

## **Introduction**

China's need for oil has grown considerably over the past two decades. However, the country's indigenous capacity to provide oil and natural gas has fallen short in the face of increasing civilian and industrial demand. China became a net energy importer in 1993 and the dependence on foreign oil has increased ever since. In order to respond to the looming threat of an economic slowdown due to lack of adequate oil, Beijing devised a go abroad policy in the early 2000s.<sup>1</sup>

As part of its quest for oil, China became involved in Sudan starting from the 1990s. The US-led sanctions have offered a relatively easier access for Chinese national oil companies (NOCs) to fill up the vacuum left by their Western counterparts. Furthermore devoid of international support and investment, Sudan had few options other than welcoming Chinese investment.

In 2012, the deep socio-economic divisions in Sudan led to the partition of the country into a north and south. China, a firm supporter of Khartoum, abstained from taking sides in the beginning of the dispute although it maintained close relations with the central government. However, after the South voted in a referendum for independence, Beijing recognized the new state and established diplomatic relations with the South Sudan.

However, independence has not brought the anticipated peace as disputes over oil fields and border demarcation remained unsolved. It follows that currently the South Sudan has over 70% of all proven oil fields whereas Sudan has the infrastructure to transport and export the extracted oil. Also, the largest oil fields are located near the border areas contested by both sides.

This paper offers an investigation into China's energy policy in the post-split Sudan. It provides an analysis of the Sudan-South Sudan relations and argues that Beijing needs to utilize a multi-track diplomacy to protect its energy interests in post-partition Sudan since traditional (track-one and track-two) diplomacy does not fully address the complexity of the conflict. On the other hand, as a systems-based approach to modern interstate relations, multi-track diplomacy may assist China to help the two countries overcome existing disputes and thereby secure its energy interests.

It is observed that the dispute between the North and South Sudan is a complex phenomenon. Deep social, political and cultural disagreements also contribute to the current problems. Consequently, traditional methods fail to provide a satisfactory solution to the historical distrust and hostility. For example, although major breakthroughs were achieved with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between Khartoum and the southern rebels in 2005, efforts made by various governments and international organizations have so far failed to stop clashes across the border areas, let alone solve deep cultural, religious and racial disputes.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Fueling the Dragon: China's Investment in the Global Oil and Gas Market," Ernst and Young Global Oil and Gas Center, 2011.

Through its multileveled approach to intra and interstate conflicts and civil unrests, multi-track diplomacy assists international and regional actors by offering various tracks to deal with the many aspects of social relations. The nine categories that compose multi-track diplomacy bring together both state and non-state actors, communities and organizations around a broad web of activities functioning as a unified system. Hence, in this study, China's energy policy toward the post-partition Sudan is studied within the framework of multi-track diplomacy. The primary thesis is that in order to protect its energy interests, Beijing should approach the Sudan-South Sudan dispute through a multi-levelled framework because the conflict between the two countries is comprehensive, deeply-seated and multi-dimensional.

It must be emphasized that the systems approach does not seek a one-size fits all solution, nor does it deny the importance of traditional diplomacy in addressing conflict situations. In fact, its effectiveness rests on flexibility as it offers tools for conflict transformation depending on the situation by involving a variety of actors that range from diplomatic to business-related and civilian.

### **Multi-Track Approach to Peace-Building**

Foreign policy is carried out through diplomatic, military and economic instruments utilized singularly or in varying combinations. The success of foreign policy depends on the ability of decision makers to apply the right tools to real life situations. In order to be able to read the developments correctly, strategists need to look at them critically and in a holistic manner (Cuthbert, 2005).

