

**“Dark Geopolitics: The Beijing-Moscow Nexus in Sudan and Syria”** by Jeff Roquen

On 26 September 2012, British Prime Minister David Cameron took the podium at the General Assembly of the United Nations and made an extraordinary set of remarks. To the delegates in the room and the world at large via television, radio and the Internet, Cameron charged, “The blood of these young children is a terrible stain on the reputation of this UN. And in particular, a stain on those who have failed to stand up to these atrocities and in some cases aided and abetted Assad’s reign of terror.”<sup>1</sup> Although the Prime Minister did not directly single-out the two nations he had castigated for supporting Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad’s murderous war against his own people, the world fully understood the import of his condemnation. Cameron was reproving Beijing and Moscow for their joint-efforts in blocking UN resolutions to place an arms embargo on Syria and impose sanctions.

More than fifty years since their political fallout, China and Russia have slowly but surely re-aligned since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Most scholars of international relations have viewed their rapprochement as an abstract device to balance the unipolar (or hegemonic) power of the United States. Yet, the re-establishment of close policy coordination between Beijing and Moscow has resulted not only as a means to counter US influence but as a geopolitical strategy to lock up key minerals and sources of oil for the purposes of expanding their economies, strengthening their regimes, and promoting allied, malleable dictatorships abroad. Over the past fifteen years, the unprecedented thrust of China into Africa exemplifies this approach. In order to fully understand the origins and the trajectory of the recent humanitarian crises in Sudan and Syria, it is necessary to retrace the making of the new Sino-

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<sup>1</sup> Jason Grove, “‘Blood on their hands’: Cameron blames Russia and China for torture and killing Syrian children under Assad’s ‘terror reign’” *The Daily Mail* (UK) 26 September 2012 Accessed 29 October 2012 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2209057/David-Cameron-UN-Russia-China-blood-Syrian-children-hands.html>

Russian alliance and examine the geopolitical agenda behind their partnership. By exposing the elements of *realpolitick* behind the coordinated policies of Beijing and Moscow in Khartoum and Damascus, policymakers, analysts and modern historians will be able to gain insight for the purpose of reassessing the locus, diffusion and dynamics of power and interest across three distinct yet politically linked regions.

### ***The Falling Out of Beijing and Moscow After The Second World War***

In 1945, Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong, who had waged an insurgency against the nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek prior to expediently banding together to drive the Japanese army from China, bristled at Soviet Premier Josef Stalin's continued support for his rival after the defeat of the Empire of Japan. Despite their shared commitment to Marxist ideology, Stalin held Mao at bay in a bid to shape post-war East Asia. Upon emerging triumphant in China's civil war, Mao could have made a decisive break with his Russian patron in 1949. Due to fearing an assault on his new government by American forces, however, he made a two-month pilgrimage to Moscow shore up relations. His efforts paid off. Only a few months later, a newly-minted agreement - the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950 - provided Beijing with much sought-after economic aid and security guarantees.<sup>2</sup> The diplomatic honeymoon, however, did not last long. By the time Nikita Khrushchev denounced Stalin for his dictatorial policies and ruthless purges of the Communist Party at a closed door session of the party elite in 1956, Mao had made considerable progress in constructing a highly authoritarian system for the People's Republic of China. Hence, Beijing and Moscow were beginning to move in opposite directions.

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<sup>2</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 64-65.

Under the Great Leap Forward in 1958, China embarked on a new five-year economic plan that subordinated small farmers to large-scale producers for the purpose of supporting rapid industrialization. Rather than a surge in the economy, the Chinese peasantry, which had been cut off from its means of subsistence, was utterly decimated from Mao's man-made, widespread famine. As Moscow neither supported Mao's departure from Soviet economic orthodoxy nor his decision to shell the Kuomintang-controlled island of Jinmen (or Quemoy in English), relations between the two countries began to deteriorate. At a conference in Romania in June 1960, Soviet representatives openly denounced the CCP for its economic and military heresy. Shortly thereafter, Moscow dramatically recalled all of its technical advisors from its Communist ally and backed out of "many existing agreements."<sup>3</sup> By the end of the decade, the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950 was in tatters, and palpable tension existed along the 2,500 mile border between the two countries. War, along with the possibility of a nuclear exchange, was not out the question.<sup>4</sup>

One year after the People's Republic of China (Beijing) supplanted the Nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-Shek (Taiwan) in 1971, US President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger seized the opportunity to cultivate relations with Mao. Although Nixon did not win any assistance from Chinese leaders in ending the Vietnam War, his week-long presence in the Celestial Kingdom succeeded in widening the rift between Beijing and Moscow. Due to its well-documented disregard for human rights, six years passed before Jimmy Carter, who became the first American head of state to substantively base American foreign policy on

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Dillon, *China: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2010), 322.

<sup>4</sup> Tony Saich, *Governance and Politics of China* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 24-36; Dillon, *China: A Modern History*, 343.

human rights, granted China official US recognition in 1978. Over the next three and a half decades, his decision proved to be both ironic and tragic.<sup>5</sup>

### ***China, Russia & Sudan: The Intersection of Power and History***

The political relationship between Beijing and Moscow, which has been marked by periods of generous cooperation and bitter dissention since the conclusion of the Second World War, has come full circle over shared geostrategic interests in Africa. Similar to the imperial era prior to the First World War, Africa, which endured the so-called “Scramble” between Britain, Germany, France, Portugal and other European powers for territorial conquest and control from 1884-1914, has attracted a resurgence of foreign interlopers in the form of Western and Chinese oil and mining companies in a zero-sum quest for economic resources in recent decades. Indeed, the meteoric rise of China’s economy has not only turned Africa into a battleground for Western (US and Europe) and Eastern (China and Russia) influence, but it has also recast the dynamics of the international order for the twenty-first century.

