
Political Stability Index	-0.0582 (0.0811)	-0.1409 (0.2637)	-0.0582 (0.1599)	-0.1409 (0.3258)
Corruption Controls Index	0.8115*** (0.1013)	-0.2934 (0.2752)	0.8115* (0.2756)	-0.2934 (0.3150)
GNI Per Capita <sup>‡</sup>	-0.5198*** (0.0694)	1.1764*** (0.2134)	-0.5198** (0.1950)	1.1764*** (0.2380)
Exports as % GDP	0.0177*** (0.0033)	0.0038 (0.0095)	0.0177* (0.0090)	0.0038 (0.0126)
ACLED Violence <sup>‡</sup>	0.0963*** (0.0258)	-0.0367 (0.0917)	0.0963* (0.0435)	-0.0367 (0.1376)
UN Security Council Temporary Member	-0.0622 (0.1592)	-0.0265 (0.5024)	-0.0622 (0.1961)	-0.0265 (0.4708)
UN Voting with US	-0.0021 (0.0900)		-0.0021 (0.1050)	
UN Voting with China		-0.2329 (0.3065)		-0.2329 (0.3193)

Dependent variables = Aid and ODF from United States and China

Standard errors are in parenthesis. StataMP 16.0.

\*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05, † p < 0.1

<sup>1</sup>U.S. and Chinese aid/ODF are run as a gamma regression

<sup>‡</sup>Values are logged

The regressions in Table 3 identify potential motivations for Chinese and U.S. ODF. The correlations reveal the variables that matter for ODF from both countries, historical disbursement of ODF, population, and poverty, were significant while resources had additional significance for China only while corruption and violence were significant only for the United States. It should be noted that Chinese ODF did not have any statistically significant correlation with a nation's debt to GDP ratio. This finding matters because U.S. officials have consistently promoted "debt-trap diplomacy" as China's motivations in Africa.<sup>394</sup> Additional research by Deborah Brautigam of the China-Africa Research Initiative,<sup>395</sup> and Michael Pettis, a China economist and Carnegie Senior Fellow, has also supported this lack of correlation.<sup>396</sup>

#### **4.6 Historical Disbursement of ODF**

Historical disbursement of ODF between the United States and recipient nations has been motivators. Given the nature of ODF disbursed during the previous year to act as a proxy for continued motivation to give ODF, a positive correlation between the two variables is expected and has been demonstrated. The data supported this correlation, which showed the United States gave ODF to every African nation examined every year over the 18-year period. China by contrast gives targeted ODF over specific years to

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<sup>394</sup> Chaellaney, "China's Debt-Trap Diplomacy."

<sup>395</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14; "Debt Relief with Chinese Characteristics: Sri Lanka, Angola, and Beyond, with Deborah Brautigam," February 23, 2021, YouTube, video, 1:14:05, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5SvFjlu9ZM>.

<sup>396</sup> Eric Olander, "Michael Pettis: China's Dramatic Curtailment in Overseas Lending Shows that Beijing is Learning the Same Lesson Today that Other Creditors Learned Years Ago," China Global South Project, March 31, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/03/31/michael-pettis-chinas-dramatic-curtailment-in-overseas-lending-shows-that-beijing-is-learning-the-same-lesson-today-that-other-creditors-learned-years-ago/>.

specific countries, which is borne out through the lack of a correlation and detailed by the peaks and troughs of Chinese funding to SSA nations.

#### 4.7 Test Example

To test the variables determined to be significant by the regression analysis, let us determine if these motivations remain consistent through the examination of an out of sample data case. One recent example offering insight would be the Ethiopian conflict going on in the Tigray region of the country, which began in 2020. Ethiopia is the second highest recipient of Chinese ODF and the highest recipient of U.S. ODF of the 48 countries examined, which thereby adds to the opportunity to examine how these two countries would compete. As the second highest population in Africa,<sup>397</sup> and the seventh largest economy in Africa,<sup>398</sup> the motivations of population and economic size are consistent. It is also the headquarters of the African Union (AU).<sup>399</sup> It was also a regional anchor for economic and military stability in East Africa.

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<sup>397</sup> “African Countries by Population (2022),” WorldOMeter, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/population/countries-in-africa-by-population/>.

<sup>398</sup> “African Countries with the Highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2021(in Billion U.S. Dollars),” Statista, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1120999/gdp-of-african-countries-by-country/>.

<sup>399</sup> China funded and built the \$200 million AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa in 2012. In 2018, allegations of espionage were raised against the Chinese. A French news agency “Le Monde” first reported on Chinese espionage efforts within the AU building to include listening devices within the building and surveillance footage being exported to servers in Shanghai every night from 2012 to 2017. Aaron Maasho, “China Denies Report it Hacked African Union Headquarters,” Reuters, January 29, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africanunion-summit-china/china-denies-report-it-hacked-african-union-headquarters-idUSKBN1FI2I5>; Ghalia Kadir and Joan Tilouine, “A Addis-Abeba, le siège de l’Union africaine espionné par Pékin [In Addis Ababa, the Headquarters of the African Union Spied on by Beijing],” Le Monde, January 26, 2018, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2018/01/26/a-addis-abeba-le-siege-de-l-union-africaine-espionne-par-les-chinois\\_5247521\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2018/01/26/a-addis-abeba-le-siege-de-l-union-africaine-espionne-par-les-chinois_5247521_3212.html).

Leading up to 2021, Ethiopia ranked 17th in Africa on the CCI.<sup>400</sup> This ranking demonstrates low instances of both petty and grand forms of corruption and capture of the state by elites and private interests. This finding was demonstrated to be a significant variable in its correlation with U.S. ODF, which should come as no surprise with Ethiopia being the highest recipient of U.S. ODF, but not a significant variable with Chinese ODF. It was however the second highest recipient of Chinese ODF that emphasizes China's "non-interference" policy in which China states it does not interfere with local governance or attach conditionalities to its ODF. This policy could also pose problematic for the United States in the future, as countries could view Chinese ODF as more favorable given the lack of conditionalities and the push for governance reform often associated with U.S. ODF.

All these variables and examples set the stage for the endogenous, out of sample data, shock being the Tigray conflict. The conflict began in November 2020 when forces from the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) seized military bases in the region because the Ethiopian central government suspended elections, set to take place that year, due to COVID-19. The Ethiopian government responded by staging a military counter offensive into the region that escalated the conflict.

#### **4.8 U.S. Response**

The United States, in conjunction with the UN, began pressuring Ethiopia over the deadly fighting in the region and the United States suspended \$272 million in security and

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<sup>400</sup> "Control of Corruption in Africa," The Global Economy, accessed March 15, 2022, [https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/wb\\_corruption/Africa/#Ethiopia](https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/wb_corruption/Africa/#Ethiopia).



development assistance to Ethiopia because of the conflict.<sup>401</sup> The United States then urged Ethiopia to end the fighting and allow full and unhindered humanitarian access to the region.<sup>402</sup> In May 2021, the United States passed legislation imposing sanctions on individual Ethiopians committing human rights abuses and suspended U.S. security and financial assistance to the Ethiopian government.<sup>403</sup> The United States also asked multilateral development banks to suspend funding to Ethiopia because of the reports of human rights abuses in Tigray.<sup>404</sup> Humanitarian assistance however was exempt from sanctions, which paralleled what the data demonstrated. As conflict increases, the United States may suspend security assistance and development finance, but humanitarian assistance continues, if not increases. This data supports the hypothesis that overall well-being is the primary motivation for U.S. ODF in SSA. It also supports the second motivation hypothesized that the United States is motivated by regional security and stability. It immediately suspended development and security assistance when the civil war began in an effort to reduce the conflict and motivate the Ethiopian government towards a peaceful solution.

By June 2021, a ceasefire was called, but later that year, fighting picked up with TPLF forces retaking key towns and advancing on the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Cara Anna, "US: Aid Pause to Ethiopia No Longer Linked to Dam Dispute," Associated Press, February 19, 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-egypt-humanitarian-assistance-ethiopia-kenya-e3f47fc14084da52daca64fe078deaa6>.

<sup>402</sup> Anna.

<sup>403</sup> Salem Solomon, "U.S. Congress Advances Bill to Sanction Those Fueling War in Ethiopia," Voice of America, February 10, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-congress-advances-bill-to-sanction-those-fueling-war-in-ethiopia-/6435352.html>.

<sup>404</sup> Simon Marks, "U.S. to Freeze Funding for Ethiopia as Tigray Abuses Surface," Bloomberg, May 28, 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-28/u-s-to-freeze-funding-for-ethiopia-as-tigray-abuses-surface>.

<sup>405</sup> "Ethiopia's Tigray Conflict Explained: How a Year of Bloodshed Has Sparked Fears of a Wider Civil War," CBC News, November 9, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-tflp-abiy-ahmed-1.6241519>.

In October 2021, the UN Human Rights Office concluded that human rights violations had occurred in Tigray, which amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity.<sup>406</sup> As a result, the United States suspended Ethiopia's duty free access to the United States, which crippled Ethiopia's economy as Ethiopia exported \$245 million worth of goods to the United States in 2020 under the AGOA.<sup>407</sup>

#### **4.9 China's Response**

In November 2021, China's envoy to the UN criticized the U.S. sanctions on Ethiopia stating, "Using trade restrictions or cutting off aid as a means to exert maximum pressure on Ethiopia will only interfere with a political settlement, and not help the parties resolve their conflicts and rebuild mutual trust."<sup>408</sup> In the face of Ethiopia's ongoing civil war, in contrast to the United States' suspension of development financing to Ethiopia and sanctions enacted earlier that year, China continued construction on the Africa Center for Disease Control headquarters building in Addis Ababa in late November 2021.<sup>409</sup> This move also supports China's second motivation of accessing markets for Chinese goods and services, to include businesses and protection of that investment.

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<sup>406</sup> CBC News.

<sup>407</sup> Samuel Gebre and Fasika Tadesse, "U.S. Suspends Duty-free Access to Ethiopia over Human Rights Abuses," Bloomberg and Al Jazeera, November 2, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/11/2/us-suspends-duty-free-access-to-ethiopia-over-human-rights-abuses>.

<sup>408</sup> Eric Olander, "China's UN Envoy Criticizes U.S. Sanctions against Ethiopia, Pushes for Multilateral Response," China Global South Project, November 10, 2021, <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/2021/11/10/chinas-un-envoy-pushes-criticizes-u-s-sanctions-against-ethiopia-pushes-instead-for-multilateral-response/>.

<sup>409</sup> Eric Olander, "Ethiopia's Civil War Isn't Slowing Construction of the Chinese-financed and Built Africa CDC HQ," China Global South Project, November 19, 2021, <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/2021/11/29/ethiopias-civil-war-isnt-slowing-construction-of-the-chinese-financed-and-built-africa-cdc-hq/>.

China's position was further cemented as being diametrically opposed to that of the United States when Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi made an unannounced visit to Ethiopia following the conclusion of FOCAC in Senegal. During his visit to Ethiopia, Foreign Minister Yi sent a strong message of support to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and rebuked the U.S. pressure against the Ethiopian government.<sup>410</sup> China's ambassador confirmed this visit to Ethiopia days later when he reiterated Beijing's support for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and stated that China supported Addis Ababa unconditionally and opposed any unilateral actions; a veiled reference to the U.S. sanctions and removal from the AGOA.<sup>411</sup> During the visit, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, raised the issue of Ethiopia's \$13.7 billion in outstanding debt, as Ethiopia is Africa's second largest recipient of Chinese ODF behind Angola. This issue supports China's second and third motivations. Given the amount of money already invested in Ethiopia and owed to China, China desires to protect that investment and a demonstration of diplomatic and continued investment ensures that desire. The third motivation of shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model is shown through China's support for Ethiopia in the face of Western-led opposition, as well as potentially drawing Ethiopia into aligning more closely with China in forums like the UN.

Similar to the situation in 2006, the Ethiopian government has been able to backstop its position in the international community and within its own country with Chinese support

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<sup>410</sup> Eric Olander, "Wang Yi Gives Boost to Abiy with Official Visit to Ethiopia," China Global South Project, December 2, 2021, <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/analysis/wang-yi-gives-boost-to-abiy-with-official-visit-to-ethiopia/>.

<sup>411</sup> Eric Olander, "China's Ambassador to Ethiopia Reaffirms Support for Addis, Keeps up the Pressure on the U.S.," China Global South Project, December 6, 2021, <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/2021/12/06/chinas-ambassador-to-ethiopia-reaffirms-support-for-addis-keeps-up-the-pressure-on-the-u-s/>.

despite facing a backlash of opposition because of its ongoing civil war and human rights violations. The conflict in Ethiopia also aligns with China's worldview that opposes the use of sanctions and portrays the United States as a "hegemonically bullying" country.<sup>412</sup>

Overall, this example demonstrates findings consistent with the model based on these predictions acknowledging that some error is involved in the analysis, especially when using Chinese data figures.

After analysis of the motivations behind why the United States and China provide ODF to SSA nations, a secondary regression was run to determine if they were working at cross-purposes to one another. Table 4 examines the relationship between U.S. and Chinese ODF on countries voting alignment at the UN.

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<sup>412</sup> Olander, "Wang Yi Gives Boost to Abiy."

Table 4. Regression Analysis on UN voting for all 48 SSA Countries from 2000–2017.

<i>For All Countries from 2000-2017</i>		
	<i>UN Voting with US<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>UN Voting with US<sup>1</sup> (Country Effects)</i>
US aid & ODF <sup>‡</sup>	0.00004 (0.0003)	0.00004 (0.0004)
Chinese aid & ODF <sup>‡</sup>	-0.00004 (0.00003)	-0.00004* (0.00002)
Population <sup>‡</sup>	0.0319 (0.0391)	0.0319 (0.0511)
Debt to GDP (%)	-0.0007 (0.0006)	-0.0007 (0.0006)
Resources as a % of GDP	0.0043 (0.0048)	0.0043 (0.0044)
Political Stability Index	0.1721* (0.0849)	0.1721* (0.0743)
Corruption Controls Index	-0.0024 (0.1077)	-0.0024 (0.1189)
GNI Per Capita <sup>‡</sup>	-0.0472 (0.0681)	-0.0472 (0.0752)
Exports as % GDP	-0.0013 (0.0034)	-0.0013 (0.0032)
ACLED Violence <sup>‡</sup>	-0.0016 0.0290	-0.0016 0.0219
UN Security Council Temporary Member	0.1517 (0.1586)	0.1517 (0.1382)

Dependent variable = United Nations voting alignment with the United States

Standard errors are in parenthesis. StataMP 16.0.

\*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05, † p < 0.1

<sup>1</sup>Regressions were run as a Zero-One Inflated Beta Model

<sup>‡</sup>Values are logged

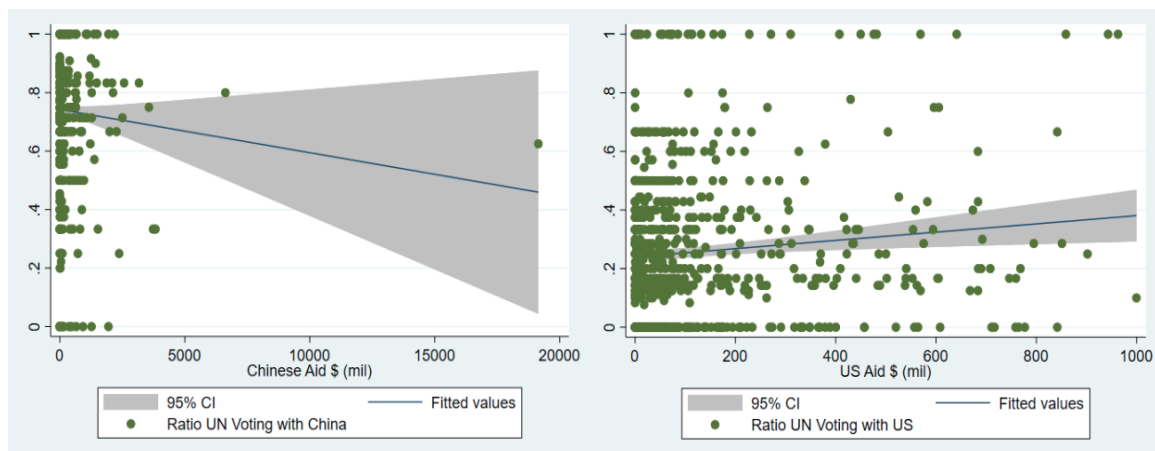
#### **4.9 UN Voting—Parallel or Cross-purposed**

In Table 4, the regression run was a zero-one inflated beta model as described previously, with the ratio of UN voting alignment with the United States as the dependent variable. The independent variables used were the same ones used in the previous regression in Table 3 for consistency, with the significant independent variables of examination being U.S. and Chinese ODF. The finding demonstrated by the correlations between ODF and UN voting alignment demonstrates that while U.S. ODF does not have an impact on countries voting in alignment with it at the UN, Chinese ODF works at cross-purposes to U.S. interests in terms of UN voting alignment, as Chinese ODF pulls countries away from U.S. voting alignment.

This scenario is the current landscape of GPC in Africa between the United States and China. Not only is China motivated by mercantilist self-enrichment and access to markets but the motivation to pull countries away from supporting the U.S. position at the UN demonstrates how China is seeking to compete with the United States. GPC between these two countries in Africa is not playing out in the form of proxy wars as in the Cold War, or militarily, but is economically through ODF for which these countries are competing. China is using these tools to shift countries towards a more Chinese centric world. ODF has become the currency of GPC between the United States and China and China is working hard to counterbalance the U.S. hegemon not only in Africa but also through African nations at the UN.

In Figure 5, two charts illustrate the correlations between ODF from either the United States or China and UN voting alignment. The chart on the left illustrates the correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States. Both

the concentration and the trend line show that Chinese aid increases as countries align more closely with the United States (1.0). The levels of Chinese ODF are 2–3 times higher in countries aligned with the United States than in countries that align with China. The amounts of ODF from China are also higher than that from the United States, as levels of ODF to countries aligned completely with China (0.0) top out at \$2 billion and the levels for countries aligning completely with the United States top out at just over \$6 billion. The chart on the right illustrates the correlation between U.S. ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States (1.0). Both the concentrations and the trend line show an almost even amount of U.S. ODF disbursed to countries regardless of their UN voting alignment. This amount demonstrates that the United States gives sustained amounts of ODF to countries regardless of their alignment and gives almost as much ODF to countries that align completely with it (1.0) as countries that align completely with China (0.0).



The chart on the left shows the correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States. Both the concentration and the trend line show that Chinese ODF increases as countries align more closely with the United States (1.0). The levels of Chinese ODF are 2–3 times higher in countries aligned with the United States than in countries that align with China. The chart on the right shows the correlation between U.S. ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States. Both the concentrations and the trend line show an almost even amount of U.S. ODF disbursed to countries regardless of their UN voting alignment.

Figure 5. UN Voting Alignment vs ODF Levels.

Recent examples of how U.S. and Chinese GPC in terms of ODF are playing out at the UN are also shown by the more recent case of South Africa’s recently vacated UNSC seat. China backed Djibouti to fill South Africa’s vacated seat at the UNSC, while the United States was backing Kenya to fill the spot.<sup>413</sup> Djibouti is a country that has received higher levels of Chinese ODF and has historically aligned with China’s position at the UN. Kenya is a high recipient of both U.S. and Chinese ODF. It has wavered between both U.S. and Chinese UN voting alignment, and has increasingly abstained from voting on important UN votes. Djibouti offers the example for a case study country that has received comparatively high levels of Chinese ODF and has historically aligned with China. Kenya

<sup>413</sup> “Kenya vs. Djibouti: Who Will Represent Africa on the UN Security Council?” DW Akademie, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/kenya-vs-djibouti-who-will-represent-africa-on-the-un-security-council/a-53758935>.



is also another such example as it has received high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF, while Malawi falls into the third category of receiving comparatively higher levels of U.S. ODF. Selecting these three countries allows for the testing of the motivations for ODF from both the United States and China, as well as if they are working at cross-purposes to one another at the individual country level.

Another correlation was between the PSI and UN voting alignment with the United States. A positive and statistically significant correlation occurred between the PSI and UN voting alignment with the United States. The more politically stable a country is with higher levels of governance, the more likely that country is to align with the United States at the UN.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

To summarize some of the findings from the research and analysis of the key motivation for U.S. disbursement of ODF to countries in SSA, five findings matter: a historical disbursement of ODF, poverty, population, corruption, and violence.

Historical disbursement of ODF by the United States is demonstrated not only through the regression analysis but also through the data in which the United States has given sustained levels of ODF to all 48 of the SSA nations examined between 2000 and 2017. This historical disbursement potentially speaks to the United States' sustained commitment to both poverty reduction and overall well-being throughout Africa. It could also speak to the bureaucratically cumbersome nature of Washington being that sometimes the easiest thing to do is repeat what was done the year before.

In addition, the correlations with population, corruption controls, and violence offer potential motivations for U.S. ODF being concentrated around large military and economic

regional anchors, rewarding corruption reduction efforts within a country, and targeted at efforts to reduce violence. These efforts to engage with countries experiencing high levels of instability support the motivation of U.S. ODF being given to promote regional peace and stability along with countering terrorist operations in the region.

For Chinese ODF, three things matter: population, GNI per capita, and resources. Resources correlated with Chinese ODF offering potential support with one motivation being centered on China's need for resources, i.e., oil, which emphasizes its driver of basic mercantilist self-enrichment. Population was another variable that correlated with both the United States and China in terms of disbursement of ODF, which is understandable as both countries engage with regional economic or military anchors as seen in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa. GNI per capita was also a consistent motivator for both countries but in opposite directions, in that the U.S. ODF was focused on lower GNI per capita countries' potential in an effort to reduce poverty, with Chinese ODF going towards richer and larger economies offering more developed markets for Chinese goods.

The negative correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States reveals that Chinese ODF works at cross-purposes to U.S. ODF. Chinese ODF is directed in higher amounts to countries that vote in alignment with the United States in efforts to pull SSA countries away from aligning with the United States and towards itself. This attempt demonstrates an effort by China to contradict and replace the United States in terms of policy influence but not in the role of regional peace and stability. This finding supports the third motivation for Chinese ODF outlined in this dissertation of moving African nations to a more Chinese centric development model.

The case study analysis in the following two chapters examines three different countries that fall into three different categories for ODF from the United States and China. Djibouti as the high China-low U.S. country, Malawi as the high U.S.-low China country, and Kenya as the high U.S.-high China country all offer opportunities to test the motivations for both countries and determine how GPC between the two is playing out.

## CHAPTER 5. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY: DJIBOUTI AND MALAWI

Scholars have labeled GPC between China and the United States in Africa as “the new scramble for Africa.”<sup>414</sup> This viewpoint draws from historical discussions of GPC in Africa, and this framing sets the stage for the case studies countries selected. The theoretical framework that underpins this dissertation is focused on a more nuanced view of GPC by examining ODF as a tool of GPC between both nations. It also tests potential motivations for why each country disburses ODF to SSA nations and if these motivations work at cross-purposes or in parallel to each other. The following two chapters examine case studies in which the countries selected lie at either end of the ODF spectrum, with the third being in the middle.

### 5.1 Theoretical Testing

This case study further examines the theoretical motivations developed in the theory chapter and tested through the quantitative process. The two theories outlined in Table 5 show the proposed motivations behind why the United States and China give aid or ODF. They seek to determine if they are working in parallel or at cross-purposes to each other. ODF is defined in this dissertation as funds or technical assistance with the primary intention of promoting economic development and welfare in developing countries.<sup>415</sup>

Each theory has three components. The first one is framed around the United States’ engagement in Africa. The first theory posits that the United States gives ODF primarily

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<sup>414</sup> Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa*.

<sup>415</sup> Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift*, 166.

to support good governance, institutional development, improve corruption controls, and overall well-being. The second motivation is conflict prevention, peace, and stability within the region, and the third focuses on counter terrorist operations.

The second theory examines China's engagement in Africa and posits the primary motivation for Chinese ODF is basic mercantilist self-enrichment. The second motivation is securing market access for Chinese goods while also securing its investments, and the third is to shift Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model.

The quantitative analysis in the previous chapter found six variables mattered for the disbursement of ODF from the United States. For the United States, these variables were historical disbursement of ODF, population, resources, poverty, corruption, and violence. Chinese ODF showed similar correlation in regards to population but contrasting relationships to the United States as it related to resources and poverty. These variables contrasted in the sense that Chinese ODF focused on resource rich countries with higher populations and income levels as these countries offered more developed markets for Chinese goods. The United States targeted poorer countries since poverty reduction efforts has been a critical part of U.S. ODF in the past. Given these previously detailed motivations, these correlations support the theory tested through the following case studies.

Table 5. Observable Motivations for Two Theories.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>Chinese ODF</b>	Basic mercantilist self-enrichment	Securing markets and investments	Shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource rich countries</li> <li>• Coastal countries paired with infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade imbalance with China</li> <li>• Large population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export high levels of raw natural resources (oil, timber, minerals) to China</li> <li>• Infrastructure for extraction (power, mines, roads, ports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of finished goods from China</li> <li>• Loan repayment over forgiveness</li> <li>• Increased debt levels</li> <li>• Increased corruption</li> <li>• Increased security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China-Xinjiang vote</li> <li>• High debt levels</li> </ul>
<b>U.S. ODF</b>	Good governance, control corruption and overall well-being	Conflict prevention, peace and stability	Counter terrorist efforts
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased governance reform</li> <li>• Reduced corruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical civil/regional Conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical regional conflict</li> <li>• Bordering or include conflict zones</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt reduction</li> <li>• Health and HIV investment</li> <li>• Free and fair elections</li> <li>• Open press and media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Governance improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Increased levels of internally displaced persons</li> </ul>

Table 5 compares the predictions for the two theories being tested: three motivations for Chinese and three motivations for U.S. disbursement of aid and ODF. ODF is defined as “Funds or technical assistance given primarily to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries.” These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study.

## 5.2 Methodology

The quantitative analysis in the previous chapter of this dissertation explores correlations between different variables and potential motivations for ODF from both the United States and China to SSA nations but it is limited. Therefore, this dissertation also needs additional empirical research in the form of case studies. Case studies are able to support quantitative analysis by providing additional explanatory value of theories that seek to explain motivations for both the United States and China in their GPC in SSA using ODF. Bennett and George stated that historically emphasis has been on causal mechanisms, which are independent stable factors that link causes to effect.<sup>416</sup> It is upon this same rational that this dissertation utilizes a combination of both congruence analysis and process tracing methodology to test theories and hypotheses laid out, as well as the causal mechanisms behind the correlations to both probe and possibly clarify these hypotheses.

Bennet and George define congruence analysis as initially beginning with a theory “then attempts to assess its ability to explain or predict the outcome in a particular case.”<sup>417</sup> This definition is appealing for this research because motivations vary as to why the United States and China disburse ODF to recipient SSA nations. This methodology is selected because it allows for the testing of competing theories by which the United States and China disburse ODF and allows for insight into if they work in parallel or at cross-purposes. Selecting case studies that are exemplars of predominately U.S. or predominately Chinese ODF allow for the testing of these theories and enable the confirmations and/or contradictions of each theory.

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<sup>416</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 8.

<sup>417</sup> George and Bennett, 181.

For case selection, the theoretical framework in Figure 6, which compares levels of USODF against levels of Chinese ODF, is used. Gerring raises a fundamental question for any case study in that “what is this a case of?”<sup>418</sup> As “the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is-at least in part-to shed light on a larger class of cases.”<sup>419</sup> The larger class of cases in this examination is countries in SSA, and to a narrower extent, the three countries that fall within each of the three quadrants shown in Figure 6, high-low, high-high, and low-high.<sup>420</sup>

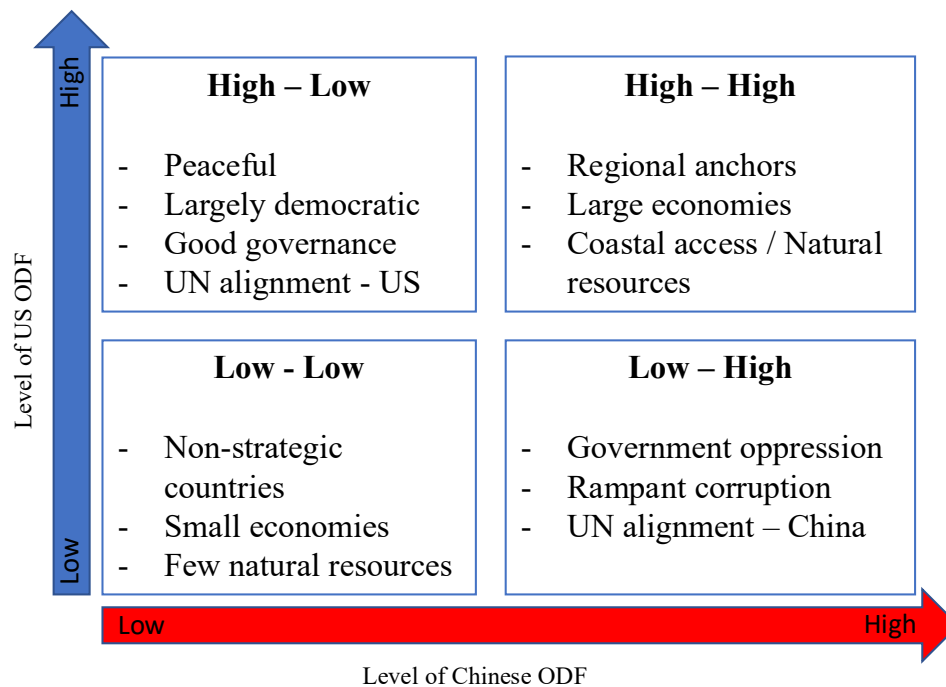


Figure 6. Theoretical Framework.

<sup>418</sup> John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>419</sup> Gerring.

<sup>420</sup> The low-low categorization was not used for case study country selection, as low levels of ODF from both the United States and China would not allow for a determination of how and in what ways these two countries are competing in SSA nations through ODF.



The two contrasting cases chosen for the first portion of this case study highlight the two different ends of the spectrum. The high-level threshold for ODF is defined as \$1 billion from 2000–2019 and the low-level threshold is under \$1 billion. It would not be as beneficial to analyze countries that fell into the low-low category of both U.S. and Chinese ODF in terms of impacts and implications of ODF from each country on the recipient country. Therefore, no countries were selected for examination that fell into this quadrant.

Causal process tracing is utilized to the extent possible that “attempts to identify the intervening causal process-the causal chain and causal mechanism-between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable.”<sup>421</sup> Figure 7 demonstrates the two different approaches for ODF in Africa taken by the United States and China. The motivations, combined with the variables determined through the quantitative analysis section to be significant, assisted in constructing the causal logic laid out in Figure 7.

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<sup>421</sup> George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 206.

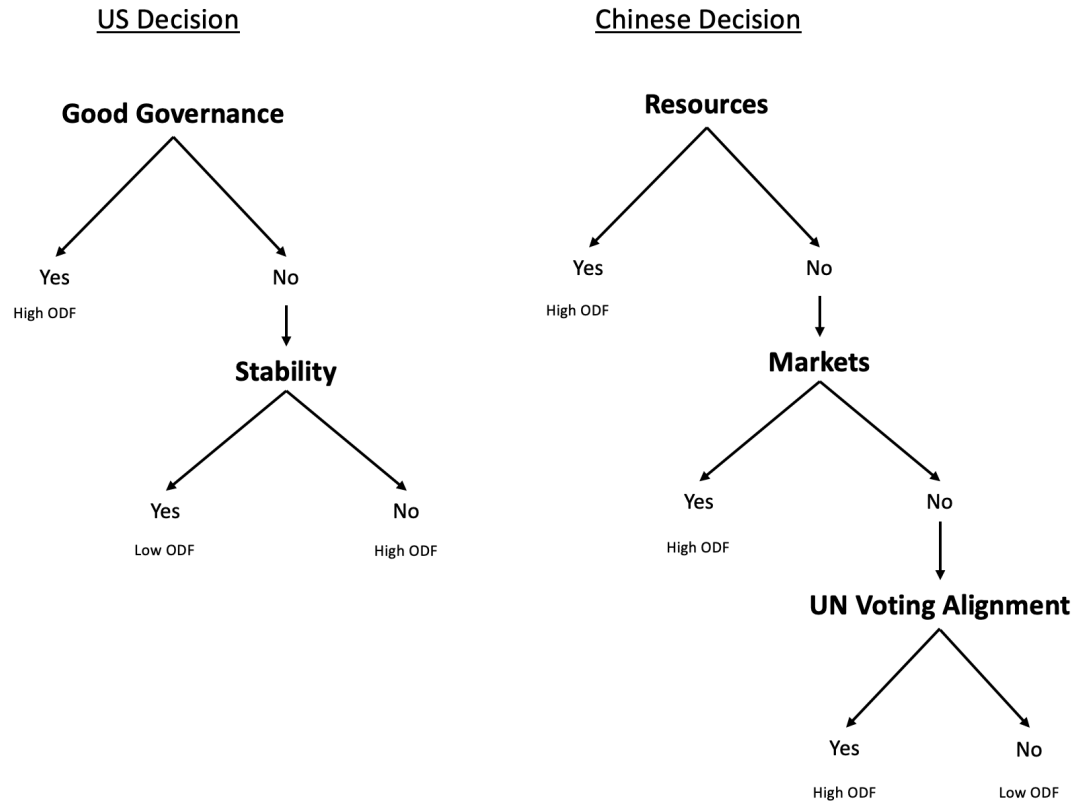


Figure 7. Competing Theories.

The framework shown tests the motivations through the following case studies with the dependent variables examined being U.S. or Chinese ODF. Levels of U.S. ODF are in current dollars and are pulled from the USAID database. For the purpose of this dissertation, aid (both military and economic), ODA, and OOF are all included for both the United States and China, and are categorized within this dissertation as ODF. The left-hand side shows the logic chain for U.S. motivations for ODF if the primary motivation is good governance and overall well-being. High levels of U.S. ODF going to countries that demonstrate increased governance reform, improved corruption controls, along with

funding allocated towards AIDS prevention and reduction efforts in the recipient country would be expected. The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance is the variable examined to determine countries that fall into this categorization, which “aims to fill the gaps left by existing governance indices by providing a comprehensive, objective and quantifiable method of measuring governance quality in Sub-Saharan Africa.”<sup>422</sup> It measures governance across four key components: security and rule of law, participation, rights, and inclusion, foundations for economic opportunity, and human development. The threshold is the average among SSA nations in which countries that fall below this average are considered poor governance and countries rising above the average are considered good governance in relation to other SSA nations.

If the second motivation for U.S. ODF were peace and regional stability, ODF going to countries with high levels of violence or neighboring conflict countries to act as a bulwark against the spread of conflict throughout the region would be expected. The Mo Ibrahim Index for the Absence of Armed Conflict is the variable examined to determine countries that fall into this categorization. This variable is measured as both the absence of violent events in state-based conflict along with the absence of non-state conflict.<sup>423</sup> The threshold is the average among SSA nations in which countries that fall below this average are considered regionally unstable and countries rising above the average are considered regionally stable in relation to other SSA nations.

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<sup>422</sup> Conor Farrington, “Putting Good Governance into Practice I: the Ibrahim Index of African Governance,” *Progress in Development Studies* 9, no. 3 (2009): 249–255.

<sup>423</sup> “About,” Ibrahim Index of African Governance, accessed December 10, 2020, <https://iiag.online/about.html>.

If the third motivation for U.S. ODF were counter terrorism operations, large amounts of U.S. support in the form of security agreements and weapons sales to facilitate intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations in the country and the region would be expected. U.S. ODF would also expect to be targeted at countries that had experienced elevated levels of terrorist attacks as compared to other countries within the region.

Using this same framework, the right-hand side of Figure 7 shows the logic chain for Chinese motivations for ODF. If the primary motivation for Chinese ODF were mercantilist self-enrichment, high levels of ODF from China going to resource rich countries along with infrastructure development to facilitate extraction would be expected, such as roads, railways, and ports. Resource rich countries in this case are defined by the World Bank as “countries whose average ‘Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)’ for the last 3 years (data source: World Development Indicators) is at least ten percent.”<sup>424</sup> Coastal access will also be another factor expected within recipient countries where a dichotomous variable is used to determine if the country has coastal access or not. This factor enables the extraction of resources from landlocked resource rich countries in the case of DRC or Zambia.

If the second motivation for Chinese ODF were securing markets for Chinese goods and investments, then seeing Chinese funding targeting countries with large populations, high levels of imports of Chinese goods by the recipient nation, and increased debt levels would be expected because of the trade imbalance. Darrat and Al-Yousif demonstrated that

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<sup>424</sup> “Is the Country Resource Rich?” World Bank, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://tcdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/7bc4251b?country=BRA&indicator=28157&viz=choropleth&years=2017>.

higher population spurs economic growth and increases the depth of the domestic market.<sup>425</sup> At the risk of over complicating this variable, simple population numbers as produced by the World Bank are used for this determination in that countries with higher populations are expected to receive higher levels of Chinese ODF, as they offer potentially many more markets for Chinese goods. Trade between China and the case study country are also examined to determine if engagement with China leads to greater bilateral trade or if the recipient country simply becomes a growing market for Chinese goods.

If the third motivation for Chinese ODF were to shift Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model, seeing countries receiving higher levels of ODF from China to be more aligned with China on UN votes would be expected. The previous chapter presented evidence that Chinese ODF worked at cross-purposes to U.S. ODF as it pertained to UN voting alignment. On this basis, this chapter examines historical voting alignment between both Djibouti or Malawi and the United States and China, and specifically, the 2019 Xinjiang vote at the UN. This vote specifically demonstrated the opposing positions between China and the United States on human rights and offered an example of how China is using its position to have SSA nations align more closely with itself at the UN, or at the very least, abstain and to not align with the United States.<sup>426</sup> As an aside, China began cultivating a group of like-minded developing countries within the UN in an effort to promote a view of human rights centered on state sovereignty and economic

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<sup>425</sup> Ali F. Darrat and Y. K. Al-Yousif, “On the Long-run Relationship between Population and Economic Growth: Some Time Series Evidence for Developing Countries,” *Eastern Economic Journal* 25, no. 3 (1999): 301–313.

<sup>426</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, “We should also pay close attention to how the Chinese leverage African votes in global forums; about half of the African countries defended China when Washington and like-minded allies condemned Beijing for human rights abuses in Hong Kong and in Xinjiang.” Center on National Security at Fordham Law, “The Significance of Africa.”

development.<sup>427</sup> Beijing has sought to align developing states and other “South-South” countries with its own diplomatic interests within the UN, specifically on Xinjiang.

Figure 7 lays out the causal logic for testing the theory outlined in Table 5 as to why both the United States and China give ODF to African nations, and how this GPC is playing out in Africa. It is the task of this chapter to demonstrate more fully the motivations behind both U.S. and Chinese ODF in the recipient countries. I proceed first with a discussion on the background of the recipient country and historical trends making it a prime candidate for either U.S. or Chinese ODF. I follow this discussion with an analysis of motivations for both the United States and China by first stepping through the U.S. motivations of good governance and overall well-being before moving to motivations of peace, stability, and counter terrorism. I continue this discussion with an analysis of Chinese motivations first beginning with mercantilist self-enrichment, before moving on to markets and shifting countries towards a more Chinese centric development model. Keep in mind that not all motivations for either the United States or China are expected to be present in each country examined in the case study, which illustrates the complex nature of both countries’ approach to Africa beyond the simplistic explanations of security (United States) or resources (China). The chapter concludes with an analysis of what it means in terms of GPC between the United States and China in these case study countries by looking specifically at the UN voting alignment between the United States, China, and

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<sup>427</sup> Detailed within the PRC mission to the UN in Geneva stated June 25, 2019. “Statement on Behalf of the Like Minded Group during Dialogue with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, June 25, 2019, <http://www.china-un.ch/eng/hom/t1676719.htm>.

the recipient nation. The questions to be examined through the research and tested in the specific country case studies are as follows.

- What strategic motivations of the United States and China explain variations in aid flow, and are these motivations similar across each great power?
- If these motivations are dissimilar, are they complementary or antagonistic, and what does this indicate about the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa?

### **5.3 Case Selection**

Figure 8 shows the selected countries that fell into the following categories: low U.S.-high Chinese ODF, high U.S.-low Chinese ODF, and the third quadrant being both high U.S. and high Chinese ODF. Country selection began with countries that were generalizable to reduce biasing the selection to favor specific donor countries or not allow for thorough testing of the theory. In the case of China, countries rich in natural resources would immediately pass the first causal logic test (resources) but not allow for testing of other motivations within the theoretical framework leading to narrowing the theory to explain strictly mercantilist self-enrichment. Such countries were Angola, Zambia, Republic of Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan. All were rich in oil or other natural resources and were therefore excluded from consideration. Selecting countries that experienced widespread violence in the form of genocide or civil war was also a factor. The selection of countries, such as Rwanda, Liberia, South Sudan, Sudan, Cameroon, Angola, Republic of Congo, and most recently Ethiopia, could bias the testing for the U.S. theoretical motivations. Violent countries would immediately fail the first causal logic test of governance and strictly frame U.S. participation in the region within the security space and were therefore excluded from consideration.

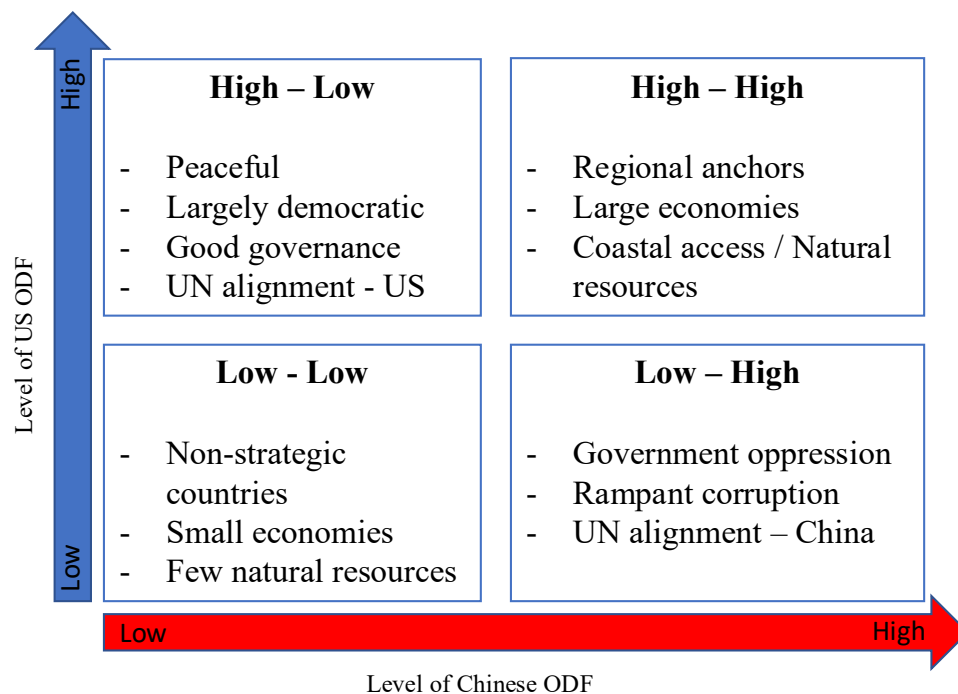


Figure 8. Case Study Country Selection Matrix.