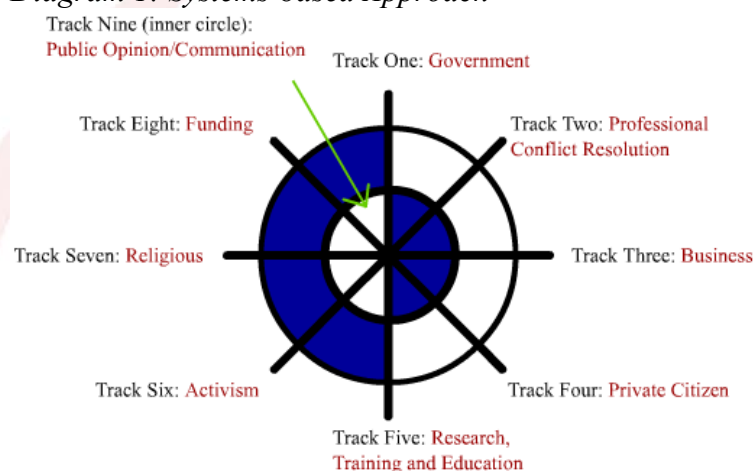
Classical diplomacy is seen to be linear and based on the rationalist discourse. The aim is to enable conflict resolution and assist peace through state-led action. However, it suffers from limitations because of its reductionist and reactive nature. Thus, in response to these shortcomings, a pro-active method has been offered. Distancing itself from a strictly state-centric approach, the new model bases peacemaking strategies on civil and societal norms. Using appropriate tools, actors from individual, local, regional, national and international levels make a cohesive network for proactive diplomacy and conflict resolution and transformation (Kumar, 1995).

To this end, the first attempt was made in the early 90s by Joseph Montville who coined the term "track-two diplomacy" which brought non-state actors into diplomatic action (Diamond and McDonald, 1996). However, it was later understood that putting everything under track-two did not explain the "complexity and breadth" of informal diplomacy. In an attempt to address these shortcomings, Louise Diamond introduced the term "multi-track diplomacy," attempting to establish a linkage between official and unofficial levels. Then further studies explored and expanded on the concept. First, with new tracks, the concept evolved into a four-track model. Later, with additional tracks, multi-track system gained its current form.

Systems-based approach recognizes that the deep-rooted conflicts cannot be solved through mere governmental intervention. Rather, actors such as non-state organizations, civil and business groups, and informal channels need to take part in peace-building to transform deep-rooted crises. Hence, in addition to more traditional applications of conflict resolution, multi-track model seeks to utilize other tracks, or communities, separately or in varying combinations, depending on the nature of situation (Notter and Diamond, 1996).

Originally, the nine tracks were structured hierarchically from the most important to the less important. In the model, government occupied the top position. However, such a top-down interaction did not truly reflect the multi-dimensional nature of the model. Consequently, Diamond and McDonald eliminated the hierarchical structure and redesigned the diagram (See Figure 1) in which all the tracks operate within a system and interact with each other horizontally. This way each track is given greater autonomy with their own distinct methods, resources and values. However, since all linked to the greater system, they operated in relation to each other.<sup>2</sup>

*Diagram 1: Systems-based Approach*



Source: Diamond and McDonald, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy  
 Multi-track diplomacy consists of three interconnected strategies for conflict resolution. Capacity building refers to the development of skills in peace-builders required for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Bridge building aims to bring conflicting parties together by creating understanding and mutual trust among them. Institution building provides formal structures to assist the peace-building work. The primary goal of these three levels is to initiate, sustain and improve peace-building efforts (Notter and Diamond, 1996).

The systems approach embraces a large network of actors (individuals, organizations, methodologies and venues) to assist international peace-building and provides a link between structural and political peace-building.<sup>3</sup> Rather than conflict resolution, it aims for conflict transformation which “refers to the process of moving from conflict-habituated systems to peace systems” (Notter and Diamond, 1996). It is often the case that a conflict creates its own patterns and is ingrained into the larger social system which internalizes and thus rationalizes the conflict. Therefore, a social system

<sup>2</sup> See, Chigas, Diana . "Track II (Citizen) Diplomacy." *Beyond Intractability*. Eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003  
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/track2-diplomacy>.

<sup>3</sup> European Centre for Conflict Prevention, People Building Peace- 35 Inspiring Stories from Around the World, 1999, <http://www.peoplebuildingpeace.org/thestories/article.php?typ=refl&id=170>

as a unit of analysis could not be resolved but transformed.