Since the restructuring of the Chinese economy toward a market-oriented model beginning in the late 1970s, China’s economy has grown exponentially. In 1980, China’s economy began to surge and posted a remarkable GDP of 7.8%. For a country as populous as China and one with an unparalleled internal market, relative stagnation had been the order of the day during the last years of Mao’s rule. From 1960-1978 (Mao died in 1976), the annual GDP has been calculated to have been an underperforming 5.3%.<sup>6</sup> How dramatic has the Chinese economic turnaround been? According to a World Bank study, the market reforms begun by

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<sup>5</sup> James Mann, *About Face: A History of America’s Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1998), 38-50, 79-92; Robert F. Drinan, *Cry of The Oppressed: The History and Hope of Human Rights Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 80-93.

<sup>6</sup> “China GDP: how it has changed since 1980,” The Guardian (UK) Datablog (no date) Accessed 31 October 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/mar/23/china-gdp-since-1980>

former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997) and continued by his successors have reduced poverty levels by 55% in only thirty years. Hence, an astounding 500 million Chinese have been able to climb out of indigence and into the lower rung of the middle-class (or higher) since 1980. At its current pace, China will overtake the US as the largest economy in the world by 2030 – if not by 2020.<sup>7</sup> In order to power its rapidly expanding cities and booming economy, China, along with Western nations, began looking outside of the politically turbulent Middle East for oil in the 1990s. As Africa was estimated to have more than 100 billion barrels of oil reserves within five key nations, a new “scramble” between East (China) and West (US & European) oil companies ensued. For China, the historically fractured and war-torn country of Sudan suddenly became its geopolitical focus.<sup>8</sup>

Since attaining independence more than a half a century ago, Sudan has been wracked by internal conflict and plagued by unstable governments.<sup>9</sup> In 1983, the country drifted into its second civil war as the largely non-Muslim Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) took up arms against Khartoum for its attempt to sever the south into three provinces to dilute its political power.<sup>10</sup> Even worse was yet to come. Six years later, a relatively unknown army officer, Umar Hasan Ahmed al-Bashir, formed a secret coterie of likeminded officers and successfully toppled the regime. Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, who had led the coalition

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<sup>7</sup> The World Bank: Developmental Research Center of The State Council, the People’s Republic of China “China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative High-Income Society,” Washington, DC, 2012 Accessed 20 November 2012 <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/China-2030-complete.pdf>; In April 2011, the IMF predicted China would overtake the US as the world’s largest economy in 2016. As the Chinese and the world economy has again stagnated after a brief post-2008 recession expansion, the date now seems improbable – although Chinese economic ascendancy may still occur well before 2030. See David Gardner, “The Age of America end in 2016: IMF predicts the year China’s economy will surpass US’ *The Daily Mail* (UK) 25 April 2011 Accessed 31 October 2012 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1380486/The-Age-America-ends-2016-IMF-predicts-year-Chinas-economy-surpass-US.html>

<sup>8</sup> Michael T. Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The Global Assault on Africa’s Vital Resources* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008), 150. Klare is a top-notch scholar and an expert on geopolitics and the global economy. This work, along with his others, demonstrates impeccable research and trenchant analysis.

<sup>9</sup> Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*, 152 Sudan achieved independence in 1956.

<sup>10</sup> Mohamed H. Fadlallah, *Short History of Sudan* (Lincoln, Nebraska: iUniverse, 2004), 49-50.

government, was imprisoned along with dozens of other politicians and unsympathetic army officers. Shortly after the coup d'état, Bashir set up a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) to run the nation according to the religious strictures of Islamist Hasan al-Turabi and the National Islamic Front – the radical Islamist coalition behind Bashir. By 1991, revisions in Sudan's Sharia law effectively subjugated women and decreed that any and all forms of dissent would be treated as apostasy – a crime punishable by death.<sup>11</sup>

Thirty years earlier, the American oil giant Chevron made an initial geological foray into Sudan and discovered areas containing rich oil deposits. Due to Bashir's brutal repression of recalcitrant ethnic groups in the south and his sponsorship of terrorism (Al-Qaeda mastermind Osama Bin-Laden received sanctuary from Bashir for a time), the Clinton administration imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Khartoum. Trade between the United States and Sudan was prohibited.<sup>12</sup> For Beijing and its rapidly expanding economy in need of oil, this was an opportunity. Twelve months after Western companies pulled out, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) bought into the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company consortium (40%) and undertook oil production in three oil blocks in the south – where most of the deposits were located.<sup>13</sup> In short order, CNPC, along with its Malaysian and Indian partners in the consortium, constructed pipelines to carry the oil from its blocks in southern Sudan to the Red Sea for shipment. In approximately eighteen months, China had successfully courted the Bashir government, acquired oil production rights, built a viable oil-export infrastructure across Sudan

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<sup>11</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 185-191. As most media outlets refer to al-Bashir as simply Bashir, the Sudanese president will be referred to as Bashir forthwith.

<sup>12</sup> Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*, 166; Pak K. Lee, Gerald Chan and Lai-Ha Chan, "China in Darfur: Humanitarian Rule-Maker or Rule Taker?" *Review of International Studies* Vol. 38, Issue 2 (April 2012), 431.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 430-431.

and began counting on the country for more than five percent of its oil imports.<sup>14</sup> From its spike in oil revenue in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Khartoum readily purchased military hardware – largely from China and Russia – to both fortify its regime and to carry out brutal campaigns against non-Muslim populations. Tragically, the stage had been set for the first acts of genocide in the twenty-first century.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Drawing Lines East and West: The Rise of the New Beijing-Moscow Axis***