Djibouti as the low U.S.-high China country, which ranks as the #21 of 48 countries in SSA as a recipient of Chinese ODF at \$1.41 billion from 2000–2019<sup>428</sup> was pushed above the \$1 billion threshold for the “high recipient” characterization. In regards to U.S. ODF, Djibouti was ranked #37 of the 48 SSA countries selected, which received \$377 million between 2000 and 2019.<sup>429</sup> Djibouti was also selected because it lacks natural resources, thereby eliminating the traditional characterization of the Chinese being motivated by extractive economics, as framed in the 2017 NSS.<sup>430</sup> As a relatively small

<sup>428</sup> These numbers are the author’s calculations based on datasets from the SAIS-CARI website.

<sup>429</sup> These numbers are the author’s calculations based on datasets from the USAID website.

<sup>430</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.



African nation, Djibouti is roughly the size of Vermont, with a GDP of about \$3.325 billion in 2019.<sup>431</sup> Even though it does not have significant amounts of natural resources, scholars have concluded that, its “curse” is that of being a prime geo-strategic location.<sup>432</sup> It also has a Chinese military base making it both a unique but replicable case study in the future should China expand its military footprint across the continent. Ports are adaptable to accommodate both military and civilian use and are being built across the continent.<sup>433</sup> Resources, such as oil, however are not as adaptable, you either have it or you do not. Angola, Cameroon, and Republic of Congo despite falling into the high China-low U.S. category, all have primary exports of crude oil and therefore fall into this category.<sup>434</sup> Djibouti has received large targeted ODF flows from China since 2013. China asserts its objectives in Africa are to “present an alternative to the Western development model and cooperation,” as well as “emphasize China’s status as a superpower,”<sup>435</sup> to thus emphasize its position as a world leader and a competitor to U.S. global hegemony. Djibouti is also reflective of China’s three main motivations for disbursement of ODF to African nations: self-enrichment, securing market access for Chinese goods, and transition toward a more Chinese centric development model. As Africans associate economic development with freedom<sup>436</sup> and that economic development is then attributed to China, China also becomes

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<sup>431</sup> World Bank GDP figures for Djibouti. “GDP (Current US\$)—Djibouti,” World Bank, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=DJ>.

<sup>432</sup> Jennifer N. Brass, “Djibouti’s Unusual Resource Curse,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 46, no. 4 (2008): 523–45, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30224905>.

<sup>433</sup> Judd Devermont, Amelia Cheatham, and Catherine Chiang, “Assessing the Risks of Chinese Investments in Sub-Saharan African Ports,” Centers for Strategic and International Studies, June 2019, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-risks-chinese-investments-sub-saharan-african-ports>.

<sup>434</sup> Data gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website. “Republic of the Congo,” Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/cog>.

<sup>435</sup> Van Dijk, *The New Presence of China in Africa*.

<sup>436</sup> Stated by Lina Benabdallah during the Wilson Center Africa Symposium in March 2020.

the model for political, economic, and governmental freedoms. This approach runs counter to the U.S. approach to ODF as it offers countries the ability to rely on Chinese financing to bypass support they historically received from the United States. Djibouti is then a good case study to test China's motivations for ODF in SSA and to see whether it is competing with or complimenting U.S. efforts in the region.

Malawi is selected as the high U.S.-low China country because it is a democratic country that does not possess large amounts of natural resources and is one of the more stable countries in the region.<sup>437</sup> U.S. ODF to Malawi between 2000 and 2019 totaled \$3.67 billion and was consistently disbursed while also increasing each year. Malawi is ranked thus at #12 of the 48 countries in SSA examined as recipients of U.S. ODF.<sup>438</sup> By contrast, Malawi was ranked as #35 out of the 48 countries examined in SSA as recipients of Chinese ODF.<sup>439</sup> Chinese ODF to Malawi was concentrated on four years (2009, 2011–12, and 2016) during that same time period and totaled \$262 million, a factor of 14 lower than ODF from the United States over the same time period. Figure 9 illustrates the contrasting levels of ODF from each donor country to Malawi. Malawi is a landlocked country with a GDP of around \$7 billion and falls within the bottom third of geographic size compared to other African nations. It does not have high levels of natural resources,<sup>440</sup> and being a landlocked country with few natural resources, does not make it a target for Chinese ODF.

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<sup>437</sup> Malawi Country Team and Africa Region, *Systematic Country Diagnostic: Breaking the Cycle of Low Growth and Slow Poverty Reduction*, report no. 132785 (Washington, DC: World Bank Group: 2018).

<sup>438</sup> These numbers are the author's calculations based on datasets from the USAID website.

<sup>439</sup> These numbers are the author's calculations based on datasets from the SAIS-CARI website.

<sup>440</sup> Based on the World Bank "non-resource rich" categorization defined as "countries whose average 'total natural resources rents (% of GDP)' for the last 3 years (data source: World Development Indicators) is below ten percent." World Bank, "Is the Country Resource Rich?"

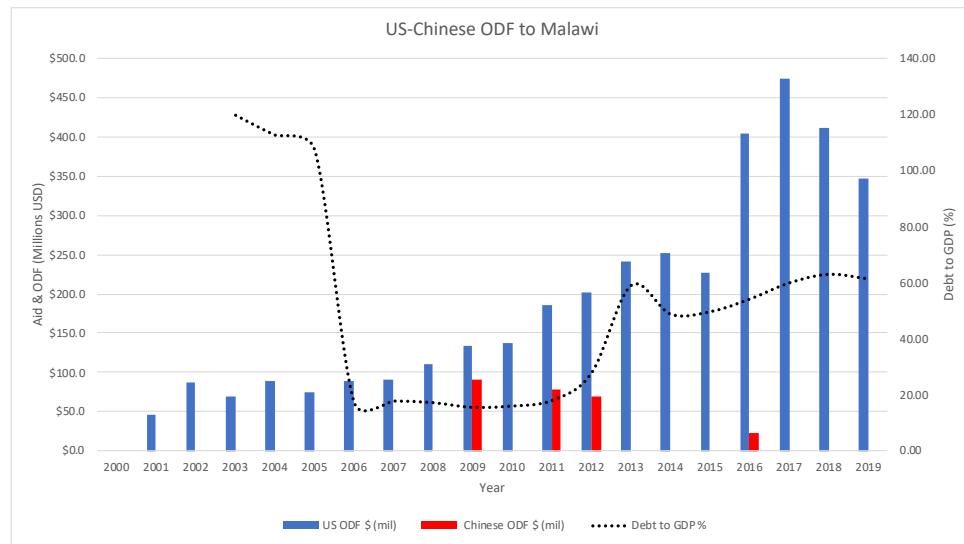


Figure 9. U.S. and Chinese ODF to Malawi.<sup>441</sup>

Kenya as the high U.S.-high China country possesses the expected characteristics. Kenya is a regional anchor that offers a large economy, has coastal access, and does not possess significant natural resources. Kenya lies at the heart of a historically unstable HOA region and borders countries characterized by instability, such as Somalia and Sudan, which became South Sudan in 2011. Given its geographic location and economic clout, Kenya has become a regional anchor in the East African community. Kenya, despite lacking significant levels of natural resources, has the sixth largest economy in Africa.<sup>442</sup> Its economic position in Africa is even more impressive when considering that four of the top six economies in Africa have oil or precious metals as their primary export. Kenya

<sup>441</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from both USAID and SAIS-CARI databases and debt to GDP data from the World Bank database.

<sup>442</sup> Prinesha Naidoo, "Nigeria Tops South Africa as the Continent's Biggest Economy," Bloomberg News, March 3, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-03/nigeria-now-tops-south-africa-as-the-continent-s-biggest-economy>.

however does have coastal access, which gives it an advantage over some of its land locked peers, such as Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Kenya, aside from post-election violence in 2007 and Al-Shabaab attacks periodically, is a regional bulwark of stability and democracy that lacks significant natural resources.

## 5.4 Hypotheses

To understand and evaluate current motivations for ODF within the context of GPC in Africa, historical motivations need to be revisited. Motivations for GPC in Africa in the form of ODF have often centered on the following hypotheses.

The United States provides ODF to African nations in coordination with the IMF and the World Bank and thus takes a leading role in lending and the implementation.<sup>443</sup> It focuses on democracy and liberal market institutions, and facilitates development, economic growth, and political stability.<sup>444</sup>

Historical non-Western GPC countries provide ODF to disrupt the Western established political and economic system in Africa.<sup>445</sup> Countries seek to gain maximum influence on the global stage while offering minimal risk to achieve it.<sup>446</sup>

Historical non-Western GPC countries seek to offer an alternative socio-economic development model to draw the regions closer together<sup>447</sup> and secure long-term loyalty from African nations.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> Tan-Mullins, Mohan, and Power, “Redefining ‘Aid’ in the China–Africa Context,” 857–881.

<sup>444</sup> Hanauer and Morris, “Implications for U.S. Interests,” 89–120.

<sup>445</sup> Bissell, *Soviet Interests in Africa*, 2.

<sup>446</sup> Brayton, “Soviet Involvement in Africa,” 253–269.

<sup>447</sup> Matusevich, “Revisiting the Soviet Moment in Sub-Saharan Africa,” 1259–1268.

<sup>448</sup> Lawson, “Soviet Economic Aid to Africa,” 501.

This dissertation blends and builds upon these hypotheses and tests the following three hypotheses regarding the motivations for both U.S. and Chinese ODF in Africa.

H1. The United States provides ODF for three reasons: (1) to support good governance, institutional development, improve corruption controls, and overall well-being, (2) conflict prevention, regional peace, and stability and, (3) counter terrorist operations.

H2. China provides ODF for three reasons: (1) promoting mercantilist self-enrichment, (2) securing market access for Chinese goods and their investments, and (3) shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model.

As GPC in Africa between the United States and China continues to play out in the form of ODF, China has sought to maximize its power especially within international institutions, such as the UN. Previous analysis in relation to motivations and nature for both the United States and China in terms of ODF determined that when it came to UN voting alignment, the Chinese ODF did in fact work at cross-purposes to U.S. voting alignment. In the sense that countries receiving larger amounts of Chinese ODF opposed the United States more often on important UN votes, they did more closely align with China. In doing so, China has sought to shift African nations towards itself, which leads to the third hypothesis to be tested:

H3. Increased levels of Chinese ODF should lead to more closely aligned countries in terms of UN voting. Lower levels should lead to less alignment with China and greater alignment with the United States. Instances of high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF should counterbalance and result in more abstentions from voting.

## 5.5 Case Studies

### 5.5.1 The Case of Djibouti: High China-Low U.S. ODF

#### 5.5.1.1 Background

Djibouti can also be seen as one example of China's broader strategic plan within Africa. China's ODF flows to Djibouti from 2000–2010 totaled \$66 million but were disbursed over only three years. The United States however had sustained disbursements of ODF during that same time period averaging \$7 million annually as shown in Figure 10. Yet, the investment is not consistent. In 2013, China's ODF to Djibouti eclipsed the amount of ODF received from the United States over the previous 13 years combined by a factor of seven.<sup>449</sup> The spike in 2013 can be attributed to the Chinese funding of the \$3.3 billion Djibouti-Addis Ababa rail connecting Ethiopia's capital to the Djiboutian coast, of which Djibouti shared a portion of the \$492 million.<sup>450</sup> Adding to the project in 2013 was another Djibouti-Ethiopia agreement in which Chinese ODF supported a \$322 million construction project for a water pipeline to run from Djibouti to Ethiopia to provide drinking water to the Shinile Zone in Ethiopia.<sup>451</sup> The second spike, in 2016, can be attributed to China's \$344 million funding of the Doraleh Multipurpose Port facility and coinciding free trade zone.<sup>452</sup> With such dramatic spikes in ODF from China, critics have framed China's approach as "debt-trap diplomacy."<sup>453</sup> However, as Figure 10 demonstrates, the criticisms

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<sup>449</sup> ODF dollars taken from USAID and SAIS-CARI database.

<sup>450</sup> Axel Dreher et al., *Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset*, AidData working paper #46 (Williamsburg, VA: AidData, 2017).

<sup>451</sup> Dreher et al.

<sup>452</sup> David Styan, "China's Maritime Silk Road and Small States: Lessons from the Case of Djibouti," *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, no. 122 (2020): 191–206.

<sup>453</sup> Jauch, "Chinese Investments in Africa," 49–55; Were, *Debt Trap?*; White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

are not substantiated by the data as the debt to GDP of Djibouti topped out in 2015 after the initial 2013 funding from China, and has fallen since its peak in 2015.

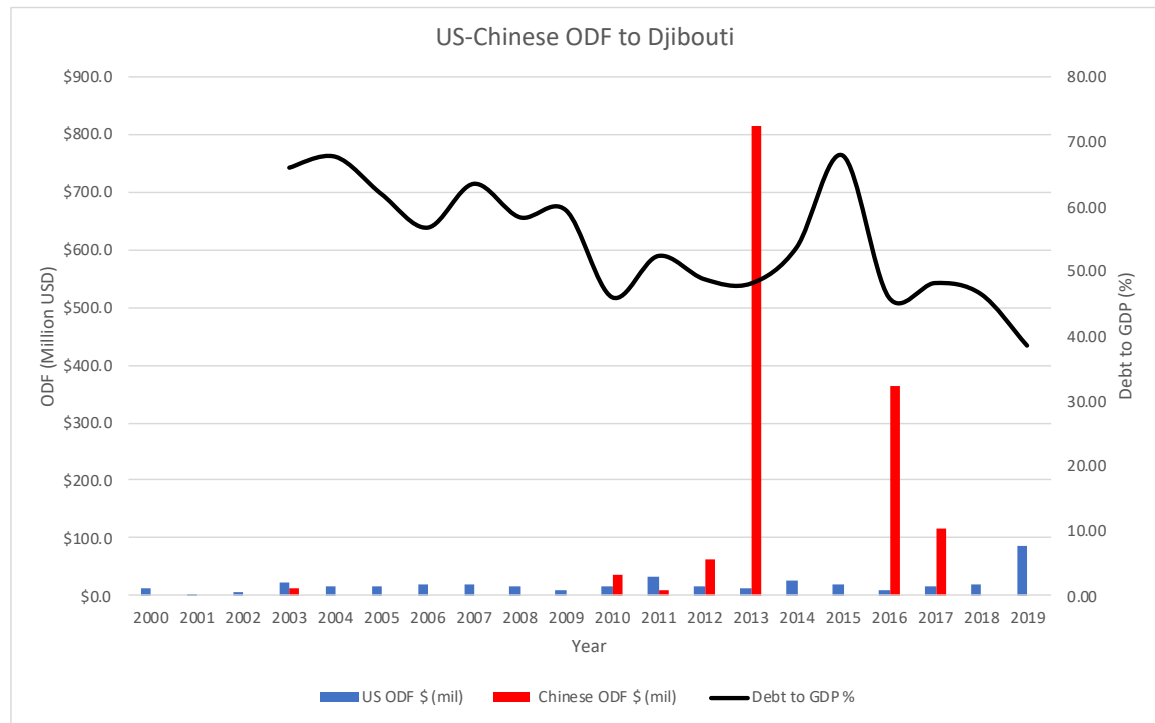


Figure 10. U.S. and Chinese ODF to Djibouti.<sup>454</sup>

Chinese investment in Djibouti can also be understood as a competitive strategy related to both of China's objectives in Africa. It is at the mouth of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, and 10–20% of all global commerce flows through this region.<sup>455</sup> In conjunction with being a chokepoint for the flow of goods and oil tankers, it overlooks the pathways in

<sup>454</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from both USAID and SAIS-CARI databases and Debt to GDP data from the World Bank database.

<sup>455</sup> "The Bab el-Mandeb Strait Is a Strategic Route for Oil and Natural Gas Shipments," Today in Energy, August 27, 2019, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=41073>.

which the Red Sea, Indian Ocean, and Gulf of Aden converge upon which “these aspects alone would define it as a major geopolitical area of the world.”<sup>456</sup> Djibouti is also encompassed in the HOA and the Middle East, sits in the middle of major shipping lanes, and acts as a bridge between both regions and its multiple trading partners. David Shinn, former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia, who previously served as the State Department’s desk officer for Djibouti, was the first to propose this “string of pearls” concept through which he asserted, China plans to develop a chain of military and commercial ports from mainland China to Djibouti.<sup>457</sup> Djibouti also plays an important role regionally as neighbors, such as Ethiopia, as they rely on Djiboutian ports for 90% of their imports,<sup>458</sup> as well as to export their goods. With this understanding, I want to turn your attention back to the causal logic chart used to test the motivations for both the United States and China in providing ODF to SSA nations.

#### 5.5.1.2 The United States’ First Motivation: Good Governance and Overall Well Being

Following the causal logic mapped out in Figure 7 for the United States, if the primary motivation is good governance and overall well-being, high levels of U.S. ODF would be expected to go to countries that demonstrate increased governance reform and improved corruption controls. The inverse would also be true. Should those countries not have good governance or corruption controls in place then the United States should not be sending ODF to the country.

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<sup>456</sup> Peter Schwab, “Cold War on the Horn of Africa,” *African Affairs* 77, no. 306 (1978): 6–20.

<sup>457</sup> Brautigam, “A Critical Look at Chinese ‘Debt-trap Diplomacy’,” 1–14; Max Bearak, “In Strategic Djibouti, a Microcosm of China’s Growing Foothold in Africa,” *Washington Post*, December 30, 2019, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/in-strategic-djibouti-a-microcosm-of-chinas-growing-foothold-in-africa/2019/12/29/a6e664ea-beab-11e9-a8b0-7ed8a0d5dc5d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/in-strategic-djibouti-a-microcosm-of-chinas-growing-foothold-in-africa/2019/12/29/a6e664ea-beab-11e9-a8b0-7ed8a0d5dc5d_story.html).

<sup>458</sup> Cabestan, “China’s Military Base in Djibouti,” 732.



The United States has given small and sustained amounts of ODF to Djibouti from 2000–2019. Djibouti ranks #38 of the 48 SSA nations in total amount of ODF received from the United States from 2000–2019 at \$389 million. This amount differs from China’s ODF levels by a factor of four and falls below the \$1 billion threshold, which moves it into the “low” category. As the dollar amounts given to Djibouti from the United States are low, it is expected that the opposite country characteristics and outcomes should be prevalent. The expectation therefore is that little to no improvement in governance will occur and levels of corruption will increase.

Referring to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Figure 11 shows Djibouti’s score from 2010–2019 as compared to the average for SSA. Also included in the chart are annual amounts of disbursed dollars for U.S. ODF to Djibouti. Examining the data, Djibouti ranks in the bottom 25% of African nations in overall governance, as well as the encouragement of democratic elections.<sup>459</sup> Djibouti has also shown little progress towards improving its governance structures based on the data collected and has persistently remained below its fellow SSA nations. Based on these metrics, it is understandable that U.S. ODF to Djibouti is comparatively smaller, but the other aspect to governance is corruption controls, which is examined next.

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<sup>459</sup> Based on data from “Explore the Data,” Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://iiag.online/app.html?loc=DJ&meas=GOVERNANCE&view=table>.

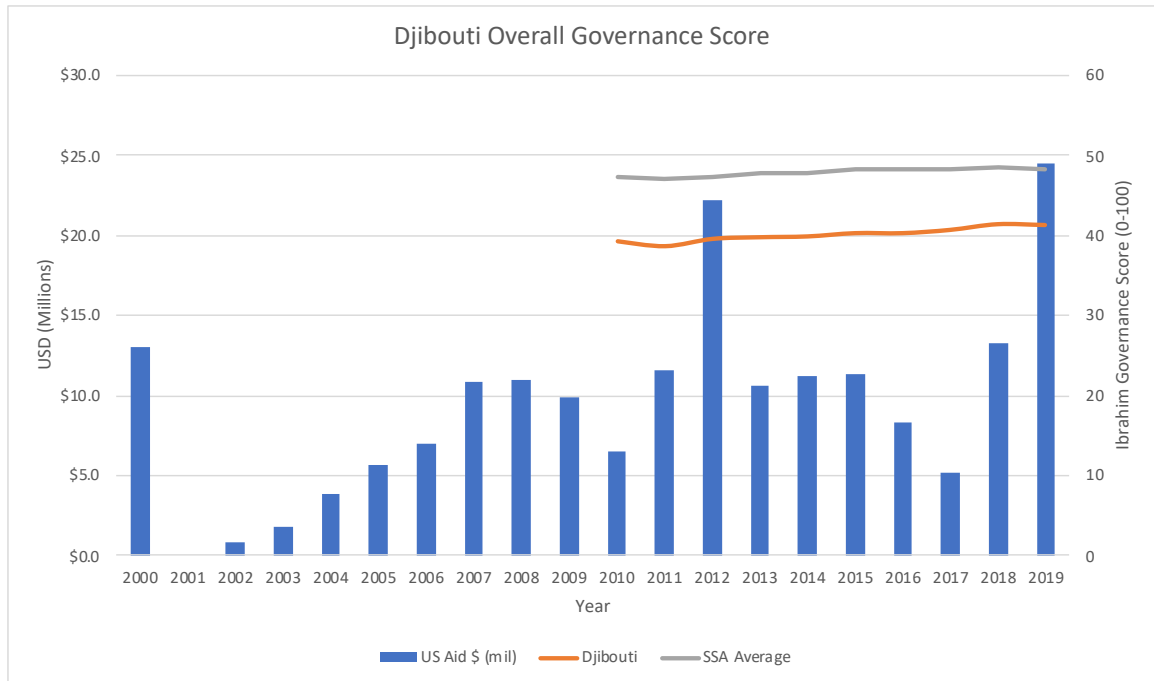


Figure 11. Djibouti Governance Score.<sup>460</sup>

In regards to the reduction of corruption levels within the country being an expected outcome and characteristic of U.S. ODF and given the low levels of it in Djibouti, reduced corruption levels are not expected. An examination of the data for the Corruption Controls Index in Figure 12 shows Djibouti on a positive trend from 2001–2008. In 2008, it reverses course and begins its downward trend for the next 11 years. During that time, China began its investment in Djibouti in 2008, as shown in Figure 10, and within three non-consecutive years, surpassed the levels of U.S. ODF by comparison. That this Chinese investment runs counter to U.S. efforts in the area of corruption controls was elaborated upon in an interview with a DOD official knowledgeable about AFRICOM who stated, “The Chinese

<sup>460</sup> The graphic was created using the author’s aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Overall Governance for Djibouti and SSA.

do not limit themselves through the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and do not appear to adhere to non-corruption projects.”<sup>461</sup> The following SSA average score for governance, coupled with declining corruption controls over the past 11 years, demonstrate potential causes as to why Djibouti does not rank high on the recipient list for U.S. ODF, as well as areas in which Chinese efforts in the region work at cross-purposes to the United States. After failing to justify the first motivation of good governance through the causal logic map, Djibouti does not demonstrate the justification within that framework to receive high levels of U.S. ODF. Transitioning on the second causal logic train allows for the testing of the second and third motivations for U.S. ODF, conflict prevention, and counter terrorism.

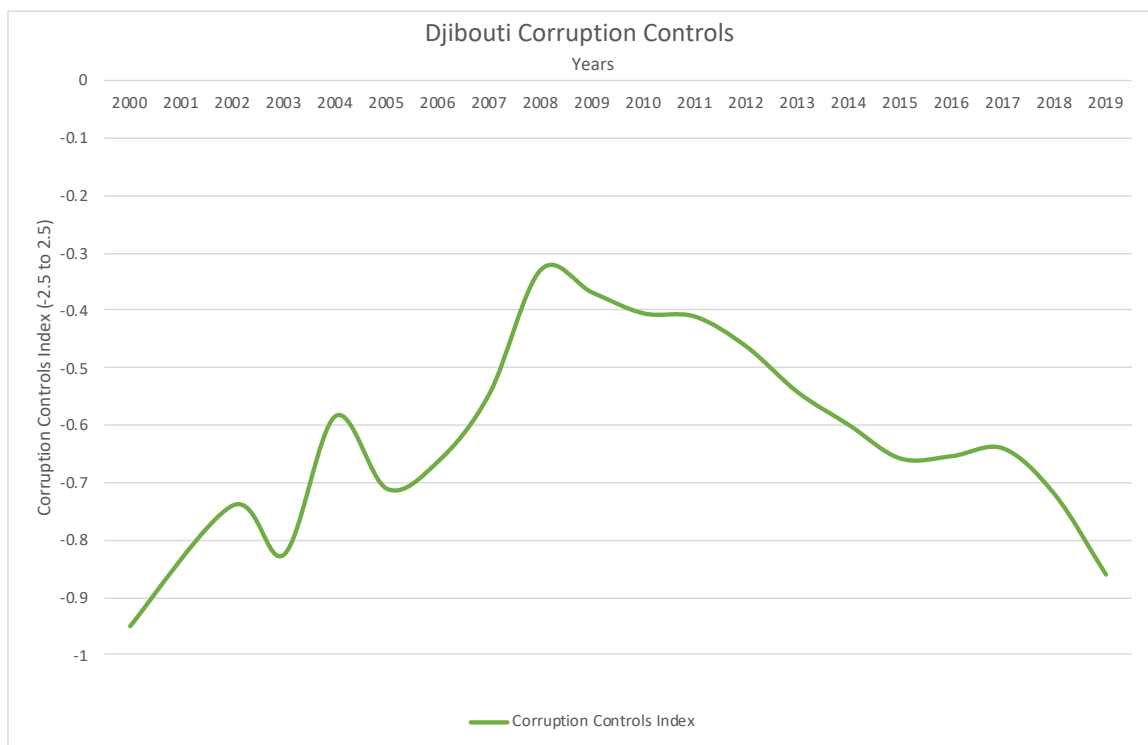


Figure 12. Corruption Controls Index for Djibouti.<sup>462</sup>

<sup>461</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021.

<sup>462</sup> Graphic created by the author using data from the World Bank Corruption Controls Index database.

#### 5.5.1.3 The United States' Second and Third Motivations: Conflict Prevention and Counter Terrorism

Referring to the causal logic train mapped out in Figure 7 for testing the theories laid out previously, the second motivation for the United States regarding ODF is regional stability. Two areas are delineated within regional stability: conflict prevention and counter terrorism efforts. To this extent, as a low recipient of U.S. ODF, high levels of violence are not expected within the country but given the neighboring country conflict, the motivation is expected to be driven more by counter-terrorist operations within the region. To test this theory, Figure 13 shows the relationship between U.S. ODF levels and Djibouti's score on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety. This score is measured by the absence of violent events in state-based conflict and the absence of non-state conflict. The threshold is the SSA average score (gray line). Djibouti consistently ranks at the top of African nations with one of the highest scores. On the surface, it appears to be a beneficial; however, stable countries with poor governance tend to be more autocratic than democratic and thus work counter to the U.S. efforts.

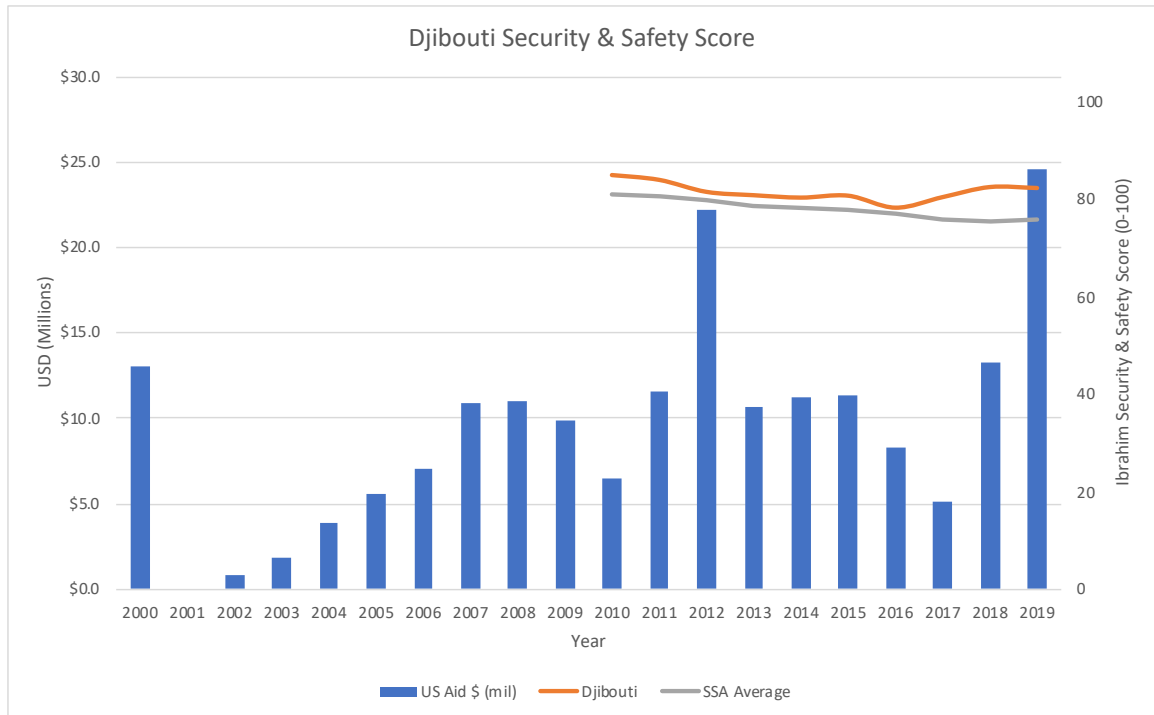


Figure 13. Djibouti Security and Safety Score.<sup>463</sup>

Despite comparatively lower levels of ODF, the United States has had a persistent footprint at Camp Lemonnier since September 2001, with a focus on counter-terrorist efforts. The current AFRICOM commander, General Townsend (U.S. Army), highlighted this point when he said, “A secure and stable Africa is an enduring American interest.”<sup>464</sup> AFRICOM and the United States have worked in conjunction with the Djiboutian government and have positioned over 4,000 troops at Camp Lemonnier in support of this effort.<sup>465</sup> However, with China’s rapid rise in the country since its establishment of its first

<sup>463</sup> The graphic was created using the author’s aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety for Djibouti.

<sup>464</sup> Stated on October 14, 2020 during the Air Force Culture and Language Center 2020 Symposium, by Lt Gen Kirk Smith, the AFRICOM Deputy Commander.

<sup>465</sup> Troop numbers based on 2019 reports. Bearak, “In Strategic Djibouti.”

overseas military base, as well as across the continent has shifted the landscape for the United States and established a new dilemma within which to operate. In an interview with a current official knowledgeable about AFRICOM, he stated the motivations for U.S. ODF to African nations are to “Enhance security and stability within one country, leading to regional security and stability.”<sup>466</sup>

Yun Sun, a Brookings Institute Researcher, illustrates the current dilemma the United States is faced with in respect to China in Africa. She states, “The US is being increasingly edged out of the continent politically and economically.”<sup>467</sup> This statement is not in reference to domestic U.S. policies and politics but in reference to the African continent as a whole. In using ODF within African nations, the United States is being edged out by China politically and economically; politically, in the sense that it is gaining allies across Africa in support of its position on issues, such as Xinjiang. This support leads to opposition against the United States at the UN.<sup>468</sup> While economically, China has become Africa’s largest trading partner and has fostered the market dependency on Chinese goods. As it pertains to the U.S. security efforts in Djibouti, however, a DOD official knowledgeable about AFRICOM and Djibouti stated, “The Chinese are still figuring out, with their base, how to live and work in a foreign country and that their presence in Djibouti is a concern and at times a mild pain factor and their presence does not support US security operations in the region.”<sup>469</sup> This statement illustrates that China’s presence in Djibouti is

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<sup>466</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 13, 2021.

<sup>467</sup> Yun Sun and John L. Thornton, *China in Africa: Implications for U.S. Competition and Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2012).

<sup>468</sup> Eric Olander, “Score Keeping: Which African Countries Aligned with China at the United Nations on Xinjian and Hong Kong,” The China Africa Project, October 13, 2020, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2020/10/13/score-keeping-which-african-countries-aligned-with-china-at-the-united-nations-on-xinjiang-and-hong-kong/>.

<sup>469</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021.

not hampering U.S. operations in the region but it also is not helping the United States achieve its goal of regional stability and countering terrorism in the HOA. Scholars have pointed to this area as a possible point of collaboration between the United States and China.<sup>470</sup> However, up unto this point, the two great powers have not largely collaborated in this area. Claims that China is obstructing U.S. operations in the region have tended to be overblown given the research since the United States still has port and base access within Djibouti.

One of the areas Chinese engagement has impacted the United States occurred in 2015. The Djiboutian government was asked to vacate a secondary base along the northern coast of Djibouti, in the town of Obock, as the Chinese had given the Djiboutian government a much more attractive offer.<sup>471</sup> Coincidentally, Obock is the same fishing port discussed previously where illegal Chinese fishing trawlers were caught fishing out of in 2017.<sup>472</sup> This request is but one example of an African government playing one power off the other to obtain the best terms and outcome for its government. In similar fashion to Ethiopia, when the Djiboutian regime faces pressure from Washington to change its authoritarian rule, it turns to China, which has substantial economic leverage in Africa to backstop its position.<sup>473</sup>

The United States has often reprimanded African governments for accepting Chinese ODF, beginning with former President Obama. In a rebuttal to U.S. criticisms of

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<sup>470</sup> Joshua Eisenman and David H. Shinn, “China’s Strategy in Africa,” in *China Steps Out* (London: Routledge, 2018), 160.

<sup>471</sup> Degang Sun and Yahia H. Zoubir, “The Eagle’s Nest in the Horn of Africa: U.S. Military Strategic Deployment in Djibouti,” *Africa Spectrum* 51, no. 1 (2016): 111–124.

<sup>472</sup> “Chinese Trawlers Snapped Fishing in Djibouti’s Protected Waters,” France 24, May 26, 2017, <https://observers.france24.com/en/20170526-chinese-trawlers-are-photographed-fishing-djibouti-protected-waters>.

<sup>473</sup> Sun and Zoubir, “The Eagle’s Nest in the Horn of Africa,” 111–124.

African governments embracing Chinese lending, one of the most consistent responses by African leaders and government officials is “We went and asked the French, the US, the EU and no one would finance or build these projects. So, we went to the Chinese.”<sup>474</sup> Implied in this statement is that the need within Africa for development and funding is so great that it exceeds the capacity of a single great power. Currently, China seems to be the only country willing or capable to meet these needs. This dissertation next tests China’s three motivations in Djibouti.

#### 5.5.1.4 China’s First Motivation: Basic Mercantilist Self-enrichment

The first step in the causal logic framework for China is the motivation of basic mercantilist self-enrichment predicated on the presence of natural resources that China would seek to extract. As previously iterated, Djibouti is categorized as a non-resource rich country because its resource rents as a percentage of GDP are below 10% for the last three years (excluding forest rents). Instead, Djibouti reflects another characteristic linked with the first motivation of Chinese ODF, coastal access and subsequent infrastructure development. It has received significant levels of investment in the areas of infrastructure as reflected in the data. The data indicates China’s ODF largely financed the development of hard power infrastructure in Djibouti, specifically regarding the funding, construction, and operation of the Doraleh Multipurpose Port, the Ethiopia-Djibouti water pipeline, the Ghoubet Port, and the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone with a collective amount of \$754 million.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> As stated during an interview conducted by the author on April 19, 2021.

<sup>475</sup> Cabestan, “China’s Military Base in Djibouti,” 733.



The ports within Djibouti are important to Djibouti, as they possess both strategic and economic significance in the HOA region. The ports enable landlocked countries to utilize Djiboutian infrastructure, to export needed goods, as well as have access to imported goods for their own economies. According to a 2019 World Bank study, 66% of Djibouti's GDP is generated because of these ports' development.<sup>476</sup> This percentage emphasizes their dependence on such infrastructure for economic development and growth. As it is becoming more and more clear, Djibouti's economic engine lies primarily within the hold of Chinese state-owned entities. Additionally, China is the largest bilateral lender to Djibouti. Djibouti's debt is continuing to rise, which ties into similar characteristics to China's second motivation. China has set a precedent of debt-for-equity swaps in the case of the national power grid in Laos and the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka that casts a long shadow over Djibouti as its debt levels rise. Both these examples are further contextualized as follows and highlight the debt trap dilemma that faces many African nations today as an outcome of continued Chinese ODF.

A recent case of illegal Chinese fishing in Djibouti is another example of China's primary motivation of mercantilist self-enrichment and problematic outcome of high levels of exports of natural resources. Albeit not constrained to Djibouti with cases also in Senegal<sup>477</sup> and Namibia,<sup>478</sup> the focus is on Djibouti. In 2017, six Chinese trawlers were illegally fishing off the Djiboutian coast in protected waters near the town of Obock.<sup>479</sup> The

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<sup>476</sup> World Bank, *Djibouti* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2019), <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/319391570664065440/EN-MPO-OCT19-Djibouti.pdf>.

<sup>477</sup> Chidinma Nwoye, "Chinese Trawlers with an Illegal Fishing Record Have Been Licensed by Senegal," Quartz Africa, October 9, 2020, <https://qz.com/africa/1915624/senegal-okays-chinese-boats-with-illegal-fishing-record-greenpeace>.

<sup>478</sup> Evelin De Kirk, "Namibia: Chinese Trawlers Seized for Illegal Fishing," All Africa News, March 20, 2020, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202003310770.html>.

<sup>479</sup> France 24, "Chinese Trawlers Snapped Fishing in Djibouti's Protected Waters."

Djiboutian Minister of Energy lamented that the sea is Djibouti's only wealth and that he is concerned for Djibouti's future as Chinese deep-sea trawling is not only banned in Djibouti but is destructive to the ecological environment and limits future sustainment.<sup>480</sup> "Djibouti is not self-sufficient and is dependent on imports of food products."<sup>481</sup>

Djibouti does not meet the natural resources threshold to be categorized as a resource rich nation, which therefore eliminates this threshold as a motivation for China. Instead, as it satisfies the second aspect of mercantilist self-enrichment in that it has coastal access and is strategically located at the mouth of major shipping lanes, China's engagement in Djibouti can be understood. Looking at the three largest investments by China in Djibouti demonstrates Chinese motivations. In the case of Djibouti, this motivation can be better understood by access to markets rather than natural resources. The 2013 funding by China of the \$3.3 billion Djibouti-Addis Ababa rail, along with a \$322 million water pipeline from Djibouti to Ethiopia, and capped with the \$344 million funding of the Doraleh Multipurpose Port project, all point to China's focus on access to markets within the HOA region, which is the second motivation to be tested.

#### 5.5.1.5 China's Second Motivation: Securing Market Access and Investments

If the second motivation for Chinese ODF were securing markets for Chinese goods and investments, then large populations, high levels of imports of Chinese goods, and increased debt levels would be expected. The size of Djibouti's economy limits its ability

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<sup>480</sup> France 24.

<sup>481</sup> France 24.

to diversify since it is one of the smallest nations in Africa with a population of just over one million people according to 2020 figures.<sup>482</sup>

The large port and infrastructure development previously noted demonstrate China's motivations in the country as this development allows Chinese exports to the region to increase. Djibouti's imports from China have grown significantly. Beginning in 2000 with around \$50 million in exports, it has expanded to \$2.2 billion in 2019. The imports from China are largely comprised of textiles (\$3.21 billion), machines (\$3.03 billion), metals (\$2.65 billion), plastics (\$1.07 billion), footwear and headwear (\$1.06 billion), and other household goods, such as furniture and light fixtures (\$1.01 billion).<sup>483</sup> A majority of these items, textiles, plastics, footwear, and household goods are all consumable items that make Djibouti dependent on China without many alternatives for African nations.<sup>484</sup> Figure 14 illustrates the balance of trade between China and Djibouti from 2000–2019. This figure illustrates the immense growth of imports (blue line) totaling \$15.6 billion, while exports to China (red line) totaled \$29 million during the same time period.<sup>485</sup>

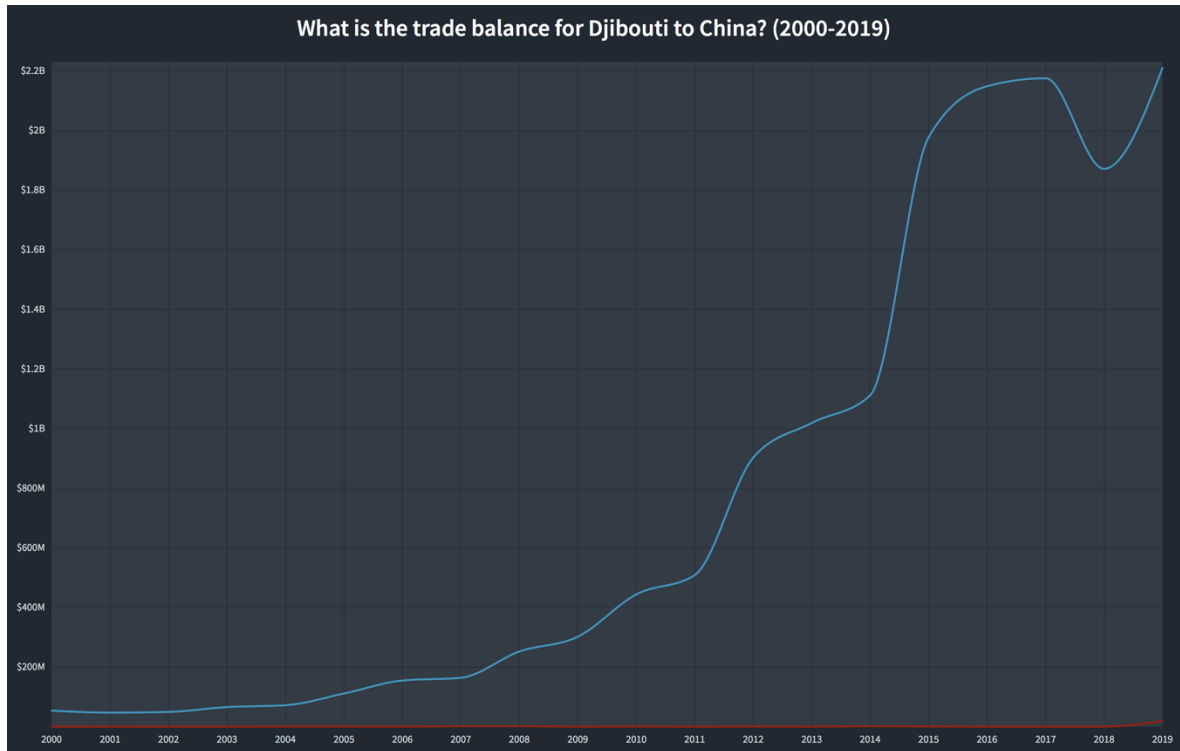
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<sup>482</sup> "The World Bank in Djibouti," World Bank, April 19, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/djibouti/overview#3>.