### **Sudan: History, Conflict and Partition**

The conflict between the South led by Anya Nya guerilla movement and the Sudanese government began one year prior to the independence (1956) and lasted until 1972 Addis Adaba Peace Agreement. However, peace did not last long and the South revolted again in 1983 under the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its armed wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The internal conflict ended with the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The CPA granted regional autonomy to the South and guaranteed greater representation in a power-sharing government. It also stipulated a referendum in the south on independence in January 2011. The referendum was held as planned and the southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly for partition in January 2011, and the newly independent nation was established on July 2011. In the original agreement, the two sides were supposed to negotiate outstanding issues within the six-month period following the agreement.<sup>4</sup> However, the partition brought along many questions including the sharing of oil revenues (Medani, 2011).

Originally, the CPA offered a detailed road map for peace. It not only attempted a compromise between the two parties, but also sought internal reconciliation and democratic development in both Sudans. Although the North, which lost one-third of its territory and three-quarters of its oil revenue to the newly-formed southern government, initially showed restraint, conflict broke out soon after the CPA. The South, for its part, was also internally divided and far from controlling many warring factions that violated the terms of the CPA. Consequently, clashes that first took place between Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the border area-insurgency soon evolved into a full scale war between the SAF and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

### ***Disputes and the Partition of Sudan***

Problems in present-day Sudan has roots going back to the colonial era under the British rulers who drawn the boundary, dividing the country across racial, material and religious lines. Sudan's internal strife mostly occurred along these boundaries and today they mark the border and the nature of conflict. Although the historical animosity is not merely economic, in post-split Sudan the border disagreement has been identified with oil fields.<sup>5</sup> Before Egyptian and British occupation in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Sudan consisted of tribal communities and small kingdoms. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the British administration separated the region into north and south due to the conviction that the Muslim-dominated north was different from the animist and Christian south (Machar, 1995; Woodward, 2011).

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<sup>4</sup> See, <http://www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/sudan/conflict-profile/timeline/> and Marina Ottaway and Mai El-Sadany, "Sudan: From Conflict to Conflict," Carnegie paper, May 2012.

<sup>5</sup>Alexander Ziadosz, "Special Report: South Sudan's Chinese oil puzzle"  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/14/us-southsudan-chinese-oil-idUSBRE8AD0B520121114>

Today Sudan is divided along racial, religious and economic, lines. Racism, in this picture, plays a greater role than religion. As a result of mutual prejudice, while the Blacks are leaving the north, Arab northerners long dwelled in the south are fleeing the region for fear of post-partition retribution (Natsios and Abramowitz, 2011). The split of Sudan has “intersected fundamental problems that existed within both,” further deepening some. The politically unstable North and the economically underdeveloped and internally divided South found their own reason to become suspicious of each other. Both countries, although formally decentralized, remained de facto single-party states and neither side showed interest in making peace agreement work (Ottaway and El-Sadany, 2011). Currently a number of outstanding issues such as the question of shared oil revenues, border demarcation and mass internal migration due to clashes between warring groups continue to affect the post-partition environment.<sup>6</sup>

Sudan remained divided ever since the days of Anglo-Egyptian joint rule. The North where colonial investment had concentrated was predominantly Arab and Muslim whereas the South appeared to be a remote region without resources and therefore was left to the missionaries. In most cases, economic disputes have mutual ethno-religious misgivings in the background. For example, the disagreement over the border region of Abyei is rooted in a conflict between pro-South Dinka Ngok people and pro-North Misseria Arab tribesmen.<sup>7</sup>

In 1983, President Numeiri declared the introduction of the Islamic law. Although the emergence of the southern liberation/separation movement cannot solely be attributed to it, after the proclamation of Islamic law, it gained further momentum and legitimacy. The South often criticized the North for imposing the Islamic law through state power and blamed the coercion on the non-Islamic peoples for one of the reasons that led to the partition of Sudan. Although separation is more visible along the lines of social status and wealth (one can find poor Blacks, Muslim Arabs and Christians dwelling in slums in the outskirts of Khartoum), religious disputes cannot be overruled (Ottaway and El-Sadany, 2011).

### ***Political and economic disputes***

Until 2005, political disputes in Sudan were centered on the struggle for greater autonomy and independence by the southern rebels. After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, civil war ended and a period of tranquility ensued. However, with the referendum in 2011, the dispute on energy resources became manifest along the fault lines of political division.