When the Soviet Union officially ceased to exist at the end of 1991, the international relations world of bipolarity suddenly became unipolar. As the United States stood as the only nation capable of projecting power to any significant degree around the world, democracy and capitalism were presumed by more than a few observers to have been epochally triumphant. In the year that witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall and a massive uprising in Tiananmen Square in Beijing (1989), one bright new scholar of world affairs, Francis Fukuyama, declared “The End of History” in a much debated essay by the same name.<sup>16</sup> New words and old words began to enter and re-enter the English lexicon to describe the new order dominated by Washington. America was suddenly characterized as a “superpower” (the remaining one), a “hyperpower” (used more among European intellectuals) or a “hegemon” (a default term widely used by international relations scholars). If democracy and capitalism were the twin pillars of a global future beyond history, neither Beijing nor Moscow agreed. Less than a year after the fall of Lenin and Stalin’s grand social engineering experiment, Qian Qichen, the Foreign Minister of China, stated, “The USA’s *hegemonic* stance and its attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of other states pose

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<sup>14</sup> David H. Shinn, “China’s Deft Sudan Diplomacy” *The Diplomat* 19 September 2012 Accessed 1 November 2012 <http://thediplomat.com/china-power/chinas-deft-sudan-diplomacy/>

<sup>15</sup> “China’s Arms Sales To Sudan” Fact Sheet” *Human Rights First* (no pagination) Accessed 1 November 2012 <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/080311-cah-arms-sales-fact-sheet.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and The Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992) Fukuyama’s seminal article appeared in *The National Interest* in 1989 and was expanded and turned into a book three years later.

the greatest danger to socialist China.” (italics added)<sup>17</sup> His statement was not only a defense of China’s militant crackdown on widespread protests in Tiananmen Square (Beijing) and elsewhere around the country on 4 June 1989 – in which hundreds or perhaps thousands of peaceful demonstrators died at the hands of a ruthless assault by the Chinese military but also a projection of China’s adversarial future foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> In order to counter American influence, Qian further stated the need to band with several regional nations – including Russia.<sup>19</sup>

In 1996, Beijing launched the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with Moscow as a co-sponsor. This bloc of states, which originally included Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, later enrolled Uzbekistan. In more recent years, it has also awarded “observer status” to India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan. While the SCO has entertained talks concerning human trafficking, terrorism, border control and boundary disputes, its ultimate purpose has been to provide an official arena for discussions and deals on energy and security.<sup>20</sup> Although initially ignored or dismissed as a largely hollow organization by Washington, the SCO has become closely monitored by the Department of State and European diplomats due to its functional expansion. Beyond serving as a broker for major contracts involving oil and weaponry, the SCO has developed into a formidable geopolitical alliance. While China, Russia and their new regional partners have effectively managed to challenge the IMF, alter US plans on missile defense for Eastern Europe and conduct joint-military exercises over the past decade, the

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<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Michael L. Levin, *The Next Great Clash: China and Russia vs The United States* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 98.

<sup>18</sup> Mara Hvistendahl, “The Great Forgetting: 20 Years After Tiananmen Square” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 19 May 2009 Accessed 1 November 2012 <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Great-Forgetting-20-Ye/44267>

<sup>19</sup> Levin, *The Next Great Clash*, 98.

<sup>20</sup> Ivan Campbell et. al “China and Conflict: Affected States: Between Principle and Pragmatism” *Saferworld* January 2012 Accessed 2 November 2012 <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/China%20and%20conflict-affected%20states.pdf> ; Levin, *The Next Great Clash*, 108.



restoration of ties between Beijing and Moscow has been nowhere more pivotal than in Africa – particularly Sudan.<sup>21</sup>

### ***The Poisoned Fruit Of The Beijing-Khartoum Alliance: Darfur***

The origins of the genocide in Darfur between the Islamist Sudanese government and the Fur – an ethnic, religiously syncretic group in western Sudan – have long roots. While the north and east have been far more influenced by Islam for centuries, the west and south have remained largely pluralistic in language and belief. After Bashir and the National Islamic Front came to power in 1989, Khartoum began an earnest campaign against the independent, multiethnic Fur peoples five years later by administratively redistricting the region to diminish their political representation.<sup>22</sup> This, however, was a first and temporary expedient. In partnering with China to develop its oil sector, the Sudanese government was able to tap into a lucrative source of revenue essential to the ultimate designs of its regime. By 2004, China had become the lead investor in Sudan's oil industry. Simultaneously, Beijing and Khartoum concluded several significant business agreements to allow Chinese companies to administer and finance key infrastructure projects in Sudan – including two hydroelectric plants and a dam.<sup>23</sup>

Ties between the two countries quickly proliferated. From 2003-2006, the amount of oil delivered from Sudan to China spiked sixty-three percent. One year later, Beijing monopolized a full forty percent of Sudanese output. Khartoum's coffers were overflowing.<sup>24</sup> Bashir quickly cemented his bilateral relationship with Beijing by promising to award additional business to

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<sup>21</sup> Michael Moran, "Putin: The Company He Keeps" *Slate* 5 June 2012 Accessed 2 November 2012 [http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_reckoning/2012/06/05/putin\\_the\\_company\\_he\\_keeps.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_reckoning/2012/06/05/putin_the_company_he_keeps.html)

<sup>22</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*, 280-284.

<sup>23</sup> Michael L. Levin, *The Next Great Clash*, 114-115.

<sup>24</sup> Moira Herbst, "Oil for China, Guns for Darfur" *Businessweek* 14 March 2008 Accessed 5 November 2012 <http://www.businessweek.com/stories/2008-03-14/oil-for-china-guns-for-darfurbusinessweek-business-news-stock-market-and-financial-advice>

Chinese construction companies and to purchase a sizable number of Chinese-manufactured weapons. As oil shipments skyrocketed, China gladly supplied Sudan with \$55 million in small arms. Beyond light weaponry, Sudan also acquired hundreds of military trucks, several tanks, and as many as twenty “Fantan fighter-bombers” from China in these years (2003-2006). Along with military hardware, China also lent Sudan a number of advisors and fighter-pilot trainers.<sup>25</sup>

What was the reason behind Khartoum’s heavy investment in Chinese weaponry? In the radical-Arab Janjaweed militia, Khartoum had found mercenaries willing to assist the Sudanese Armed Forces in launching a campaign of extremist violence. During the peak years of their economic and trade relationship, Sudan used its newfound wealth and its newly-acquired cache of weapons from China to conduct a policy of extermination against Darfur. By 2007, 300,000-400,000 Darfurians had been slaughtered and two million others displaced by the Bashir-sponsored rape and murder of the Fur people. The scale and scope of these atrocities remain incomprehensible.