<sup>483</sup> Data pulled from the Trading Economics website. "China Exports to Djibouti," Trading Economics, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://tradingeconomics.com/china/exports/djibouti>.

<sup>484</sup> Eric Olander, "Africans May Dislike Their Dependence on Imported Chinese Goods, but There Isn't Much They Can Do about It," The China-Africa Project, March 9, 2020, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2020/03/09/africans-may-dislike-their-dependence-on-imported-chinese-goods-but-there-isnt-much-they-can-do-about-it/>.

<sup>485</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website. "What Is the Trade Balance for Djibouti to China? (2000–2017)," Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://oec.world/en/visualize/line/hs92/show/dji/chn/all/2000.2017/>.



This chart shows the trade balance between Djibouti and China in which the blue line shows the level of imports from China by Djibouti in billions of dollars while the red line resembles exports from Djibouti to China. From 2000 to 2019, imports from China by Djibouti totaled \$15.6 billion, while exports to China from Djibouti totaled \$29 million.

Figure 14. Djibouti Balance of Trade with China (2000–2019).<sup>486</sup>

Djibouti is also a market for China’s excess production capacity as expansive infrastructure development has taken place in the country. China also utilizes ODF to build on South-South relations to form a voting block and offer Chinese companies the opportunity to grow their brand internationally.<sup>487</sup> This situation makes African nations dependent on Chinese goods and services, as well as gives China access to African markets. Having African countries dependent on it for goods, services, and large amounts of

<sup>486</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website.

<sup>487</sup> Dr. Lina Benabdallah, assistant Professor at Wake Forest University, with expertise in China-Africa relations foreign policy.

financing, gives China a larger role on the international stage and solidifies its stance as a global superpower. This microcosm is also reflective of the overall trend in the levels of trade between African nations and China. Between 2006 and 2018, China's trade with Africa grew 226%, and as of 2019, China is Africa's largest trading partner.

In addition to securing access to markets for Chinese goods, China also seeks to secure its investment in the continent. One of the expected outcomes of this increased desire to protect China's access to markets but also its investments is the increased presence of security personnel. In 2017, China established its first international military base in Djibouti. The base was located approximately six miles from the U.S. joint allied base, Camp Lemonnier, illustrated in Figure 15. The presence of the Chinese base has not only been to support Chinese efforts and investments in the HOA region but has also had an antagonistic presence on U.S. security operations there. Soon after the Chinese base was established, the Chinese interfered with U.S. planes in Djibouti including lasing U.S. planes and injuring two crewmen, as well as attempting to gain access to the U.S. military base.<sup>488</sup> A DOD official knowledgeable about AFRICOM and Djibouti elaborated that the lasing incident had more to do with China not doing its due diligence and building its base in the flight path of the international airport for international, commercial, and military flights plans already established by the Djiboutian airport authority prior to its base construction.<sup>489</sup> This situation outlines China's approach in Djibouti, beginning with

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<sup>488</sup> Jim Garamone, "U.S. Protests Chinese Interference with U.S. Planes in Djibouti," Department of Defense, May 3, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/1511708/us-protests-chinese-interference-with-us-planes-in-djibouti/>; David Brennan, "U.S. Commander Says China Tried to Sneak into American Military Base in Africa," Newsweek, June 18, 2019, <https://www.newsweek.com/u-s-china-sneak-military-base-africa-djibouti-1444542>.

<sup>489</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021.

critical infrastructure development and then leveraging economic position and might within the region to gain concessions to expand its sphere of influence within the country and the region.

With high levels of investment in Djibouti and the surrounding region, as well as the establishment of its first base in Djibouti, China stated its mission is to secure and protect these investments. China not only has a growing need for energy to maintain its economic growth, but it “needs safe and secure routes for trading and energy security.”<sup>490</sup> A recent report by the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy highlighted this need for China and the manner in which it is playing out in Africa. China uses security contractors in African countries to be both able to protect its investments, as well as keep former Chinese military employed.<sup>491</sup> Doing so has allowed China to maintain a low profile militarily as an increased military presence would raise concerns about China’s image internationally. China has also implemented “safeguarding its overseas interests and protecting Chinese nationals”<sup>492</sup> as part of its official strategic guidance from 2019 forward. This stance includes adding security cooperation as a component to its already successful BRI on the continent,<sup>493</sup> as well as in 2015, elevating the “far seas” to the level of national security within China.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Alam Fahmida and Samin Farhan Asef, “The Implications of BRI in Djibouti: A Critical Geopolitical Analysis,” in *Proceedings of the 18th International RAIS Conference*, August 17–18, 2020 035fa (Princeton, NJ: Research Association for Interdisciplinary Studies, 2020).

<sup>491</sup> Nantulya, “Chinese Security Contractors in Africa.”

<sup>492</sup> Nantulya.

<sup>493</sup> Nantulya.

<sup>494</sup> Monica Wang, “China’s Strategy in Djibouti: Mixing Commercial and Military Interests,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 13, 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/chinas-strategy-djibouti-mixing-commercial-and-military-interests>.



Figure 15. Map of Djibouti and Chinese and U.S. Bases and Infrastructure.<sup>495</sup>

Infrastructure development and basic mercantilist self-enrichment motivates Chinese ODF in Djibouti but it is not restricted to just that singular area. China is also motivated by the desire to secure markets for Chinese goods, as well as securing the investments it has already made in the region. The final motivation tested is the third motivation of shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model.

<sup>495</sup> Bearak, "In Strategic Djibouti."

#### 5.5.1.6 China's Third Motivation: Shifting Africa towards a More Chinese Centric Model

Transitioning to testing if the third motivation for Chinese ODF is to shift Africa, and in this case, Djibouti, towards a more Chinese centric development model, seeing Djibouti more aligned with China on UN votes would be expected. Along with alignment on important UN votes, as defined in Chapter 4, the 2019 Xinjiang vote is also examined in which about half of the African countries defended China when Washington and like-minded allies condemned Beijing for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.<sup>496</sup>

Figure 10 shows the increased disbursements of ODF, which build upon the motivation of Chinese offering an alternative to U.S. hegemony in Africa. With the establishment of China's base, China has intentionally portrayed its presence there as opposite to that of the United States by stating, "contrary to Western power, China will not use this base to interfere in other countries' internal affairs."<sup>497</sup> Scholars have noted that Djibouti is currently being used as a testing ground for China's economic and strategic expansion. The drawbacks for China however have been that the learning curve has been steep and opens up opportunities for the United States "to shape the space in which China expands."<sup>498</sup>

Figure 16 illustrates Djibouti's voting alignment with the United States or China at the UN on important votes, as determined by the U.S. State Department, from 2000–2017. Djibouti aligned with China specifically in the areas of democracy, nuclear non-

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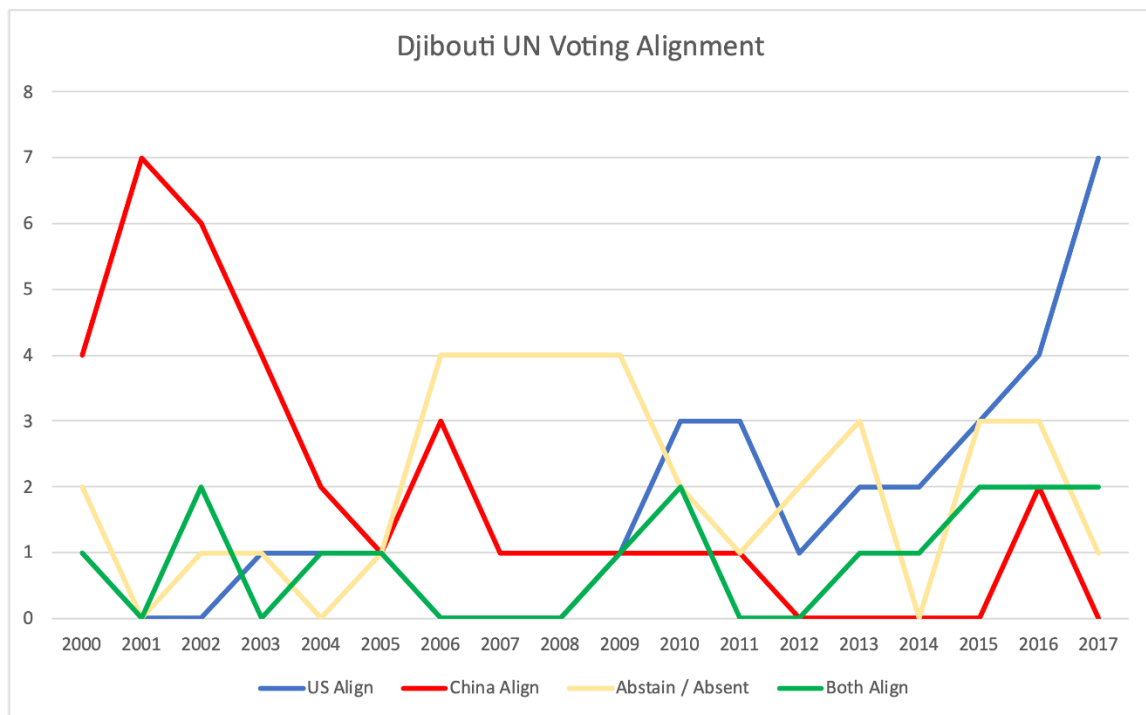
<sup>496</sup> Putz, "Which Countries Are for or against China's Xinjiang Policies?"

<sup>497</sup> Wang Lei, 'Jibuji: keyi chengwei ZhongMei junshi hezuo de xinchuangkou' ['Djibouti Can Become a New Window of Military Cooperation between China and the United States'], *Shijie Zhishi*, World Affairs 16 (August 2017): 56–57.

<sup>498</sup> Zach Vertin, *Great Power Rivalry in The Red Sea: China's Experiment in Djibouti and Implications for the United States* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2020), 1–30.



proliferation (NNPT), nuclear test bans, arms trade, and human rights. In the area of democracy and NNPT, Djibouti aligned with the United States a majority of the time demonstrated by the blue voting blocks. In the areas of the test bans, arms trade, and development, Djibouti aligned with both the United States and China, but in the area of human rights, Djibouti shifted from alignment with China in the early 2000s to align more with the United States or abstained from voting.



This figure shows Djibouti's voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige). Djibouti and the United States aligned in the areas of the UN's role in democracy and NNPT. Djibouti aligned with both the United States and China in the areas of nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Djibouti abstained from voting in the area of human rights, except when it aligned with China from 2000–2005, and then aligned mostly with the United States from 2015–2017. A more detailed graphical depiction of UN voting alignment by individual vote and category can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 16. Djibouti UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).

A 2018 study analyzing voting patterns by country at the UN from 1971–2017 showed that Djibouti voted in agreement with China 90.5% of the time.<sup>499</sup> The data supports this finding in that from 2000–2014, Djibouti voted in a majority role with China every year on votes classified as important by the U.S. State Department.<sup>500</sup> From 2000–2017, out of the 116 votes categorized as important by the U.S. State Department and analyzed in this dissertation, Djibouti aligned with China on 34 or 30% of the votes. For comparison, Djibouti aligned with the United States on 30 or 26% of those votes and abstained or was absent for 36 or 31% of those votes. Djibouti also aligned with both the United States and China on 16 or 13% of those votes. Figure 16 graphically illustrates these breakdowns in votes and shows that the highest number of votes was abstentions followed by alignment with China and then alignment with the United States.

In 2018, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 29% with an absentee rate on those same votes of 21%. Djibouti aligned with the United States on 33% of important votes and had an absentee rate for important votes of 0%. In 2019, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 28% and an absentee rate on important votes of 18%. Djibouti by comparison aligned with the United States on 37% of important votes and had an absentee rate for important votes of 0%. This rate of voting is consistent with Djibouti’s previous voting trend as shown in Figure 16. Initially, a majority of the votes in the graphic are red, which indicates an alignment with China. However,

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<sup>499</sup> “Data Analysis: Who Votes with China, and Who Votes with the U.S. and Europe at the UN?” Yiqin Fu, June 10, 2018, <https://yiqinfu.github.io/posts/united-nations-general-assembly/>.

<sup>500</sup> The U.S. State Department began classifying UNGA votes in 1984. Database used for calculations and analysis: Erik Voeten, Anton Strezhnev, and Michael Bailey, “United Nations General Assembly Voting Data,” Harvard Dataverse, 2009, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/LEJUQZ>, Harvard Dataverse, V27.

since 2010, on votes, such as human rights issues, Djibouti has aligned more closely with the United States. In 2018 and 2019 voting, China voted in alignment with the United States on 5% of important votes in 2018, and 17% of important votes in 2019. China also had an abstention rate of 0% on important votes in both 2018 and 2019, which demonstrates that alignment with the United States by Djibouti was mostly in contrast to China's position, and not in support of China's position.

One last metric to test if China is shifting Djibouti towards a more Chinese centric development model to include alignment at the UN is in regards to the 2019 Xinjiang vote. Referred to as the "22 vs 50"<sup>501</sup> vote, it demonstrated the diplomatic split between the United States and China, specifically in the area of human rights as it pertains to Xinjiang. In March 2019, ahead of a UN panel on human rights violations in Xinjiang, "PRC diplomats directly approached delegates from developing states, and sent letter to other ambassadors ...making a veiled threat, the letter advised recipients 'in the interest of our bilateral relations and continued multilateral cooperation...not to co-sponsor, participate in, or be present at this side event.'" <sup>502</sup> Djibouti was one of the 50 signatories in support of the "second letter" supporting China's position on Xinjiang and was one of the 22 African nations to vote in alignment with China on this issue.

#### 5.5.1.7 Alternative Theories Examined: Is Debt a Motivator for China?

One of the most persistent categorizations of Chinese ODF is "debt-trap" diplomacy. It is valuable therefore to examine this rational, especially within the high

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<sup>501</sup> Roie Yellinek and Elizabeth Chen, "The '22 vs. 50' Diplomatic Split between the West and China over Xinjiang and Human Rights," *Jamestown Foundation China Brief* 19 (2019): 22.

<sup>502</sup> Yellinek and Chen, 22.

Chinese ODF instance. It would be most prevalent if it were in fact a motivator. Since 2000, Djibouti's debt to GDP ratio had been steadily declining until 2013 when it sharply rose and peaked at 68 percent of GDP, with a majority of that debt being owed to China. Figure 17 shows just how disproportionate Chinese lending is to Djibouti when compared alongside nine other developing countries, with Djibouti's debt to China equating to almost 68.5% of GDP. In a 2019 study, the IMF stated, "While debt appears sustainable, staff's Debt Sustainability Analysis concludes that Djibouti is at high risk of debt distress."<sup>503</sup> This statement strikes at the core of the argument as to why the West has labeled Chinese ODF as "debt trap diplomacy."<sup>504</sup> One of the most prominent examples of China's "debt-trap diplomacy" has been the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka.

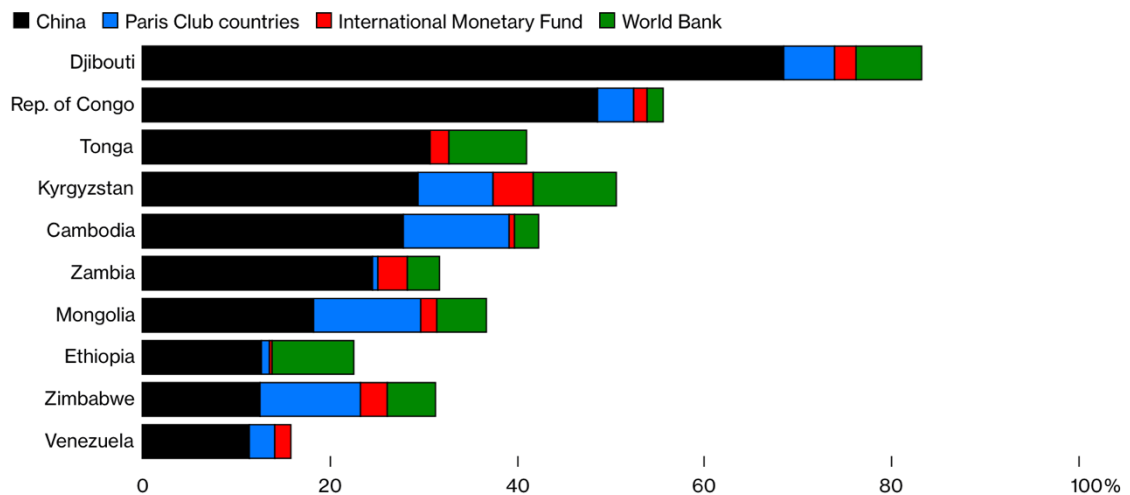
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<sup>503</sup> International Monetary Fund, *2019 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; Statement by the Executive Director for Djibouti* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2019).

<sup>504</sup> Jauch, "Chinese Investments in Africa," 49–55; Were, *Debt Trap?*; White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.

## Debt Owed to Creditors, as Share of GDP

Selected developing countries



Data: Kiel Institute for the World Economy

Figure 17. Debt to Creditors.<sup>505</sup>

In the case of the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, the operation of the port was signed over to a Chinese state-owned company on a 99-year lease to repay over \$1 billion of the \$12 billion of accrued debt to China by the Sri Lankan government.<sup>506</sup> The case of the Laotian national power grid is a second and more recent example. Under mounting debt to China, and to avoid default, the Laotian government agreed on a debt-for-equity swap in which Laos signed over majority control of the nation's electrical grid to a Chinese state-

<sup>505</sup> Alonso Soto and William Horobin, "Paris Club Seizes Pandemic Opportunity to Reclaim Lost Influence," Bloomberg Businessweek, April 20, 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-20/paris-club-uses-pandemic-to-reclaim-lost-influence-and-bring-china-to-the-table?sref=uMuyuNij>.

<sup>506</sup> Hurley, Morris, and Portelance, "Examining the Debt Implications," 139–175.

run firm, China Southern Power Grid.<sup>507</sup> Should the debt levels of Djibouti become unserviceable, Djibouti could run the same risk, and with COVID-19 bringing global trade to a standstill and shutting down most economies, this possible default becomes an even more glaring reality. Defaulting on repayment could jeopardize Djibouti's economic engine by granting China control of strategic regional assets, such as port operations. However, this scenario would be a rare occurrence and was not anticipated to occur since it would run counter to China's second motivation of securing markets and investments. The most likely outcome, should Djibouti default or threaten to, would be a restructuring of the debt. Research has shown that despite China's formidable economic size, its leverage in these renegotiations is limited.<sup>508</sup>

As it pertains to U.S.-China GPC in Africa, the United States has often pointed to the Hambantota Port as the illustration of the cost of doing business with China rather than the exception.<sup>509</sup> The United States has also cautioned African nations against this approach by China being replicated across Africa should countries begin to default on their debt and turn over assets to China.<sup>510</sup> Strategic assets, such as the port complex in Djibouti, would make it difficult for the United States to maintain operations in the region, as dependency

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<sup>507</sup> Patrick Winn, "How a Chinese Company Took Control of an Entire Nation's Electrical Grid," PRI's The World Science, September 20, 2020, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2020-09-30/how-chinese-company-took-control-entire-nation-s-electrical-grid>; Keith Zhai and Kay Johnson, "Exclusive: Taking Power—Chinese Firm to Run Laos Electric Grid amid Default Warnings," Reuters, September 4, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-laos-exclusive/exclusive-taking-power-chinese-firm-to-run-laos-electric-grid-amid-default-warnings-idUSKBN25V14C>.

<sup>508</sup> Agatha Kratz, Allen Feng, and Logan Wright, *New Data on the "Debt Trap" Question* (New York: Rhodium Group, 2019), <https://rhg.com/research/new-data-on-the-debt-trap-question/>.

<sup>509</sup> Salem Solomon, "As U.S. 'Debt-Trap Diplomacy' Rhetoric Heats Up, China-Africa Relations Hold Fast," Voice of America, December 19, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/africa/us-debt-trap-diplomacy-rhetoric-heats-china-africa-relations-hold-fast>.

<sup>510</sup> Solomon.

on access to Djiboutian ports is necessary and required.<sup>511</sup> Concerns though tend to be overblown. China has not seized any assets in Africa because of an African nation's default on its debt repayment to China. In the wake of COVID in 2020, and the global economic contraction that ensued, multiple African nations were able to refinance their debt with China as opposed to forfeiting assets.<sup>512</sup>

An additional point of emphasis should be that the regression analysis and correlations explained in the previous chapter do not support the notion that China intentionally lends to countries to leverage them into debt and seize assets. China's primary motivation is basic mercantilist self-enrichment and its focus on win-win situations features prominently in China's engagement with these countries, in which China also does not give ODF to gain nothing in return. By very nature of the win-win declaration, China expects to gain something in return from these investments. If countries are unable to repay, in certain smaller instances of grants, China has forgiven them.<sup>513</sup> However, with most of China's ODF, repayment is expected. Repayment is expected through either the export of goods, other concessions, renegotiation of debt structuring, or in rare cases, debt-for-equity swaps as in the case of Sri Lanka and Laos, or renegotiation of the debt. This scenario

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<sup>511</sup> In a briefing to a Senate committee, the former AFRICOM Commander, General Waldhauser, emphasized the importance of Djiboutian port access as it pertains to sustained logistical support. He stated, "It's no secret roughly 98% of the logistics support for Djibouti, as well as Somalia and East Africa, come through that port [in Djibouti]. That port is one of five entities in the overall Djiboutian port. And so, our access there is necessary and required." Arwa Damon and Brent Swails, "China and the United States Face Off in Djibouti as the World Powers Fight for Influence in Africa," CNN, May 26, 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/26/africa/china-belt-road-initiative-djibouti-intl/index.html>.

<sup>512</sup> Eric Olander, "As Angola Gets Debt Relief from its Creditors, Kenya Hopes for the Same from China," The China Africa Project, January 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/01/13/as-angola-gets-debt-relief-from-its-creditors-kenya-hopes-for-the-same-from-china/>; Eric Olander, "China, Kenya Close to Reaching Debt Relief Deal," The China Africa Project, January 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/01/19/china-kenya-close-to-reaching-debt-relief-deal/>.

<sup>513</sup> Dreher et al., "Apples and Dragon Fruits," 182–194.

transitions into the U.S. position in Djibouti and behind which the United States invests ODF in Djibouti.

Additionally, when discussing U.S. and Chinese GPC in Africa, it is important to consider the agency that these African nations have in also making demands and pursuing its own objectives. One such case is the Doraleh Port terminal, which is illustrative of an African nation's agency within its engagements with both the United States and China, and its willingness to use it. The original operation for the Djiboutian Port Terminal was awarded to a Dubai-based company, DP World. In 2018, the Djiboutian government was not getting what it wanted out of the relationship since DP World did not see the same future vision for the port as Djibouti did with it becoming a major hub. The Djiboutian government appropriated the Doraleh Complex and later awarded operation to a Chinese company called China Merchants. Djibouti maintained its position a year later after a London Court of International Arbitration ruled in favor of DP World.<sup>514</sup> A Department of Defense official knowledgeable about AFRICOM and Djibouti stated during an interview, "At the time this spooked the Chinese and Chinese companies operating in Djibouti, because if the Djiboutian government was willing to do that to the UAE, who they are very close to, what would they do to the Chinese and others?"<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> "China Merchants Consolidates its Hold in Djibouti," *The Maritime Executive*, February 21, 2019, <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/china-merchants-consolidates-its-hold-in-djibouti>; Costas Paris, "China Tightens Grip on East African Port," *Wall Street Journal*, February 21, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-tightens-grip-on-east-african-port-11550746800>; "Legal Battle for Control of Djibouti Ports Comes to Hong Kong," *Africa News*, February 12, 2019, <https://www.africanews.com/2019/02/12/legal-battle-for-control-of-djibouti-ports-comes-to-hong-kong>.

<sup>515</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021.



## 5.5.2 The Case of Malawi: High U.S.-Low Chinese ODF

### 5.5.2.1 Background

Malawi is the next case study country for analysis and falls into the upper left quadrant of the matrix, characterized by low levels of Chinese ODF and high levels of U.S. ODF. The expected characteristics of countries falling into this quadrant are largely democratic, good governance, undertake conflict and corruption reduction efforts, and vote in alignment with the United States at the UNGA. Figure 18 compares the amounts of U.S. and Chinese ODF to Malawi from 2000 to 2019 and is overlaid by its debt to GDP ratio. As shown, the United States has given persistent and increasing amount of ODF to Malawi since 2000 while China has given comparatively little and in nonsequential years.

Over the last two decades, Malawi has sustained significant droughts.<sup>516</sup> These droughts have increased its need for food aid and food security. It also ranks within the top third of African nations in its overall governance ranking,<sup>517</sup> but has struggled historically with debt distress. Malawi is an example of Washington consensus led economic and debt reform. In the early 2000s, Malawi was struggling under mounting debt and was labelled a “debt distressed” nation by the World Bank and the IMF<sup>518</sup> before implementing IMF and World Bank adjustments.

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<sup>516</sup> Reid Hamel, “Drought-Ravaged Malawi Faces Largest Humanitarian Emergency in its History,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2, 2016, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/drought-ravaged-malawi-faces-largest-humanitarian-emergency-its-history>.

<sup>517</sup> Based on the Mo Ibrahim index of African Governance at <http://iiag.online>.

<sup>518</sup> International Monetary Fund, *Malawi: Debt Relief at the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative Completion Point and under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative*, IMF Country Report No. 06/420 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2006), 3, box 1, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2006/cr06420.pdf>.

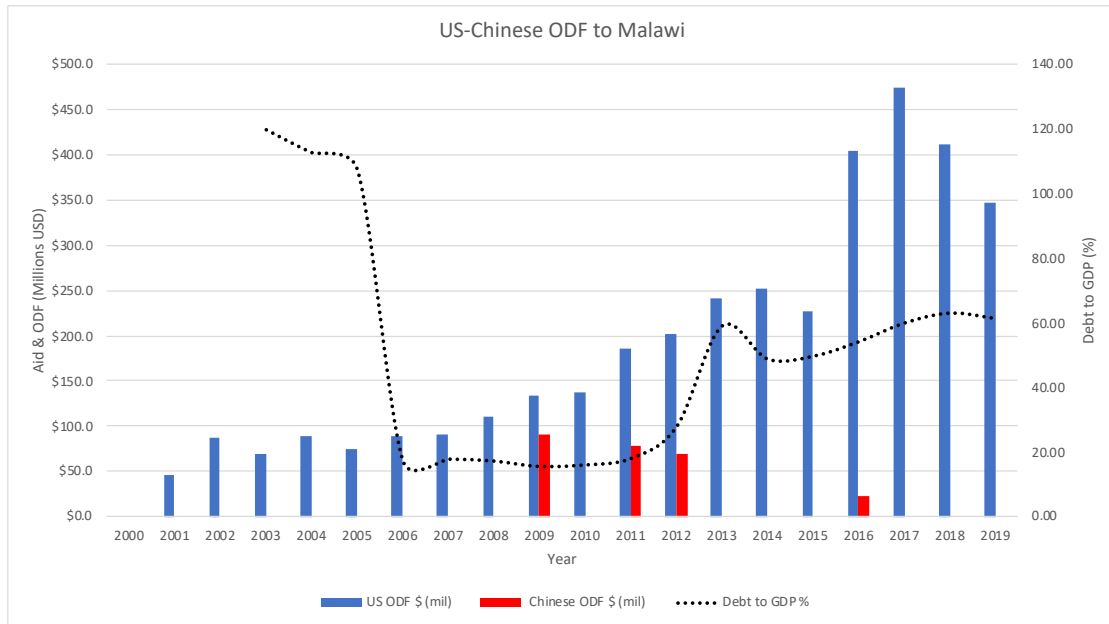


Figure 18. U.S. and Chinese ODF to Malawi.<sup>519</sup>

To address its rising debt levels, in 2002, Malawi adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan. By 2005, it had implemented the necessary completion point triggers to receive debt relief the following year.<sup>520</sup> These triggers included economic governance reform, poverty reduction strategies, governmental transparency, improving health, combating human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and increases in quality education.<sup>521</sup> All these triggers and conditionalities are characteristic of U.S. ODF as outlined in Chapter 2 but also have long been criticized as being more detrimental than beneficial to the recipient nation.<sup>522</sup> Given

<sup>519</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from both USAID and SAIS-CARI databases and Debt to GDP data from the World Bank database.

<sup>520</sup> International Monetary Fund, *Malawi*, 3.

<sup>521</sup> International Monetary Fund, 3.

<sup>522</sup> Stone, “The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa,” 577–591; Vreeland, “Why Do Governments and the IMF Enter into Agreements,” 321–43.

Malawi's ability to enact and meet these triggers, the ensuing result was debt relief representative of 80% of Malawi's GDP,<sup>523</sup> as shown in Figure 18. This drop in Malawi's debt to GDP ratio brought it out of the "debt distress" category and onto more sure footing. Looking ahead 11 years to 2017, and the Debt Sustainability Analysis conducted by the IMF on Malawi reported that even though Malawi had accumulated debt at a faster rate than its peers had in the years following 2006, it was still at moderate risk of debt distress.<sup>524</sup> An additional note is that a growing portion of Malawi's debt is held domestically, with 75% of the external debt being held by international institutions.<sup>525</sup> This percentage is compared with Djibouti in which around 96% of its total debt is held bilaterally by China.<sup>526</sup>

Building on the previous example of debt forgiveness and its impacts on governance, critics of the U.S. approach to ODF have often cited that ODF can distort the accountability structure within the government due to the fact that when revenues are not dependent on taxes from citizens and businesses, government incentive to be accountable to them is lessened.<sup>527</sup> In this case study being the high U.S. ODF example, it is important

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<sup>523</sup> Bill F. Battaile, Leonardo Hernández, and Vivian Norambuena, *Debt Sustainability in Sub-Saharan Africa: Unraveling Country-specific Risks* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2015), 6.

<sup>524</sup> Michael Ego, Zeine Zeidane, and Paloma Casero, *Malawi-Ninth Review under the Extended Credit Facility Arrangement and Request for Waivers for Nonobservance of Performance Criteria—Debt Sustainability Analysis* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2017).

<sup>525</sup> International Development Association and the International Monetary Fund, *Malawi-Joint Bank-Fund Debt Sustainability Analysis—2018 Update* (Washington, DC: International Development Association and the International Monetary Fund, 2018), <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/798271545161239979/pdf/wbg-malawi-debt-sustainability-analysis-2018-update-final-dec0618-12142018-636805946075844525.pdf>.

<sup>526</sup> Sebastian Horn, Carmen M. Reinhart, and Christoph Trebesch, *China's Overseas Lending*, no. w26050 (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2019).

<sup>527</sup> Stephen Knack, "Aid Dependence and the Quality of Governance: Cross-Country Empirical Tests," *Southern Economic Journal* 68, no. 2 (2001): 310–29; William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin, 2007); Deborah A. Bräutigam and Stephen Knack, "Foreign Aid, Institutions, and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 52, no. 2 (January 2004): 265.

to consider this criticism. An examination of 460 elected politicians in Malawi found that the participants allocated development assistance to schools in line with a fairness norm and based on if they had or had not received support previously rather than for self-serving purposes.<sup>528</sup> This assistance offers insight into Malawi's commitments to governance, corruption reduction, and education. All three build into the United States' first motivation for ODF, which is tested next.

#### 5.5.2.2 The United States' First Motivation: Good Governance and Overall Well-being

Following the causal logic mapped out in Figure 7 for the United States, if the primary motivation is good governance and overall well-being, high levels of U.S. ODF going to countries that demonstrate increased governance reform and improved corruption controls would be expected. As a high recipient of U.S. ODF, Malawi ranks #12 of the 48 SSA countries examined after receiving \$3.67 billion in ODF from the United States between 2000 and 2019. The U.S. amounts have been consistent each year and grown overall from below \$50 million in 2001 to \$350 million in 2019. Using the Ibrahim Index of African Governance as a measure, Figure 19 shows Malawi's governance score between 2010 and 2019 compared against the average score for SSA and superimposed on levels of U.S. ODF each year. The data show that Malawi is consistently well above the average score for SSA and currently sits in the top 50% of African nations in terms of governance. In absolute terms, however, as SSA as a region has improved 1.1 points between 2000 and 2019, Malawi has regressed 1.3 points dropping it from 17th to 23rd in Africa. The areas

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<sup>528</sup> Brigitte Seim, Ryan S. Jablonski, and Johan Ahlback, "How Information about Foreign Aid Affects Public Spending Decisions: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Malawi," *Journal of Development Economics* (forthcoming).

in which U.S. ODF is allocated is another important factor to consider to help demonstrate motivations.

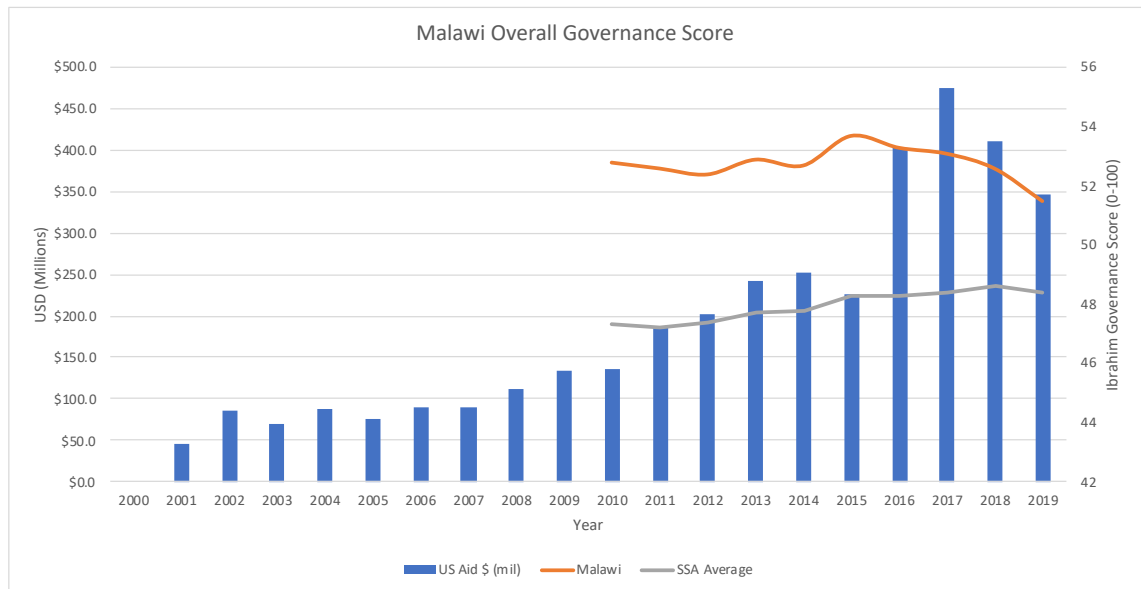


Figure 19. Malawi Governance Score.<sup>529</sup>

Breaking down the areas to which U.S. ODF to Malawi has been directed confirms the specific drivers behind one of the top recipients of U.S. ODF in SSA. Figure 20 shows the distribution of the \$3.67 billion to Malawi from the United States in the form of ODF from 2000–2019. The seven main categories they fell into were health and population (47%), agriculture and food aid (18%), education (10%), economic development and infrastructure (9%), humanitarian (7%), administrative costs (7%), and governance (2%). These percentages support the primary assertion of U.S. ODF overall well-being to include

<sup>529</sup> The graphic was created using the author’s aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Overall Governance for Malawi.

health, education, and nutrition. These data reflect the goals for bilateral assistance to Malawi outlined by the State Department, which included “increased food security and agricultural growth; poverty reduction; and stronger institutions to ensure effective social service delivery.”<sup>530</sup> However, the criticism of U.S. aid also requiring significant overhead is persistent even in this case study. The study found that 7% of overall funds, amounting to \$235 million over the 20-year period, went to administrative overhead.

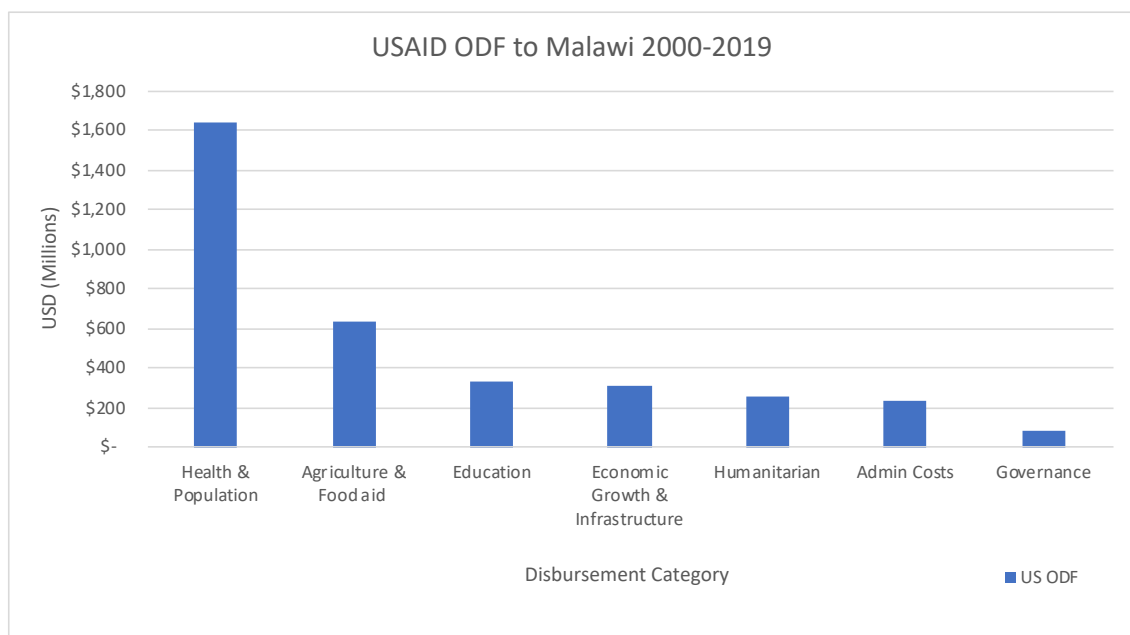


Figure 20. Categories of U.S. ODF Disbursement to Malawi (2000–2019).<sup>531</sup>

Under the umbrella of governance, a reduction in corruption levels within a country are expected characteristics of U.S. ODF. Malawi is expected to implement corruption

<sup>530</sup> Nicolas Cook, *Malawi: Recent Developments and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report No. R42856 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2013), 12, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42856.pdf>.

<sup>531</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from USAID.

controls or at last take steps to counter corruption as a high recipient of U.S. ODF. The United States is also expected to use these metrics as conditionalities to disburse ODF. Looking at the corruption controls in Malawi, until about 2008–2009, the trend was positive trend, as shown in Figure 21. A consensus has not been reached as to the causes for Malawi’s corruption, but the three main causes research have shown are poverty and inequality, an underfunded public sector, and patronage networks.<sup>532</sup>

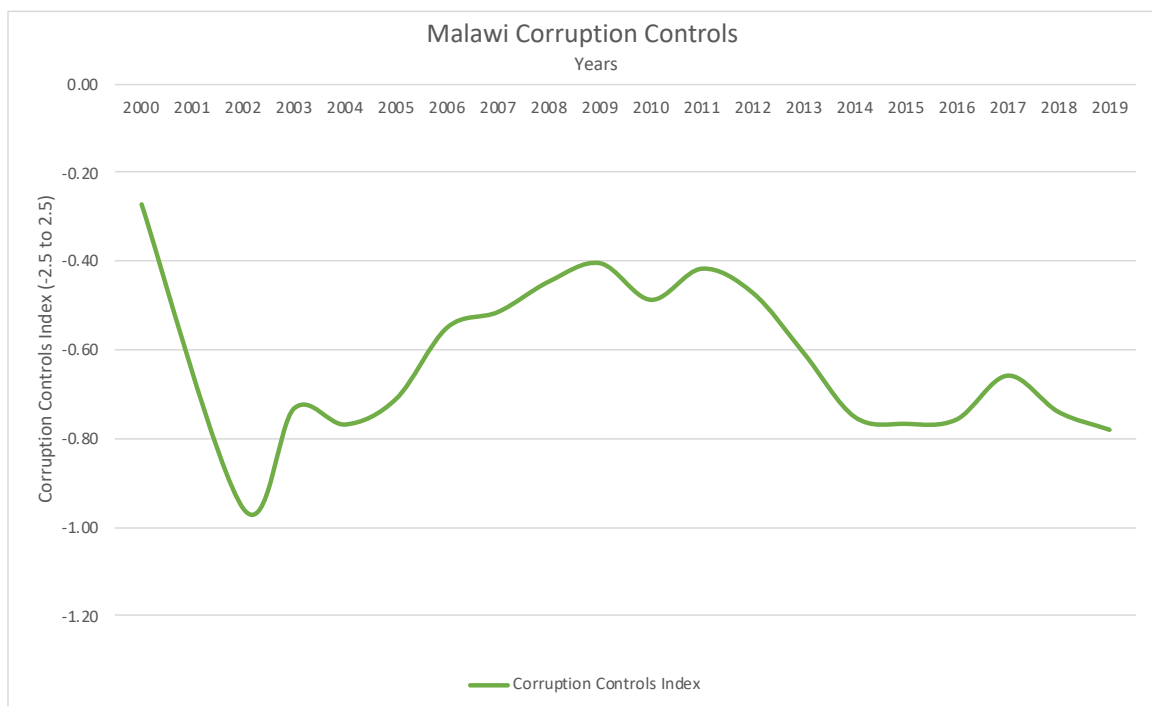


Figure 21. Corruption Controls Index for Malawi.<sup>533</sup>

<sup>532</sup> Farzana Nawaz, *Overview of Corruption and Anti-corruption in Malawi* (Berlin, Germany: Transparency International, 2012), [https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/helpdesk/329\\_Overview-of\\_corruption\\_and\\_anti-corruption\\_in\\_Malawi.pdf](https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/helpdesk/329_Overview-of_corruption_and_anti-corruption_in_Malawi.pdf).