Although Sudan and South Sudan split, they still dependent on each other for the continuity of the oil business. Whereas an estimated 75% of the former Sudan’s oil fields are located in the South, the pipeline and refineries are in Sudan. Prior to the independence South Sudan received 50% of the revenue generated in the unified Sudan. Yet this arrangement expired after the peace agreement and talks on the

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<sup>6</sup> See, Energy Information Administration, Sudan and South Sudan Country Analysis Brief, March 19, 2012, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=SU>

<sup>7</sup> See, Insights on Conflict, <http://www.insightsonconflict.org/conflicts/sudan/conflict-profile/timeline/>

sharing of the oil revenues ended in failure and the halt of the oil production by the South.

Oil is important for both governments, contributing greatly to the running of the basic governmental functions. During the period leading to the partition, the hope was that the mutual dependency would create an economic symbiosis: The South needed Sudan's infrastructure (pipeline, processing facilities and marine terminal) to transfer and export oil through the terminal at Port Sudan whereas Sudan needed the oil from the South in the form of transit fees and other payments to make up the loss from the split.<sup>8</sup>

*Map: Oil Industry in Sudan and South Sudan*



Source: Drilling Info International

However, the oil dispute got deeper after the partition as Sudan decided to demand the southern government to pay transit fees and other payments to make up for the lost income due to secession. In fact, about 98% of state revenues in South Sudan and over half in the united Sudan relied on the oil sales before the split. In response to Khartoum's demand, South Sudan halted oil production and exploitation.<sup>9</sup> Although

<sup>8</sup> Alexander Dziadosz, "Special Report: South Sudan's Chinese oil puzzle," Reuters, Nov 14, 2012.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/14/us-southsudan-chinese-oil-idUSBRE8AD0B520121114>

<sup>9</sup> "China welcomes oil deal between Sudan, South Sudan," Xinhua, 2012-08-06,

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-08/06/c\\_131765167.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-08/06/c_131765167.htm); Mariar Wuoi, "China's role in North-South Sudan relations," 8 January 2012.

<http://www.sudantribune.com/China-s-role-in-North-South,41210>

the two sides resumed the talks on oil payments in July 2012 and signed an agreement in August, outstanding disputes over the contested regions with rich oil deposits have continued to this day.<sup>10</sup>

### **China-Sudan Relations: Before and After Partition**

China and Sudan enjoyed robust diplomatic, economic and strategic cooperation over the last two decades—ever since Jiang Zemin initiated China's reengagement in Africa in 1996. As China's economy grew, the country's foreign policy strategies in Sudan evolved. However, the split of Sudan has cast some doubts on the bilateral relations with Sudan and newly independent South Sudan. Beijing preferred multilateral engagement in the regional crises. However, China's trade policy, especially arms sales to the Khartoum government seemed to contradict the principle of non-interference (Sparks, 2011).<sup>11</sup> Also, until 2007, Beijing opposed UN resolutions to deploy peace-keeping forces in Darfur.<sup>12</sup> Yet after the UN involvement, it became the first country, and the only permanent member, to send troops to the UN missions in Darfur and South Sudan.<sup>13</sup>

*China and South Sudan:* Three years before the partition took effect, in 2008, China opened a consulate in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Although the South's mistrust still lingers due to Beijing's ties with the Khartoum, bilateral relations are beginning to take shape. China, moving away from its diplomacy of restraint in recognizing the break-away region because of its own one-China policy toward Taiwan and Tibet, set up diplomatic relations with Juba before many others.<sup>14</sup>

What caused China to choose a different path? According to some analysts, first and foremost, China understood that secession was inevitable. Also, it had been in constant contact with the interim government in the South even before the split; hence, relations between the two parties had been relatively mature at the time of Sudan's partition.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, China could not have challenged South Sudan's independence because of the huge energy investment it had in the region. The fact that the solution to the oil dispute depended partly on the southern government obliged Beijing to run a simultaneously amicable relations with two Sudans.