On a visit to the region in 2005, Don Cheadle and John Prendergast recounted the scene,

During our visit to Darfur and the Darfurian refugee camps in Chad, we heard story after story of mind-numbing violence perpetrated by the Sudanese government army and the Janjaweed militias they support. We heard of women being gang-raped, children being thrown into fires, villages and communities that had existed for centuries being burned to the ground in an effort to wipe out the livelihoods and even the history of those communities.<sup>26</sup>

Day after day, reports of the genocide leaked out of Sudan in 2003. After the Sudanese

Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) united to defend Darfur

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<sup>25</sup> “China’s Arms Sales To Sudan: Fact Sheet” *Human Rights First* (no pagination) Accessed 5 November 2012 <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/080311-cah-arms-sales-fact-sheet.pdf> ; Hilary Andersson, “China ‘is fueling war in Darfur’” *BBC NEWS* 13 July 2008 Accessed 5 November 2008 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7503428.stm>

<sup>26</sup> Don Cheadle and John Prendergast, *Not On Our Watch: The Mission To End Genocide In Darfur And Beyond* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 7-8; In 2008, one news report chronicled the misfortunes of Kaltam Abakar Mohammed in Darfur. She personally witnessed three of her seven children “being blown to pieces” by a Chinese fighter jet. See Hilary Andersson, “China ‘is fueling war in Darfur’” *BBC NEWS* 13 July 2008 Accessed 5 November 2012 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7503428.stm>

and regional nomads under attack, the issue became known to the wider world.<sup>27</sup> One year later, a first step was taken to quell the violence.

On 30 July 2004, the UN Security Council passed a resolution directly condemning Khartoum. More importantly, it demanded the Sudanese government immediately cease its campaign of violence and placed a weapons embargo on the regime. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Beijing completely denied its role in supplying weapons to Bashir.<sup>28</sup> Although the Sudanese government did allow the UN to enter the country to provide humanitarian assistance shortly after the UN resolution, Khartoum remained undaunted, and the SAF and Janjaweed continued their brutal assaults on Darfur with a range of imported Chinese arms. On 18 September, The UN Security Council again took action. In a new resolution (1564), the Council 1) invited the African Union (AU) into Sudan to act as monitors on the frontlines, 2) called for a political solution to the conflict between Khartoum and “The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement,” 3) requested the presence of UN human rights monitors in order to investigate potential acts of genocide and 4) demanded identification and punishment for those responsible for atrocities. Beyond these provisions for ending the conflict, operative clause number fourteen was undoubtedly of the greatest concern to both China’s ambassador to the United Nations and leaders in both Khartoum and Beijing. In that provision, the Security Council members threatened to “*consider* taking additional measures...such as actions to affect Sudan’s petroleum sector and the Government of Sudan or individual members of the

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<sup>27</sup> “Genocide in Darfur” *United Human Rights Council* (no pagination) Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/genocide/genocide-in-sudan.htm> Salih Booker and Ann Louise-Colgan, “Genocide in Darfur” *The Nation* 12 July 2004 Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://www.thenation.com/article/genocide-darfur>

<sup>28</sup> UN Security Council, Security Council Resolution 1556 (2004) on measures to prevent the sale or supply of arms and related materiel, 30 July 2004, S/RES/1556 (2004), available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/411355bc4.html> [accessed 6 November 2012]; “China’s Arms Sales To Sudan” Fact Sheet” *Human Rights First* (no pagination) Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/080311-cah-arms-sales-fact-sheet.pdf>

Government of Sudan.”<sup>29</sup> This was indeed a backhanded swipe at one of the UN Security Council members – China – for its unscrupulous trade of oil and guns with Khartoum prior to and during the genocide campaign in Darfur. In response, Beijing registered its official abstention on the resolution. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China subsequently used its prospective veto power over the next three years to dilute the content of fourteen UN Security Council resolutions to shield itself and its premier oil client from punitive legal action and economic sanctions for directly promoting, aiding and abetting war crimes.<sup>30</sup>

Under the glaring spotlight of sponsoring genocide, Beijing and Khartoum intensified their collaboration to ward off international criticism. In the spring of 2005, President Hu of China and President Bashir of Sudan held a private meeting at the Asia-Africa Summit in Jakarta and issued a statement pledging to “push forward the friendly cooperative relations between the two countries.”<sup>31</sup> Two years later, China not only continued to hold UN sanctions against Sudan at bay by insisting on Khartoum’s “sovereignty” over its own internal affairs but it also simultaneously funded the construction of an elaborate presidential palace for Bashir.<sup>32</sup> From its official policy of “non-interference” and respect for “sovereignty,” China has attempted to both justify and veil its collaboration with tyrannical regimes around the globe in the pursuit of key natural resources and profit.<sup>33</sup> Under the calculus of “noninterference,” China’s officially

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<sup>29</sup> UN Security Council, Security Council Resolution 1564 (2004) on Darfur, Sudan, 18 September 2004, S/RES/1564 (2004), available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/41516da4.html> [accessed 6 November 2012]

<sup>30</sup> Richard Cockett, *Sudan: Darfur and The Failure of an African State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 224; Ivan Wheeler et al., “China and Conflict – Affected States: Between Principle and Pragmatism” *Saferworld* January 2012 Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/China%20and%20conflict-affected%20states.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Michael T. Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*, 167.