<sup>533</sup> Graphic created by the author using data from the World Bank Corruption Controls Index database.

Elaborating on corruption reduction efforts within Malawi, in 2011, protestors took to the streets in protest of “poor economic trends, the government’s increasingly poor relations with donors and various anti-democratic government actions” in addition to widespread governance concerns within the country.<sup>534</sup> As a result of these protests, in which 19 people were killed, along with the actions of the Malawian government, the United States suspended ODF to Malawi in 2011.<sup>535</sup> A change in Presidential leadership in 2012 in Malawi to President Joyce Banda resulted in the reinstatement of U.S. aid,<sup>536</sup> as President Banda had several initiatives that aligned with the United States.

An example was repealing the media control law, criticized both domestically and abroad, for its authoritarian tendencies.<sup>537</sup> This step was followed up by a 2012 visit by then-Secretary Clinton in which she “discussed economic reform and political governance as well as highlighted bilateral development cooperation projects” in Malawi with President Banda.<sup>538</sup> The ability of the United States to suspend aid to Malawi in 2011 and again in 2014 because of “Cashgate,” involving corruption by high government officials serving within the President Banda administration,<sup>539</sup> is consistent with today’s policy as it pertains to ODF in Africa. These suspensions are reflected in the 2017 NSS that stated, “We will suspend aid rather than see it exploited by corrupt elites.”<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> Cook, *Malawi*, 19.

<sup>535</sup> Jamie Crawford, “U.S. Suspends Some Aid to Malawi over Violence,” CNN, July 26, 2011, <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/07/26/us.malawi.aid/index.html>; “U.S. Suspends Aid to Malawi after Killings,” BBC News, July 26, 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14299172>.

<sup>536</sup> “U.S. Restores \$350 mln Malawi Aid Programme,” Reuters, June 22, 2012, <https://www.reuters.com/article/ozabs-malawi-aid1-20120622-idAFJOE85L04X20120622>.

<sup>537</sup> Cook, *Malawi*, 4.

<sup>538</sup> Cook, 3.

<sup>539</sup> Tom De Bruyn, “‘New Friends, Easier Partners and Bigger Brothers’: The Influence of the Emerging Powers on Agriculture and Food Security in Malawi,” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 23, no. 1 (2016): 39–68.

<sup>540</sup> White House, *2017 National Security Strategy*.



Stepping through the causal logic chain, Malawi has demonstrated it meets the first criteria of good governance in its above SSA average governance score. It does however similarly track Djibouti's up-then-down corruption controls score but differentiates anecdotally in that the United States has been able to suspend ODF successfully to enact change in areas of corruption. As Malawi passes the United States' first motivation of good governance, it is not expected to demonstrate the second and third motivations for the United States of conflict prevention and counter terrorism, but they are tested as follows.

#### 5.5.2.3 The United States' Second and Third Motivations: Conflict Prevention and Counter Terrorism

Figure 7 shows the causal logic train used for testing motivations behind the United States and China for providing ODF to SSA nations. The second motivation for the United States is regional stability. The two areas to be examined are conflict prevention and counter terrorism efforts. As a high recipient of U.S. ODF but also a country that has good governance, high levels of violence within the country are not expected. Nor are high levels of U.S. ODF going to efforts in support of these two motivations to be expected. Figure 22 demonstrates these expectations between U.S. ODF levels and Malawi's score on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety, measured by the absence of violent events in state-based conflict and the absence of non-state conflict. The threshold is the average for SSA nations, represented by the gray line, with Malawi persistently ranking well above the average and within the top 10 of all African nations. This ranking supports Malawi as illustrative of U.S. motivations in the areas of good governance and overall well-being, but unsurprisingly, fails to support the U.S. motivations of security and stability being comparatively peaceful and stable.

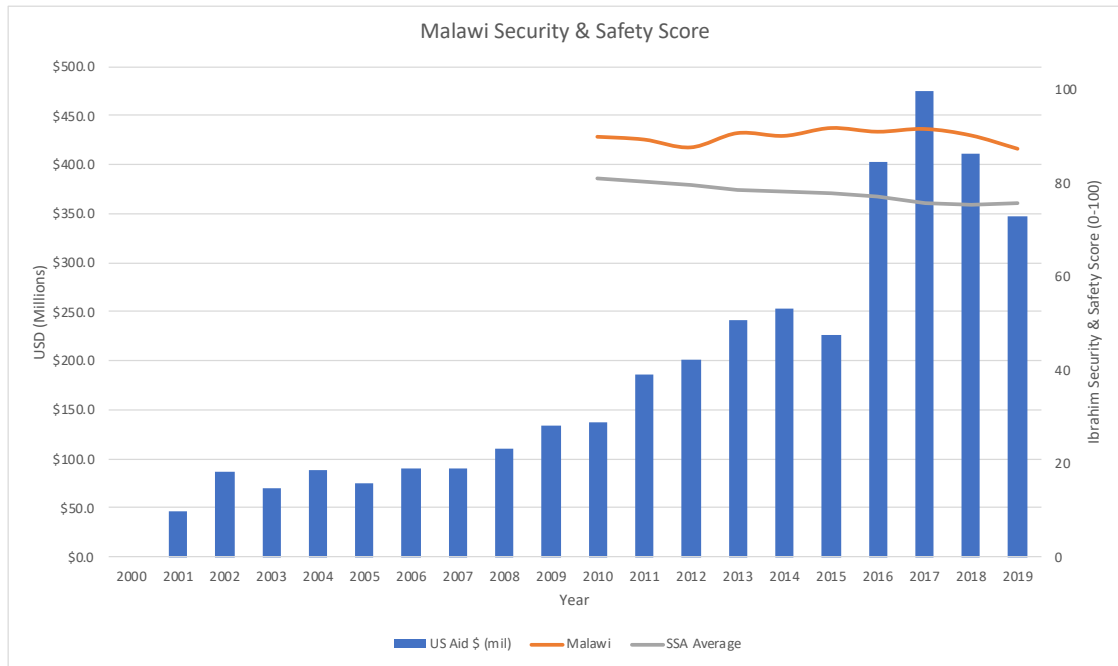


Figure 22. Malawi Security and Safety Score.<sup>541</sup>

The data combined with the preceding research emphasize U.S. motivations of overall well-being indicators, such as health, education, and nutrition, as well as demonstrate the expected characteristics and outcomes, such as corruption reduction efforts with a focus on health and HIV reduction. Turning to China as the other great power being examined in Malawi, the next section tests the motivations for China’s engagement, or lack thereof, in Malawi to determine if it is consistent.

<sup>541</sup> The graphic was created using the author’s aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety for Malawi.

#### 5.5.2.4 China's First Motivation: Basic Mercantilist Self-enrichment

Malawi is categorized as the low China ODF case and ranks as #35 out of the 48 countries examined in SSA in terms of ODF levels from China and totaled \$262 million from 2000–2019. As a land locked country with a population of 18 million people and a GDP of \$7 billion in 2018,<sup>542</sup> it does not possess the country characteristics or outcomes for the first level motivation for China of basic mercantilist principles. China began a diplomatic relationship with Malawi in December 2007, only after it had ended its 41-year relationship with Taiwan, one of the few conditionalities to Chinese ODF and assistance.<sup>543</sup> China has risen in prominence in Malawi as President Mutharika in 2014 stated, “I want to assure our traditional friends in the West that we will continue our traditional relationships. However, let me say this also, that we are now beginning to have new friends, we have new friends in China for example.”<sup>544</sup> With China's approach being labeled as motivated by debt burdens, a brief examination of Malawi revealed that multilateral institutions hold a majority of Malawi's debt. China however is the largest bilateral lender to Malawi and holds 12.7% of Malawi's debt, approximately \$226 million.<sup>545</sup>

Stepping through the causal logic framework laid out for China, its investment in a country would be predicated on the presence of natural resources that China could extract. Malawi is also a non-resource rich country as its resource rents as a percentage of GDP are

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<sup>542</sup> According to World Bank data.

<sup>543</sup> De Bruyn, “‘New Friends, Easier Partners and Bigger Brothers’,” 39–68.

<sup>544</sup> De Bruyn, 39.

<sup>545</sup> International Development Association and the International Monetary Fund, *Malawi-Joint Bank-Fund Debt Sustainability Analysis—2018 Update*.

below 10% for the last three years, excluding forest rents.<sup>546</sup> Within this motivation, another factor reviewed is coastal access, which Malawi does not possess. Therefore, being a non-resource rich country without coastal access, Malawi fails this first test of Chinese motivations and moves on to testing China's second motivation or that of securing market access.

#### 5.5.2.5 China's Second Motivation: Securing Market Access and Investments

If the second motivation for Chinese ODF were to secure markets for Chinese goods and investments, then large populations and high levels of imports of Chinese goods would be expected. Malawi ranks #21 out of 54 African nations in terms of population at 20.2 million people in 2021.<sup>547</sup> An examination of the data found that Malawian imports from China totaled \$3.46 billion between 2000 and 2019, with the most substantial growth beginning in 2007 after diplomatic relations were established. The top four areas of imports from China were machines (\$990 million), textiles (\$538 million), metals (\$456 million), and fertilizers (\$349 million).<sup>548</sup> In total, these numbers accounted for 67% of the total imports from China. Exports to China however amounted to \$622 million over the same time period. Two cash crops accounted for 87% of those total exports. Raw tobacco was

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<sup>546</sup> African Department, *Malawi: Economic Development Document*, IMF Staff Country Reports (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2017), <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2017/07/05/Malawi-Economic-Development-Documents-45037>.

<sup>547</sup> "African Countries with the Largest Population as of 2020 (in 1,000 Individuals)," Statista, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1121246/population-in-africa-by-country/>.

<sup>548</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website. "What Is the Trade Balance for Malawi to China? (2000–2017)," Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://oec.world/en/visualize/line/hs92/show/mwi/chn/all/2000.2017/>.

\$485 million and raw cotton was \$56.4 million.<sup>549</sup> Most of the Malawian imports from China went to facilitate its exports to China; machinery to harvest and process cotton and metals to construct factories and roads, and fertilizers to feed the cash crops of cotton and tobacco. One overall observation that characterizes the Malawi-China trade relationship is the cotton-textile exchange. Between 2000 and 2019, Malawi exported \$56.4 million in raw cotton to China. China turned it into clothing and exported the finished product back to Malawi at almost 10 times the amount, \$538 million. Figure 23 shows the widening trade imbalance in favor of China and points to a very one-sided win-win agreement between the two nations.

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<sup>549</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website. “What Does Malawi Export to China? (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019),” Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed March 6, 2021, [https://oec.world/en/visualize/tree\\_map/hs92/export/mwi/chn/show/2000.2001.2002.2003.2004.2005.2006.2007.2008.2009.2010.2011.2012.2013.2014.2015.2016.2017.2018.2019/](https://oec.world/en/visualize/tree_map/hs92/export/mwi/chn/show/2000.2001.2002.2003.2004.2005.2006.2007.2008.2009.2010.2011.2012.2013.2014.2015.2016.2017.2018.2019/).

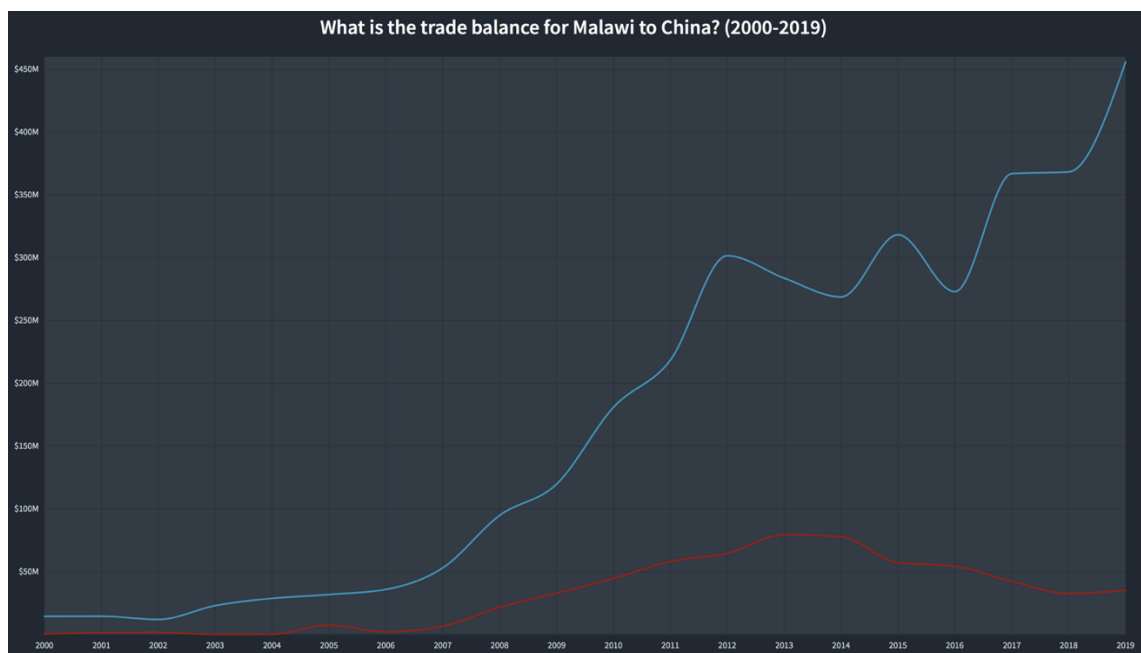


Figure 23 shows the trade balance between Malawi and China in which the blue line shows the level of imports from China by Malawi in millions of dollars while the red line resembles exports from Malawi to China. From 2000 to 2019, imports from China by Malawi totaled \$3.46 billion, while exports to China from Malawi totaled \$622 million.

Figure 23. Malawi Balance of Trade with China (2000–2019).<sup>550</sup>

#### 5.5.2.6 China’s Third Motivation: Shifting Africa towards a More Chinese Centric Model

In testing China’s third motivation of shifting Africa, and in this case Malawi, towards a more Chinese centric development model, Malawi aligning with China on UN votes given the low levels of ODF would not be expected. Along with alignment on important UN votes, the 2019 Xinjiang vote is examined in which about half of the African countries defended China when Washington and like-minded allies condemned Beijing for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.<sup>551</sup>

<sup>550</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website.

<sup>551</sup> Putz, “Which Countries Are for or against China’s Xinjiang Policies?”

Examining China's ODF to Malawi and the motivations therein, the \$262 million disbursed to Malawi from China between 2000 and 2019 was focused on education and other social impacts.<sup>552</sup> This money was disbursed into scholarships either for Malawians to study in China or for the construction of Confucius institutes in Malawi with a stated goal of teaching Chinese language and culture.<sup>553</sup> As stated in previous chapters, this goal is pursued through investment in social and human capital including training and scholarship programs.<sup>554</sup> Even though Malawi receives relatively low levels of Chinese ODF, it still is consistent in the motivations behind why China does give ODF.

A 2018 study analyzing voting patterns by country at the UN from 1971–2017 showed Malawi was one of the top most dissimilar SSA nations in its alignment with China at the UNGA. Malawi opposed China's position 73% of the time.<sup>555</sup> The data supports this finding in that from 2000–2017, Malawi voted in a majority role with the United States, in opposition of China, 74% of the time for important UN votes.

Figure 24 shows Malawi's voting alignment with the United States or China at the UN on important votes, as determined by the U.S. State Department, between 2000 and 2017. Malawi aligned with China only 26% of the time on important votes between this time period and most of the votes in alignment with China were in the areas of NNPT, nuclear test bans, arms trade, and human rights between 2000 and 2003. In the area of democracy and NNPT, Malawi aligned with the United States a majority of the time as demonstrated by the blue voting blocks. In the areas of the test bans, arms trade, and

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<sup>552</sup> Data and categorization pulled from the China Africa Research Institute.

<sup>553</sup> Steve Chilundu, "China Aid to Fund Confucius Institute Construction," *The Nation*, April 8, 2019, <https://www.mwnation.com/china-aid-to-fund-confucius-institute-construction/>.

<sup>554</sup> Benabdallah, *Shaping the Future of Power*, 5.

<sup>555</sup> Fu, "Data Analysis."

development, Malawi aligned with both the United States and China. In the area of human rights, Malawi shifted from alignment with China in the early 2000s to aligning more with the United States or abstaining from voting. This pattern of voting is also similar to Djibouti, specifically in the area of human rights. This pattern could speak more towards a position held by African nations as a voting block versus specific influences by either China or the United States.

Turning to 2018, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 29% with an absentee rate on those same votes of 21%. Malawi aligned with the United States on 50% of important votes with an absentee rate of 10% on the important votes. In 2019, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 28% and an absentee rate on important votes of 18%. Malawi by comparison aligned with the United States on 41% of important votes and had an absentee rate for important votes of 27%. Figure 24 demonstrates these rates. Initially, a few of the votes in the graphic are red, which indicates an alignment with China but on votes, such as human rights issues, Malawi more recently has aligned more closely with the United States or abstained from voting altogether. Note that in voting in 2018 and 2019, China voted in alignment with the United States on 5% of important votes in 2018, and 17% of important votes in 2019. China also had an abstention rate of 0% on important votes in both 2018 and 2019, which demonstrates that alignment with the United States by Malawi was mostly in contrast to China's position, and not in support of China's position.



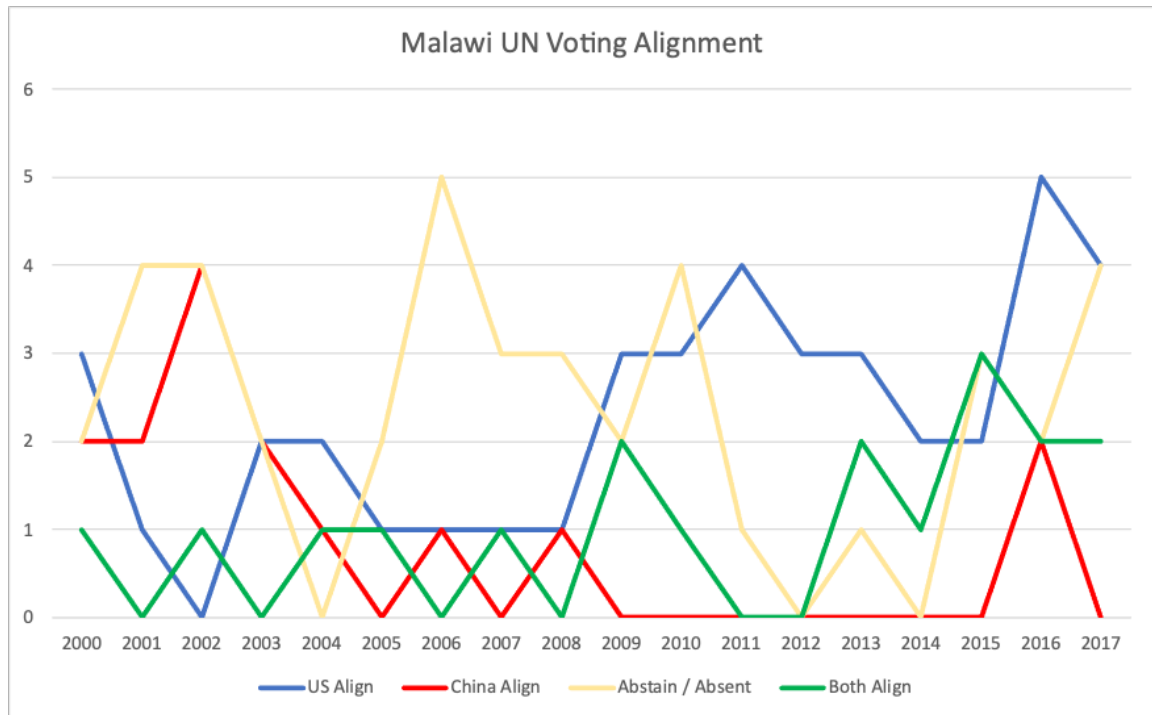


Figure 24 shows Malawi's voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige). Malawi and the United States aligned in the areas of the UN's role in democracy and NNPT. Malawi aligned with both the United States and China on nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Malawi abstained most often from voting in the area of human rights, but even in this area, it traditionally voted in alignment with the United States. A more detailed graphical depiction of UN voting alignment by individual vote and category can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 24. Malawi UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).<sup>556</sup>

One additional metric to test if China is shifting Malawi towards a more Chinese centric development model is in regards to the 2019 Xinjiang vote at the UN. Referred to as the “22 vs 50”<sup>557</sup> vote, it demonstrated the diplomatic split between the United States and China specifically in the area of human rights as it pertains to Xinjiang. In March 2019,

<sup>556</sup> Graphic created by author using UN Voting data from U.S. State Department records. “Voting Practices in the United Nations,” Department of State, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.state.gov/voting-practices-in-the-united-nations/>; Voeten, Strezhnev, and Bailey, “United Nations General Assembly Voting Data.”

<sup>557</sup> Yellinek and Chen, “The ‘22 vs. 50’ Diplomatic Split between the West and China,” 22.

ahead of a UN panel on human rights violations in Xinjiang, “PRC diplomats directly approached delegates from developing states, and sent letter to other ambassadors...making a veiled threat, the letter advised recipients ‘in the interest of our bilateral relations and continued multilateral cooperation...not to co-sponsor, participate in, or be present at this side event.’”<sup>558</sup> Malawi was not one of the 50 signatories on the “second letter” supporting China’s position on Xinjiang nor was it one of the 22 nations that aligned with the U.S. position. Malawi therefore fails both metrics laid out for testing this motivation for China, which was to be expected as a low recipient of Chinese ODF. Malawi voted in alignment with the United States on average 77% of the time from 2000–2017 on contested votes between the United States and China. Malawi also did not vote in alignment with China on Xinjiang but did abstain from the vote altogether.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this case study sought to test two theories on motivations behind both U.S. and Chinese ODF to SSA and to determine if they were working at cross-purposes to each other. The first theory centers around the primary motivation for U.S. ODF being to support good governance, improve corruption controls, and overall well-being. The second and third motivations for U.S. ODF are conflict prevention, peace and regional stability, and counter terrorist operations. The second theory tested outlined the motivations for Chinese ODF and primarily focused on basic mercantilist self-enrichment. The second motivation is securing market access for Chinese goods while also securing its investments. The third motivation is to shift Africa towards a more Chinese centric

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<sup>558</sup> Yellinek and Chen, 22.

development model. Tables 6 and 7 summarize these motivations for both China and the United States.

Table 6. Summary of Evidence: China.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>Chinese ODF</b>	Basic mercantilist self-enrichment	Securing markets and investments	Shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource rich countries</li> <li>• Coastal countries paired with infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade imbalance with China</li> <li>• Large population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export high levels of raw natural resources (oil, timber, minerals) to China</li> <li>• Infrastructure for extraction (power, mines, roads, ports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of finished goods from China</li> <li>• Loan repayment over forgiveness</li> <li>• Increased debt levels</li> <li>• Increased corruption</li> <li>• Increased security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China-Xinjiang vote</li> <li>• High debt levels</li> </ul>
<b>Chinese Motivations in Djibouti</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Chinese Motivations in Malawi</b>	No	Yes	No

Observable motivations for Chinese theory and determinations of which motivations are reflected in the specific case study countries. The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for Chinese disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the casual logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Table 7. Summary of Evidence: United States.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>U.S. ODF</b>	Good governance, control corruption and overall well-being	Conflict prevention, peace and stability	Counter terrorist efforts
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased governance reform</li> <li>• Reduced corruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical civil/regional conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical regional conflict</li> <li>• Bordering or include conflict zones</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt reduction</li> <li>• Health and HIV investment</li> <li>• Free and fair elections</li> <li>• Open press and media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Governance improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Increased levels of internally displaced persons</li> </ul>
<b>U.S. Motivations in Djibouti</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>U.S. Motivations in Malawi</b>	Yes	No	No

Motivations for U.S. theory and determinations of which motivations are reflected in the specific case study countries. The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for U.S. disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the casual logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Djibouti, as a high Chinese-low U.S. ODF case study, exemplifies China's motivations for ODF in Africa. It passed all three causal logic hoops laid out previously. It confirmed the first motivation being mercantilist self-enrichment, even though Djibouti is not a resource rich country. It does have coastal access to allow access to resources located within landlocked countries. This motivation was demonstrated by a substantial portion of

the funding from China directed towards port and other infrastructure development to facilitate the export of goods to China. This motivation also allows access to local markets for Chinese goods in Djibouti and, more importantly, its more populous and landlocked neighbor, Ethiopia punctuated by the \$15.6 billion in imports from China that Djibouti has amassed between 2000 and 2019. This scenario fits into its second motivation of security. Security for investments, as well as a projection of power by China, is showcased in the construction of its first overseas military base to enable and protect both the shipping lanes for Chinese trade, as well as China's investments. This security connects with China's third motivation of shifting the world towards a more Chinese centric model, in which Djibouti voted in alignment with China a majority of the time at the UNGA over the past 20 years and was one of the 20 African nations to support China's position on the 2019 Xinjiang vote. As it passed through all three of the causal logic trains for the motivations of Chinese ODF, is it expected and reflected that Djibouti is a high recipient of Chinese ODF based on the theoretical framework established by this dissertation.

As it pertains to GPC, it is clear by examining project specific data within Djibouti by the Chinese that the focus is access to Ethiopia and the HOA region more than Djibouti itself. Djibouti provides a strategic access point for China in the HOA region but the infrastructure is directed towards facilitating and supporting trade and access within Ethiopia. Djibouti allows this arrangement as it generates export revenue for an economy limited in its options for growth. Djibouti also shows persistent support within the UN for China's position reflected specifically by being one of the African signatories in support of China's position on human rights in Xinjiang.

Not a primary motivation but an observed byproduct of increased Chinese investment in Djibouti has been the rise in its debt to GDP ratio expanding from 48% in 2013 and peaking at 68% in 2015 before falling to 38% by 2019. China has however demonstrated a willingness to renegotiate the bilateral debt it holds with the distressed nations and runs counter to the asset seizure and debt trap diplomacy narrative that tends to be more politically motivated by the United States than demonstrated in the data or research. China does however hold limited leverage in these negotiations,<sup>559</sup> which begs the question often posed by Wang of “who is trapping who?”<sup>560</sup>

Djibouti, being one of the lower recipients of U.S. ODF, does not pass the criteria laid out for high levels of U.S. ODF, which is observed by the comparatively low levels of ODF it receives from the United States. The United States’ establishment and sustainment of Camp Lemmonier in 2001 enable anti-terrorist operations in the HOA region, as well as supports stability operations. Camp Lemmonier does demonstrate that U.S. engagement in Djibouti, albeit comparatively smaller, is motivated by the second and third motivations of regional stability and conflict prevention, as well as combating terrorism in the region. Additionally, the United States still has a continued operational presence at Camp Lemmonier, as well as access to the ports despite assertions of asset seizures and loss of access.<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> Kratz, Feng, and Wright, *New Data on the “Debt Trap” Question*.

<sup>560</sup> In discussion with Dr. Fei-Ling Wang of the Sam Nunn School at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

<sup>561</sup> Idrees Ali and Phil Stewart, ““Significant’ Consequences if China Takes Key Port in Djibouti,” Reuters, March 6, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-djibouti/significant-consequences-if-china-takes-key-port-in-djibouti-u-s-general-idUSKCN1GI2V0>.

Malawi, as the high U.S.-low Chinese ODF case study passed some casual logic hoops and thus validated certain U.S. motivations for ODF. It expectedly failed the second and third U.S. motivations because it is a relatively stable country with good governance. Malawi demonstrated above average governance levels in addition to responding to U.S.-led debt reduction and governance reforms. A majority of U.S. ODF to Malawi also was in support of health and population, education, and agriculture. These levels support the theory that the primary motivation for U.S. ODF is overall well-being and good governance to include health, education, and nutrition. Emphasizing the motivation to ensure good governance, the United States demonstrated its willingness to suspend aid to Malawi multiple times as a result of corruption and was able to implement positive change as a result. Malawi as a largely democratic and peaceful nation shows that the second and third motivations for U.S. ODF, conflict prevention and reduction in terrorism, are not main drivers for U.S. engagement there.

Malawi, despite receiving lower levels of Chinese ODF, still supported the second motivation laid out through the theoretical framework of securing markets for Chinese goods. An examination of China's trade with Malawi supports the motivation of securing market access for Chinese goods through increased trade. The Malawi case study did not support the first and third motivations for Chinese ODF outlined in Table 6 of basic mercantilism and shift Africa towards a more China centric. Malawi is neither a resource rich country, nor does it have coastal access, and thereby fails the first criterion to test its motivation. For the third motivation, the data showed that from 2011–2017, Malawi voted in alignment with the United States while voting in opposition to China's position 73% of



the time.<sup>562</sup> Specifically, in the case of the 2019 Xinjiang vote, Malawi was not one of the African nations that voted in support of China's position, but it did not vote in alignment with the United States either.

Both the important voting data and the Xinjiang vote could demonstrate that even with high levels of ODF from the United States, African nations could continue to abstain or be absent from votes to not be perceived as directly opposing the United States. As GPC grows in Africa between the United States and China, countries will be pressured more and more to pick a side, something they are reluctant to do.<sup>563</sup> Countries receiving high levels of Chinese ODF however have demonstrated a willingness to oppose the United States directly in UN votes knowing they have the backstop of China. As the largest voting block at the UN, along with the essential A3<sup>564</sup> votes within the UN Security Council, China's ability to garner support at the UN through economic means could counterbalance the United States' hegemony within these institutions.

Both ends of the U.S.-China ODF spectrum provided insightful comparisons between the two opposing approaches and often contrasting motivations. The next case study of Kenya in which both the United States and China are providing substantial levels of ODF is additionally beneficial in proving the hypothesis.

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<sup>562</sup> Fu, "Data Analysis."

<sup>563</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, "[The US must] resist framing it as part of a new Cold War because the Africans are firmly against that. They don't want to choose between China and the United States." Center on National Security at Fordham Law, "The Significance of Africa."

<sup>564</sup> A3 refers to the three African nations that hold temporary two-year seats on the UN Security Council. In 2020, South Africa ended its two-year term. The top two proposed countries to fill its spot were Djibouti and Kenya. Djibouti was advocated by China to fill the position and Kenya was advocated by the United States to fill the role. Ultimately, Kenya won in a second round of UNGA voting and assumed its seat on the UNSC in 2020. "Kenya Wins Final Contested Seat on Security Council," United Nations, June 18, 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066632>.

## CHAPTER 6. STRATEGIC CASE STUDY: KENYA

The previous chapter compared the two contrasting ends of the spectrum as it pertains to U.S. and Chinese GPC and the manner in which it is playing out in the form of ODF. It tested two theories focused on the primary motivations behind both China and the United States' disbursement of ODF by examining two countries: Malawi and Djibouti. The first theory is that the primary motivation for U.S. ODF is to support good governance and institutional development, as well as improving corruption controls. In short, it attempts to improve the recipient nation's overall well-being. The other two motivations for the United States are conflict prevention, peace and regional stability, along with counter terrorist operations. The second theory is that Chinese ODF is primarily focused on basic mercantilist self-enrichment. This focus presents as securing market access for Chinese goods while also securing its investments. In conjunction, the third motivation is to shift Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model. This chapter continues to build on the previous work and is the second part of the case study research by examining a country that is a high recipient of both U.S. and Chinese ODF: Kenya.

Africa also should not be viewed merely as a chessboard upon which GPC is playing out as it removes the notion of African agency from the equation. African nations have learned from historical precedent that it is not favorable to be the country (grass), in the middle of two great powers (elephants)<sup>565</sup> that vie for influence in the international arena and have voiced that opinion to U.S. leadership. Specifically, President Uhuru Kenyatta's, during his trip to the White House in 2019, commented to former President

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<sup>565</sup> Referencing the African proverb "When two elephants battle it is the grass that suffers."

Trump that the United States should not view Africa as a chess board upon which the competition is played out.<sup>566</sup> That desire is further supported by graphics developed that reflect UN voting patterns presented later in this chapter.

## **6.1 Background: The Case of Kenya: High China-High U.S. ODF**

Referencing the original 2x2 matrix developed for the theoretical framework, Kenya falls into the upper right quadrant characterized by high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF. Figure 25 compares the levels of U.S. and Chinese ODF to Kenya from 2000 to 2019 while overlaying the debt to GDP ratio for Kenya during that same time period. Chinese ODF to Kenya during that time was \$9.18 billion.<sup>567</sup> Kenya ranked as the fourth highest recipient of Chinese ODF of the 48 SSA countries examined behind Zambia (#3), Ethiopia (#2), and Angola (#1). Similar to that of China, U.S. ODF to Kenya totaled \$11.68 billion ranking it as the second highest recipient of U.S. ODF out of the 48 countries examined in SSA.<sup>568</sup>

Similar to Djibouti, Kenya has coastal access in the HOA region, which affords it strategic geography for counter piracy and terrorist operations in Somalia and the Indian Ocean. Kenya's SGR was hailed as one of the cornerstone projects of China's BRI in Africa and was anticipated to connect the Kenyan coast with exports from Rwanda, DRC, Uganda, and South Sudan.<sup>569</sup> The spikes in financing from China in 2014 and 2015 went directly to this effort with \$3.6 billion in 2014 financing Phase 1 of the SGR project running from

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<sup>566</sup> Stated by Pete Marocco, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, at the Wilson Center Africa Symposium in March 2020.

<sup>567</sup> ODF data was gathered and calculated from the SAIS-CARI database for Chinese ODF to Africa.

<sup>568</sup> ODF data was gathered and calculated from the USAID database for U.S. ODF to Africa.

<sup>569</sup> David Herbling and Dandan Li, "China's Built a Railroad to Nowhere in Kenya," Bloomberg News, July 19, 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2019-07-19/china-s-belt-and-road-leaves-kenya-with-a-railroad-to-nowhere>.

Mombasa, on Kenya's coast, to the capital Nairobi. It was completed in 2017. In 2015, \$1.5 billion was again disbursed to finance Phase 2 running from Nairobi to Naivasha, in the Rift Valley, and was completed in 2019. Aside from those two large spikes in ODF, China has provided Kenya with similar or smaller levels of ODF than that of the United States over the 20-year period examined.

The United States by comparison has provided sustained ODF to Kenya from 2000–2019. This chapter tests the differing motivations for both U.S. and Chinese ODF using the causal logic chart mapped out in the previous chapter. It also highlights areas in which both U.S. and Chinese motivations work at complimentary or cross-purposes to each other and what this means for GPC in Africa.

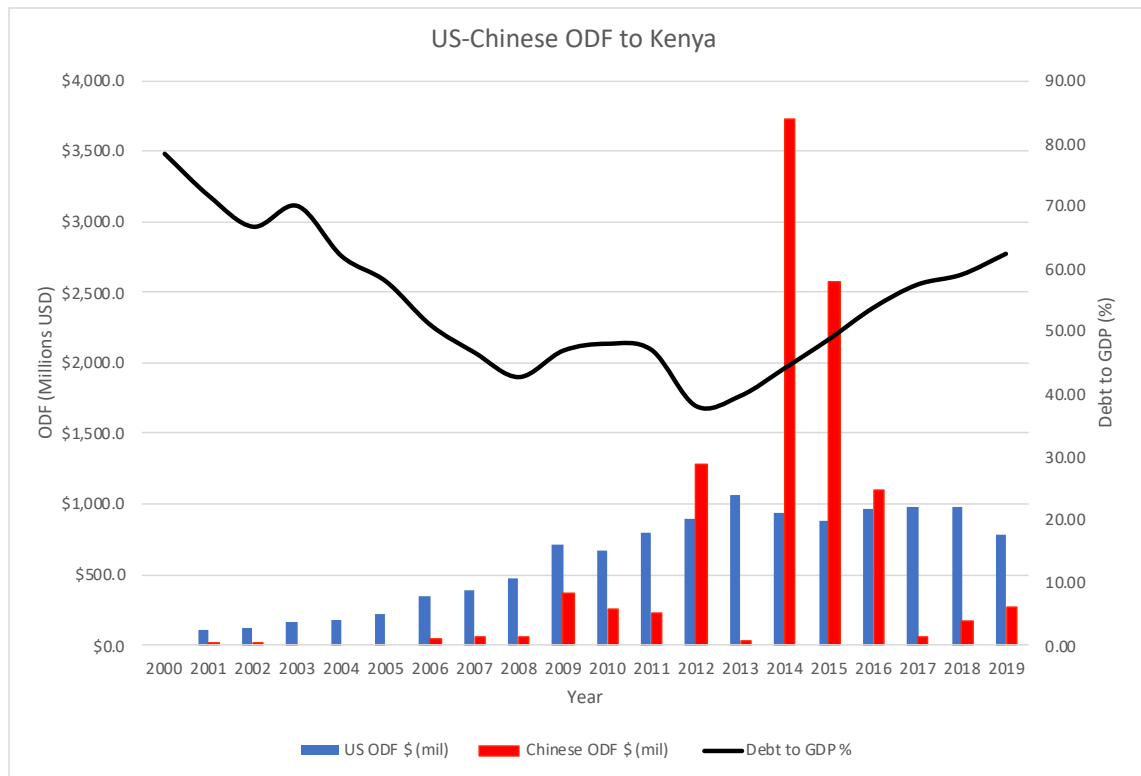


Figure 25. U.S. and Chinese ODF to Kenya.<sup>570</sup>

#### 6.1.1 The United States' First Motivation: Good Governance and Overall Well-being

Following the causal logic mapped out in Figure 7 from the previous chapter, for the United States, if the primary motivation is good governance and overall well-being, high levels of U.S. ODF going to countries that demonstrate increased governance reform and improved corruption controls would be expected. Kenya, as a high recipient of U.S. ODF, ranks #2 out of the 48 SSA countries examined. It received \$11.68 billion in ODF from the United States between 2000 and 2019. The amounts given by the United States have been consistent each year and grown overall from \$108 million in 2001 to \$786

<sup>570</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from both USAID and SAIS-CARI databases and debt to GDP data from the World Bank database.

million in 2019. Using the Ibrahim Index of African Governance as a measure, Figure 26 shows Kenya's governance score between 2010 and 2019 compared against the average score for SSA and superimposed on levels of U.S. ODF each year. The data indicates that Kenya is consistently above the average score for SSA and currently is ranked 14th in terms of governance when compared to African nations. In absolute terms, SSA as a region has improved 1.1 points between 2000 and 2019; Kenya has improved 3.7 points, which again demonstrates Kenya's improved governance levels when compared to its peers in SSA. Another important factor to consider is the areas in which U.S. ODF is allocated to help demonstrate motivations.

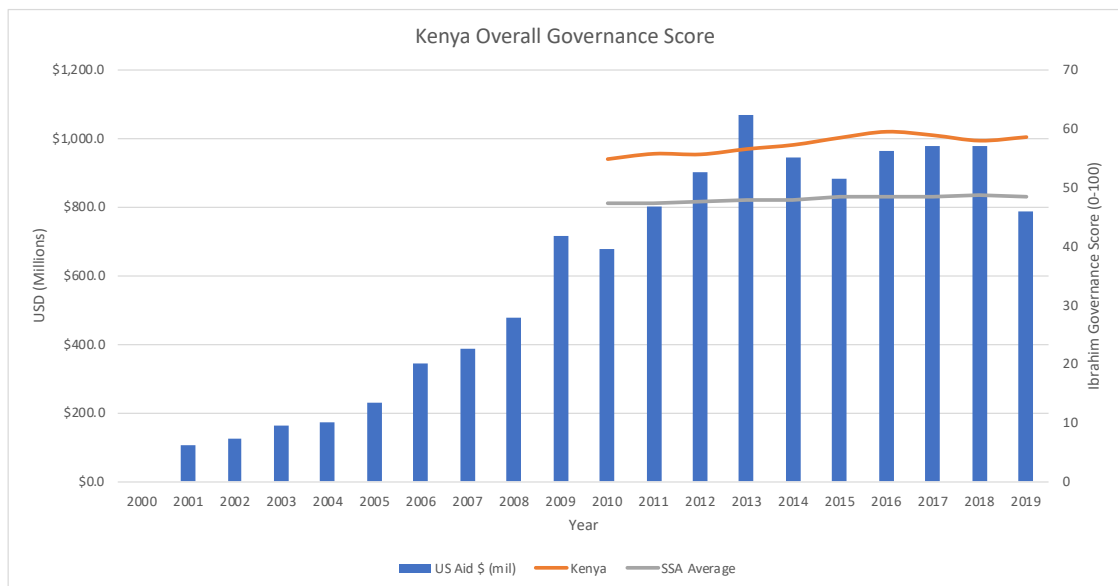


Figure 26. Kenya (2000–2019).<sup>571</sup>

<sup>571</sup> The graphic was created using the author's aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Overall Governance for Kenya and SSA.

Figure 27 shows U.S. ODF to Kenya broken down by disbursement category with 78%, \$8.96 billion, of the funding going towards health and population or humanitarian efforts.<sup>572</sup> This number aligns with the United States’ primary motivation for ODF being overall well-being and good governance. These motivations are also similarly reflected in Malawi, the high U.S. ODF case study, in which the largest portion of ODF went to health and population efforts as well.