### ***Economic relations***

The real boost to China-Sudan relations came in the 1990s with the development of the oil sector and Sudan's isolation from the larger international community. The NPC's (National Party Congress) seizure of power in 1989 and Sudan's deteriorating

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<sup>10</sup> "China welcomes oil deal between Sudan, South Sudan," Xinhua, 2012-08-06,

<sup>11</sup> "China and South Sudan," *Saferworld Briefing*, August 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Alessi and Stephanie Hanson, "Expanding China-Africa Oil Ties," Council on Foreign Relations, February 8, 2012. <http://www.cfr.org/china/expanding-china-africa-oil-ties/p9557>

<sup>13</sup> David Shinn, "China's Growing Role in Africa: Implications for U.S. Policy," Hearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, November 1, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> "Eyeing oil, Hu congratulates South Sudan," Ben Blanchard, Reuters, July 11, 2011, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/china/national-news/2011/07/11/309341/Eyeing-oil.htm>

<sup>15</sup> Mariar Wuoi, "China's role in North-South Sudan relations," Sudan Tribune, 8 January 2012,

relationship with the West pushed the government to look for a non-Western investor to develop its oil sector. Beijing offered Sudan a willing partner and, despite of unstable security environment, Chinese energy firms enjoyed a favorable investment climate.<sup>16</sup>

Khartoum's need for an investor coincided with China's growing thirst for oil. Currently the second largest, China is estimated to become world's largest importer of oil in less than a decade.<sup>17</sup> It gets nearly one-third of its total import from Africa, world's third largest oil producing region, and Sudan is the second largest regional exporter to China. A non-OPEC producer, Sudan sold 66% of its oil to China in 2011 and CNPC is currently the largest investor in the country.<sup>18</sup>

China's oil investment in Sudan's energy sector began in the late 1990s. Before the split of Sudan, China developed the oil fields initially operated by Chevron, which withdrew from Sudan when US placed sanction on Khartoum. Beijing also built pipelines to transport crude from central Sudan to the port on the Red Sea. CNPC has remained the biggest international player in Sudan's oil industry with its 40% stake in Sudan's Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC). Furthermore, CNPC provides field services and construction, and built two pipelines for Sudan.<sup>19</sup> Driven by CNPC's investments, Sudan's proven oil reserves increased to 6.7bb/l in 2010, from 0.3bb/l, in 2000 (Xin, 2011).

After the partition, China has become a primary target of the southern rebels as a chief partner to the North. In April 2012, 29 Chinese workers were abducted by insurgent groups in the oil rich province of Kordofan. In the same year, president of the Chinese oil consortium based in Juba was expelled by the Southern government. China, however, still maintains certain advantages in the newly independent South thanks to its early engagement. Chinese financial institutions and construction companies have been waiting for the situation to be stabilized to take full part in the development of the South Sudan's economy.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> See, International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook*, 2011.

[http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebiste/2011/executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebiste/2011/executive_summary.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Shelly Zhao, "The Geopolitics of China-African Oil," April 13, 2011.

<http://www.china-briefing.com/news/2011/04/13/the-geopolitics-of-china-african-oil.html>;

Christopher Alessi and Stephanie Hanson, "Expanding China-Africa Oil Ties," February 8, 2012.

<http://www.cfr.org/china/expanding-china-africa-oil-ties/p9557>

<sup>19</sup> Sundarsan Raghavan and Andrew Higgins, "China in a tug of war between two Sudans,"

Washington Post, March 23, 2012; "The Main International Oil Companies Present in Sudan,"

Understanding Sudan,

<http://understandingsudan.org/Oil/OilResources/L2FS9-MainIntlOilCoPresentinSudan.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> China and South Sudan, Saferworld Briefing, August 2012.



### **Chinese Diplomacy in Post-Split Sudan**

China approached cautiously to the partition of Sudan.<sup>21</sup> As the referendum approached and it became clear that the South would secede, Beijing began to develop relations with the southern interim government. Chinese investors in agriculture, telecommunication, financial services and infrastructure moved to the South.<sup>22</sup>

With the partition of Sudan, China's engagement evolved into a trilateral framework. Beijing maintained close ties with the North while it worked to improve links with Juba, encouraging both sides to negotiate outstanding disputes, most importantly the oil dispute. Apparently, Beijing realizes that in order to protect its energy interests, it needs both sides cooperation. Therefore, a negotiated peace is more favorable to Beijing than a protracted civil war.<sup>23</sup>