<sup>32</sup> “Chinese leader boosts Sudan ties” *BBC NEWS* 2 February 2007 Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6323017.stm>

<sup>33</sup> Ivan Wheeler et al., “China and Conflict – Affected States: Between Principle and Pragmatism” *Saferworld* (January 2012), 10. Accessed 6 November 2012 <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/>

sanctioned arms manufacturers have reaped significant profits over the last decade. In 2010, Beijing became the fourth largest exporter of arms in the world, and all but two percent of its shipments were delivered to developing nations. After South Asia (57%), and the Middle East (21%), Africa was third in its reception of Chinese-made guns.<sup>34</sup> That same year marked a move by the United Nations to formally accuse Beijing of clandestinely supplying Khartoum with ammunition for its war against the people of Darfur. As the evidence would have implicated China of violating UN imposed sanctions, Beijing expressed outrage at the highest diplomatic levels and considered using its weighty vote to prevent the publication of a UN report containing evidence of its complicity in fueling the African genocide.<sup>35</sup> Between its foreign policy of non-interference and its employment of denial and deception, Beijing has been able to partially camouflage the nature of its relationship with the Sudanese regime.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Sudan's Other Enabler of Genocide***

China, however, has not been the only violator of the UN sanctions against arms exports to Sudan. At the same time, the governments of Russia and Belarus have also supplied Bashir with weaponry. While Beijing has primarily focused on funneling significant amounts of small arms (although it has sold Fantan fighters and other aircraft to Sudan), Moscow and Minsk have furnished heavier military hardware. Since the beginning of the conflict in Darfur, the governments of Russia and Belarus have delivered at least thirty-six Mi-36 and Mi-17

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China%20and%20conflict-affected%20states.pdf In stating "China supports the development of democracy and the rule of law in Africa. But we never impose our will on others," Premier Wen Jiabao was using carefully constructed rhetoric to rationalize and justify Beijing's partnership with tyrannical states. (See above, page 10)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., (no pagination)

<sup>35</sup> Colum Lynch, "China fights UN report on Darfur" *The Washington Post* 10 October 2010 Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/15/AR2010101506100.html>

<sup>36</sup> In 2006, Smith College professor Eric Reeves rightly stated, "China's behavior in oil exploration...(has) been marked by deep complicity in gross human rights violations, scorched-earth clearances of the indigenous populations in the oil regions, and direct assistance to Khartoum's regular military forces." See Michael T. Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*, 167.

helicopters, more than a dozen Sukhoi 25 jets along with several types of armored vehicles and a number of air-to-ground rockets. Instead of following Beijing and dispatching flight instructors to Sudan, Russia has moved in the opposite direction and gone one step further. It has brought pilots of the Sudanese Armed Forces to its Air Force base in Torzhok (Russia) for training on military aircraft sold to Khartoum.<sup>37</sup> Ultimately, the decision of China and Russia (and Belarus) to provide substantive military support to Sudan has resulted in genocidal warfare and a destabilization of the entire region.

In early 2011, the SAF (Sudanese Armed Forces) intensified its attacks on Darfur due to fear of losing control of the region to the SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army) and the emergent state of South Sudan. Military attack helicopters (Mi-24) and jet fighters (Su-25) from Russia were not only used to suppress resistance groups but to conduct "indiscriminate aerial bombardments and the clearing and burning of villages in eastern Darfur."<sup>38</sup> Consequently, refugee camps swelled with the addition of 70,000 civilians forced to abandon their homes. As talks between Khartoum and JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) continued to break down over the ensuing months, NGOs on the ground struggled to cope with the dire situation.<sup>39</sup> Although Khartoum's war on Darfur had lost much of its resonance in the mainstream Western press, the same atrocities, which had prompted an outpouring of media coverage and activism

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<sup>37</sup> Colum Lynch. "China fights UN report on Darfur" *The Washington Post* 16 October 2010 Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/15/AR2010101506100.html> ; Amnesty International "Sudan: No End To Violence in Darfur – Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations" (9 February 2012): 18. Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/afr540072012en.pdf> ; Amnesty International "Darfur: New Weapons from China Fuelling Conflict" 8 February 2012 Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/darfur-new-weapons-china-and-russia-fuelling-conflict-2012-02-08>; Human Rights First, "China's Arms Sales To Sudan," 1-2. Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/080311-cah-arms-sales-fact-sheet.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Amnesty International "Sudan: No End To Violence In Darfur" (9 February 2012), 9; Amnesty International "Darfur: New Weapons from China Fuelling Conflict" 8 February 2012 Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/darfur-new-weapons-china-and-russia-fuelling-conflict-2012-02-08>

<sup>39</sup> Larisa Epatko, "In Darfur, Violence Grows in Darfur as Flashpoint Town Abyei Arms," *PBS Newshour*, 1 April 2011 Accessed 8 November 2012 <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2011/04/darfur-and-abyei.html>

worldwide in 2005, were still being committed by the same perpetrators (Sudan and its client-militias) in 2011, and Moscow (similar to Beijing) was able to continue supplying Khartoum with weapons despite a UN embargo by simply denying its involvement.<sup>40</sup>

### ***China, Russia and The Maturation of The Shanghai Cooperation Organization***

In May 2012, the annual G8 Summit was held at Camp David, Maryland. Rather than attend as the newly-elected, returning head of state, Russian President Vladimir Putin sent his protégé and predecessor Dmitry Medvedev to represent Moscow. It was not only a deliberate move but also a signal of Russia's continued gravitation toward an adversarial bloc of predominantly eastern, non-aligned, non-democratic states.<sup>41</sup> One month later, Putin arrived in Beijing to play an equally prominent role with the host country in a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). On his eighth visit to the Chinese capital in twelve years, Putin was an animated figure at the three-day conference. When the foreign minister of Iran labeled the United States and its allies "arrogant powers" on the first day, Russia's president took the podium to express his wholehearted agreement.<sup>42</sup> Over the last decade, the burgeoning relationship between Beijing and Moscow has been re-forged by shared commitments to supplying arms to non-democratic (and mostly tyrannical) regimes around the world and through expanding bilateral trade – including arms transfers between the two countries. In the second year of the genocide in Darfur (2004), China increased its purchases of Russian arms by thirty-