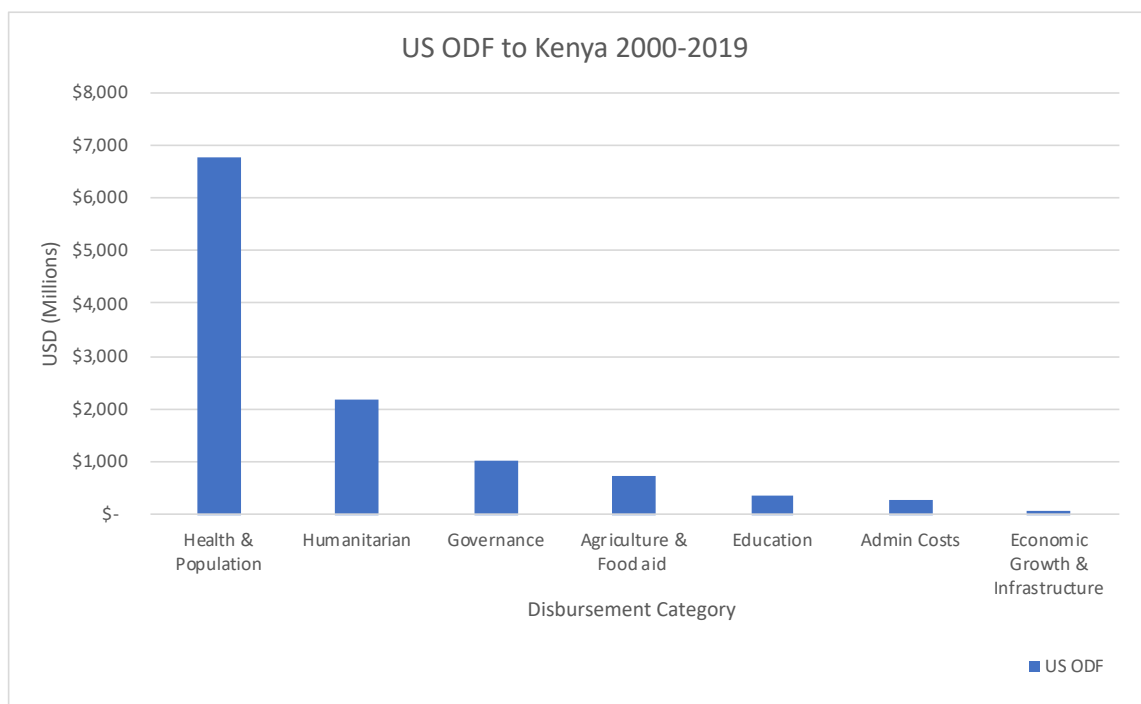


Figure 27. Categories of U.S. ODF Disbursement to Kenya (2000–2019).<sup>573</sup>

<sup>572</sup> Calculations based on author’s data gathered from the USAID Foreign aid website, <https://explorer.usaid.gov>.

<sup>573</sup> Graphic created by the author using ODF data from USAID.

Four of the seven largest categories for disbursement tabulated in Figure 27 support the U.S. primary motive of good governance and overall well-being. Agriculture and food aid combined with education to account for 6% of total funding, \$741 million, over the 20-year period. Additionally, much like Malawi, the administrative costs account for a smaller percentage of the overall funds yet are still significant, totaling \$270 million over the 20-year period. Of the \$6.78 billion dedicated to health and population efforts in Kenya, 85% or \$5.76 billion went towards reducing HIV/AIDS in Kenya along with improvements for treatments.<sup>574</sup>

Kenya has also made additional positive gains as it pertains to governance when in 2010 it passed a new constitution introducing a two-body legislative house, a devolved county government, and a constitutionally tenured judiciary and electoral body.<sup>575</sup> Governance in Kenya however has not been without its obstacles. The post-election violence of 2007 led to investigations by the International Criminal Court (ICC) into crimes against humanity by the current Kenyan president that resulted in the death of over 1,000 people and displacement of 350,000 more.<sup>576</sup> Governance was also the third largest area of U.S. ODF totaling \$790 million from 2000–2017 and focused on strengthening democracy and human rights. Kenya ranks 14 out of 54 African nations in terms of overall governance. It has been on an upward trend since 2010.<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> Data and statistics gathered from the USAID website and are the author's calculations.

<sup>575</sup> "The World Bank in Kenya," World Bank, accessed April 3, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya/overview>.

<sup>576</sup> The ICC investigation into Kenya's post-election violence. "Kenya, Situation in the Republic of Kenya," International Criminal Court, accessed April 7, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/kenya>.

<sup>577</sup> Based on data from the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance. "The Most Comprehensive Dataset of African Governance," Ibrahim Index of African Governance, accessed December 12, 2020, <https://iiag.online/app.html?loc=KE&meas=GOVERNANCE&view=table>.



Governance, along with corruption reduction efforts, is another motivation for U.S. ODF. Unfortunately, however, this issue has been a more difficult battle for Kenya to overcome. Kenya currently ranks in the bottom 40% of African nations in terms of public perception of anti-corruption efforts, and it has a downward trend in anti-corruption policy, bodies, and investigation.<sup>578</sup> Figure 28 shows the Corruption Controls Index for Kenya from 2000 to 2019. The connection between U.S. ODF and corruption reduction efforts were at the forefront of the incoming Kenyan administration in 2002, including the creation of a special unit task force to combat corruption and fraud.<sup>579</sup> Anti-corruption and public service reform were also key policy positions of the new administration noting, “reducing state corruption is seen as crucial to winning back the international donor support that has steadily deserted Kenya over the past decade.”<sup>580</sup> State corruption and political violence were also viewed as two of the largest obstacles to long-term stability in Kenya,<sup>581</sup> which underscores the interconnectedness of all three of the motivations for U.S. ODF in enabling the other.

A more recent example from Kenya also displays the connection between health and anti-corruption efforts and U.S. ODF. USAID had previously expressed concern with how the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (Kemsa) was distributing HIV drugs along with citing corruption within Kemsa leadership and inadequate distribution

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<sup>578</sup> Based on data from the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

<sup>579</sup> John Githongo, *Kenya's Fight against Corruption* (Washington, DC: CATO Institute—Center for Global Liberty & Prosperity, 2007).

<sup>580</sup> David M. Anderson, “Briefing: Kenya’s Elections 2002: The Dawning of a New Era?” *African Affairs* 102, no. 407 (2003): 340.

<sup>581</sup> Lauren Ploch Blanchard, *U.S.-Kenya Relations: Current Political and Security Issues*, CRS Report No. R42967 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2013).

infrastructure.<sup>582</sup> This situation resulted in USAID holding back \$11 million in ARV drugs. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and expressed concern over a lack of accountability within Kemsu. The result was the dismissal of the entire Kemsu board and reform within the organization being instituted.<sup>583</sup>

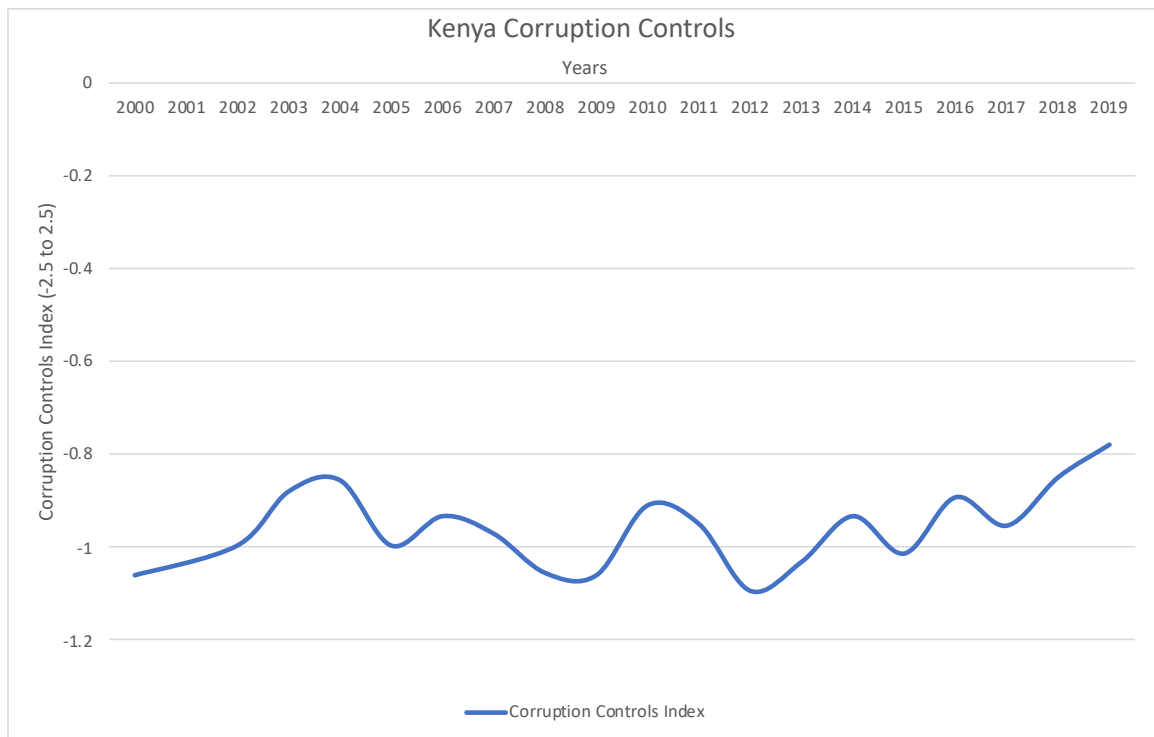


Figure 28. Corruption Controls Index for Kenya.<sup>584</sup>

<sup>582</sup> Bernadine Mutanu and Angela Oketch, “Kemsu Board Fired after Uhuru Meeting with U.S. Secretary of State,” Daily Nation, April 30, 2021, <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/kemsu-board-fired-after-uhuru-meeting-with-us-secretary-of-state-3382176>.

<sup>583</sup> Mutanu and Oketch.

<sup>584</sup> Graphic created by the author using data from the World Bank Corruption Controls Index database.

### 6.1.2 The United States' Second and Third Motivation: Peace, Security, and Counter Terrorism

The second motivation for the United States is regional stability. The two areas to be examined are conflict prevention and counter terrorism efforts. As a high recipient of U.S. ODF and a country with good governance but unstable neighbors like Somalia, high levels of violence within the country centered mainly on terrorist attacks are to be expected. As a result, high levels of U.S. ODF going to efforts in support of these two motivations are to be expected. Figure 29 tests this theory between U.S. ODF levels and Kenya's score on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety when measured by the absence of violent events in state-based conflict and the absence of non-state conflict. The threshold is the average for SSA nations, represented by the gray line, with Kenya shifting between being above and below the SSA average from 2010 to 2019. This shift supports Kenya's case as being illustrative of U.S. motivates in areas of good governance and overall well-being while also supporting the U.S. motivations of security and stability given its history of being targeted for terrorist attacks.

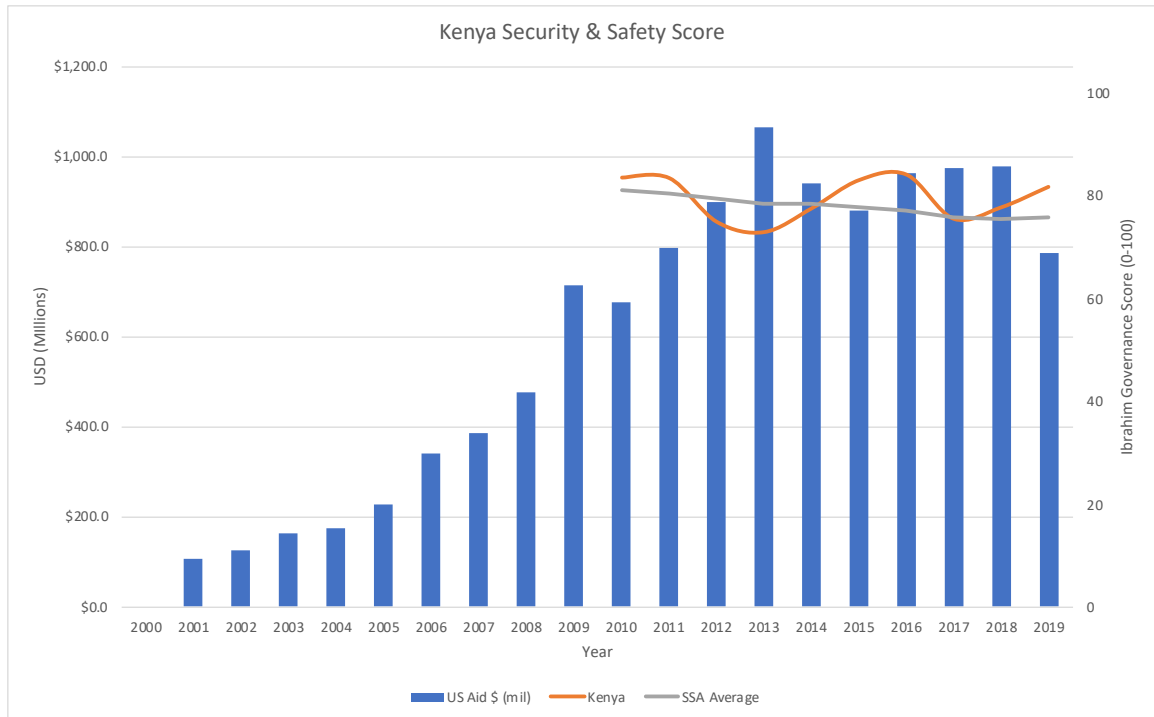


Figure 29. Kenya (2000–2019).<sup>585</sup>

Chairman Meeks, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, articulates how the three U.S. motivations for are interconnected and build on one another. Chairman Meeks stated, “On the matter of regional peace and security, the United States needs to frame its approach to the continent [Africa] through the lens of democracy, good governance and human rights.”<sup>586</sup> Kenya has historically been a key U.S. ally in its fight against terrorism and its efforts to maintain peace and stability in the HOA. Kenya has long been a target for Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab terrorists based out of neighboring Somalia.

<sup>585</sup> The graphic was created using the author’s aggregation of USAID data and data on the Mo Ibrahim Index for Security and Safety for Kenya and SSA.

<sup>586</sup> Shared during a CSIS online event on new U.S. policy toward Africa on February 1, 2021. “Online Event: A New U.S. Policy toward Africa: A Conversation with Chairman Gregory Meeks and Africa,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 1, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/events/online-event-new-us-policy-toward-africa-conversation-chairman-gregory-meeks-and-african>.

The U.S. embassy bombing in Nairobi in 1998,<sup>587</sup> the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi in September 2013,<sup>588</sup> the Garissa University attack in April 2015,<sup>589</sup> the Nairobi DusitD2 hotel attack in January 2019,<sup>590</sup> and most recently, the attack on Camp Simba, a U.S. air base in the Kenyan coastal town of Lamu in January 2020, have been some of the more notable attacks in Kenya.<sup>591</sup> The United States and Kenya have worked together to counter terrorism in the region.

The 2002 NSS emphasized the United States' focus on peace, security, and regional stability, specifically in Africa, and emphasized that the greatest threat to the United States lies with failing states.<sup>592</sup> Research showed that failing states, such as Somalia, neighboring Kenya, have actually led to a growth of Kenyan terrorists and as a result exacerbated regional instability. "A combination of good infrastructure, lax government and security surveillance, and a disaffected Muslim population enable a terror network to develop and flourish undetected on Kenya's coast."<sup>593</sup> Even with the identification and focus on terrorism in Kenya specifically, the motivation behind U.S. efforts in the region ultimately have been to promote long-term regional stability.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>587</sup> "East African Embassy Bombings," Federal Bureau of Investigation, August 7, 1998, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/east-african-embassy-bombings>.

<sup>588</sup> "Westgate Mall Attack in 60 Seconds," BBC News, September 21, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-29247163>.

<sup>589</sup> "Kenya Attack: 147 Dead in Garissa University Assault," BBC News, April 3, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32169080>.

<sup>590</sup> "Shabab Claim Responsibility for Deadly Assault on Nairobi Hotel-Office Complex," *New York Times*, January 15, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/15/world/africa/nairobi-attack.html>.

<sup>591</sup> "Camp Simba: Three Americans Killed in Kenya Base," BBC News, January 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-50997769>.

<sup>592</sup> White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2002), 1.

<sup>593</sup> Guilain Denoeux and Lynn Carter, *Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism* (Washington, DC: United States Agency for International Development, 2009); Harmony Project, *Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa* (West Point: Combating Terrorism Center, 2007).

<sup>594</sup> Department of the Army, *Civil Affairs—Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, Field Manual 3-05.401 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2007), section 5-40.

This stance is reflected in the data in which the third largest category of U.S. ODF went to governance and specifically focused on conflict, peace, and security efforts in the region.<sup>595</sup> The trade data also supports the motivation in that from 2000 to 2017, Kenya imported \$2.44 billion in transportation materials, such as airplanes and helicopters. These imports were emphasized during Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta's visit to the White House in 2015. The United States donated \$92 million to the Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) for new equipment acquisitions and counterterror war efforts against Al-Shabab.<sup>596</sup> These imports were followed up with a \$13.2 million effort to provide the KDF with Scan Eagles, low-altitude, medium-range unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), to increase the ability to detect and monitor Al-Shabaab.<sup>597</sup>

In 2016, these efforts were increased by a \$10 million sale of additional UAVs to gather intelligence on Al-Shabab terrorists, which Kenya received in September 2016.<sup>598</sup> That same year, the United States gave a \$9 million Grant Authority, a legal contract between the U.S. government and another state, to provide Kenya with three C-145A Skytruck aircraft designed for precision combat airdrops, combat search and rescue (CSR), and humanitarian and disaster relief missions.<sup>599</sup> Additionally that year, the United States provided \$2.9 million in ODF to extend the range of the KDF's intelligence, surveillance,

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<sup>595</sup> Calculations based on author's data gathered from the USAID Foreign aid website, <https://explorer.usaid.govtg>.

<sup>596</sup> Oscar Nkala, "Kenya Gets U.S. Funds for Counterterror War," Defense News, August 6, 2015, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/mideast-africa/2015/08/06/kenya-gets-us-funds-for-counterterror-war/>.

<sup>597</sup> These numbers and descriptions were pulled directly from USAID's Foreign Aid data spreadsheet to Kenya and are the author's calculations.

<sup>598</sup> "U.S. Gives Nod for \$418m Military Aircraft Sale to Kenya," The East African, January 24, 2017, <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/US-military-aircraft-sale-Kenya/2558-3784980-m62ltoz/index.html>.

<sup>599</sup> These numbers and descriptions were pulled directly from USAID's Foreign Aid data spreadsheet to Kenya and are the author's calculations. "C-145A Skytruck Light Twin-Engine Aircraft," Airforce Technology, June 22, 2020, <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/c-145a-skytruck-light-twin-engine-aircraft/>.

reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft, MD-500 helicopters and light scout attack helicopters, as well as enhancing the capabilities of Kenya's existing Special Operations Unit.<sup>600</sup> All these imports are encapsulated within the \$502 million of ODF the United States supplied to Kenya specifically in support of conflict prevention, peace, and security.<sup>601</sup>

In 2017, the United States approved a \$418 million sale of armed aircraft to aid Kenya in its fight against Al-Shabab, according to a U.S. State Department statement.<sup>602</sup> Another report identified that between 2013 and 2017, the United States accounted for 11% of arms exports to Africa and was mainly concentrated in small batches of weapons to include eight helicopters for Kenya. During that time, it acquired 13 transport helicopters, two second-hand combat helicopters, and 65 light armored vehicles in support of its fight against Al-Shabab.<sup>603</sup>

More recently, in 2020, the United States delivered six MD-530F helicopters to the KDF for light scout attack combat operations, with another six to be delivered in the near future in support of its counter terrorism mission along the Somali border.<sup>604</sup> Washington also announced the establishment of the United States' first ever overseas joint terrorism

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<sup>600</sup> These numbers and descriptions were pulled directly from USAID's Foreign Aid data spreadsheet to Kenya and are the author's calculations.

<sup>601</sup> These numbers and descriptions were pulled directly from USAID's Foreign Aid data spreadsheet to Kenya and are the author's calculations.

<sup>602</sup> John Campbell, "U.S. Arms Sales to Kenya," *Council on Foreign Relations* (blog), March 7, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/us-arms-sales-kenya>.

<sup>603</sup> Pieter D. Wezeman et al., *Report: Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2017* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2018), 37, doi:10.2307/resrep24441.

<sup>604</sup> Ashley Nicole Taylor, "United States Delivers MD-530F Helicopters to Kenya Defense Force," Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa, January 23, 2020, <https://www.hoa.aficom.mil/image/23166/united-states-delivers-md-530f-helicopters-to-kenya-defense-force>.

task force based in Kenya as part of a multi-agency partnership between Kenya and the United States.<sup>605</sup>

The aggregation of Kenya's safety and security score fluctuating above and below the SSA average along with the agreements in security equipment sales between the United States and Kenya support the theoretical motivations for U.S. ODF to Kenya being driven by peace, security, and regional stability. The United States though is not the only significant actor in Kenya. China's presence in the country has grown significantly since the initiation of its BRI in 2013. The focus now transitions to China being the other high contributor of ODF to Kenya, as well as the testing of the theory on Chinese engagement.

#### 6.1.3 China's First Motivation: Basic Mercantilist Self-enrichment

The first step in the causal logic framework for China is the motivation of basic mercantilist self-enrichment predicated on the presence of natural resources that China would seek to extract. Kenya has historically lacked natural resources and only recently has discovered and begun to export oil in 2019. Kenya also reflects another characteristic linked with the first motivation of Chinese ODF, having coastal access and subsequent infrastructure development. China's largest investment in Kenya has been towards the construction of the SGR, which is seen as the crown jewel of China's investments in Africa and the flagship project for the BRI in Africa.<sup>606</sup>

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<sup>605</sup> Karen Allen, "Why Is the U.S. Ramping Up Anti-terrorism Efforts in Kenya?" Institute for Security Studies, March 26, 2020, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/why-is-the-us-ramping-up-anti-terrorism-efforts-in-kenya>.

<sup>606</sup> Keren Zhu, Rafiq Dossani, and Jennifer Bouey, "Addressing Impact Evaluation Gaps in Belt and Road Initiative Projects in Africa: The Standard Gauge Railway Project in Kenya as a Proof of Concept," *The African Review* 1, no. aop (2020): 22.



Figure 30 shows the levels of U.S. and Chinese ODF to Kenya from 2000 to 2019, which totaled \$9.18 billion over that time with the top three categories of funding being transport, power, and mining. The largest portion of China's ODF funds went into the construction and operation of the SGR. The BRI is a global initiative by China seeking to connect the globe to China with land, sea, space, and cyber connectivity components.<sup>607</sup> The BRI is not the focus of this dissertation but it is important to identify how it ties together all three of China's motivations for the disbursement of ODF. This case study examines the motivations and outcomes of such an undertaking specifically as it pertains to Kenyan, U.S., and Chinese GPC.

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<sup>607</sup> Mark Beeson, "Goeconomics with Chinese Characteristics: The BRI and China's Evolving Grand Strategy," *Economic and Political Studies* 6, no. 3 (2018): 240–256.

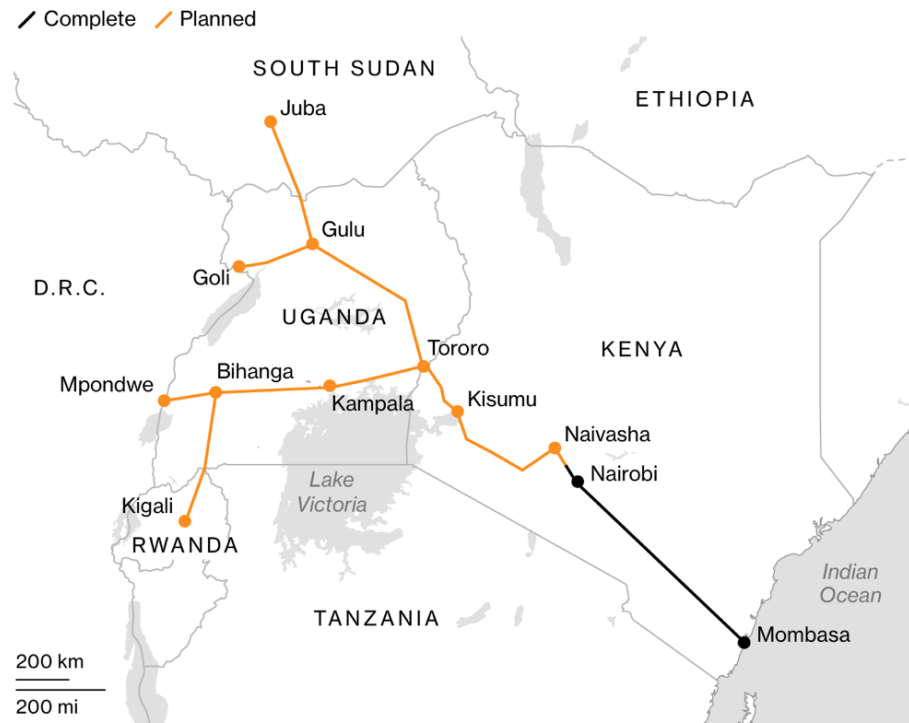


Figure 30. Map of Planned and Completed Segments of the SGR.<sup>608</sup>

At the time, Kenya's SGR was the largest BRI project in Africa and is Kenya's largest infrastructure project since independence.<sup>609</sup> The SGR in Kenya has three separate phases to its project shown in Figure 30. The planned additions for the SGR seek to connect land-locked economies, such as Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, and Burundi to Kenya and ultimately the coast.<sup>610</sup> The first phase is a 485 km connection between Nairobi, the capital, and Mombasa, the largest port city. Phase 1 began in 2013 and cost \$3.8 billion, which is reflected by the spike in Chinese ODF to Kenya in Figure 30. SGR Phase 1 was completed

<sup>608</sup> Zhu, Dossani, and Bouey, "Addressing Impact Evaluation Gaps in Belt and Road Initiative Projects in Africa," 1–38.

<sup>609</sup> Herbling and Li, "China's Built a Railroad to Nowhere in Kenya."

<sup>610</sup> Johnston, "The Belt and Road Initiative," 40–58.

in 2017, two months before President Uhuru Kenyatta stood for re-election.<sup>611</sup> The China Road and Bridge Corporation constructed the railway and the China Communications Construction Company currently operates the railway.<sup>612</sup>

Phase 2 of the SGR was completed in 2019 at a cost of \$1.5 billion and connected Nairobi to the rift valley town of Naivasha, about 120 km away as shown in Figure 30. Similar to Djibouti in which the construction of the Port Complex led to the establishment of special economic zones (SEZs), Kenya has established its own SEZ for investment in Naivasha in tandem with its dry dock. Phase 3 is supposed to connect Naivasha with Malaba on the border with Uganda linking a similarly proposed line in Uganda. However, Kenya was unable to secure the \$3.6 billion in funding from China to complete the project, which put the financial viability of the SGR in jeopardy.<sup>613</sup> Instead, Kenya will spend \$210 million upgrading older colonial era train lines for Phase 3, which increases the need for the dry dock in Naivasha and accompanying SEZ.

Some of the controversies that have arisen around the SGR project also echo consistent outcomes in line with high levels of Chinese ODF: asset seizure, corruption, unsustainable debt levels, and security or geopolitical risks. Some scholars have warned of a “Hambantota 2.0” for Kenya’s SGR<sup>614</sup> by citing that for the SGR to be viable, it needs to

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<sup>611</sup> Yuan Wang and Uwe Wissenbach, “Clientelism at Work? A Case Study of Kenyan Standard Gauge Railway Project,” *Economic History of Developing Regions* 34, no. 3 (2019): 280–299.

<sup>612</sup> Herbling and Li, “China’s Built a Railroad to Nowhere in Kenya.”

<sup>613</sup> Allan Olingo, “Kenya Fails to Secure \$3.6b from China for Third Phase of SGR Line to Kisumu,” *The East African*, April 27, 2019, <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/kenya-fails-to-secure-3-6b-from-china-for-third-phase-of-sgr-line-to-kisumu-1416820>.

<sup>614</sup> James McDonnell, *Cooperation, Competition, or Both?—Options for U.S. Land Forces vis-à-vis Chinese Interests in Africa* (Cambridge: Harvard Kennedy School National Security Fellows Program, 2020), <https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/LandForces/LandForcesAfrica.pdf>.

maintain 55.2 million tons of freight annually.<sup>615</sup> A goal that looks unobtainable given a World Bank report projecting freight traffic within the entire East African Community (EAC) to reach only 14.4 million tons by 2030.<sup>616</sup>

As it relates to corruption, according to a 2014 survey, all the 75 Chinese companies detailed corruption as the single largest obstacle to doing business in Kenya.<sup>617</sup> Wang and Wissenbach also highlighted that the opaque nature of such deals and agreements with China, combined with the high cost of the SGR, implies that government officials were receiving kickbacks from the project.<sup>618</sup> This opacity came to a head when Kenya's Court of Appeals found that the SGR contract was illegal as it was not open to public tender and therefore was not "fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective."<sup>619</sup>

Oil production and exportation are other examples of China's ODF being driven largely by mercantilist principles in Kenya. Kenya is not historically known for being an oil-exporting nation, but exported its first shipment of oil in 2019. The current production level is relatively small at 2,000 barrels per day but the first shipment was worth around \$12 million with the expectation that by 2024, Kenya could be exporting around 100,000 barrels a day, which would place it within the top 10 of African oil producing nations.<sup>620</sup> A Chinese petrol company, ChemChina, won the contract from the Kenyan government to

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<sup>615</sup> World Bank, *The Economics of Rail Gauge in the East Africa Community* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2013).

<sup>616</sup> World Bank.

<sup>617</sup> Yuan Wang and Yating Luo, 'China Business Perception Index Survey on Chinese Companies' *Perception of Doing Business in Kenya* (Geneva: Globethics.net, 2015).

<sup>618</sup> Wang and Wissenbach, "Clientelism at Work?" 280–299.

<sup>619</sup> "Kenya's Court of Appeals Finds SGR Contract with China Road and Bridge Corporation Was Illegal," *Global Construction Review*, June 2020, <https://www.globalconstructionreview.com/news/kenyas-court-appeals-finds-sgr-contract-china-brid/>.

<sup>620</sup> Mohammad Yusuf, "Activists Want Detail on Kenya Oil Contract with Chinese Firm," *Voice of America (VOA) News*, September 18, 2019, <https://www.voanews.com/africa/activists-want-details-kenya-oil-contract-chinese-firm>; "Crude Oil Production by Country," *IndexMundi*, 2019, <https://www.indexmundi.com/energy/?region=af&product=oil&graph=production&display=rank>.

export the oil; however, multiple civil society organizations in Kenya are raising concerns over a lack of transparency surrounding the bidding process for that contract.<sup>621</sup>

An examination of the contract offers insight into China's motives for ODF in Kenya, as well as some of the outcomes as a result. The opaque nature of China's dealings with Kenya on the SGR has led to decreased perceptions on anticorruption efforts, as well as highlighting the cross-purpose nature of Chinese ODF when compared with U.S. ODF to Kenya. The SGR is not the only case of Chinese infrastructure projects in Kenya increasing not only the perception but also outright corruption in Kenya.

One example is the Ahero-Katito Bridge, near Kisumu in Western Kenya, which collapsed in March 2020 due to heavy rains. A subsequent government investigation discovered that the Chinese Company that won the \$82 million contract to do the work, China Construction Third Engineering Bureau, forged documents to win government tenders for three other contracts as well.<sup>622</sup> China Construction Third Engineering Bureau is also a subsidiary of the Chinese state-owned company, China State Construction Engineering, which has additional contracts in Kenya including a \$200 million contract to build what is projected to be Africa's tallest building in Nairobi.<sup>623</sup>

These examples highlight areas that the country characteristics and outcomes because of Chinese ODF run counter to the United States' efforts as it relates to corruption and debt levels. Kenya's increasing debt has led to calls from Kenyan government officials to renegotiate with China on its debt levels in 2020. Only two countries, Angola and

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<sup>621</sup> Yusuf.

<sup>622</sup> Brian Wasuna, "Kenya: How Chinese Firm Won Sh9 Billion Contract on Forged Documents," AllAfrica, February 2021, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202102180132.html>.

<sup>623</sup> Wasuna.

Ethiopia, so far have successfully renegotiated with China. They are also the two countries ahead of Kenya in terms of the amount of ODF received from China.<sup>624</sup> This scenario leads into China's second motivation for ODF to be tested, which is securing market access for Chinese goods in addition to securing its investments.

#### 6.1.4 China's Second Motivation: Securing Market Access and Investments

If the second motivation for Chinese ODF were securing markets for Chinese goods and investments, then large populations, high levels of imports of Chinese goods, and increased debt levels would be expected. Kenya is the seventh largest country in Africa in terms of population, with a population of 53.8 million as of 2021.<sup>625</sup> The population alone and the market potential it offers for Chinese goods satisfy the criteria for being a high recipient of Chinese ODF. To continuing testing the second motivation, Figure 31 shows the balance of trade between Kenya and China from 2000 to 2019. Kenya's imports from China grew from an initial \$146 million in 2000, peaked at \$4.93 billion in 2015, and totaled \$43.5 billion over the 20-year period.<sup>626</sup> Machines, metals, and transportation accounted for 48.4% of the total volume of imports, with \$12 billion categorized as machines largely in the form of cell phones, computers, and broadcasting equipment. Of the imports, \$5.43 billion were metals in the form of construction related materials, such as iron bars, structures, and wire. Under transportation, \$3.64 billion centered on the import of motorcycles, buses, delivery trucks, and bicycles.

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<sup>624</sup> David Rogers, "'We Are Not Able to Pay': Kenyan MPs Urge Renegotiation of Chinese Rail Debt," *Global Construction Review*, September 25, 2020, <https://www.globalconstructionreview.com/news/we-are-not-able-pay-kenyan-mps-urge-renegotiation-/>.

<sup>625</sup> Statista, "African Countries with the Largest Population as of 2020."

<sup>626</sup> Data pulled from the trading economics website. "What Is the Trade Balance for Kenya to China? (2000–2017)," *Observatory of Economic Complexity*, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://oec.world/en/visualize/line/hs92/show/ken/chn/all/2000.2017/>.

Kenya's exports to China started at \$6.76 million in 2000, slowly rose to \$150 million in 2019, and totaled \$1.08 billion over that time period.<sup>627</sup> Metal ore in the form of titanium, iron and tungsten ores, and petroleum accounted for 42% or \$454 million of Kenya's exports. Of those exports, 11% or \$121 million were tanned animal hides with another 14% (\$148 million) being vegetable products, such as tea, nuts, and seeds along with 11% (\$115 million) categorized as raw textile materials like sisal, jute, coconut, and cotton fibers. The consistent theme of imports of raw materials and goods from African nations while exporting finished and consumable goods connects China's first and second motivations for ODF. This imbalanced "win-win" relationship that China engages in disproportionately benefits itself while offering recipient countries comparatively smaller gains in terms of trade benefits.

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<sup>627</sup> Data pulled from the trading economics website.

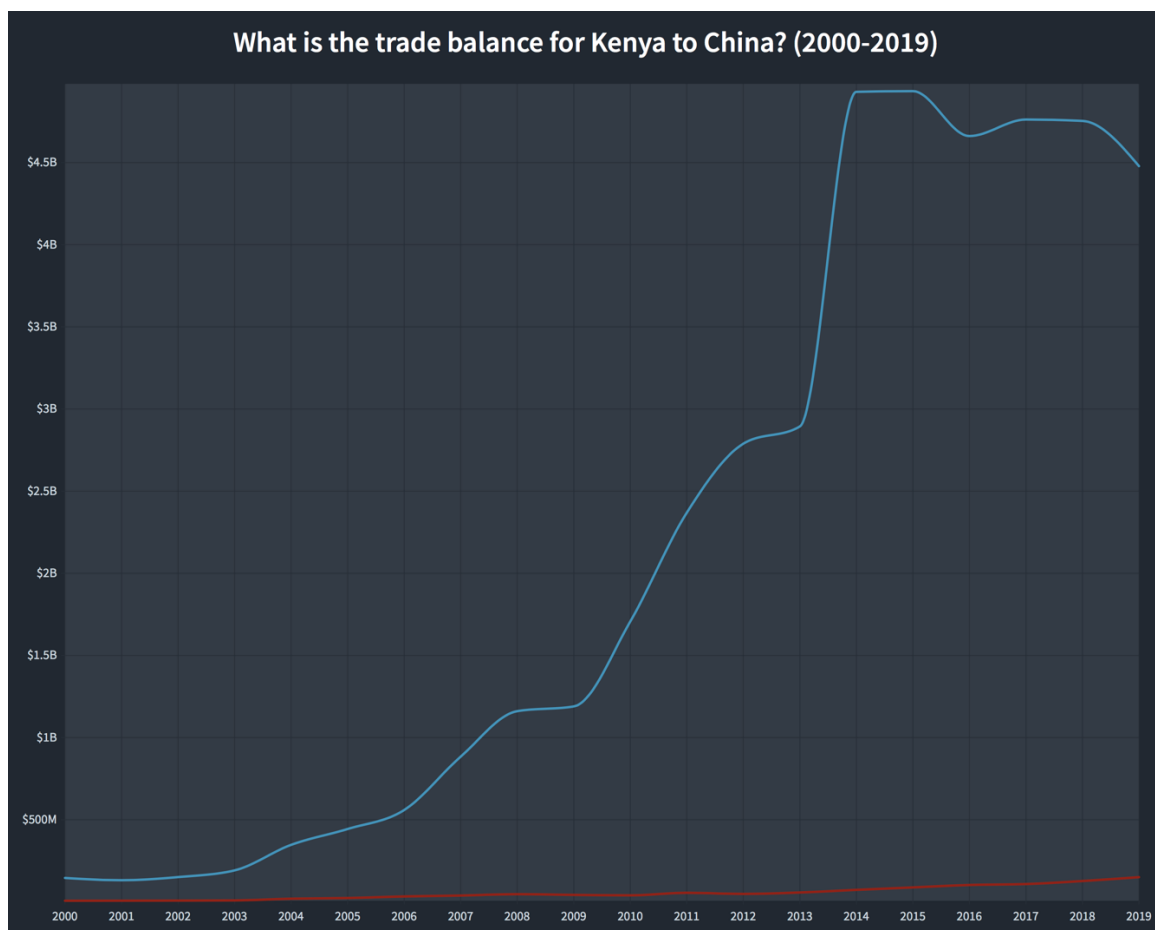


Figure 31. Kenya Balance of Trade with China (2000–2019).<sup>628</sup>

In addition to securing access to markets for Chinese goods, securing China’s investments has also been a consistent motivation for Chinese ODF to Kenya. China has continued to increase the presence of security personnel along with its investments, and funding for Chinese security personnel is not a line item in the Chinese SOE’s budget.<sup>629</sup> Chinese security personnel allow China to sidestep the uncomfortable political situation of

<sup>628</sup> Data and graphics gathered from the Observatory of Economic Complexity World website. Observatory of Economic Complexity, “What Is the Trade Balance for Kenya to China? (2000–2017).”

<sup>629</sup> Nantulya, “Chinese Security Contractors in Africa.”



having Chinese troops on the ground but employs retired PLA personnel,<sup>630</sup> with responsibilities, such as training local security guards along the SGR.<sup>631</sup> The PLA of China has also conducted anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and HOA region since 2008<sup>632</sup> to support the motivation of securing its investments. Securing investments however is not restricted to security personnel but also is reflected in the securing of debt repayments.

Viability and sustainability were some of the reasons why Kenya was unable to obtain the desired funding for Phase 3 of its SGR project, and was directed to conduct another feasibility study on the project before any more funding would be given by China.<sup>633</sup> To protect its investment in the SGR, China wanted assurances, which however became problematic when its deal with Kenya began to resemble the Hambantota Port deal. In 2018, a report by Kenya's Auditor General alleged that the Kenyan government had waived the Mombasa port's sovereign immunity to be able to secure Chinese funding for the SGR.<sup>634</sup> This waiver turned out to be a wide mischaracterization of the agreement in which the lender demanded an allocated level of cargo to be set aside for SGR use to ensure commercial viability of the project.<sup>635</sup> The port was not in fact used as collateral but rather the repayment of the debt was secured, illustrating China's motivation of securing its

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<sup>630</sup> Daniel R. Russel and Blake H. Berger, *Weaponizing the Belt and Road Initiative* (New York: The Asia Society Policy Institute, 2020).

<sup>631</sup> Nantulya, "Chinese Security Contractors in Africa."

<sup>632</sup> Paul Odhiambo, "China's Geostrategic Interests in the Indian Ocean Region: Implications for Kenya," *The African Review* 1, no. aop (2020): 1–15.

<sup>633</sup> Olingo, "Kenya Fails to Secure \$3.6b from China for Third Phase of SGR Line to Kisumu."

<sup>634</sup> George Omondi, "Mombasa Port at Risk as Audit Finds It Was Used to Secure SGR Loan," *The East African*, December 20, 2018, <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/business/mombasa-port-at-risk-as-audit-finds-it-was-used-to-secure-sgr-loan-1408886>.

<sup>635</sup> Research by Zhengli Huang of the University of Sheffield and Oscar Otele of the University of Nairobi shared this news via email to the China in an Africa group set up by Johns Hopkins SAIS-CARI on June 2019.

investments. In a more ominous warning about the feasibility of the SGR to repay its debt bill to China, the late Ian Taylor emphasized that unless the SGR was connected to Uganda, the only exports for Kenya's SGR would be "tea, coffee, animals hides and vegetable oil, none of these are high value."<sup>636</sup> A mounting problem in this area is that Tanzania signed on to a Chinese built railway connecting the Lake Victoria region to the Tanzanian coastline thereby directly competing with Kenya's SGR for export shipments.<sup>637</sup>

Rising debt levels among recipients of Chinese ODF has been a concern and led to the mischaracterization of Chinese ODF as a form of debt-trap diplomacy. As it pertains to debt within African nations, Onjala pointed out, "There has been a shift of most of Africa's debt from concessional to non-concessional sources, including bilateral and commercial creditors...which have generally worsened the debt situation."<sup>638</sup> That shift has been towards China as a bilateral lender. Even though institutions, such as the World Bank, hold most of Kenya's external debt, that balance is quickly shifting to China.<sup>639</sup>

With regards to unsustainable debt levels, Figure 26 shows Kenya's debt to GDP ratio on a downward trend from 2000 to 2012 while maintaining consistent levels of U.S. ODF. After construction of the SGR in 2013, Kenya's debt to GDP levels began to climb, which resulted in the Kenyan Senate having to raise the debt ceiling to Sh9 trillion shillings

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<sup>636</sup> Ian Taylor, "Kenya's New Lunatic Express: The Standard Gauge Railway," *African Studies Quarterly* 19, no. 3–4, 2020.

<sup>637</sup> Reuters Staff, "Two Chinese Firms to Build \$1.32 Billion Tanzanian Rail Line," Reuters, January 7, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-tanzania-railway/two-chinese-firms-to-build-1-32-billion-tanzanian-rail-line-idUSKBN29C20X>.

<sup>638</sup> Joseph Onjala, "China's Development Loans and the Threat of Debt Crisis in Kenya," *Development Policy Review* 36, no. S2 (2018): O714.