One of the strengths of Chinese diplomacy is the ability of the PRC to provide financial aid, the experience it gained in dealing with the Darfur crisis, and the existing energy and other investments. However, China's diplomatic efforts in the region do not match its capabilities as a great power.<sup>24</sup> Multi-track diplomacy will be instrumental to bridge the gap between China's capabilities and its actual influence. Hence, the idea that Beijing should stay out of Sudan's internal disputes and limit its engagement to trade needs be modified since traditional method will not be adequate to address the complex nature of Sudan-South Sudan conflict.<sup>25</sup>

#### ***Strategies of multi-track diplomacy***

China's engagement in pre and post-partition Sudan has been predominantly based on traditional diplomacy. However, a successful engagement requires China to depart from classic government-to-government interaction. Then the question is how China could carry out a multi-track diplomacy in Sudan and South Sudan. Apparently, not all tracks may be available at once. The dispute between Sudan and South Sudan has strong economic, ethnic, political and cultural components. Therefore, the following tracks are believed to be applicable:

*Track one:* Traditional government-to-government conflict resolution techniques may be used to bring the two sides together. In this respect, China has been at the forefront of international efforts. Through official channels, China has continuously encouraged both Khartoum and Juba for a negotiated and reconciliation-based solution to the conflict before and after partition. Although before the partition, China stood closer to the North, it did not hesitate to establish diplomatic ties well before the referendum. After the referendum took place and the issue of disputed areas and oil payments

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> David H. Shinn, China's Deft Sudan Diplomacy, *The Diplomat*, September 19, 2012.; Mariar Wuoi, "China's role in North-South Sudan relations," Sudan Tribune, 8 January 2012.

<sup>23</sup> James Traub, "The Accidental Peacemaker," *Foreign Policy*, May 4, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> "China's New Courtship in South Sudan," Crisis Group Africa Report N°186, 4 April 2012.

<sup>25</sup> China and South Sudan, Saferworld Briefing, August 2012; Christopher Alessi and Stephanie Hanson, "Expanding China-Africa Oil Ties," *Council on Foreign Relations*, February 8, 2012,

surfaced, China maintained an impartial posture. Hence, Beijing have thus far successfully utilized track-one options.

In the post-split era, China's track-one diplomacy needs to be separate but coordinated because, at least in the medium run, Sudan and South Sudan will remain dependent on each other for a big chunk of their economy. With its huge energy investment in line, China needs to make sure that this symbiotic relationship would go unhindered.

*Track-two:* Track-two involves non-official and non-governmental action to prevent or resolve violent conflict (Dixon and Simmons, 2006). A country's soft power is often projected through such organizations (NGOs) that act relatively independently from the state apparatus. Chinese NGOs have been active in Sudan in a wide variety of areas including health, education and agricultural development.<sup>26</sup> However, further effort could be made in this realm so that Chinese NGOs would be more effective in public diplomacy.

*Track-three (Business):* Apart from track-one, business diplomacy may be considered the area that China is the most advantageous. Decades-long sanctions that kept Sudan out of the reach of most international investment allowed China to become a major economic actor there. Over the years, Chinese companies have invested in, among others, energy, infrastructure and telecommunication sectors. Hence, business diplomacy may lead to improved living standards including health, education and an overall improvement in the quality of life in both Sudans. On the other hand, questionable business practices (environmental degradation, corruption, etc.) and political considerations (the southern government's decision to expel the head of Chinese-led energy consortium) may negatively affect peace-building efforts.

*Track-four (Citizen Diplomacy):* Chinese nationals in both Sudans may assist the peace-building efforts in the conflict-hit areas through grassroots mobilization. Interested individuals or groups could act in unison without being hindered by the formality, protocol or government mandate. Citizen diplomacy may also enable the participants to get a better sense of international disputes and reflect on their preconceptions, which creates a better environment for mutual understanding.<sup>27</sup> In this area, too, much has yet to be done.

*Track five (Research, training and education):* Track-five diplomacy involves the activities by professionals (think tanks) and students (colleges and universities). Scholars may be brought together to devise strategies and recommend solutions. Students, considered less constrained by formalities and more creative, may offer grassroots assistance. China's track-five activity in Sudan and South Sudan are still in its initial stage and there are further steps it needs to take.