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<sup>40</sup> Amnesty International "Sudan: No End To Violence In Darfur" (9 February 2012), 9; Amnesty International Darfur: New Weapons from China Fuelling Conflict" 8 February 2012 Accessed 8 November 2012

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/darfur-new-weapons-china-and-russia-fuelling-conflict-2012-02-08>

<sup>41</sup> "Putin flexes muscle in shunning US-hosted G-8 talks" *Reuters* 10 May 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/10/russia-putin-usa-idUSL5E8GA7N820120510>

<sup>42</sup> Chen Qin, "Why Putin is betting on China," *Marketwatch* 10 June 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012

[http://articles.marketwatch.com/2012-06-10/economy/32154774\\_1\\_sino-russian-relations-russian-president-vladimir-putin-sino-russian-ties](http://articles.marketwatch.com/2012-06-10/economy/32154774_1_sino-russian-relations-russian-president-vladimir-putin-sino-russian-ties);

Michael Moran, "Putin: The Company He Keeps" *Slate* 5 June 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012 [http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_reckoning/2012/06/05/putin\\_the\\_company\\_he\\_keeps.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_reckoning/2012/06/05/putin_the_company_he_keeps.html)

two percent from the previous year. In 2005, both Beijing and Tehran took clandestine (or almost clandestine) deliveries on twenty Russian missiles. Iran also purchased Russian “Tor M1 surface-to-air missiles” along with “upgrades” for its Russian-made fighter planes. The rapid expansion of military ties between China and Russia in the 2000s also resulted in the sale of diesel submarines and missile systems from the latter to the former (2002) and the first “Sino-Russian joint military exercise” (2005).<sup>43</sup>

In purely economic terms, Russia’s largest and most significant relationship is with China. Trade between Beijing and Moscow, which centers on exchanges of military hardware, armaments and energy, and consumer items, exceeded \$80 billion in 2011. That figure is projected to surpass \$100 billion in 2015 and \$200 billion in 2020. Interestingly, an increasing number of their economic transactions are being done in their respective currencies rather than in standard US dollars. Hence, mutual economic interest, anti-Western nationalism and regional security have all factored into the Beijing-Moscow alliance.<sup>44</sup> In a meeting between President Putin and President Hu Jintao of China at the June 2012 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference, Hu stated, “better and more intimate relations between China and Russia are a blessing for the two countries and to the world.”<sup>45</sup> For the people of western Sudan and Syria, however, the Beijing-Moscow military-foreign policy alliance has been nothing short of a curse over the past decade.

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<sup>43</sup> Michael Levin, *The Next Great Clash*, 98-112.

<sup>44</sup> Fred Weir, “Putin’s China visit shows warming ties between neighboring giants,” *The Christian Science Monitor* 4 June 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012 <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2012/0604/Putin-s-China-visit-shows-warming-ties-between-neighboring-giants>; “Russia and China cement business alliance” *RT* 6 June 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012 <http://rt.com/business/news/china-russia-cement-deals-investment-046/>

<sup>45</sup> Chen Qin, “Why Putin is betting on China,” *Marketwatch* 10 June 2012 Accessed 9 November 2012 [http://articles.marketwatch.com/2012-06-10/economy/32154774\\_1\\_sino-russian-relations-russian-president-vladimir-putin-sino-russian-ties](http://articles.marketwatch.com/2012-06-10/economy/32154774_1_sino-russian-relations-russian-president-vladimir-putin-sino-russian-ties)



## Going South and East: China, Russia, South Sudan and Syria

Due to its prodigious economic growth, rapid urban expansion and unprecedented increase in manufacturing, China requires an ever-increasing amount of oil to power its productive engine. In less than a decade, China will overtake the European Union and the United States to become the largest importer of oil in the world. Over the next two decades, China's oil imports will rise from slightly more than five million barrels of oil per day (bbl) to nearly thirteen million bbl. In order to meet future demands, Beijing will undoubtedly tap its three largest suppliers in Africa (Angola, Sudan and the Republic of the Congo) to an even larger degree. Indeed, it is already doing so already.<sup>46</sup> In its quest for oil in Africa, China has made significant oil-for-infrastructure-investments in several oil-rich countries, and it has expanded its trade with Africa by more than 300% since becoming the continent's number one trade partner (surpassing the United States) four years ago.<sup>47</sup>

For years, China has bankrolled Khartoum in its genocidal war against Darfur for the purpose of maintaining its drilling rights and major investments in oil infrastructure in the southern half of the country. When the South began to break away politically from Khartoum with the backing of the international community in 2011-12 after decades of civil unrest, China quickly changed course. As its alliance with Khartoum threatened to jeopardize its oil interests in the new state of South Sudan, Beijing made a strategic *volte face* and began courting the new

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<sup>46</sup> Christopher Alessi, "Expanding China-Africa Oil Ties," *Council on Foreign Relations* 8 February 2012. Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.cfr.org/china/expanding-china-africa-oil-ties/p9557> ; *The World Factbook 2012*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2012. Accessed 12 November 2012 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2175rank.html>

<sup>47</sup> Ty McCormick, "What does China want for its \$20 billion to Africa?," *Foreign Policy* 19 July 2012. Accessed 19 July 2012 [http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/07/19/is\\_china\\_acting\\_responsibly\\_in\\_africa](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/07/19/is_china_acting_responsibly_in_africa) China's trade with Africa reached \$166 billion in 2011.