<sup>639</sup> Stated at an event hosted by the Atlanta Council of International Relations on April 4, 2019. "Contemporary Issues in Kenya and the African Union," Atlanta Council on International Relations, April 4, 2019, <https://atlantacir.org/event-3023420>.

and abandoning a limit pegged to the GDP in 2019.<sup>640</sup> The Kenyan Treasury did not project debt levels to hit this number until 2024; however, as of January 2021, Kenya's government is considering raising it again to Sh12 trillion as Kenya's National Assembly's Budget and Appropriations Committee Chair stated the country has no alternative but to borrow.<sup>641</sup>

China's involvement in Kenya has not come without opposition, which has mostly been on the civic side. In June 2019, a Kenyan Tribunal halted the construction of a Chinese financed coal power plant in Kenya's coastal city of Lamu, and was directed to conduct another environmental impact study.<sup>642</sup> This halt was in large part due to opposition from deCOALonize Lamu, a local non-governmental organization (NGO), along with local residents.<sup>643</sup> Additionally, the Kenyan press pushed back on President Kenyatta on the details surrounding the SGR project; details that the president agreed to release to the public and then walked back. Some of the details released by the local newspaper *The Nation* that raised concerns by Kenyans were the high price tag of the project in addition to specifying that all disputes with respect to the SGR contract must be resolved in Chinese courts.<sup>644</sup> Additionally, Kenya has had to levy a 1.5 percent tax on goods imported into

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<sup>640</sup> Duncan Miriri, "Kenya's Senate Backs Raising of the Government's Debt Ceiling," Reuters, November 6, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/ozatp-uk-kenya-debt-idAFKBN1XG1UX-OZATP>.

<sup>641</sup> David Mwere, "Kenya: Treasury Mulls Debt Ceiling Boost as the Coffers Run Dry," allAfrica, January 5, 2021, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202101050183.html>.

<sup>642</sup> Eric Olander, "Kenya Tribunal Blocks Chinese Financed Coal Power Plant," The China-Africa Project, June 28, 2019, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/analysis/podcast-coal-lamu-transcript-decoalonize-china-kenya/>; Abdi Latif Dahir, "China's Plan to Help Build Kenya's First Coal Plant Has Been Stopped-for Now," Quartz Africa, June 26, 2019, <https://qz.com/africa/1653947/kenya-court-stops-china-backed-lamu-coal-plant-project/>.

<sup>643</sup> Olander; Dahir.

<sup>644</sup> Salem Solomon, "Kenyan Government Faces Backlash after Chinese Contract Leaks," Voice of America, January 15, 2019, <https://www.voanews.com/a/kenyan-government-faces-backlash-after-chinese-contract-leaks/4743500.html>.

Kenya to repay the SGR loan to China, which thus increased the cost of doing business and making Kenya a less attractive location to investors.<sup>645</sup>

China's second motivation of securing access to markets for Chinese goods, in addition to securing China's investments in Africa, point towards its third motivation for the disbursement of ODF, or that of shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model. Otenia summarized this motivation, who stated, "In the case of Sino-African context, the reinforcement of trade bonds will push African countries to be supportive of China, because they will gain more by standing on China's side."<sup>646</sup> From a granular level at the localized business level, a local Kenyan businessman said, "We understand our government is married to China and we don't know the details of that marriage, but on a business-to-business level working with China is a necessity."<sup>647</sup> That growth of dependence on China at not only the governmental level but also the localized level sheds further light on China's second and third motivation being linked together.

#### 6.1.5 China's Third Motivation: Shifting Africa towards a More Chinese Centric Model

Transitioning to testing if the third motivation for Chinese ODF is to shift Africa, and in this case, Kenya, towards a more Chinese centric development model, seeing Kenya more aligned with China on UN votes could initially be expected. However, given that Kenya is also a high recipient of U.S. ODF, and Kenya's expressed desire to not be perceived as choosing sides on issues, such as human rights, the expectation would be that Kenya would abstain on more votes. In addition to examining important UN votes, as

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<sup>645</sup> Taylor, "Kenya's New Lunatic Express."

<sup>646</sup> Temitayo Otenia, "Chinese Zero-tariff Treatment for Least Developed Countries: China's Soft-power in Action in Africa," *Journal of International and Public Affairs* 1, no. 2 (2017): 39–46.

<sup>647</sup> Interview with local Kenyan businessman, online via Zoom February 2021.

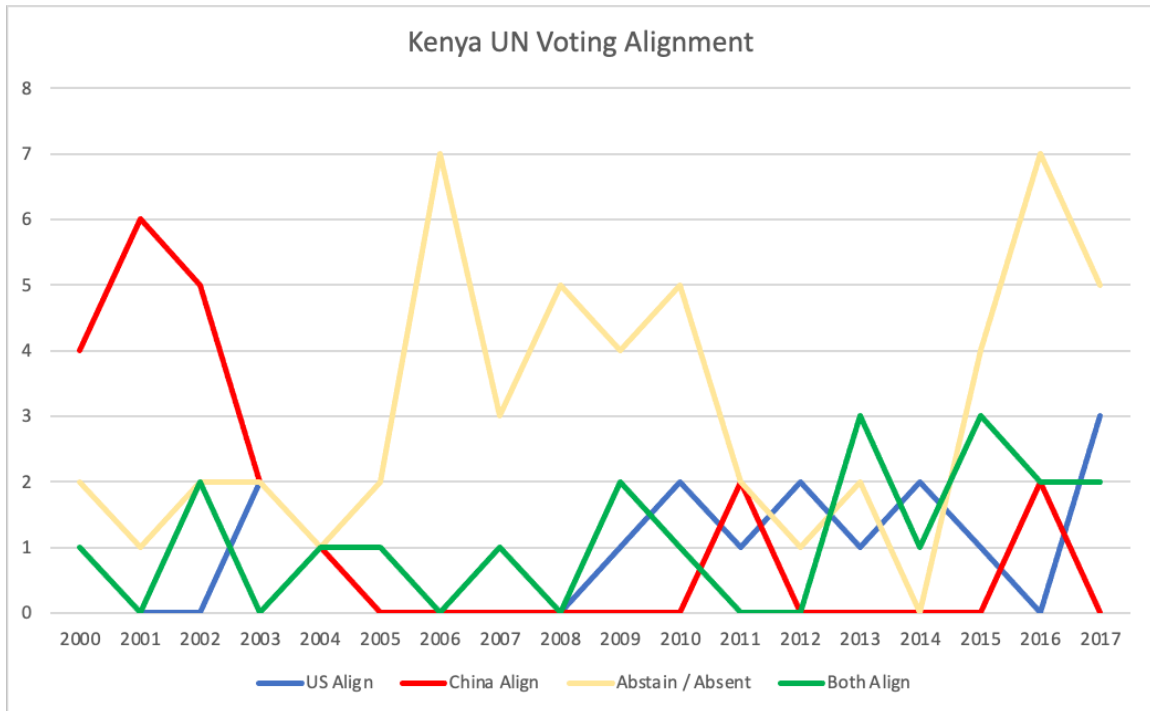
defined in Chapter 4, the 2019 Xinjiang vote is also used as a criterion to test alignment with either the United States or China largely because almost half of the African countries supported China's position when Washington and like-minded allies condemned Beijing for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.<sup>648</sup>

Figure 32 illustrates Kenya's voting alignment with the United States or China at the UN on important votes, as determined by the U.S. State Department, from 2000–2017. Kenya aligned with China between 2000 and 2003 in the areas of democracy, NNPT, nuclear test bans, arms trade, and human rights. In the area of democracy and NNPT, Kenya aligned with the United States a majority of the time as demonstrated by the blue voting blocks. In the areas of the test bans, arms trade, and development, Kenya aligned with both the United States and China. In the area of human rights, Kenya shifted from alignment with China in the early 2000s to abstaining from voting.

The following research shows that from 2000–2017, out of the 116 votes categorized as important by the U.S. State department and analyzed in this dissertation, Kenya aligned with China on 22 or 19% of the votes. For comparison, Kenya aligned with the United States on 19 or 16% of those votes and abstained or was absent for 55 or 47% of those votes, the highest among the three case study countries. Kenya also aligned with both the United States and China on 20 or 18% of those votes. Figure 32 graphically illustrates all these breakdowns in votes, and shows that the highest number of votes was abstentions followed by alignment with China and then alignment with the United States with the aligning votes for either the United States or China being nearly even.

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<sup>648</sup> Putz, "Which Countries Are for or against China's Xinjiang Policies?"



This figure shows Kenya's voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige). This alignment was analyzed at the resolution level with the columns representing subject consistent resolutions and the years being reflected by the different rows. Kenya and the United States were aligned in the areas of the UN's role in democracy and NNPT. Kenya aligned with both the United States and China on nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Kenya abstained from voting in the area of human rights except from 2000–2001 when it voted a majority of the time with China. A more detailed graphical depiction of UN voting alignment by individual vote and category can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 32. Kenya UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).

In 2018, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 29% with an absentee rate on those same votes of 21%. Kenya aligned with the United States on 22% of important votes with an absentee rate on important votes of 10%. In 2019, the average voting coincidence between African nations and the United States on important votes was 28% with an absentee rate on important votes of 18%. Kenya by comparison aligned with the United States on 25% of important votes

with an absentee rate for important votes of 7%. These percentages are consistent with Kenya's previous voting trend as shown in Figure 32. From 2000–2003, a majority of the votes in the graphic are red, which indicates an alignment with China; however since then, for votes on issues, such as human rights, Kenya has abstained. Kenya did align with the United States primarily in the areas of democracy and NNPT.

Note that in voting in 2018 and 2019, China voted in alignment with the United States on 5% of important votes in 2018, and 17% of important votes in 2019. China also had an abstention rate of 0% on important votes in both 2018 and 2019, which demonstrates that alignment with the United States by Kenya was mostly in contrast to China's position, and not in support of China's position.

One last metric to test if China is shifting Kenya towards a more Chinese centric development model to include alignment at the UN is in regards to the 2019 Xinjiang vote. Referred to as the “22 vs 50”<sup>649</sup> vote, it demonstrated the diplomatic split between the United States and China specifically in the area of human rights as it pertains to Xinjiang. In March 2019, ahead of a UN panel on human rights violations in Xinjiang, “PRC diplomats directly approached delegates from developing states, and sent letter to other ambassadors ...making a veiled threat, the letter advised recipients ‘in the interest of our bilateral relations and continued multilateral cooperation...not to co-sponsor, participate in, or be present at this side event.’”<sup>650</sup> Kenya was not one of the 50 signatories on the “second letter” supporting China's position on Xinjiang nor was it one of the 22 nations that aligned with the U.S. position.

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<sup>649</sup> Yellinek and Chen, “The ‘22 vs. 50’ Diplomatic Split between the West and China,” 22.

<sup>650</sup> Yellinek and Chen, 22.

Kenya, as a high recipient of both U.S. and Chinese ODF, has repeatedly stated it does not want to be forced to choose sides nor does it wish to return to the Cold War era of proxy wars. This sentiment is borne out by its voting alignment in which Kenya had the highest rate of abstention and absences on votes at the UN on important votes when compared with the other two case study countries, Malawi and Djibouti. One possible conclusion is that the more the United States and China compete in a country through ODF, the less likely that country is to support any one position especially when it comes to human rights. Kenya therefore fails both metrics laid out for testing this motivation for China, as it voted in alignment with the United States on average 59% of the time from 2000–2017 on contested votes between the United States and China. Kenya also did not vote in alignment with China on Xinjiang but did abstain from voting altogether.

#### 6.1.6 Alternative Theories Examined: Is Debt a Motivator for China?

Before leading into the conclusions, it is necessary to explore alternative theories for motivations behind U.S. and Chinese ODF to African nations. One of the more persistent and well-known theories is the “debt-trap diplomacy” motive behind Chinese ODF. “Debt-trap diplomacy” is characterized as loading African nations up with unsustainable debt levels to seize strategic assets within recipient nations. The most notable and often cited example has been the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka. Control was signed over to a Chinese SOE to write off a portion of Sri Lanka’s bilateral debt burden to China. The quantitative analysis in the previous chapter failed to find any correlation between debt to GDP and Chinese ODF levels. Additionally, research by Deborah Brautigam and others



denote similar findings.<sup>651</sup> The Hambantota Port was raised as a cautionary tale to other countries on dealing with China, but to date, asset seizures due to debt default in Africa have not occurred. Countries coming close to or under debt distress due to their rising debt levels, compounded by the COVID crisis, have been able to restructure their debt or suspend debt repayment to China. Countries, such as Angola, Zambia, and Kenya all fall into this category. The desire to restructure the debt rather than forgive it or seize a physical asset as collateral speaks to China's motivations. By suspending and renegotiating the debt, it is securing revenue and its investments well into the future. Additionally, it was able to use that debt to obtain a greater prize than a port or mine, international support, and legitimacy. When a Chinese government official was asked by a reporter during the height of the COVID crisis why it would not just forgive the debt from African nations under a banner of good will and benevolence, China responded, "Then we will lose all our leverage."<sup>652</sup> That leverage is useful when China needs countries to support its position pertaining to Hong Kong's new election laws,<sup>653</sup> or Xinjiang and human rights.<sup>654</sup> Therefore, it can be said that it may be an undesirable outcome of continued Chinese ODF, but it is not a motivation for Chinese ODF.

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<sup>651</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14; Kratz, Feng, and Wright, *New Data on the "Debt Trap" Question*.

<sup>652</sup> Eric Olander of the China-Africa Project had interviewed a Chinese government official from the Ministry of Finance and asked that official the question about why China would not just offer blanket debt forgiveness to African nations due to COVID.

<sup>653</sup> Burundi and Uganda both publicly endorsed China's legislation regarding Hong Kong in statements put out by Burundi's and Uganda's foreign ministries. Eric Olander, "Why Would Burundi Endorse China's Controversial New Election Law in Hong Kong?" The China Global South Project, March 15, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/analysis/why-would-burundi-endorse-chinas-controversial-new-election-law-in-hong-kong/>; Olander, "Why Would Uganda Write a Letter to Support China's Position in Hong Kong?"

<sup>654</sup> Fifty countries signed on in support of China in response to the July 8, 2019 UNHCR letter condemning China's treatment of Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Twenty-two of the 50 countries were from Africa, to include Djibouti, the high China-low U.S. exemplar.

A recent report published by William & Mary analyzing Chinese lending contracts presents further evidence that undermines the theory of asset seizure and neocolonial control over resources due to unpaid debt. The report looked at Chinese contracts in 24 different developing countries and found that debt was used as collateral for the loan rather than the hard asset. The debt was repaid through an escrow account, which was collateralized should the country default on its repayment. “What we find is that Chinese lenders seem to prefer to collateralize on liquid assets, we sometimes talk about them as ‘grab and go’ assets.”<sup>655</sup> One example is Ghana with the Sinohydro agreement for the Priority Road infrastructure projects. In the contract, the collateral stipulated for the agreement is detailed as “escrow over the Bauxite Revenue account.”<sup>656</sup> Another stipulation in this contract was for confidentiality and non-disclosure and that it would not be publicly available to third parties.<sup>657</sup>

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<sup>655</sup> Stated by one of the report’s authors, Brad Parks, during a podcast interview on The China-Africa Report podcast dated April 6, 2021. Eric Olander, “How China Lends: A Landmark Report on Chinese Loan Contracts,” in April 6, 2021, in *The China in Africa Podcast*, produced by Bradley Parks, podcast, MP3 audio, 01:19:18, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/podcasts/how-china-lends-a-landmark-report-on-chinese-loan-contracts/>.

<sup>656</sup> This collateral was specified in the contract between the Ghanaian government and Sinohydro upon which the escrow account must be procured offshore by the Ghanaian government and maintain a balance equivalent to two months of payments on the debt. It was also specified as “the exclusive account for receiving revenue generated by Republic of Ghana from selling Refined Bauxite,” The contract reviewed was graciously provided by William and Mary University. AidData Communications Team, *Joint Memorandum to Parliament by The Hon. Minister for Roads and Highways for the Approval of Commercial Agreements between the Government of Ghana and Sinohydro Corporation Limited for An Amount of up to Five Hundred Million United States Dollars (US\$500,000,000.00) for the Construction of Priority Road Infrastructure Projects—Phase I under the Master Project Support Agreement* (Williamsburg, VA: AidData Communications Team, 2018), [https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20488279-gha\\_2018\\_483](https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20488279-gha_2018_483).

<sup>657</sup> The confidentiality agreement was also specific that “This clause shall survive this agreement,” which implied that even after the project is completed, the conditions and stipulations of the agreement cannot be revealed to the public; the public who will be paying for this project long after its date of completion. William & Mary University graciously provided the contract reviewed. AidData Communications Team.

The report however does raise some concerning issues specifically around the opacity of the contracts and debt. The author noted that after 2014, the first full year of China's BRI, all contracts examined had confidentiality clauses in them that thereby restricted the discussion or even acknowledgement of the debt. This restriction has the potential to undermine trust in governance within a local population as the government becomes accountable to the lender rather than the citizens, and the citizens paying for the debt, through taxes, are unaware of their obligations. This restriction also has similar parallels to early concerns around U.S. ODF in that it undermined governance by making the recipient country accountable to the donor country rather than the population that elected it.<sup>658</sup>

## **6.2 Conclusions**

In conclusion, this case study sought to test the two competing theories on motivations behind U.S. and Chinese ODF to SSA and to determine if they were working at cross-purposes to each other. The first theory centers on the primary motivation for U.S. ODF being to support good governance and improve corruption controls and overall well-being. The second and third motivations for U.S. ODF are conflict prevention, peace and regional stability, and counter terrorist operations. The second theory tested outlined the motivations for Chinese ODF and primarily focused on basic mercantilist self-enrichment. The second motivation is securing market access for Chinese goods while also securing its investments. The third motivation is to shift Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model.

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<sup>658</sup> Knack, "Aid Dependence and the Quality of Governance," 310–29; Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, 2007; Bräutigam and Knack, "Foreign Aid," 265.

Kenya, as the high U.S.-high Chinese ODF case study, provided an examination of motivations and outcomes when both competing great powers are heavily invested in a given country. This case study also completed a well-rounded examination of the three corners of the 2x2 matrix outlined in Chapter 5. Tables 8 and 9 show the results of the testing conducted in this chapter as it pertains to each motivation.

Table 8. Summary of Evidence: China.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>Chinese ODF</b>	Basic mercantilist self-enrichment	Securing markets and investments	Shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource rich countries</li> <li>• Coastal countries paired with infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade imbalance with China</li> <li>• Increased corruption</li> <li>• Large economies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy infrastructure development</li> <li>• UN voting alignment with China</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export high levels of raw natural resources (oil, timber, minerals) to China</li> <li>• Infrastructure for extraction (power, mines, roads, ports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of finished goods from China</li> <li>• Loan repayment over forgiveness</li> <li>• Increased risk of debt default and high debt levels</li> <li>• Increased security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China— leadership positions</li> <li>• High debt levels</li> <li>• Government oppression</li> <li>• Restricted press and media</li> </ul>
<b>Chinese Motivations in Kenya</b>	Yes	Yes	No

Observable motivations for Chinese theory and determinations of which motivations are reflected in the specific case study countries. The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for Chinese disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the casual logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Kenya was reflective of two of the three motivations for China regarding the disbursement of ODF to SSA nations as it only passed through the causal logic tests for China's first and second motivations. It confirmed the first motivation of mercantilist self-

enrichment, even though Kenya has not historically been a resource rich country.<sup>659</sup> It does have coastal access to allow access to resources located within its landlocked neighbors like Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, as demonstrated by substantial levels of infrastructure spending in Kenya, punctuated by construction of the SGR in conjunction with the facilitation trade and exports of raw materials not only within Kenya but also from its neighbors. Kenya also has a large population and offers a valuable market for Chinese goods, which is reflected in the trade data showing \$1.08 billion in exports to China compared with \$43.5 billion in imports from China from 2000 to 2019 mainly in the form of finished goods, such as cell phones, broadcasting equipment, construction materials and vehicles, and train cars. This data is also supportive of China's second motivation of securing its investments. China has increased the number of private security personnel in Kenya to safeguard the SGR and ensure its operation. China's third motivation however was not borne out by the case study since Kenya neither voted in alignment with China a majority of the time when compared to the United States or voted in alignment with China on the 2019 Xinjiang vote. It did not however align itself with the United States on the Xinjiang vote and instead abstained, which could be taken as a win for China because it insisted that countries either support its position or abstain from voting. More likely, however, as consistent with Kenya's position, it is due to its desire to not be perceived as choosing sides as both the United States and China are high contributors of ODF to Kenya.

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<sup>659</sup> Kenya discovered oil reservoirs and began exporting its first barrels of oil to China in 2019. It currently produces 2,000 barrels a day currently, which places it at 107th in the world for oil production according to Worldometer. Yusuf, "Activists Want Detail on Kenya Oil Contract with Chinese Firm."

Table 9. Summary of Evidence: United States.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>U.S. ODF</b>	Good governance, improved corruption controls and overall well-being	Conflict prevention, peace and stability	Counter terrorist efforts
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased governance reform</li> <li>• Reduced corruption</li> <li>• UN voting alignment with the United States</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical civil/regional conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical regional conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> <li>• Bordering or include conflict zones</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt reduction</li> <li>• Health and HIV investment</li> <li>• Free and fair elections</li> <li>• Open press and media</li> <li>• UN voting alignment with the United States</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Governance improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> </ul>
<b>U.S. Motivations in Kenya</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

Observable motivations for the U.S. theory and determinations of which motivations are reflected in the specific case study countries. The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for U.S. disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the causal logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Kenya, as a high recipient of U.S. ODF, passed all three of the causal logic hoops for the United States supporting the theory laid out seeking to explain U.S. motivations for ODF. Kenya demonstrated above average governance levels when compared with the SSA average. A majority of U.S. ODF went to support health and population, humanitarian,

governance, agriculture and food aid, and education, as shown in Figure 27. This disbursement supports the theory that the primary motivation for U.S. ODF is overall well-being and good governance to include health, education, and nutrition. Emphasizing the motivation to ensure good governance, the United States demonstrated its willingness to suspend aid to Kenya if corruption reduction efforts were not enacted as was the case with Kensa. Kenya also passed the second and third casual logic hoops for the United States, and demonstrated the motivations were centered on regional peace and security, as well as counter terrorist efforts. Kenya's security and safety score fluctuated between above and below the SSA average and through an additional analysis of U.S. trade and weapons sales to Kenya, it demonstrated a persistent support for both regional security and counter terrorism. Trade levels between both countries supported the United States' motivation to ensure regional stability as seen by two large weapons sales deals in 2016 and 2017 of both UAVs and armed aircraft in efforts to combat terrorism along the Somali border and the region.

Kenya is illustrative of all three of the U.S. motivations and the first two Chinese motivations for the disbursement of ODF. As it pertains to GPC, both the important voting data and the Xinjiang vote could demonstrate that even with high levels of ODF from the United States, Kenya continued to abstain or be absent from votes to not be perceived as directly opposing the United States. As GPC grows in Africa between the United States and China, countries could see increased pressure to pick a side, something they have been



reluctant to do.<sup>660</sup> Countries receiving high levels of Chinese ODF however have demonstrated a willingness to oppose the United States directly in UN votes knowing they have the backstop of China.

As the largest voting block at the UN, along with the essential A3<sup>661</sup> votes within the UN Security Council, China's ability to garner support at the UN through economic means could counterbalance the United States' hegemony within these institutions. Similar to Djibouti, both Kenya and Djibouti received high levels of Chinese ODF. Despite the persistent rhetoric of "debt trap" diplomacy, no instances of asset seizures in Kenya have occurred because of non-repayment of loans to China. Even with large infrastructure projects like the SGR leading to a rising debt to GDP ratio for Kenya, China has demonstrated a willingness to refinance the loans rather than seize assets. An action more consistent with its second motivation of securing its investments and by doing so, China ensures it maintains both repayment of the loans and its leverage.

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<sup>660</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, "[The US must] resist framing it as part of a new Cold War because the Africans are firmly against that. They don't want to choose between China and the United States." Center on National Security at Fordham Law, "The Significance of Africa."

<sup>661</sup> A3 refers to the three African nations that hold temporary two-year seats on the UN Security Council. In 2020, South Africa ended its two-year term and the top two proposed countries to fill its spot were Djibouti and Kenya. Djibouti was advocated by China to fill the position and Kenya was advocated by the United States to fill the role. Ultimately, Kenya won in a second round of UNGA voting and assumed its seat on the UNSC in 2020. United Nations, "Kenya Wins Final Contested Seat on Security Council."

## CHAPTER 7. SUPPORTING SURVEYS AND ANALYSIS

### 7.1 Survey Design and Analysis

In addition to congruence analysis and causal process tracing via the case study analysis completed in this dissertation, survey data were used as secondary data to both supplement and further the research for this dissertation. Due in large part to the old adage that “correlation doesn’t imply causation,”<sup>662</sup> a survey and interviews were conducted to supplement the research.<sup>663</sup> This chapter is not a scientific testing of ideas and theories nor does this survey and the following interviews serve as a statistically valid sample. The goal is to provide further clarity on the quantitative and qualitative research conducted in the previous chapters and add to the conclusions drawn in previous chapters.

A survey was distributed to members of the China-in-Africa/Africans-in-China 900-person network comprised of scholars, government officials, and experts in Chinese, African, and U.S. relations. Member responses were kept anonymous but they were asked about their geographic location, their affiliation, i.e., government, civilian, academic/scholar, followed by a series of questions on motivations for both U.S. and Chinese ODF to African nations, as well as overall perceptions of U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa. Selection bias and differential attrition were some of the threats to the validity of the survey results. Selection bias results when selection for participation is not random and

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<sup>662</sup> John A. List, “Why Economists Should Conduct Field Experiments and 14 Tips for Pulling One Off,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 25, no. 3 (2011): 3–16.

<sup>663</sup> This survey protocol and procedures were exempted from the IRB process, IRB protocol number: H20487 on January 28, 2021.

certain individuals are more likely to be selected.<sup>664</sup> Criteria for selection had to be established however to create this sort of selection to obtain any meaningful feedback or insight from the survey. Appendix A presents the criteria for the selection before the survey was sent to the IRB process for review and ultimately exemption.<sup>665</sup>

Of the 900-person network who received the survey, only 17 chose to participate. This low number potentially creates challenges to validity of the study, which is then referred to as differential attrition. Differential attrition occurs when groups differ from one another due to self-selection.<sup>666</sup> In this case, members chose not to participate in the survey, which potentially skewed the results towards only individuals who did participate. If more members had chosen to participate in the survey, the results would have been different. The benefits however are that “experimental procedures remain unbiased in small samples.”<sup>667</sup> Thus, despite the small number of respondents, value still can be gleaned from their insights.

Experimenter bias is another potential threat to the validity of the surveys being conducted. Experimenter bias is described as “the mere presence or interaction with the interviewer has an effect on the respondents’ responses.”<sup>668</sup> For this reason, the survey was

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<sup>664</sup> Donald T. Campbell, “Factors Relevant to the Validity of Experiments in Social Settings,” *Psychological Bulletin* 54, no. 4 (1957): 297; Veronica Valli, Florian Stahl, and Elea McDonnell Feit, “Field Experiments,” in *Handbook of Market Research* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 1–29; Gilbert A. Churchill and Dawn Iacobucci, *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2010), 2.

<sup>665</sup> This survey protocol and procedures were exempted from the IRB process, IRB protocol number: H20487 on January 28, 2021.

<sup>666</sup> Valli, Stahl, and Feit, “Field Experiments,” 1–29.

<sup>667</sup> The interviews were conducted using the preapproved IRB survey protocol number H20487, along with approved consent from interviewees prior to conducting the interview.

<sup>668</sup> Alan S. Gerber and Donald P. Green, “Field Experiments and Natural Experiments,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 357–384.

<sup>669</sup> Valli, Stahl, and Feit, “Field Experiments,” 1–29.

sent out electronically and also contained both structured and unstructured questions to allow the respondents the flexibility to elaborate on areas without guiding them to specific outcomes or answers through a mix of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions via Google's survey feature. A sample of the survey questions appears in Appendix B. Semi-structured interviews, combined with an interview piggyback, were utilized to obtain this result. Piggy-back techniques were used during the interview with the expert asking the interviewees if they have anyone they could think who should be interviewed. If yes, the interviewer would pursue those interview recommendations.

Respondents freely offered their time in responding to the survey and were not compensated for their time or to complete the survey. Additionally, interviews were conducted with African scholars, current and former U.S. government and DOD employees, ambassadors, and local African businessmen.<sup>669</sup> The results of both the interviews and surveys along with the insights they provided are detailed as follows.

## **7.2. Survey and Interview Data and Results**

Building on the theory tested in the previous two chapters as to the motivations behind U.S. and Chinese ODF as a tool of GPC in Africa, a mix of interviews and surveys were conducted. The respondents were a combination of academics, scholars, current and former U.S. government, and DOD officials based in 11 different nations that included the

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<sup>669</sup> The interviews were conducted using the preapproved IRB survey protocol number H20487, along with approved consent from interviewees prior to conducting the interview.

United States, China, South Africa, Mozambique, Rwanda, Zambia, Kenya, Japan, and the Netherlands.<sup>670</sup> Figure 33 shows the geographical breakout of the individuals.

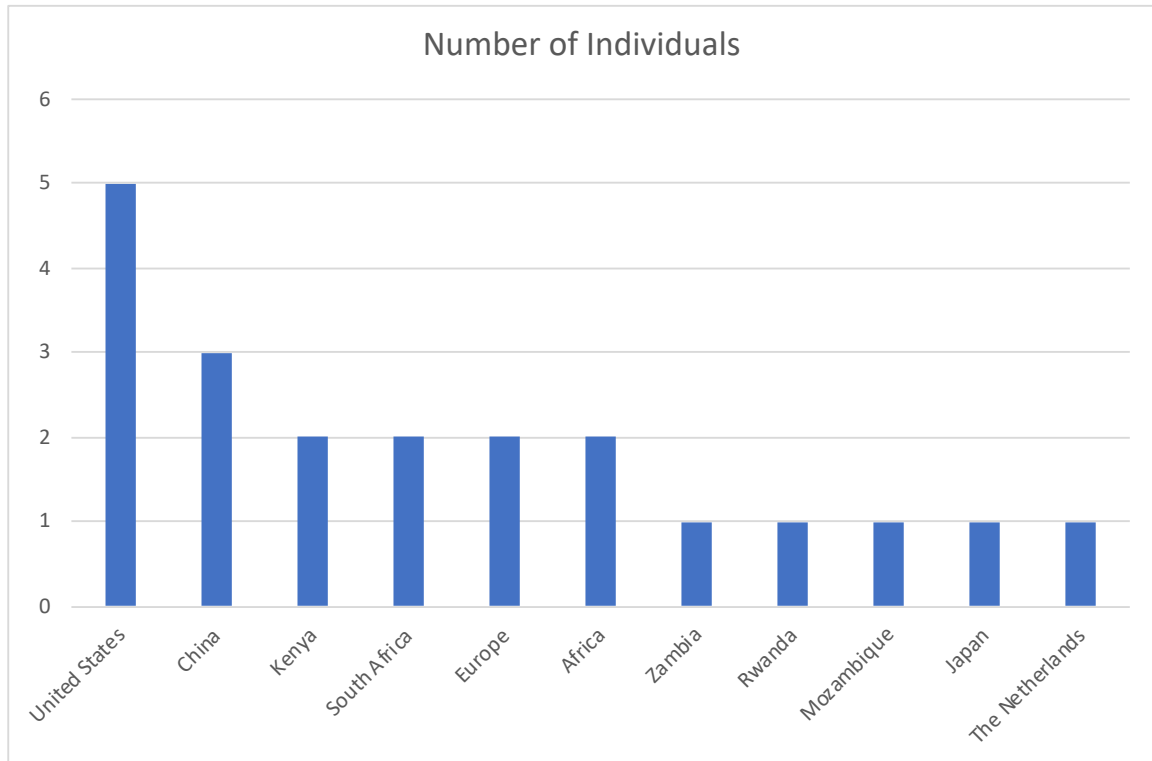


Figure 33. Geographic Location of Respondents.

Individuals were first asked their opinions on U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa, and if it was beneficial, detrimental, or a non-factor for African nations, as shown in Figure 34. Of the individuals surveyed and interviewed, 19 of the 21 respondents (91%) viewed U.S. and Chinese competition in Africa as either a positive or non-factor. The positives of U.S.

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<sup>670</sup> The survey responses were submitted anonymously with four of the respondents putting “Africa” or “Europe” as their geographical locations. Their country of basis was not included in the country count but the data was included in the overall count and is displayed as “Europe” and “Africa.”

and Chinese GPC in Africa, freely stated by the respondents, were that African nations had more choice, which provided a wider environment of financial support opportunities for SSA nations, and gave African nations options in terms of financing. One quote from the interviews that punctuated ODF as tools of GPC in Africa was from a Kenyan scholar knowledgeable about U.S. and Chinese engagement in SSA. The respondent stated, “What China has done for the last 15 years is to expand the sources of capital, African countries are happy because they don’t have to beg for financing from Western donors.”<sup>671</sup>

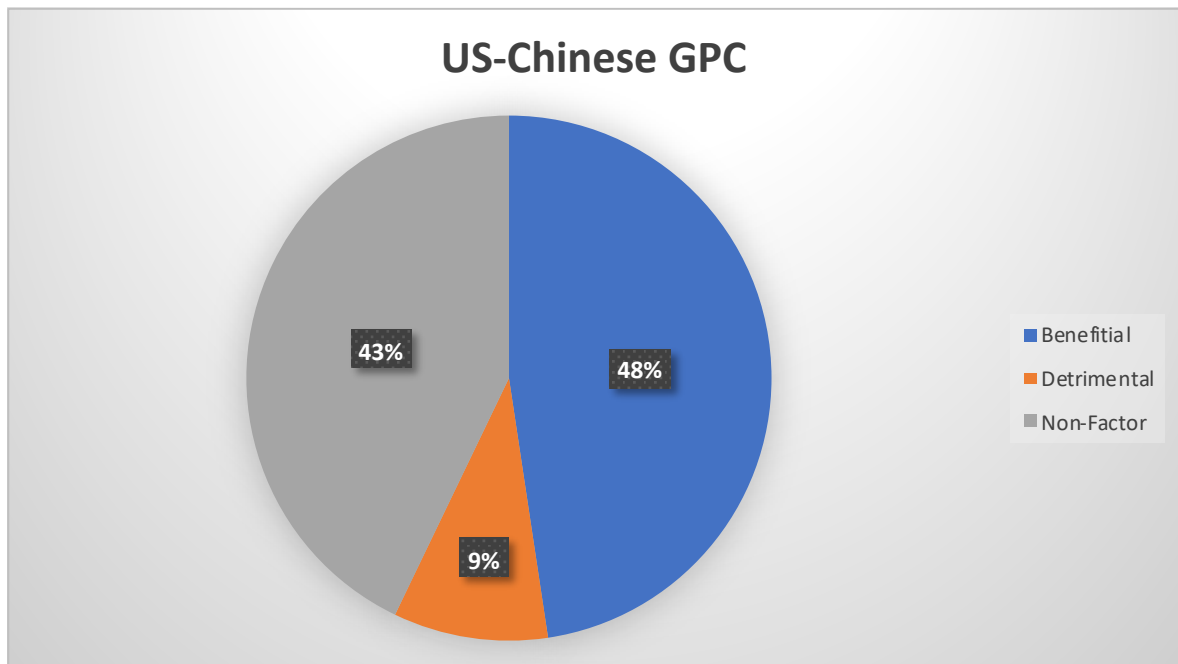


Figure 34. Perspectives on U.S. and Chinese GPC in Africa.

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<sup>671</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021 in accordance with preapproved IRB survey protocol number H20487, along with approved consent from interviewees prior to conducting the interview.

Examining the survey results, some individuals did not view U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa as a positive. They were the same individuals who viewed both U.S. and Chinese ODF as detrimental to African nations and led to dependence. These individuals often cited Moyo's "dead aid," which describes Western ODF as a leading cause for Africa's shortcomings in terms of development and growth. Moyo also points readers towards China as a replacement for U.S. ODF in a chapter titled "The Chinese Are Our Friends."<sup>672</sup> Some of the negatives outlined regarding U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa were "duplication in aid programs" and "efforts as countries compete for influence in the region."

Building on U.S.-Chinese GPC comes back to the African proverb often cited in regards to U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa, "When two elephants battle it is the grass that suffers." The problem with this proverb is that it removes all agency from African nations as they are considered the proverbial "grass" trampled beneath the feet of the competing great powers. GPC between these two countries in Africa is not a Cold War 2.0 predicated on hard power projection and proxy wars. The current competition between the United States and China in Africa is playing out in the form of soft power, or development finance.

Quantitative analysis in previous chapters demonstrated that Chinese ODF did in fact work at cross-purposes to U.S. ODF when it came to UN voting alignment. The interviews and surveys conducted built on this finding. Ambassador Shinn, former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, stated, "The fact that they [China] are offering the loans gives them advantage vis-à-vis African governments. This has a huge impact on China's ability to gain influence on African governments, that's why you tend to see more African

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<sup>672</sup> Moyo, *Dead Aid*. Chapter 7 is titled "The Chinese Are our Friends," This book was also written before the Chinese BRI began in 2013 and before President Xi Jinping came to power in 2012.

governments voting in line with China that the US. [The Chinese] Remind African leaders that they hold \$X billion of loan stock and to keep that in mind when they vote at the UN.”<sup>673</sup>

Turning to an examination of the motivations behind both U.S. and Chinese ODF as examined in the case studies, individuals were asked multiple questions regarding Chinese motivations for ODF, as well as China’s framing of “win-win” and continued characterization of “debt-trap diplomacy” by Western nations. Figure 35 shows the results from both the survey and interview analysis in which 71% of the individuals determined Chinese ODF to be beneficial. However, the most consistent motivations for Chinese ODF were China itself, market(s), resources, and infrastructure. These results support the motivations laid out in Table 8 in the previous chapter of mercantilist self-enrichment along with access to markets for Chinese goods.

Tying Chinese motivations back to the GPC discussion, the views on Chinese ODF were for the most part beneficial, as seen in Figure 35. One Kenyan scholar knowledgeable about U.S. and Chinese engagement in SSA stated that Chinese ODF was also detrimental. It was detrimental in regards to the opacity around the lending, detrimental in the way it disregards environmental impacts, and detrimental in the way it seems to be changing U.S. attitudes about how to conduct development. The example cited was that the competition has now become commercial with the establishment and use of Exim banks and development finance for contracting national companies from the United States to work in Africa.

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<sup>673</sup> The author conducted this interview on April 19, 2021 in accordance with preapproved IRB survey protocol number H20487, along with approved consent from interviewees prior to conducting the interview.



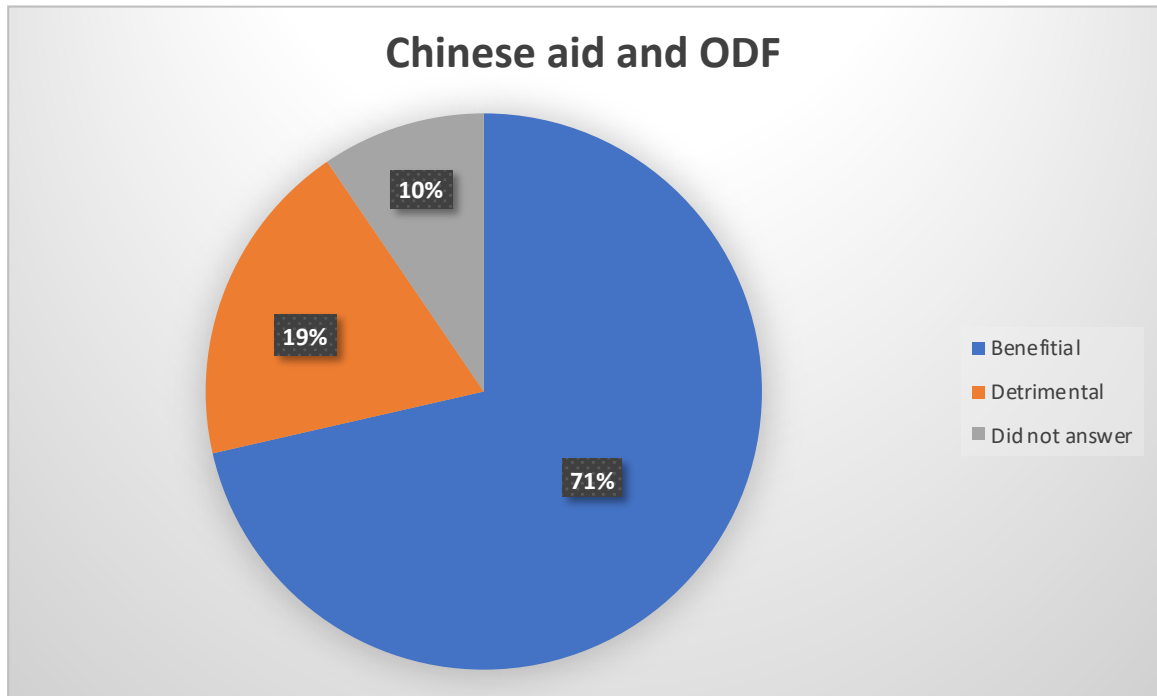


Figure 35. Perspectives on Chinese ODF in Africa.

Examining U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa, “debt-trap diplomacy” continues to be a reoccurring narrative from the United States. During his virtual travel to Africa on April 27, 2021, a Nigerian participating in the Young African Leaders Initiative in the United States asked Secretary Blinken, “Considering the growth of the Chinese in Africa, will the US be competing with China in Africa?”<sup>674</sup> This question could be interpreted in two ways. The first is that U.S. engagement in Africa has gone largely unnoticed by local Africans,

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<sup>674</sup> “Secretary Blinken’s Virtual Travel to Africa,” April 27, 2021, YouTube, video, 4:48:54, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nsk1K3CEcVA&t=3398s>.

which is encapsulated by the free rider problem.<sup>675</sup> The second is that African nations are aware of being caught in the middle of U.S.-Chinese GPC and are seeking to determine the motivations for engagement from the United States and China. Secretary Blinken responded by cautioning Africans against taking on too much debt. In “assuming too much debt becomes an unsustainable burden on countries and then they face an incredibly hard choice between having to pay it back, and probably in ways that takes resources away from the people, or hand over whatever the investment was to whoever made the investment and owns the debt.”<sup>676</sup> This situation however has not been demonstrated either through the literature, the quantitative analysis in previous chapters, or in the case study analysis conducted within this dissertation. On this basis, it was necessary to query individuals about “debt-trap diplomacy” being a mischaracterization or motive for China’s engagement in Africa.