Beijing opened the first Confucius Institute in 2007 at the University of Khartoum and in 2008 a partnership agreement was signed between China's Northwest Normal

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<sup>26</sup> "China, Africa to build new model for NGO co-op," Xinhua, 07/11/2012,

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012chinaafricaforum/2012-07/11/content\\_15575890.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012chinaafricaforum/2012-07/11/content_15575890.htm)

<sup>27</sup> Bonny Ling, "China's Peacekeeping Diplomacy," China Rights Forum, No. 1, 2007,

[http://www.hrchina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/CRF.1.2007/CRF-2007-1\\_Peacekeeping.pdf](http://www.hrchina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/CRF.1.2007/CRF-2007-1_Peacekeeping.pdf)

University and University Khartoum for student exchange. In September 2012, South Sudan announced its intention to build five university campuses with \$2.5 billion loan from the Chinese government.<sup>28</sup> These efforts need to be upgraded so that they would bring the warring groups together in non-political (peace-building) settings and thus contribute to the mutual understanding and normalization.

*Track-eight:* This track, that is, funding, is perhaps one of the most important areas that China could play a dominant role. So far, Chinese individuals, NGOs and private companies have carried out significant philanthropy activities in Sudan and South Sudan. Hospitals, schools, roads, dams and irrigation and sewage systems have been built with the funding and expertise provided by various groups and entities from China.

In 2010, the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation announced to establish 13 hospitals for women and children to help decrease the maternal and infant mortality rates.<sup>29</sup> In July 2012, delegates from China Charity Foundation opened China-Sudan Friendship Hospital.<sup>30</sup> These efforts could be widened in scope so that the quality of life a larger segment of the populations on both sides would improve and the frequency of mutual interaction is increased.

*Track-nine (Media):* Electronic, visual and print media is important in informing and engaging the public on both sides on issues related to peace-building. In this respect, the most important step was taken in 2012 in which China's CCTV and Sudan's State Television signed a framework cooperation agreement. Under this agreement, the sides pledged to increase communication and awareness of each other among the general public.<sup>31</sup> Beijing can utilize this advantage (of having a strong media presence) for efforts towards creating in Sudan and South Sudan a favorable environment in which both sides are kept informed of each other and people-to-people relations are more normalized.

## **Conclusion**

Sudan, once the largest and one of the most geographically diverse states in Africa, was split in two due to deep socio-cultural, economic and political differences and

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<sup>28</sup> Alexander Dziadosz and Hereward Holland, "South Sudan plans China-backed \$2.5 billion university project," Reuters, September 13, 2012,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/13/southsudan-education-idUSL5E8KD83Z20120913> ;

"Culture Exchanges between China and Sudan," Chinese Embassy in Sudan, 2012/03/05,

<http://sd.china-embassy.org/eng/whjl/t911020.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Wang Hui, "The China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation Internationalizes," China Development Brief, No. 45 (Spring 2010).

<sup>30</sup> "China Charity Foundation Delegates visited Sudan," Tiens,

[http://www.tiens.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=267:china-charity-foundation-delegates-visited-sudan&catid=139:news-a-promotions&Itemid=261](http://www.tiens.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=267:china-charity-foundation-delegates-visited-sudan&catid=139:news-a-promotions&Itemid=261)

<sup>31</sup> "CCTV and Sudan State Television Signed a Cooperation Agreement," 2012/06/07,

<http://sd.china-embassy.org/eng/whjl/t939073.htm>

disagreements. Although economic factors are emphasized and most research has been done from such perspective, it is believed that Sudan-South Sudan split cannot be understood merely through economy-driven explanations. State-led classical diplomacy has been insufficient in tackling the issues that run deep in Sudan-South Sudan relations. For the problem is multi-dimensional, any action taken to address it needs to be multi-dimensional.

The systems approach, offers a well-articulated and comprehensive methodology to understand conflict environments. In this paper, it is argued that multi-track diplomacy may be instrumental in facilitating peace between Sudan and South Sudan. Hence, if implemented well, it may assist Beijing to manage the conflict and, as a result, protect its energy interests. The reason that China is regarded one of the viable candidates to carry out such strategy is that Beijing has been involved in Sudan and South Sudan's affairs for over two decades due to its dependency on energy resources and thus holds considerable power to influence the two major actors' behavior. Therefore, considerations for energy security provide an incentive for Beijing to play a more active and constructive role.

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