regime in Juba to ensure the sanctity of its oil contracts.<sup>48</sup> Upon gaining independence on 9 July 2011, South Sudan agreed to a 50-50 oil-sharing revenue deal with Khartoum. Yet, the exact percentage and logistics of carrying oil to northern ports remained unresolved.<sup>49</sup> Six months after becoming a new nation, a crisis unfolded over one of the thorny issues in the oil agreement. In a row over transit fees, Juba demonstrated its leverage by closing down all but two percent of its production of oil. Due to China's immediate diplomatic response, a return to hostilities and the possibility of an all-out war was averted.<sup>50</sup> In April 2012, South Sudan President Salva Kiir arrived in Beijing for talks surrounding their shared economic and political interests in the region. Only three and a half weeks later, Beijing and Juba announced an \$8 billion oil-for-infrastructure agreement "to build roads, bridges and telecom networks, and to develop agriculture and hydroelectric power" for the fledgling nation.<sup>51</sup> Similar to its \$2 billion oil-for-infrastructure deal with Angola almost a decade earlier, China clearly intends to continue using the same trade model for the foreseeable future.<sup>52</sup> Beyond making significant diplomatic overtures to South Sudan, China also dramatically ended its unwavering support of Khartoum in the United Nations. Rather than prevent passage of UN Security Council Resolution 2046 in

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<sup>48</sup> Pak K. Lee, Gerald Chan and Lai-Ha Chan, "China in Darfur: Humanitarian Rule-Maker or Rule-Taker?" *Review of International Studies* Vol. 38/Issue 02/April 2012, 432-433. Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=8527351&jid=RIS&volumeId=38&issueId=02&aid=8527349&bodyId=&membershipNumber=&societyETOCSession=>

<sup>49</sup> "South Sudan Faces Hurdles As World's Newest Country," *IMF Survey Magazine: Countries and Regions* The International Monetary Fund 18 July 2011 Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2011/car071811a.htm>

<sup>50</sup> In the weeks and months prior to and after South Sudan became independent, Sudan waged a low-intensity war against its southern neighbor by supporting armed proxy groups that carry out "indiscriminate bombings." See Ross Mountain, "The Republic of South Sudan turns a new page – but humanitarian needs persist," *The Guardian* (UK), 8 July 2011 Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/08/sudan-darfur-aid-south-kordofan-independence>

<sup>51</sup> "South Sudan 'agrees \$8bn deal with China' *BBC NEWS* 28 April 2012 Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17883321>; "China's New Courtship in South Sudan," *International Crisis Group* 4 April 2012 Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/horn-of-africa/south-sudan/186-chinas-new-courtship-in-south-sudan.aspx>

<sup>52</sup> See Indira Campos and Alex Vines, "Prospects for Improving U.S.-China-Africa Cooperation," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* March 2008, 6-9 Accessed 12 November 2012 [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/080306\\_angolachina.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/080306_angolachina.pdf)

May 2012, which called for both sides to cease and desist from all cross-border attacks, Beijing voted to approve the measure.<sup>53</sup> In the words of former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, “China identifies Africa as an alternative source of energy and raw materials that are essential to the continuation of China’s economic modernization process.”<sup>54</sup> As such, Beijing has and will pursue an expedient foreign policy that caters to primarily to resource-acquisition.

At the same time China was attempting to mend the rift between Khartoum and Juba in 2011, an “Arab Spring” rocked the Middle East with revolutions from below in a number of countries. As Egyptians conducted massive demonstrations Tahrir Square in Cairo against the corrupt, authoritarian regime of Hosni Mubarak, the heavily repressed population of Syria revolted against the iron-clad rule of Bashar al-Assad.<sup>55</sup> While the West expressed its collective diplomatic outrage at the heavy-handed tactics being used to quell the uprisings, China remained tactically aloof and Russia rushed to protect Assad. Syria has remained in the Russian geopolitical orbit since the days of being ruled by Hafez al-Assad (Bashar’s father). Beyond receiving nearly \$20 billion in Russian investments for development of its domestic energy, tourism and infrastructure in 2009 alone, Syria also agreed in principle to purchase \$5 billion worth of weapons from Russian arms-makers in early 2012. Aside from maintaining a lucrative client for guns and military hardware, Moscow is especially interested in checking Western

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<sup>53</sup> James Traub, “The Accidental Peacemaker,” *Foreign Policy* 4 May 2012 Accessed 12 November 2012 [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/04/the\\_accidental\\_peacemaker](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/04/the_accidental_peacemaker); UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 2046 (2012) [on the situation in Sudan and South Sudan], 24 May 2012, S/RES/2046(2012) , available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4fbc0206195.html> [accessed 12 November 2012]

<sup>54</sup> Kevin Rudd, “Viewpoint: China and the world,” *BBC NEWS* 8 November 2012 Accessed 12 November 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-20217333>

<sup>55</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, “Mubarak’s Allies and Foes Clash in Egypt,” *The New York Times* 2 February 2011 Accessed 13 November 2012 [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/03/world/middleeast/03egypt.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/03/world/middleeast/03egypt.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0); Elizabeth Flock, “Syria Revolution: A revolt brews against Bashar al-Assad’s regime,” *The Washington Post* 15 March 2011 Accessed 13 November 2012 [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/syria-revolution-revolt-against-bashar-al-assads-regime/2011/03/15/ABrwNEX\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/syria-revolution-revolt-against-bashar-al-assads-regime/2011/03/15/ABrwNEX_blog.html) The Egyptian and Syrian revolts began in earnest in February 2011 and March 2011 respectively.

influence in the region by holding onto Tartus – its last naval base on the Mediterranean. In fact, Russia has employed 600 engineers to rebuild the aging naval station during the ongoing Syrian civil war.<sup>56</sup>