The question was posed to individuals about China’s approach being termed “debt-trap diplomacy.” Figure 36 shows the breakdown of responses by individuals with 86% of the respondents viewing it as a mischaracterization of China’s approach to African nations and not indicative of a motivation. This finding supports the quantitative analysis conducted, which failed to find any correlation between Chinese ODF and the debt to GDP ratio within the recipient nation along with the literature review and case study analysis. Most individuals surveyed and interviewed acknowledged the debt as an unfortunate byproduct of Chinese engagement and not what the Chinese initially anticipated or

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<sup>675</sup> The free rider problem is described as the dilemma created by donor nations investing in public goods, such as improvements in governance, which benefit everyone but are nonselective and therefore create little incentive to sacrifice to provide for them or determine that they are a result of investment.

<sup>676</sup> YouTube, “Secretary Blinken’s Virtual Travel to Africa.”

intended. Interviewees acknowledged that the Chinese have introduced a new system of collateral for repayment through either operation or administration of an asset and pointed to the fact that the Chinese have taken up purchasing a share of an entity be it a road, bridge, or port to justify operation. Ambassador Shinn cautioned against the mantra of China seizing assets within Africa as a means of repayments as Africans would not stand for this approach. This opinion was demonstrated by the severe blow back the Kenyan government received when the public was led to believe the Port of Mombasa was to be held as collateral by a Chinese SOE should Kenya default on its loans.

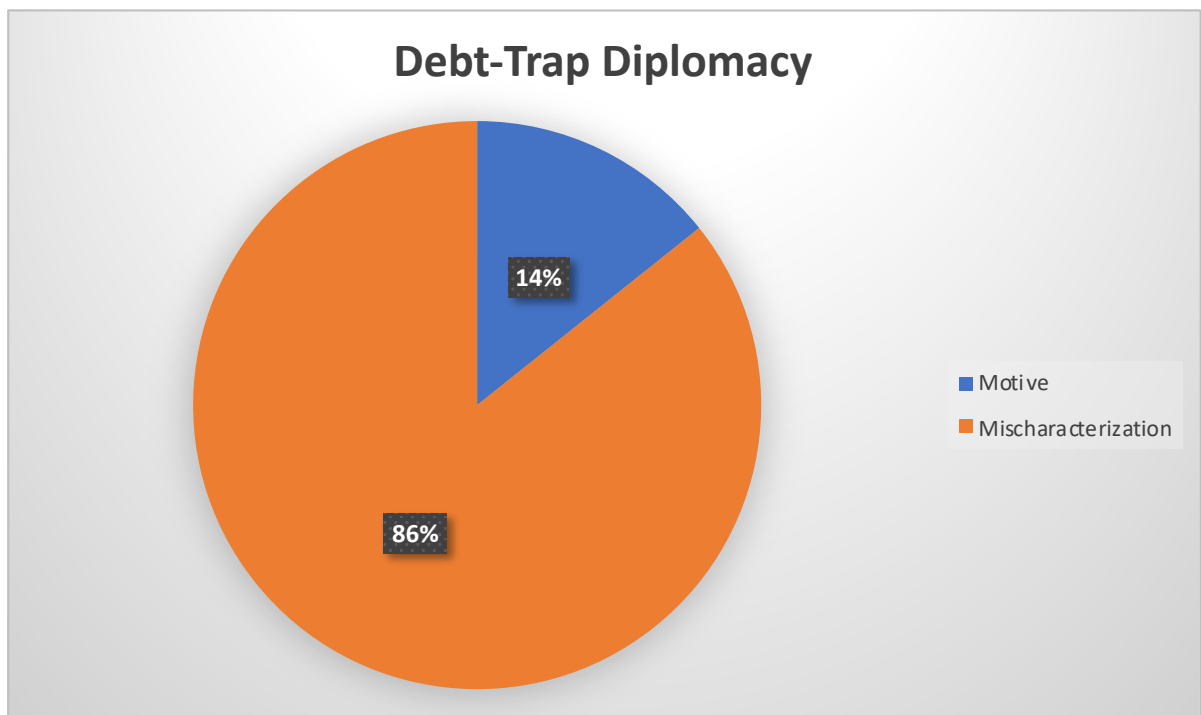


Figure 36. Perspectives on Debt-trap Diplomacy.

In addition to providing greater clarity around the debt trap diplomacy motivation for Chinese ODF to African nations, the win-win narrative propagated by China was also examined. China continually touts its ODF in Africa as win-win with both China and the recipient nation gaining from engagement. Survey participants and interviewees were asked if the win for China and the win for the recipient nation should be equal or if a disproportionate win system was acceptable as long as both countries were gaining something that benefitted them. A slight majority of respondents (52%) stated that the wins for both nations did not have to be equal. Figure 37 shows the breakdown of responses from surveyed individuals. Some of the explanations for why a disproportionate win system would be accepted were, “The wins will not be equal since both actors are not at the same level, but as long as both countries benefit this relationship should prevail.” Respondents also stated, “As far as the two countries get what they want it shall be considered as an equal.” One important distinction made by Ambassador Shinn was that “In the eyes of a Westerner it should be equal, in the eyes of an African it should be equal, and the Chinese will tell you it IS equal. African nations get 1 win, while China gets 4 wins.”

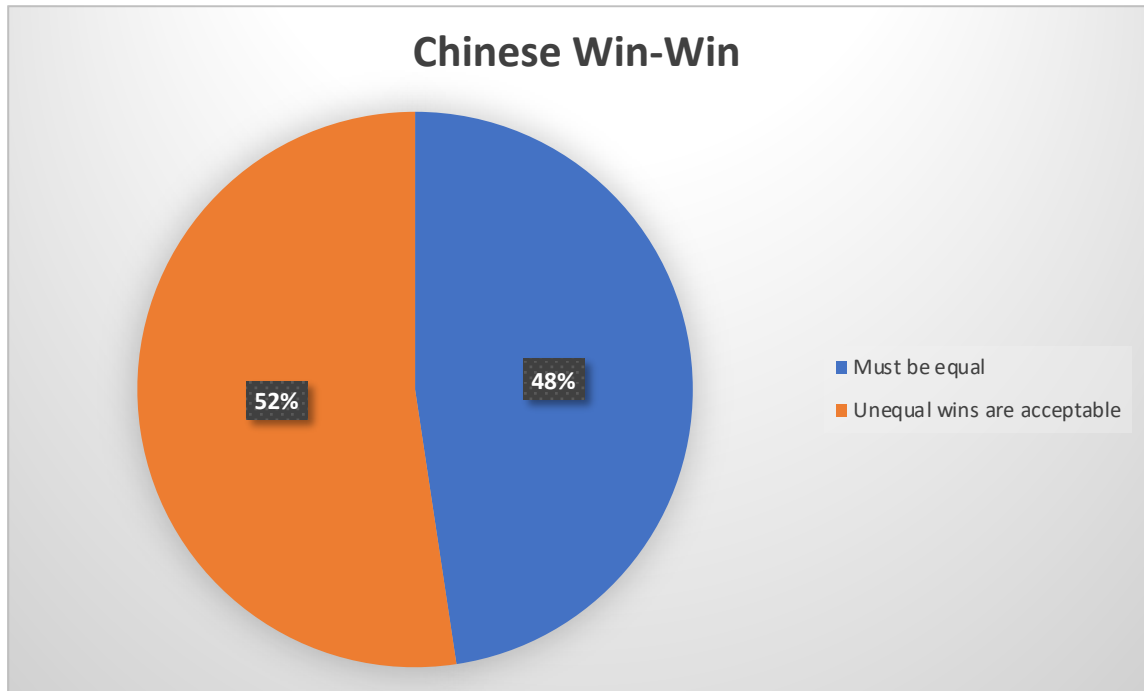


Figure 37. Perspectives on China's Win-Win Characterization.

Ambassador Shinn elaborated on the four wins that China obtains: (1) a Chinese company gets the contract, (2) the contract uses predominantly Chinese materials, (3) a percentage of Chinese labor is negotiated, and (4) African nations have to repay the loan. The first win for China is consistent with the research. This win has raised concern around China's traditionally opaque deal. In most cases, the contracts are not put out for competitive tender and are awarded to a Chinese company. This win occurs in large part since about 60% of the ODF from China to Africa comes from the Chinese Exim bank and one of its goals is to promote Chinese businesses abroad. The second win that the contracts use predominately Chinese materials is true of early efforts by the Chinese but is not reflective of more recent projects. One example came from the Kenyan Ambassador to the

United States during a Q&A in which he stated that for the Mombasa-Nairobi portion of the SGR rail, 90% of the materials for the rail came from China, and over 5,000 personnel were brought in from China for construction. However, he stated that Kenya then gave China four new conditions for every project from then on that the Chinese must add to every contract. The first one is that the Chinese companies must ensure local labor is used, and can only bring in no more than 5,000 engineers or professionals for the project. Secondly, 70% of all materials for projects must be locally sourced. Thirdly, the consultants for each project must not come from China and must be a third party. Finally, the contracts must be in English and Chinese to ensure both parties mutual understanding of the agreement.<sup>677</sup> These new requirements also lead into the third win for China of negotiating labor for Chinese coming to Africa. Much like the materials coming from China, Chinese labor dominated many of the Chinese projects in Africa in the early 2000s and in the early stages of the BRI. However, governments like Kenya have begun to put restrictions on labor, as well as seeing that in countries like Ethiopia and Angola, the proportion of national workers is now 90% of all workers (100% for low-skilled workers) in Ethiopia and 74% in Angola.<sup>678</sup> The final win is the repayment of the debt burden, which has been discussed previously concerning the framing of China's activities as "debt-trap diplomacy." As this dissertation has discussed, China's willingness to renegotiate debt

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<sup>677</sup> The Kenya Ambassador to the United States, Robinson Njeru Githae, made this statement in response to a question from the author regarding the SGR during a Q&A event hosted by the Atlanta Council for International Relations on April 4, 2019.

<sup>678</sup> Carlos Oya and Florian Schaefer, *Chinese Firms and Employment Dynamics in Africa: A Comparative Analysis*, IDCEA Research Synthesis Report (London: SOAS, University of London, 2019), <https://www.soas.ac.uk/idcea/publications/reports/file141857.pdf>.

repayment with countries like Angola, Kenya, and Zambia over this past year have put cold water on the alarm bells of asset seizure and forfeiture of sovereignty.

A final question posted to surveyed individuals and interviewees alike was around motivations for U.S. ODF, as well as perceptions. As shown in Figure 38, 86% of respondents stated that they perceived U.S. ODF to be beneficial. A Kenyan scholar knowledgeable about U.S. and Chinese engagement in SSA stated that U.S. ODF has been very beneficial. That PEPFAR is known throughout Africa as one of USAID's most popular programs and that programs focused on health sectors have been very beneficial for Kenyans. He also echoed sentiments highlighted by this case study in that the Kenyan military establishment was very happy about U.S. engagement in Kenya and appreciated the superiority of U.S. equipment.

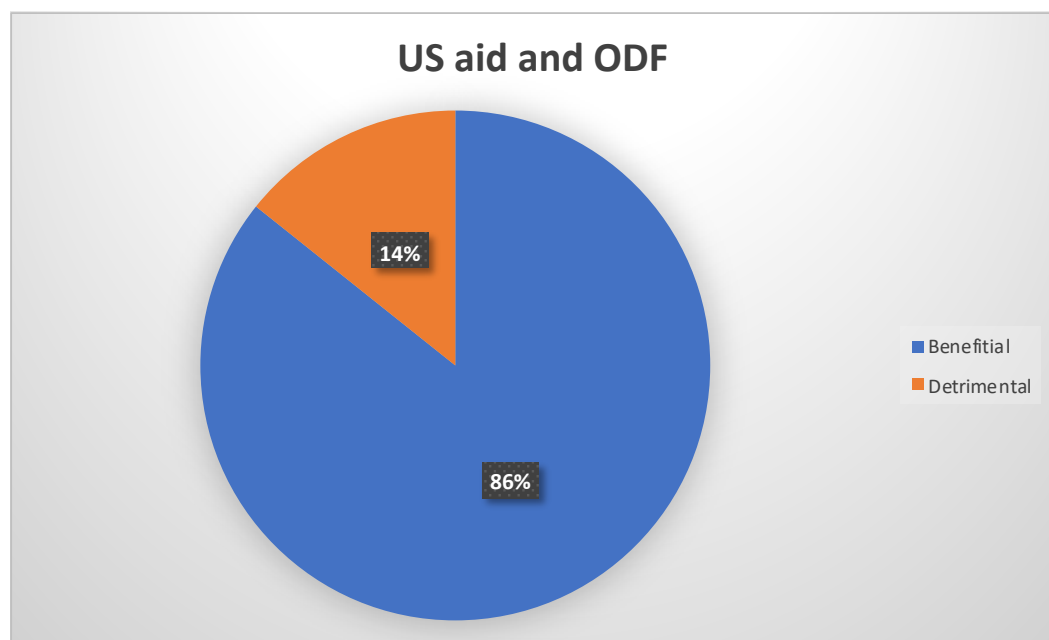


Figure 38. Perspectives on U.S. ODF in Africa.

The individuals surveyed also stated that the most consistent motivations for U.S. ODF to African nations centered around five areas: China, strategic, humanitarian, influence, and political. The survey and interview responses support the three motivations for U.S. ODF to African nations being centered on health and overall well-being, coupled with regional peace and stability and counter terrorism. It also points to the notion that the United States and China still seek to use ODF as tools of GPC to influence nations in differing ways for differing benefits.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

The survey results supported much of the findings established through the quantitative and qualitative analysis laid out in previous chapters. A majority of interviewees and individuals surveyed believed that U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa was either a benefit or non-factor to African nations. Similar to that described in the case studies is the perception by individuals that this competition gives the African nations options when it comes to developmental finance. Granted, finance comes with different motivations and costs depending on the country providing it. When asked about the motivations for the Chinese ODF, most (71%) of surveyed and interviewed individuals viewed it as beneficial for African nations. One Kenyan scholar stated that Chinese ODF did have detrimental aspects as well. It was detrimental in regards to the opacity around the lending, detrimental in the way it has disregarded environmental impacts, and detrimental in the way it seems to be changing U.S. attitudes about how to conduct development. When asked about the “win-win” characterization of Chinese ODF by China, the interviewees articulated that while both countries may see wins from the relationship in terms of development and trade,



China overwhelmingly benefitted from these relationships. The data reflects this viewpoint as demonstrated through the analysis of bilateral trade within the case study countries, and strengthens the argument. The last component sought to shed light on the persistent “debt-trap” diplomacy narrative. Of the interviewees and surveyed individuals, 86% believed the “debt-trap” diplomacy narrative to be a mischaracterization of Chinese ODF and more of an unfortunate byproduct of dealing with China. One of the interviewees, Ambassador Shinn, cautioned against the mantra of asset seizures by China within Africa as a means of repayments as Africans would not stand for this approach. This point was also detailed through the examination of the SGR project in the Kenya case study chapter.

Additionally, a majority (86%) of the interviewees and surveyed personnel also believed U.S. ODF to be beneficial mostly because of the United States’ engagement through PEPFAR and security efforts, which builds on its three motivations. These areas are also not areas that China have historically operated in and therefore are not areas of competition between the two. As indicated, the competition lies in cases, such as UN voting alignment. In areas in which both countries are heavily invested, the African nations have opted to abstain rather than choose a side. This position has been supported through both the quantitative and qualitative analysis and through the surveys and interviews. It would seem that the rhetoric of the United States and China being on the verge of conflict in Africa is overblown and geared more towards motivating action in Washington than a reflection of conditions on the ground.

## CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION

GPC between the United States and China has traditionally been framed solely within the security space. While weapons and defense systems are important aspects of GPC, the manner in which it is playing out between the United States and China in Africa differs from the Cold War era.<sup>679</sup> Currently, it is through development finance. Literature has shown that while parallels exist between historic GPC in Africa and the way it is currently playing out between the United States and China, the nature of GPC Africa has shifted. A characteristic of GPC is that states will seek to maximize their relative power in relation to other states by focusing on the distribution of power within a system or restricting others from gaining power.<sup>680</sup> Historically, the United States has done so through institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, to exert power and spread influence throughout Africa. China historically has not used the same institutions and opted instead to deal bilaterally with countries when it came to development finance. This conclusion recounts the central argument of this dissertation, discusses the quantitative research conducted, and examines the comparative and strategic case studies, along with survey and interview data to lay the foundation for the study's contributions.

As U.S.-China GPC has played out in Africa, variations in ODF flow have shown different strategic motivations. For both the United States and China, the motivations for each country were consistent across the 48 SSA nations examined, as well as the case studies. For the United States, the motivations for disbursing ODF were overall well-being,

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<sup>679</sup> Thomson, *Introduction to African Politics*, 152–153.

<sup>680</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*.

good governance, and anti-corruption combined with regional peace, security, and counter terrorism efforts. Albeit not a consistent motivation for every country, the motivations were consistent in that ODF provided to each country fell into one or multiple of those three motivations. For China, the motivations for ODF were basic mercantilist self-enrichment, securing market access, and its investments, and shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model. Similar to the United States, not all three motivations were present in every country, which was to be expected. As not all SSA nations are fraught with conflict, not all SSA nations have coastal access or natural resources.

Figure 39 illustrates U.S. and Chinese variations in ODF from 2000 to 2019. This figure shows the amounts of ODF given by the United States in blue and China in red on a country-by-country level for the 48 SSA nations from 2000 to 2019. The figure shows that while China gave *targeted* amounts of ODF to *specific* countries, the United States gave *sustained* levels of ODF to *all* the countries examined over the 20-year period. The shading scales range from \$8.4 million to \$13.7 billion for the United States with the top three recipients of ODF being Ethiopia at \$13.7 billion, Kenya at \$11.7 billion, and Uganda at \$8.1 billion. Conversely, for China, the shading scales in Figure 39 go from zero to \$13.7 billion with the outlier being Angola. Angola is the top recipient at \$42.8 billion, Ethiopia is second with \$13.7 billion, and Zambia is third with \$9.8 billion.

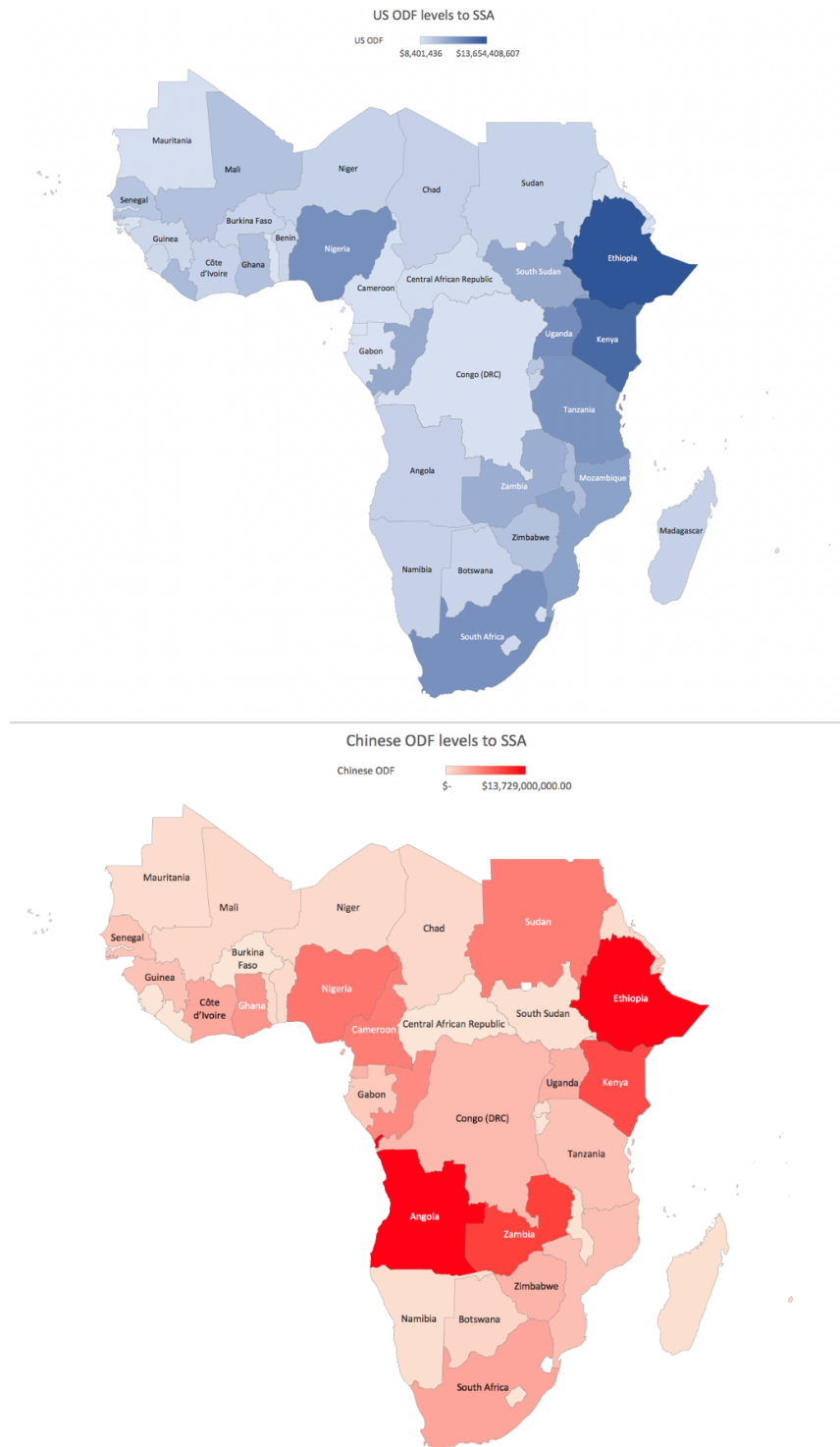


Figure 39. U.S. ODF Levels (Top) vs Chinese ODF Levels (Bottom) to SSA from 2000–2019.

## 8.1. Theoretical Framework

This dissertation established a theoretical framework for examining the motivations of U.S. and Chinese ODF in Africa. Figure 40 shows the theoretical framework by which to understand the motivations along with the expected characteristics and outcomes that accompany high levels of U.S. and/or Chinese ODF. Countries that had high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF demonstrated the characteristics of being strategic countries both regionally and internationally. These countries are also seen to be regional “anchors” with large economies and have a combination of coastal access, large natural resource deposits, or a combination of the two.

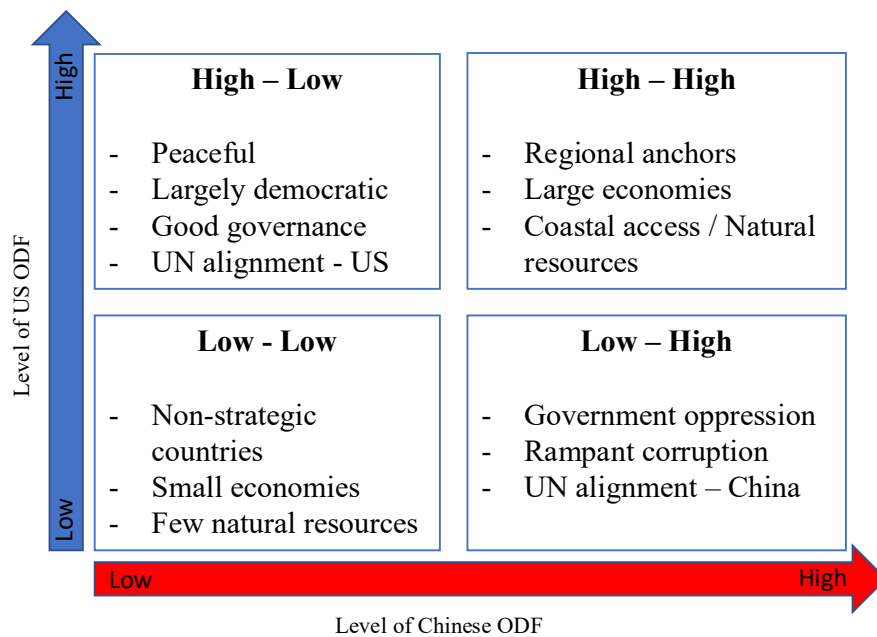


Figure 40. Theoretical Framework Chart.

This framework was used to test two different hypotheses through quantitative analysis and laid the foundation for the two theories tested through the case study analysis. Furthermore, it facilitated the case study selection in which countries were placed into one of the following brackets: high U.S.-low China, high China-low U.S., and high U.S.-high China, and were then selected for analysis to ensure generalization of the theory and to minimize selection biases. This dissertation developed and tested two hypotheses using the theoretical framework chart.

If development finance from the United States to SSA is motivated by overall well-being, good governance, and reducing regional conflict and terrorism, then it will target countries with violence, democratic development, or corruption controls resulting in regional stability and improved governance.

If Chinese development finance to SSA is motivated by mercantilist self-enrichment, increased market access, and shifting Africa to a more Chinese centric development model, then it will target countries with high levels of natural resources, large populations, and countries that align with China at the UN.

## **8.2 Quantitative Research Conclusions**

Beginning with the quantitative research findings, the key motivation for U.S. disbursement of ODF to countries in SSA centered around five variables: a historical disbursement of ODF, poverty, population, corruption, and violence.

Historical disbursement of ODF by the United States is demonstrated not only through the regression analysis but also through the data in which the United States has given sustained levels of ODF to all 48 the SSA nations examined between 2000 and 2019.

This historical disbursement potentially speaks to the United States' sustained commitment to both poverty reduction and overall well-being throughout Africa. It could also speak to the bureaucratically cumbersome nature of Washington being that sometimes the easiest thing to do would be to repeat what was done the year before.

In addition, the correlations with population, corruption controls, and violence offer potential motivations for U.S. ODF being concentrated around large military and economic regional anchors, rewarding corruption reduction efforts within a country, and targeting efforts to reduce violence. These efforts to engage with countries experiencing high levels of instability support the motivation of using U.S. ODF to promote regional peace and stability along with countering terrorist operations in the region. Critics however have argued that aid and humanitarian assistance don't help as "populations that receive food aid in the model African country are typically not pivotal voters that shape public opinion."<sup>681</sup> African leaders are looking for development and growth and at this time it appears China is the only Great Power willing to compete in this space. The US seems content either through its policy position or bureaucratic inertia to continually be motivated by overall well-being and good governance and regional security. African nations know this and lean on the US and other Western countries for security and governance and China for infrastructure development. "Where France (and the US) cannot compete with Chinese companies in terms of investment in many African countries or in terms of construction...yet when it comes to their political needs after a very difficult election or

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<sup>681</sup> Ken Opalo, "On America's Structural Inability to Effectively Compete with China in Africa," An Africanist Perspective, March 27, 2023, <https://kenopalo.substack.com/p/on-americas-structural-inability>.

when there is political instability they will not turn to China, they will not turn to Russia—they’ll turn to Washington.”

For Chinese ODF, the motivations were centered on three variables: resources, population, and GNI per capita. Resources were a predicated and demonstrated motivator for Chinese ODF supporting the primary motivation of basic mercantilist self-enrichment. Population was another variable that was a consistent motivation for both the United States and China in terms of disbursement of ODF, which demonstrated a potential motivation for both countries to engage with regional economic or military anchors as seen in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa. Population was also an expected motivation for Chinese ODF as it also related to market size for Chinese goods, a second motivator for China. GNI per capita was a consistent motivator for both countries but in opposite directions in that the United States was motivated by poverty reduction efforts, and focused on lower GNI per capita countries, while China was motivated by richer and larger economies offering more developed markets for Chinese goods.

The negative correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States reveals that Chinese ODF works at cross-purposes to U.S. ODF. Chinese ODF is directed in higher amounts to countries that vote in alignment with the United States in a potential effort to pull SSA countries away from aligning with the United States and towards itself. This situation demonstrates an effort by China to contradict and replace the U.S. role in the region, which can be alarming given the United States’ role in regional peace and stability and China’s continually stated “non-interference” policy as it pertains to ODF. This scenario supports the third motivation for Chinese ODF outlined in this dissertation of moving African nations to a more Chinese centric development model. The



quantitative research results built the framework for which the case studies were selected and tested. The following conclusions detail the findings.

In addition to the case study examination of the 2019 Xinjiang Vote at the UN, we can look at a more recent example of the UN Human Rights report on Xinjiang in September of 2022 detailing arbitrary detention camps and torture of Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang. China refuted these findings in joint statement and the statement in support of China's position was signed by 11 African nations.<sup>682</sup> The support by African nations can be attributed to the notion that African countries do not want to 'pick a fight' with Beijing over Xinjiang.<sup>683</sup> An issue that is far away from their purview and has the potential to cost them economically is they side against China as it is Africa's largest trading partner.

As it pertains to the cost effectiveness of China's engagement with Africa, COVID-19 has complicated the debt repayment discussion within African nations, and some scholars argue it merely accelerated the process.<sup>684</sup> This aligns with both their first and second motivations. Their second being not only access to markets but securing those investments, and its third motivation in seeking to shift Africa, and to a larger extent, towards a more Chinese centric development model, away from the Bretton Woods led institutions.

As African nations have been able to secure repayment holidays from the United States, the World Bank and the IMF, and China, along with additional funding from the

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<sup>682</sup> Kate Bartlett, "Why African Nations Are Mostly Silent on China's Rights Record," Voice of America, September 24, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/why-african-nations-are-mostly-silent-on-china-s-rights-record-/6760590.html>.

<sup>683</sup> Bartlett,

<sup>684</sup> Michael Pettis (@michaelpettis), "Risky these loans could be. Covid-19—as it has done with so many other trends—seems to be accelerating this process," Twitter, November 28, 2020, 11:10 p.m., <https://twitter.com/michaelpettis/status/1332945023550304260>.

World Bank and the IMF, issues have arisen. Based on the latest data on Chinese ODF to Africa, it fell in 2019 to \$7.7 billion, and countries with which China has restructured or refinanced debt, received less ODF in the following years.<sup>685</sup> China is also running into issues with renegotiating the debt with African nations such as Ghana, Ethiopia, and Zambia as these countries hit high levels of debt distress. African countries are struggling to repay China's debt, for example in May of 2022 Kenya's debt repayments to China tripled as the typical 5-year grace period for repayments of Chinese lending came to an end. This led to widespread concern that Kenya would default on its debt to China, concerns that were quickly downplayed by the Kenyan government.<sup>686</sup> Ghana also defaulted on its external debt in December of 2022 due to the compounding issues of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine.<sup>687</sup> China owns a sizeable portion of Ghana's external debt and therefore is forced to be part of the debt restructuring arrangement. Through the debt refinancing negotiations with Bretton Woods institutions on these African nations, China is facing the potential of having to take a 'haircut' on its investments in Africa and write down some of their debt to African nations. China has been opposed to doing this and has taken a hard line against the Bretton Woods institutions in efforts to shift the global order more in its favor and has repeatedly stated that all parties, to include the World Bank and IMF, must take write downs on their lending if China is to do the same.

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<sup>685</sup> Matthew Mingey and Agatha Kratz, "China's Belt and Road: Down but Not Out," Rhodium Group, January 4, 2021, <https://rhg.com/research/bri-down-out/>.

<sup>686</sup> Mohammed Yusuf, "Kenya Denies It Defaulted on Debt to China," Voice of America, October 14, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/kenya-denies-it-defaulted-on-debt-to-china/6790020.html>.

<sup>687</sup> Jonathan Wheatley, "Ghana Halts Payments on Large Swaths of Foreign Debt," *Financial Times*, December 19, 2022, <https://www.ft.com/content/2cffb07c-828c-400d-a51a-2c52a00bb8e0>.

As it pertains to gains or losses by either the US or China in Africa the clear gains for China have been the ability to balance against the US on the global stage using African nations. The US has managed to maintain its influence in Africa but relative to China it has waned. Wang in “China in Africa: Presence, Perceptions and Prospects” gives a new perspective on China’s approach to Africa. One African economist he met with in Ghana said “We Africans may have more bargaining power in negotiations with the West”<sup>688</sup> implying that African’s stand to benefit from this competition between Great Powers. Studies by Pew Research also showed that favorable perceptions of the US in Sub-Saharan Africa declined from 2002-2017. Both the US and China currently sit at a 58% favorability rating in Sub-Saharan African countries but China has been on the rise since 2002 while US favorability has declined among African nations. Additionally, fewer countries in Sub-Saharan Africa perceive the US as the world’s leading economic power while increasingly more countries perceive China as the world leading economic power.<sup>689</sup> This demonstrates that while China’s investment in Africa has given them access to many African markets, it has also increased their influence. This does come at a cost as they are finding out with the debt restructuring and it does not seem to be a cost China is willing to pay. Eric Olander stated that “China has made it abundantly clear that it is willing to let Zambia be roadkill if it needs to in order to win this fight.”<sup>690</sup> This fight, being between China and the Bretton Woods institutions over African nations debt restructuring as it seeks to shift the World

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<sup>688</sup> Fei-Ling Wang, “China in Africa: Presence, Perceptions, and Prospects,” *Journal of Contemporary China* (2013): 13.

<sup>689</sup> “Global Indicators Database,” Pew Research Center, accessed March 31, 2023, <https://www.pewglobal.org/database/indicator/17/group/5>.

<sup>690</sup> Eric Olander, Cobus van Staden, and Geraud Neema, “Week in Review: China-IMF Debt Standoff,” March 3, 2023, in the China in Africa Podcast, produced by China-Global South Project, podcast, 57:49, <https://chinaglobalsouth.com/podcasts/week-in-review-china-imf-debt-standoff-frances-new-africa-strategy-sa-naval-exercises/>.

Order to a more Chinese centric model. China has also become a prisoner to its own success to a degree in that a recent study showed that between 2000–2021 China spent \$240B in rescue payments to economically distressed BRI signatory countries.<sup>691</sup> China in essence has had to step in and rescue its own banks and has stepped into the risky business of international bailout lending.<sup>692</sup> At this juncture it would seem that in the case of Debt-Trap's China has trapped themselves in Africa and as the costs for China have mounted, the bill is finally coming due and it does not seem to be one that China or African nations, are willing or able to pay.

### **8.3 Case Studies**

The hypotheses developed through the theoretical framework and tested by quantitative analysis revealed different motivations in U.S. and Chinese disbursement of ODF in Africa, which led to the development of two theories that were tested through a case study analysis of three countries, as shown in Tables 10 and 11. Djibouti, Malawi, and Kenya were the countries selected using Figure 40 as a selection criterion. Djibouti was selected as the country exhibiting high levels of Chinese and low levels of U.S. ODF. Djibouti was compared with Malawi, which lay at the opposite corner of the matrix, and was reflective of high levels of U.S. and low levels of Chinese ODF. The third country, Kenya, was the strategic case study country receiving high levels of both U.S. and Chinese ODF.

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<sup>691</sup> Horn et al., “China as an International Lender of Last Resort (working paper #124, AidData at William & Mary, 2023).

<sup>692</sup> Horn et al.

### 8.3.1 Chinese Motivations Tested

Table 10. Observable Motivations for Chinese Theory and Determinations of Which Motivations Are Reflected in the Specific Case Study Countries.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>Chinese ODF</b>	Basic mercantilist self-enrichment	Securing markets and investments	Shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource rich countries</li> <li>• Coastal countries paired with infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade imbalance with China</li> <li>• Large population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export high levels of raw natural resources (oil, timber, minerals) to China</li> <li>• Infrastructure for extraction (power, mines, roads, ports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of finished goods from China</li> <li>• Loan repayment over forgiveness</li> <li>• Increased debt levels</li> <li>• Increased corruption</li> <li>• Increased security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN voting alignment with China-Xinjiang vote</li> <li>• High debt levels</li> </ul>
<b>Chinese Motivations in Djibouti</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Chinese Motivations in Malawi</b>	No	Yes	No
<b>Chinese Motivations in Kenya</b>	Yes	Yes	No

The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for Chinese disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the casual logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Djibouti, as a high Chinese-low U.S. ODF case study, exemplified China's motivations for ODF in Africa and passed all three causal logic hoops detailed in Chapter 5. It supported the first motivation being mercantilist self-enrichment, despite Djibouti not being a resource rich country. It does have coastal access to allow access to resources located within landlocked countries, as demonstrated by a substantial portion of the funding from China directed towards port and other infrastructure development to facilitate the exchange of goods to and from China. This motivation also allowed access to local markets for Chinese goods in Djibouti and, more importantly, its more populous and landlocked neighbor, Ethiopia. Djibouti was again representative of China's second motivation of security. Security for investments, as well as a projection of power by China, is showcased in the construction of its first overseas military base that enables and protects both the shipping lanes for Chinese trade, as well as China's investments. This scenario connected with China's third motivation of shifting the world towards a more Chinese centric model, in which Djibouti voted in alignment with China a majority of the time at the UNGA over the past 20 years and was one of the 20 African nations to support China's position on the 2019 Xinjiang vote. As it passed through all three of the causal logic trains for the motivations of Chinese ODF, it supported the hypothesis laid out earlier.

As it pertains to GPC, it is clear by examining project specific data within Djibouti by the Chinese that the focus is access to Ethiopia and the HOA region more than Djibouti itself. Djibouti provides a strategic access point for China in the HOA region but the infrastructure is directed towards facilitating and supporting trade and access within Ethiopia. Djibouti allows this arrangement as it generates export revenue for an economy limited in its options for growth. Djibouti also shows persistent support within the UN for

China's position, which is reflected specifically by being one of the African signatories in support of China's position on human rights in Xinjiang.

Malawi, despite receiving lower levels of Chinese ODF, still supported the second motivation laid out through the theoretical framework of securing markets for Chinese goods. An examination of China's trade with Malawi supports the motivation of securing market access for Chinese goods through increased trade. The first and third motivations for Chinese ODF outlined in Table 5 of basic mercantilism and shift Africa towards a more China centric model were not supported by the Malawi case study. Malawi was neither a resource rich country, nor did it have coastal access. Malawi thereby failed the first criterion to test its motivation. For the third motivation, the data showed that from 2011–2017, Malawi voted in alignment with the United States while voting in opposition to China's position 73% of the time.<sup>693</sup> Specifically, in the case of the 2019 Xinjiang vote, Malawi was not one of the African nations that voted in support of China's position, but it did not vote in alignment with the United States either.

Both the important voting data and the Xinjiang vote could demonstrate that even with high levels of ODF from the United States, African nations could continue to abstain or be absent from votes to not be perceived as directly opposing the United States. As GPC grows in Africa between the United States and China, countries will be pressured more and more to pick a side, something they are reluctant to do.<sup>694</sup> Countries receiving high levels

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<sup>693</sup> Fu, "Data Analysis."

<sup>694</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, "[The US must] resist framing it as part of a new Cold War because the Africans are firmly against that. They don't want to choose between China and the United States," Center on National Security at Fordham Law, "The Significance of Africa."

of Chinese ODF however have demonstrated a willingness to oppose the United States directly in UN votes knowing they have the backstop of China. As the largest voting block at the UN, along with the essential A3<sup>695</sup> votes within the UN Security Council, China's ability to garner support at the UN through economic means could counterbalance the United States' hegemony within these institutions.

Kenya was reflective of two of the three motivations for China regarding the disbursement of ODF to SSA nations as it only passed through the causal logic tests for China's first and second motivations. It confirmed the first motivation was mercantilist self-enrichment, even though Kenya has not historically been a resource rich country.<sup>696</sup> It does have coastal access to allow access to resources located within its landlocked neighbors like Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, as demonstrated by substantial levels of infrastructure spending in Kenya, punctuated by construction of the SGR in conjunction with the facilitation of trade and exports of raw materials not only within Kenya but also from its neighbors. Kenya also has a large population and offers a valuable market for Chinese goods, which is reflected in the trade data showing \$1.08 billion in exports to China compared with \$43.5 billion in imports from China from 2000 to 2019 mainly in the form of finished goods, such as cell phones, broadcasting equipment, construction materials and vehicles, and train cars. This data is also supportive of China's second

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<sup>695</sup> A3 refers to the three African nations that hold temporary two-year seats on the UN Security Council. In 2020, South Africa ended its two-year term and the top two proposed countries to fill its spot were Djibouti and Kenya. Djibouti was advocated by China to fill the position and Kenya was advocated by the United States to fill the role. Ultimately, Kenya won in a second round of UNGA voting and assumed its seat on the UNSC in 2020. United Nations, "Kenya Wins Final Contested Seat on Security Council."

<sup>696</sup> Kenya discovered oil reservoirs and began exporting its first barrels of oil to China in 2019. It currently produces 2,000 barrels a day that currently places it at 107th in the world for oil production according to Worldometer. Yusuf, "Activists Want Detail on Kenya Oil Contract with Chinese Firm."



motivation of securing its investments in which China has increased the number of private security personnel in Kenya to safeguard the SGR and ensure its operation. China's third motivation however was not borne out by the case study as Kenya neither voted in alignment with China a majority of the time when compared with the United States or voted in alignment with China on the 2019 Xinjiang vote. It did not however align itself with the United States on the Xinjiang vote and instead abstained, which could be considered a win for China given its insistence on countries to either support its position or abstain from voting. More likely, however, as consistent with Kenya's position, it is due to its desire to not be perceived as choosing sides as both the United States and China are high contributors of ODF to Kenya.

### 8.3.2 U.S. Motivations Tested

Table 11. Observable Motivations for U.S. Theory and Determinations of Which Motivations Are Reflected in the Specific Case Study Countries.

	<b>Motivation 1</b>	<b>Motivation 2</b>	<b>Motivation 3</b>
<b>U.S. ODF</b>	Good governance, control corruption and overall well-being	Conflict prevention, peace and stability	Counter terrorist efforts
<b>Expected Country Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased governance reform</li> <li>• Reduced corruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical civil/regional conflict</li> <li>• Drought or famine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical regional conflict</li> <li>• Bordering or include conflict zones</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt reduction</li> <li>• Health and HIV investment</li> <li>• Free and fair elections</li> <li>• Open press and media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import high levels of food products, grains and medicines</li> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Governance improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import of military equipment</li> <li>• Increased levels of internally displaced persons</li> </ul>
<b>U.S. Motivations in Djibouti</b>	No	No	No
<b>U.S. Motivations in Malawi</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>U.S. Motivations in Kenya</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

The table compares the predictions for the theory being tested: three motivations for U.S. disbursement of ODF. These motivations contribute to the expected country characteristics and outcomes within each country selected within the case study. The table also shows if the casual logic was passed (Yes) or failed (No) through the case study testing given the criteria laid out in the methodology section.