Rather than attempt to take a balanced approach or camouflage its realpolitik, Moscow has boldly supported the Assad regime despite its grievous violations of human rights. In October 2011, Russia used its Security Council member status in the United Nations to thwart an attempt by the diplomatic body to condemn Assad's murderous campaigns against civilians – particularly women and children.<sup>57</sup> Three months later, Moscow not only prevented the UN Security Council from taking action but it also dispatched an "aircraft-carrying missile-cruiser" with "a consignment of Yakhont cruise missiles" to bolster Assad's hold on power.<sup>58</sup> Under protection of Moscow's veto power in the UN Security Council, Assad has been able to carry on his limitless campaign of violence and repression with arms from Russia and Iran.<sup>59</sup> On 3 February 2012, Assad's forces waged an all-out assault on the town of Homs after a long siege. At least two hundred residents were slaughtered in a scene of carnage reminiscent to the destruction of the town of Hama by Hafez al-Assad three decades earlier.<sup>60</sup> Undaunted by its failure to override previous Russian objections, the UN again attempted to take action in the hours immediately after this latest atrocity. Although Moscow took the lead, Beijing

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<sup>56</sup> Daniel Treisman, "Why Russia protects Syria's Assad," *CNN* 3 February 2012 Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.cnn.com/2012/02/02/opinion/treis-man-russia-syria/index.html>

<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2012: Syria* Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-syria> Assad and his henchmen murdered approximately 3,500 civilians – including children – in one brutal assault in 2011.

<sup>58</sup> Daniel Treisman, "Why Russia protects Syria's Assad," *CNN* 3 February 2012 Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.cnn.com/2012/02/02/opinion/treis-man-russia-syria/index.html>

<sup>59</sup> "Russia threatens Syria resolution at UN" *BBC NEWS* 18 January 2012 Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16609789>

<sup>60</sup> Ben Quinn, "Syria: more than 200 dead after 'massacre' of Homs," 3 February 2012 *The Guardian* (UK) Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/04/syria-report-homs-killings>; Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on Syria," 4 February 2012 *The White House* Accessed 13 November 2012 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/02/04/statement-president-syria>

prominently joined its Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) partner to block the making of a new resolution to call Assad to accountability. Similar to their involvement in Sudan, Beijing and Moscow have joined hands to protect their respective anti-democratic, geopolitical ambitions.<sup>61</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

In 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague issued a warrant for the arrest of Omar al-Bashir. In the indictment, the president of Sudan was charged with “five counts of crimes against humanity,” “two counts of war crimes” for his campaign against Darfur.<sup>62</sup> Charges of “genocide” were added a year later. Rather than assisting the international community in bringing him to justice, China’s leadership welcomed Bashir to Beijing for high-level talks in June 2011 to sign a set of new finance and trade agreements.<sup>63</sup> On 11 November 2012, former ICC prosecutor Luis-Moreno Ocampo stated that NATO had the grounds and authority to issue an arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for his role in the killing of innocent, unarmed civilians.<sup>64</sup> Barring a large-scale NATO military intervention, however,

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<sup>61</sup> Holly Yan, “Why China, Russia won’t condemn Syrian regime,” *CNN* 5 February 2012 Accessed 13 November 2012 [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-05/middleeast/world\\_meast\\_syria-china-russia-relations\\_1\\_syrian-president-bashar-al-assad-syrian-government-syrian-regime?\\_s=PM:MIDDLEEAST](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-05/middleeast/world_meast_syria-china-russia-relations_1_syrian-president-bashar-al-assad-syrian-government-syrian-regime?_s=PM:MIDDLEEAST); Ted Piccone and Emily Alinikoff, “Rising Democracies Take on Russia and China,” *The National Interest* 17 February 2012 <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/rising-democracies-take-russia-china-6525> In exchange for China’s support of Syria’s control of the Golan Heights, Syria has backed China’s ‘One China’ policy with respect to Taiwan.

<sup>62</sup> International Criminal Court, “ICC 02/05-01/09 The Prosecutor v Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir,” Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://www.iccpi.int/menus/icc/situations%20and%20cases/situations/situation%20icc%200205/related%20cases/icc02050109/icc02050109?lan=en-GB>; International Criminal Court, “Situation in Darfur, Sudan - In The Case Of The Prosecutor v. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir” 4 March 2009 (First Arrest Warrant) Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc639078.pdf>

<sup>63</sup> “UN Criticizes China’s Failure to Arrest Sudan’s Bashir,” *Voice of America* 29 June 2011 Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://www.voanews.com/content/un-criticizes-chinas-failure-to-arrest-sudans-bashir---124771729/141530.html>

<sup>64</sup> “NATO could arrest Assad in Syria:ex-ICC prosecutor,” *The Nation* 11 November 2012 Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/11-Nov-2012/nato-could-arrest-assad-in-syria-ex-icc-prosecutor>

Assad will be able to keep his regime of terror in power indefinitely with shipments of Russian weapons and continued diplomatic protection against UN sanctions by Beijing and Moscow.<sup>65</sup>

In the course of the last decade, Beijing and Moscow have formed a lethal alliance to counter Western influence. By aligning their interests with the criminal regimes of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan and Bashar al-Assad in Syria, China and Russia have emphatically opted to carry out a foreign policy of *realpolitik* rather than one based on international law.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, their expedient, Machiavellian approach to world politics lies in stark contrast to one of principled, long-term stability. As such, British Prime Minister David Cameron was entirely correct to condemn their actions in his speech to the United Nations. As long as the international community fails to sanction the Beijing-Moscow power nexus, the predatory politics of guns and oil will continue to undermine all efforts to bring democracy and human rights to both Africa and the Middle East – and ultimately sunder the credibility of the United Nations and its pledge to create a world order based on justice.

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<sup>65</sup> Bessma Momani, “Russia and China Provide Cover for Assad’s Syria,” *The Toronto Star* 31 January 2012 Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/1124472--russia-and-china-provide-cover-for-assad-s-syria>

<sup>66</sup> Thomas Wheeler, “China’s Development Diplomacy,” *The Diplomat* 4 March 2012 Accessed 15 November 2012 <http://thediplomat.com/2012/03/04/china%E2%80%99-development-diplomacy/> In writing “when the benefits are seen to favor certain groups or consolidating the power of elites China’s economic role may inadvertently exacerbate instability,” Wheeler clearly understated the base motives and baleful consequences of Beijing’s economic and political investments in dictatorships.