Djibouti, being one of the lower recipients of U.S. ODF, did not pass the criteria laid out for high levels of U.S. ODF, which was observed by the comparatively low levels

of ODF it received from the United States. The United States' establishment and sustainment of Camp Lemmonier in 2001 enable anti-terrorist operations in the HOA region and support stability operations. Camp Lemmonier does demonstrate that U.S. engagement in Djibouti, albeit comparatively smaller, is centered on the second and third motivations described in the hypothesis of regional stability and conflict prevention, as well as combating terrorism in the region. Additionally, the United States still has a continued operational presence at Camp Lemmonier, as well as access to the ports despite assertions of asset seizures and loss of access.<sup>697</sup>

Malawi, as the high U.S.-low Chinese ODF case study, passed some casual logic hoops and thus validated certain U.S. motivations for ODF and expectedly failed the second and third U.S. motivations as a relatively stable country with good governance. Malawi demonstrated above average governance levels in addition to responding to U.S. led debt reduction and governance reforms. A majority of U.S. ODF to Malawi also was in support of health and population, education, and agriculture. These levels support the theory that the primary motivation for U.S. ODF is overall well-being and good governance to include health, education, and nutrition. Emphasizing the motivation to ensure good governance, the United States demonstrated its willingness to suspend aid to Malawi multiple times because of corruption and was able to implement positive change as a result. Malawi as a largely democratic and peaceful nation results in the second and third motivations for U.S. ODF, conflict prevention and reduction in terrorism as not main drivers for U.S. engagement there.

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<sup>697</sup> Celine Castronuovo, "U.S. General Warns China Is Actively Seeking to Set up an Atlanta Naval Base," The Hill, May 7, 2021, <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/552331-us-general-warns-china-is-actively-seeking-to-set-up-an-atlantic-naval-base>.

Kenya as a high recipient of U.S. ODF passed all three of the causal logic hoops for the United States supporting the theory laid out seeking to explain U.S. motivations for ODF. Kenya demonstrated above average governance levels when compared with the SSA average. A majority of U.S. ODF went to support health and population, humanitarian, governance, agriculture and food aid, and education as shown in Figure 27. This disbursement supports the theory that the primary motivation for U.S. ODF is overall well-being and good governance to include health, education, and nutrition. Emphasizing the motivation to ensure good governance, the United States demonstrated its willingness to suspend aid to Kenya if corruption reduction efforts were not enacted as was the case with Kensa. Kenya also passed the second and third casual logic hoops for the United States that demonstrated the motivations were centered on regional peace and security, as well as counter terrorist efforts. Kenya's security and safety score fluctuated between above and below the SSA average and through an additional analysis of U.S. trade and weapons sales to Kenya, it demonstrated a persistent support for both regional security and counter terrorism. Trade levels between both countries supported the United States' motivation to ensure regional stability as seen by two large weapons sales deals in 2016 and 2017, both UAVs and armed aircraft in efforts to combat terrorism along the Somali border and the region.

Kenya is illustrative of all three of the U.S. motivations and the first two Chinese motivations for the disbursement of ODF. As it pertains to GPC, both the important voting data and the Xinjiang vote could demonstrate that even with high levels of ODF from the United States, Kenya continued to abstain or be absent from votes to not be perceived as directly opposing the United States. As GPC grows in Africa between the United States

and China, countries could see increased pressure to pick a side, something they have been reluctant to do.<sup>698</sup> Countries receiving high levels of Chinese ODF however have demonstrated a willingness to oppose the United States directly in UN votes knowing they have the backstop of China. As the largest voting block at the UN, along with the essential A3<sup>699</sup> votes within the UN Security Council, China's ability to garner support at the UN through economic means could counterbalance the United States' hegemony within these institutions. Similar to Djibouti, both Kenya and Djibouti received high levels of Chinese ODF. Despite the persistent rhetoric of "debt trap" diplomacy, no instances of asset seizures have occurred in Kenya because of non-repayment of loans to China. Even with large infrastructure projects like the SGR leading to a rising debt to GDP ratio for Kenya, China has demonstrated a willingness to refinance the loans rather than seize assets. An action more consistent with its second motivation of securing its investments and by doing so, China ensures it maintains both repayment of the loans and its leverage.

#### **8.4 Inferences from the Research**

Are these motivations complementary or antagonistic, and what does this mean for the future of GPC between the United States and China in Africa? In areas, such as corruption, the research has demonstrated that the motivations work counter to one another.

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<sup>698</sup> Judd Devermont, the Africa Director for CSIS when asked by the Center on National Security about GPC in Africa stated, "[The US must] resist framing it as part of a new Cold War because the Africans are firmly against that. They don't want to choose between China and the United States." Center on National Security at Fordham Law, "The Significance of Africa."

<sup>699</sup> A3 refers to the three African nations that hold temporary two-year seats on the UN Security Council. In 2020, South Africa ended its two-year term and the top two proposed countries to fill its spot were Djibouti and Kenya. Djibouti was advocated by China to fill the position and Kenya was advocated by the United States to fill the role. Ultimately, Kenya won in a second round of UNGA voting and assumed its seat on the UNSC in 2020. United Nations, "Kenya Wins Final Contested Seat on Security Council."

Chinese ODF has had a negative impact on anti-corruption efforts within African nations. The higher corruption rates in the recipient countries subsequently undermine U.S. efforts to promote good governance, human rights, and overall well-being.

In areas, such as debt to GDP, countries that had high levels of Chinese ODF also saw increased levels of debt. However, counter to the “debt-trap diplomacy” mantra popular inside the D.C. beltway, debt was not found to be a motivator for Chinese ODF to African nations. Debt was a characteristic of African nations receiving high levels of Chinese ODF but the research did not reveal motivations for China to provide ODF to African nations in attempts to seize assets. As was the case in Djibouti, debt was not a primary motivation but rather an observed byproduct of increased Chinese investment. Djibouti’s debt to GDP ratio rose from 48% in 2013 to 68% in 2015 before falling to 38% by 2019. China has demonstrated a willingness to renegotiate the bilateral debt it holds with the distressed nations. This willingness runs counter to the asset seizure and debt trap diplomacy narrative that tends to be more politically motivated by the United States than demonstrated in the data or research. Kenya, Zambia, and Angola all entered into talks or agreed with China on debt renegotiation deal in 2021,<sup>700</sup> which allowed China to maintain repayment of investments.

In areas, such as security in Africa, the motivations for U.S. and Chinese ODF have the potential to work at cross-purposes. While aggravations in the past have occurred between both U.S. and Chinese forces in Djibouti,<sup>701</sup> the differing motivations could be closer aligned or driven apart depending on future actions. China is developing an

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<sup>700</sup> Olander, “As Angola Gets Debt Relief from its Creditors”; Olander, “China, Kenya Close to Reaching Debt Relief Deal.”

<sup>701</sup> Garamone, “U.S. Protests Chinese Interference with U.S. Planes in Djibouti.”

increased security presence on the continent; an increased number of personnel involved in UN peacekeeping missions, construction of its first military base in Djibouti, and increased numbers of private security personnel. This increase indicates China's growing understanding that development and security are intertwined.

An area of potential concern for the United States is the utilization of China's Party-Army model in Africa because in China's one party system, the Party-Army's primary duty is the survival of the ruling party.<sup>702</sup> Through increased professional military education in China, African military officers—from Angola, Algeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, to name a few—have all adopted aspects of this model of fusing the military with the ruling party.<sup>703</sup> Though push back among African military leaders in Zambia and Burkina Faso has occurred, leaders in Zimbabwe and South Sudan have embraced it.<sup>704</sup>

When it comes to ideological alignment in UN voting, the research demonstrates that in the case of extreme ends of the funding spectrum, the votes trend in favor of the predominant donor. Djibouti aligned with China on a majority of UN votes from 2000–2017 and Malawi aligned with the United States on a majority of UN votes over the same time period. Kenya as a high-high case demonstrates the position more African nations are now seeking to move towards or that of a more centrist position. African governments are eager to keep a U.S.-China Cold War out of Africa at all costs<sup>705</sup> and do not want to return

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<sup>702</sup> Paul Nantulya, "China Promotes its Party-Army Model in Africa," Africa Center for Strategic Studies, July 2020, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/china-promotes-its-party-army-model-in-africa/>.

<sup>703</sup> Nantulya.

<sup>704</sup> Nantulya.

<sup>705</sup> Judd Devermont, "Haven't We Done This Before? Lessons from and Recommendations for Strategic Competition in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Lawfare* (blog), April 15, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/havent-we-done-lessons-and-recommendations-strategic-competition-sub-saharan-africa>.

to Cold War-era GPC.<sup>706</sup> One possible trend African nations like Kenya may continue is towards abstaining from UN or other institutional body votes, which potentially limits the impact these institutions have on enacting change in the future. Should Chinese lending to African nations continue to grow however, a more noticeable shift in favor of the Chinese should result. Ambassador Shinn supported this assertion by stating, “The fact that they [Chinese] are offering the loans gives them advantage vis-à-vis to African governments. It has a huge impact on China’s ability to gain influence with African governments, that’s why you tend to see more African governments voting in line with China than the US.”<sup>707</sup>

Focusing on China’s third motivation of shifting Africa towards a more Chinese centric development model, a recent survey shows that African nations still favor the United States as the best model for development over that of China and other nations. For the United States, 32% compared to 23% for China followed by 11% for former colonial powers, and 11% for South Africa with the remaining responses being other/none or their own model.<sup>708</sup> When asked about the influence that China’s economic activities had on the host nation’s economy, the average among surveyed African nations went from 71% positive in 2014/2015 to 56% positive in 2019/2020.<sup>709</sup> Every nation interviewed also had

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<sup>706</sup> Stated by Lauren Ploch Blanchard, a Specialist in African Affairs at Congressional Research Service, during a webinar entitled “Building the U.S. Strategic Relationship with African Nations” hosted by the American Security Project on October 14, 2020. Katie Foley, “Building the U.S. Strategic Relationship with African Nations,” American Security Project, October 14, 2020, <https://www.americansecurityproject.org/building-the-u-s-strategic-relationship-with-african-nations/>.

<sup>707</sup> The author conducted this interview with Ambassador Shinn on April 16, 2021.

<sup>708</sup> Data and statistics pulled from Afrobarometer.org recently published report on its 2019/2020 survey results and analysis published September 2020. Edem Selormey, *Africans’ Perceptions about China: A Sneak Peek from 18 Countries* (Ghana: Afrobarometer, 2020), [https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/africa-china\\_relations-3sept20.pdf](https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/africa-china_relations-3sept20.pdf).

<sup>709</sup> Data and statistics pulled from Afrobarometer.org recently published report on its 2019/2020 survey results and analysis published September 2020. Selormey.



a higher favorable view of China's economic activities in 2014/2015 than in 2019/2020, which demonstrated that China's economic impacts could be declining on the continent.<sup>710</sup>

Despite the perceived decline in economic impacts, a majority of respondents surveyed viewed the external influence by both the United States and China at almost parity with China at 59% positive and the United States at 58% positive.<sup>711</sup> This data shows how even though China's influence in certain areas may be waning, its prominence as a global power in the eyes of African nations is growing and supports its third motivation.

In efforts to not oversell China's influence in the region as a result of its growing use of ODF as a tool of GPC and soft power to influence and shift countries to more closely align with it, a quote from a Kenyan businessman interviewed for this dissertation provides insight into the localized perspective. "Very few people [in Kenya] are waking up in the morning watching Chinese tv shows, dreaming of living in China and going to school in China. If I went outside to someone with a ticket and a visa to the US and told them to find their way, no one would say no. China is not competing from a cultural perspective. You are still looking to buy the iPhone; you are still aspiring towards an American lifestyle."<sup>712</sup>

## **8.5 A Look Forward**

As described in the literature review, parallels can be drawn from historical GPC in Africa. However, the United States should exercise caution in comparing the current GPC similar to the proxy wars of the Cold War era. The dynamic in Africa has shifted and

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<sup>710</sup> Data and statistics pulled from Afrobarometer.org recently published report on its 2019/2020 survey results and analysis published September 2020. Selormey.

<sup>711</sup> Data and statistics pulled from Afrobarometer.org recently published report on its 2019/2020 survey results and analysis published September 2020. Selormey.

<sup>712</sup> Interview conducted on April 22, 2021.

is currently playing out in the form of development finance. Ambassador Johnnie Carson cautioned against the United States seeking to dissuade African nations from asking for infrastructure projects that China provides, given the United States is unwilling to put up the money either.<sup>713</sup>

One of the most consistent positions among African leaders in response to U.S. criticism of African governments embracing Chinese lending is, “A drowning man will reach out to any hand.”<sup>714</sup> This response is much like the ultimatum game,<sup>715</sup> which uses game theory to study self-interest. In the ultimatum game, a proposer decides how much to offer the responder. The responder may reject the offer but will get nothing, and so in spite of a lopsided offer, the comparatively smaller portion the responder receives is better than nothing. In the case of Africa, the United States is currently not offering another choice to African nations in areas, such as 5G, to counter the Chinese company Huawei, or infrastructure development. African nations therefore accept the offer from China as it is better than the alternative of nothing. As other nations in recent years have signed additional bilateral agreements with China, it has begun to level the playing field as African nations are able to compare contracts and thus exact more favorable terms from China.

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<sup>713</sup> Stated by Ambassador Johnnie Carson during a webinar entitled “Building the U.S. Strategic Relationship with African Nations” hosted by the American Security Project on October 14, 2020. Foley, “Building the U.S. Strategic Relationship with African Nations.”

<sup>714</sup> A quote from a Malian government official when asked why African nations readily embrace Chinese lending even if the terms are unfavorable to them.

<sup>715</sup> The ultimatum game uses game theory to study self-interests, “In the simplest form of the ultimatum game, a proposer decides how much of \$10 to give a responder, and the responder decides whether to accept or reject the offer. If the responder accepts, the players split the money in the way the proposer suggested. If the responder rejects, neither player gets any money. The experimental subjects participate in the experiment only once, and they know that they will not play again.” “The Ultimatum Game: Appendix 1,” Foundation for Teaching Economics, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://www.fte.org/teachers/teacher-resources/lesson-plans/is-capitalism-good-for-the-poor-2/the-ultimatum-game-appendix-1/>.

Given the previous examination of Malawi as the case study for high levels of U.S. ODF, a recent address to President Biden by Malawi's President, Lazarus Chakwera, offers insight. In his speech, President Chakwera detailed the areas to be strengthened between America and Africa. Each of these areas highlights not only U.S. motivations for ODF to African nations but also demonstrates how African countries view U.S. and Chinese GPC in Africa. His first point was that multinational institutions, such as the UN, must respect African nations' sovereignty and that more needs to be done to strengthen African voices within these institutions. He also cautioned against "this policy of treating any countries as children to be forever regulated and sustained by external forces has no place in the 21st century."<sup>716</sup> In no uncertain terms, his criticism is that U.S. ODF is often being patronizing and paternalistic in nature.<sup>717</sup> China's non-interference policy with its ODF, on the surface, does a better job of respecting national sovereignty (although that approach has been shifting to a more engaging China as criticisms of China's non-interference policy leading to the sustainment of dictatorships and perpetuation of conflict).<sup>718</sup>

President Chakwera highlighted two other areas to be strengthened between the United States and African nations: security and liberty. The first is security in the form of COVID-19, terrorism, and NNPT, all areas that African nations have been able to align themselves with while maintaining impartiality. Both the United States and China value stability, albeit for different motivations. For the United States, it is a focus on counter

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<sup>716</sup> Stated at the Center for Strategic and International Studies "From Africa to the United States: Recommendations for the Biden Administration" conference on February 12, 2021. "From Africa to the United States: Recommendations for the Biden Administration," Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 12, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/events/africa-united-states-recommendations-biden-administration>.

<sup>717</sup> Brautigam, "A Critical Look at Chinese 'Debt-trap Diplomacy'," 1–14.

<sup>718</sup> Taylor, "China's Oil Diplomacy in Africa," 937–59.

terrorism and regional stability. China is motivated to secure its investments in the region, but both countries want recipient nations to be secure. Second, President Chakwera pointed to liberty as a unifying theme or protecting human rights, the rule of law, and fighting corruption. All three of these areas fall into the primary motivation behind U.S. ODF and continue to be areas that both the United States and African nations can work together to promote and foster.<sup>719</sup>

Finally, President Chakwera spoke of prosperity as an area the two countries can continue to strengthen. He detailed that although Africa is rich in natural resources, it was burdened with unfair trade rules that pit Western giants against Eastern giants at Africa's expense. His Kenyan counterpart, President Uhuru Kenyatta, who cautioned against the United States viewing Africa just as a location for GPC, shares this echo of sentiments.<sup>720</sup> Both of these perspectives are also reflected in the UN voting data that shows a growing desire from African nations to be viewed as impartial to the U.S.-China competition and instead engage in a manner that does not force them to pick sides.<sup>721</sup> This stance was specifically demonstrated by both Kenya and Malawi abstaining from the 2019 Xinjiang vote. They both chose to support neither the United States nor the Chinese position on the issue.

As it pertains to China's engagement with Africa, COVID-19 has complicated the debt repayment discussion within African nations, and some scholars argue it merely

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<sup>719</sup> Stated at the Center for Strategic and International Studies "From Africa to the United States: Recommendations for the Biden Administration" conference on February 12, 2021. Center for Strategic and International Studies, "From Africa to the United States."

<sup>720</sup> Stated by Pete Marocco, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, at the Wilson Center Africa Symposium in March 2020.

<sup>721</sup> Stated at the Center for Strategic and International Studies "From Africa to the United States: Recommendations for the Biden Administration" conference on February 12, 2021. Center for Strategic and International Studies, "From Africa to the United States."

accelerated the process.<sup>722</sup> As African nations have been able to secure repayment holidays from the United States, the World Bank and the IMF, and China, along with additional funding from the World Bank and the IMF, issues have arisen. Based on the latest data on Chinese ODF to Africa, it fell in 2019 to \$7.7 billion, and countries with which China has restructured or refinanced debt, received less ODF in the following years.<sup>723</sup> This decrease speaks to China's second motivation of securing its investments and ensuring repayment while at the same time potentially calling into question its reliability as a partner in development.

GPC between the United States and China in Africa has also shifted policy positions on both sides as the United States led the G7 efforts to establish the Build Back Better World (B3W) Initiative focused on countering China's BRI with an emphasis on building infrastructure in developing countries.<sup>724</sup> Additionally, China has focused more and more on poverty alleviation efforts in its public messaging to African nations.<sup>725</sup> China's largest commercial bank plans to phase out financing for coal projects in a nod to pressure from the G7 for more environmentally sustainable projects.<sup>726</sup> As continued competition between the two countries causes these sorts of changes within policy positions, it seems

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<sup>722</sup> Pettis, "Risky these loans could be."

<sup>723</sup> Mingey and Kratz, "China's Belt and Road: Down but Not Out."

<sup>724</sup> Eric Olander, "Two Competing Views of the G7's B3W vs. China's BRI," The China Africa Project, June 17, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/06/17/two-competing-views-of-the-g7s-b3w-vs-chinas-bri/>.

<sup>725</sup> Eric Olander, "Poverty Alleviation is Becoming an Increasingly Important in China's Public Diplomacy Messaging in Africa," The China Africa Project, June 21, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/06/21/poverty-alleviation-is-becoming-an-increasingly-important-in-chinas-public-diplomacy-messaging-in-africa/>.

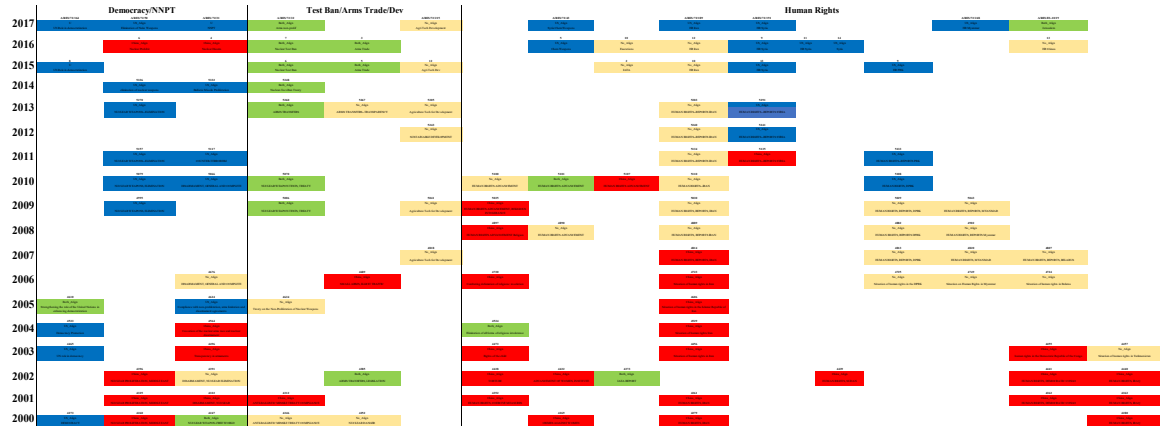
<sup>726</sup> Eric Olander, "China's Largest Commercial Bank Says It Plans to Phase out Financing Coal Projects," The China Africa Project, June 15, 2021, <https://chinaafricaproject.com/2021/06/15/chinas-largest-commercial-bank-says-it-plans-to-phase-out-financing-coal-projects/>.

the winners are the African nations themselves. It would seem that in this instance, when two elephants battle, it is the grass that benefits.

## **8.6 Future Research**

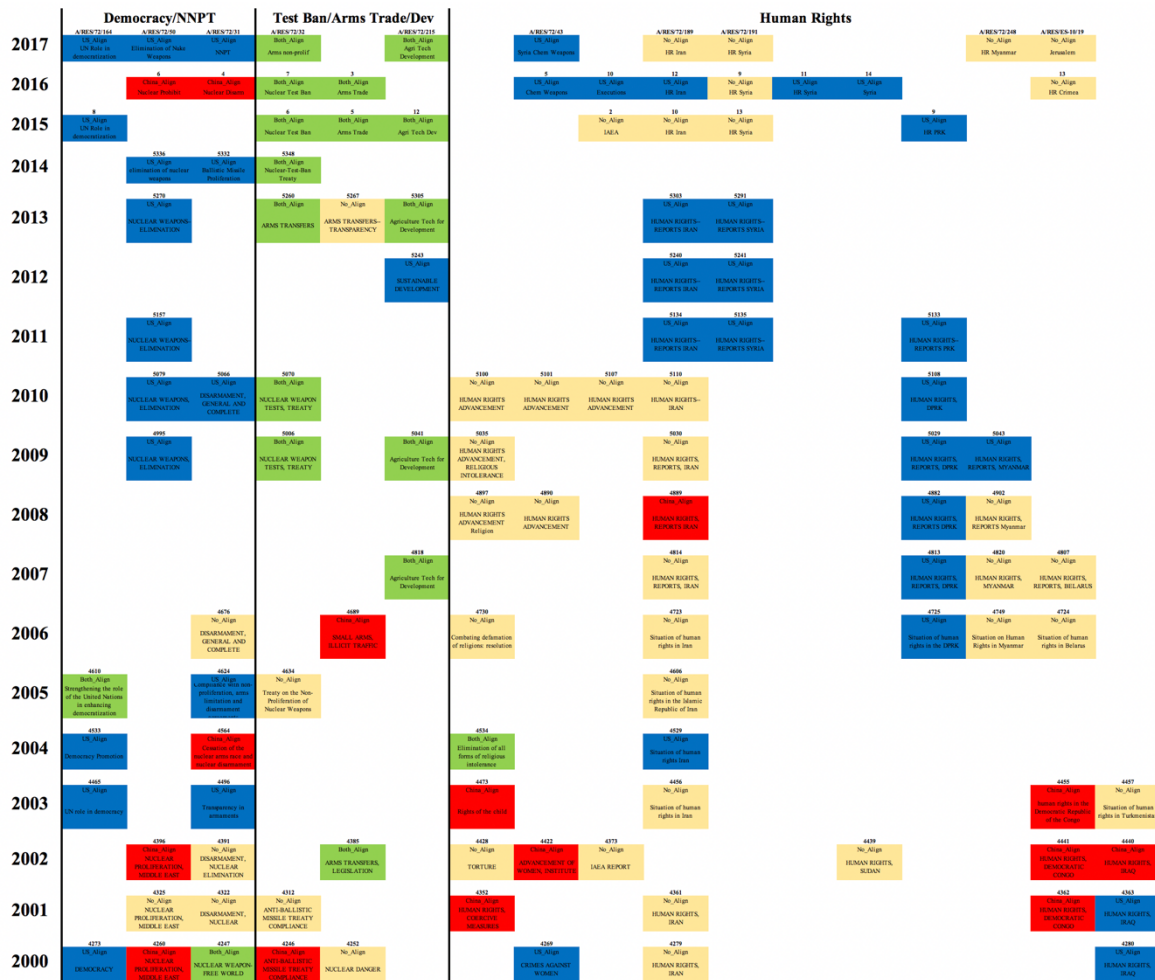
Overall, the work of this dissertation is by no means a totality of the GPC between the United States and China in Africa, but offers another lens by which to view and thereby understand what is currently unfolding. This dissertation brought much to light but also much more that can be pursued as a result of this research to continue testing the validity of the models, as well as improving upon the foundation laid out in this dissertation. One starting point could be to expand the research to include additional case study countries laid out in the methodology and continue testing the theory. Another option is to expand the scope of research outside of Africa, albeit specific causal metrics would need to be changed by applying scholars to suit their geographical focus area. For example, the Ibrahim Index is for Africa only. Finding another measure for stability and governance in South America or Asia would be a necessary first step. As China has expanded its outflows of ODF to nations, such as Venezuela and across the South China Sea, it could be a useful construct to test in different regions like South America to determine if the motivations are consistent across the globe or are specific to China's engagement in Africa. Another area of future research would be in respect to the surveys and interviews. Further research could include more samples and more extensive and rigorously selected interviews to understand the policy implications of U.S.-Chinese GPC in Africa.

## APPENDIX A. UN VOTING ALIGNMENT BY INDIVIDUAL VOTE AND CATEGORY



This figure shows Djibouti's voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige) analyzed at the resolution level with the columns representing subject consistent resolutions and the years being reflected by the different rows. Djibouti and the United States aligned on the UN's role in democracy and NNPT. Djibouti aligned with both the United States and China on nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Djibouti abstained from voting in the area of human rights, except when it aligned with China from 2000–2005 and then aligned mostly with the United States from 2015–2017.

Figure 41. Djibouti UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).

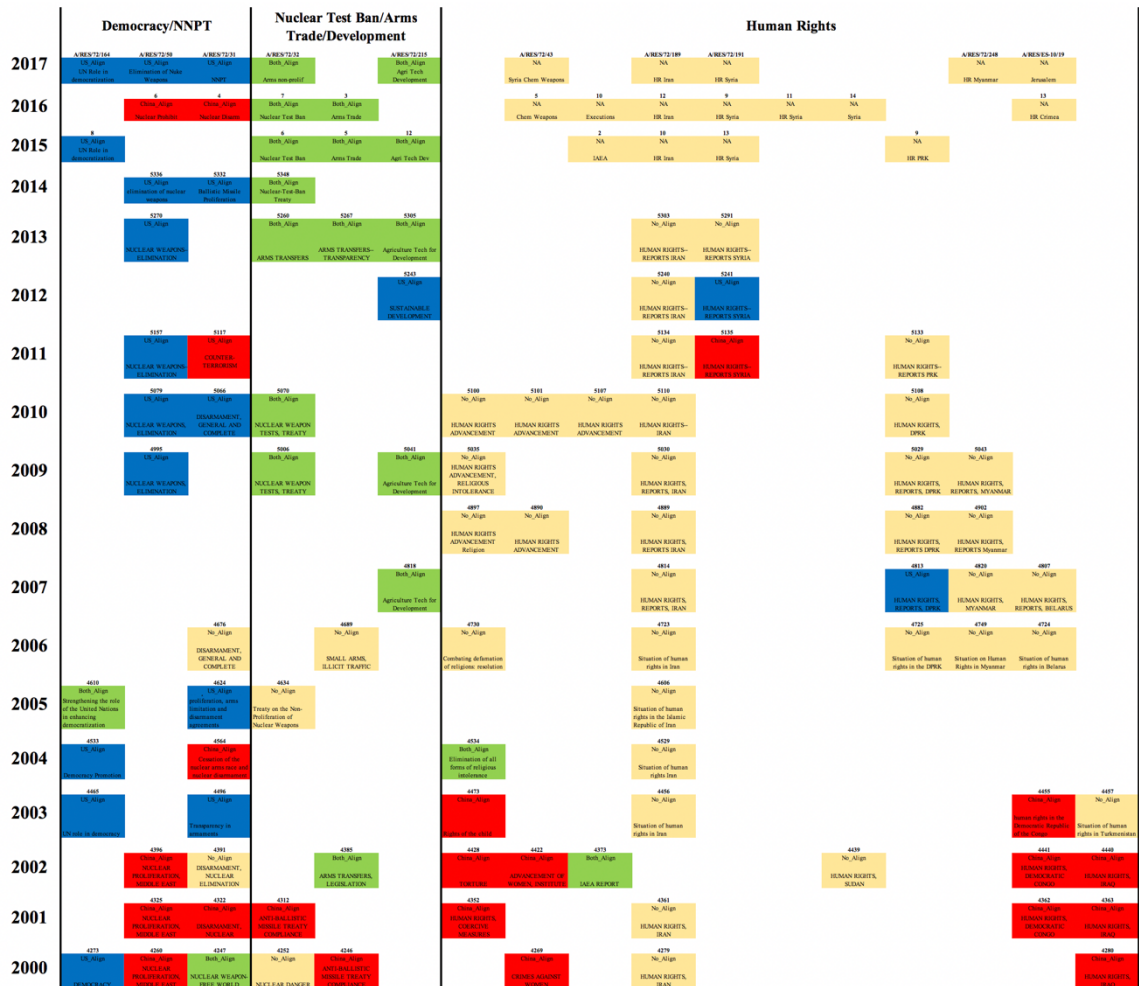


This figure shows Malawi’s voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige) analyzed at the resolution level with the columns representing subject consistent resolutions and the years being reflected by the different rows. Malawi and the United States aligned on the UN’s role in democracy and NNPT. Malawi aligned with both the United States and China on nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Malawi abstained most often from voting in the area of human rights, but even in this area, it traditionally voted in alignment with the United States.

Figure 42. Malawi UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).<sup>727</sup>

<sup>727</sup> Graphic created by author using UN Voting data from U.S. State Department records. Department of State, “Voting Practices in the United Nations”; Voeten, Strezhnev, and Bailey, “United Nations General Assembly Voting Data.”





This figure shows Kenya’s voting alignment for UNGA important votes (as categorized by the U.S. State Department) from 2000–2017 coded using four colors to resemble the four categories of alignment. U.S. alignment (blue), Chinese alignment (red), aligns with both the United States and China (green), abstain/absent from vote (beige analyzed at the resolution level with the columns representing subject consistent resolutions and the years being reflected by the different rows. Kenya and the United States aligned on the UN’s role in democracy and NNPT. Kenya aligned with both the United States and China on nuclear test bans, arms trade, and technology in development. Kenya abstained from voting in the area of human rights except from 2000–2001 when it voted a majority of the time with China.

Figure 43. Kenya UN Voting Alignment (2000–2017).

## APPENDIX B. SAMPLE OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONS

### US and Chinese Great Power Competition in Africa

For the purpose of this survey, Great power competition between China and the United States conjures images of military might and hard power. While weapons and defense systems are important aspects of great power competition, how this is playing out between the US and China in Africa is no longer in the form of proxy wars as it was during the Cold War era, but is currently in the form of aid and development. The motivations by which both the US and China disburse aid and ODF to Sub-Saharan African nations varies along with the impacts they have on recipient nations.

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\* Required

1. What is your affiliation? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Government  
☐ Civilian  
☐ Academic/Scholar  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where are you geographically based? \*

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Given your expertise, is US and Chinese Competing in Africa positive, negative or a non-factor?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Beneficial  
☐ Detrimental  
☐ Non-Factor

Figure 44. Survey Questions 1–4.

4. What are some positives or negatives of US and Chinese competition in Africa? \*

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Chinese aid and development finance

5. In your professional opinion is Chinese aid and ODF to African nations beneficial or detrimental?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Beneficial  
☐ Detrimental

6. Chinese 'Debt-Trap diplomacy' has been widely propagated by American policy makers. Is it a mischaracterization or a motive for Chinese lending to African nations?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Mischaracterization  
☐ Motive

Figure 45. Survey Questions 4–6.

7. If it is a mischaracterization what in your opinion are the motivations for Chinese aid and development finance to African nations?

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8. China consistently declares its aid and ODF as win-win for both itself and African nations. Should the 'win' for China and the 'win' for the recipient nation be equal?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. Should the wins be equal or is a disproportionate win system acceptable as long as both countries are benefitting?

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US aid and development finance

10. In your professional opinion what are the motivations for US aid and ODF to African nations?

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Figure 46. Survey Questions 7–10.

11. In your professional opinion is US aid and ODF to African nations beneficial or detrimental? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Beneficial

☐ Detrimental

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Figure 47. Survey Question 11.

## APPENDIX C. AKAIKE INFORMATION CRITERION

	AIC	Difference
Full Model (US)	10.13401	
Condensed Model (US)	10.13177	.00224
Full Model (China)	9.96840	
Condensed Model (China)	9.96845	-.00005

Examining the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) allows for testing of how well the model fits the data set without over-fitting it. The lower the AIC the better the model fits the data. The variable of Political Stability Index (PSI) was removed from the model and the regression was rerun to determine what impact this had on the model and how much is explained the model. The model inclusive of the PSI variable is herein referred to as the full model and the model without the PSI variable will be referred to as the condensed model. The difference in AIC values demonstrates which model is superior and allows for increased validity in model selection. The positive, albeit small, difference in the US ODF models AIC value would imply that the condensed model is a better fit for the U.S. model, whereas the negative difference between the full and condensed model for China would imply that the condensed model is a marginally better fit to the data. Variations in the other IV's for both the full and condensed model were negligible as none of the coefficients changed outside of the standard error. Given the minimal variance in the variables for the condensed model, it is concluded that it is best left incorporated into the model to speak to the discussion on U.S. ODF being targeted towards political stability and good governance.

## APPENDIX D. CORRELATION BETWEEN CHINESE ODF AND UN VOTING ALIGNMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA

Figure 48 is the original chart including the \$19.1B ODF from China to Angola for reference. The figure shows the correlation between Chinese ODF and UN voting alignment with the United States and China. Both the concentration and the trend line show that Chinese ODF increases as countries align more closely with the United States (1.0). Given such a large outlier being the \$19.1B datapoint, it was removed to determine the robustness of the model. The data point and original model were kept within the original dissertation work as it adds validity to the targeted vs sustained comparative approaches that China and the United States have towards SSA.

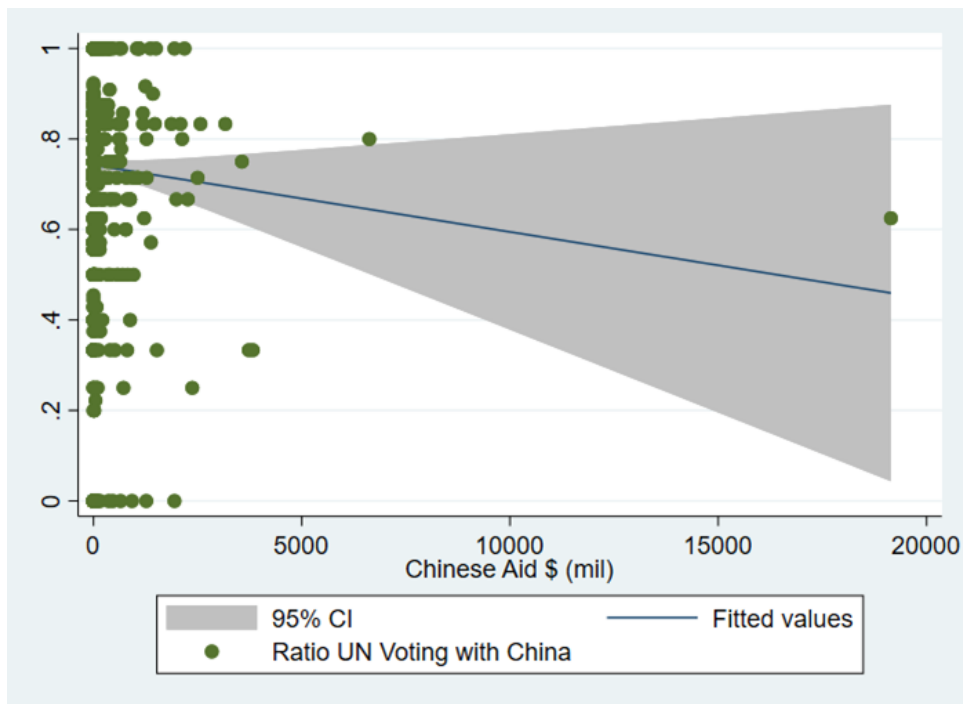


Figure 48. Chinese ODF vs UN Voting (Inclusive of \$19B Angola Data Point)

Given that the \$19.1B data point was a large outlier, it was removed from the data set and the model was re-estimated to determine robustness of the model and if this singular data point was a driving factor in the analysis. Figure 49 shows the \$19.1B data point removed and the trend line remains consistent with the original findings. Additionally, the confidence interval becomes more condensed along the trend line, which is to be expected based on the removal of the outlier and the original chart.

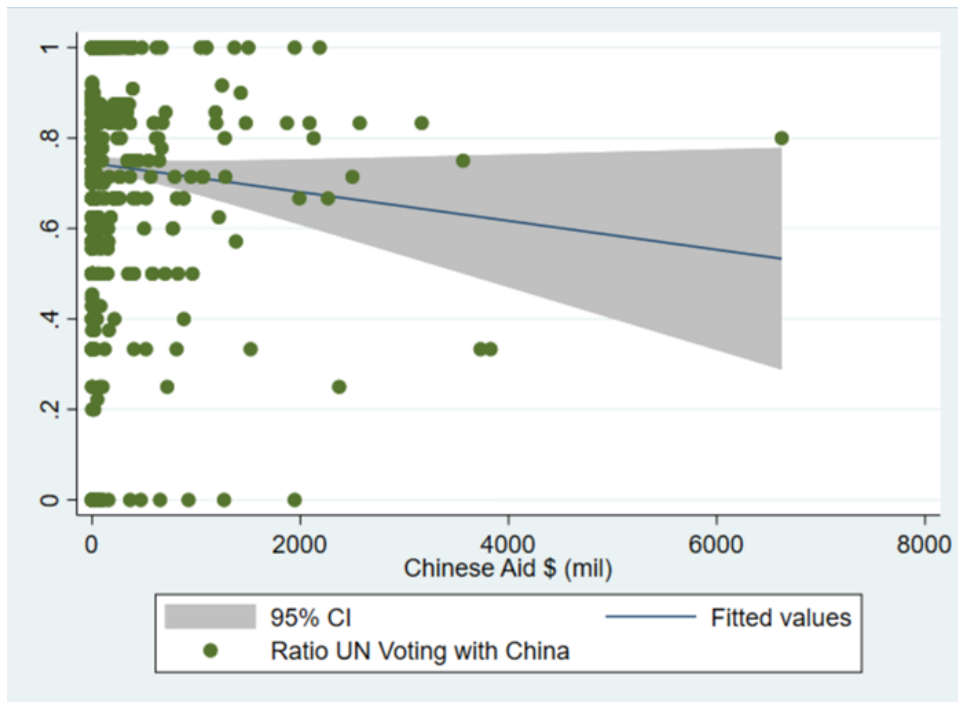


Figure 49. Chinese ODF vs UN Voting (without \$19.1B Angola Data Point)

After removing the \$19.1B data point and re-estimating the model, the results were consistent but again there was another seemingly outlier, a \$6.6B ODF disbursement to Ethiopia in 2013. For additional robustness, the \$6.6B data point was removed and the model was re-estimated. Figure 50 shows the model estimation without the \$19.1B and



\$6.6B datapoints. The model remains consistent throughout the process in that the line consistently trends downward, which indicates that China's ODF is higher in countries that align with the United States than in countries that align with China.

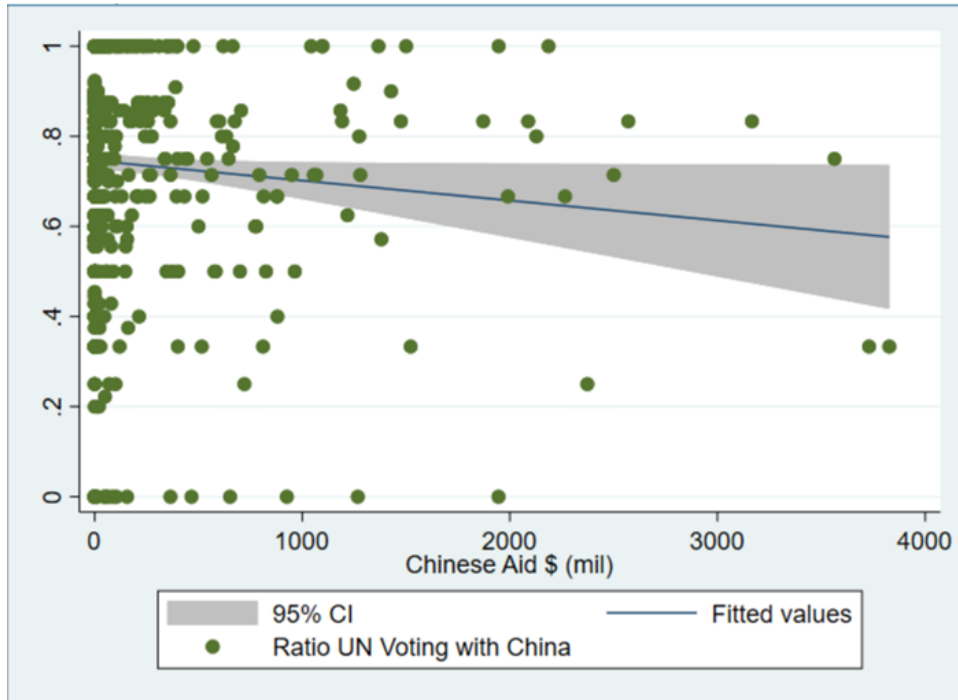


Figure 50. Chinese ODF vs UN Voting (without \$19.1B Angola and \$6.6B Ethiopia)

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