

THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF CHINESE BUREAUCRATS TOWARDS PEACEKEEPING DECISION MAKING IN THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN DARFUR (UNAMID): 2005 to 2012

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ABSTRACT

Bureaucratic politics played an important role in China's decision to send peacekeeping troops to Sudan-Darfur. This intranational politicking process involved departmental and individual interests with bureaucrats competing, bargaining and compromising in ways that reflect Graham Allison's bureaucratic politics model (BPM). Consequently, BPM is applied towards China's peacekeeping decisionmaking in the United Nation's Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). The positions and actions of Chinese bureaucrats are examined to establish what contribution they individually and collectively made to the decisionmaking process. The analysis revealed that bureaucrats influenced peacekeeping decisionmaking through departmental positions and used their bargaining skills to promote personal interests. Some of the bureaucrats/bureaucracies also had competing preferences on the goals and missions of the UNAMID. The "national interest" cannot be considered as the driving force for China's peacekeeping intervention; rather it is a result of competition between bureaucracies in various attempts to secure their own sectional interests.

Keywords: Peacekeeping Operations, Decision making, Motivations, Rational Actor Model, Bureaucratic Politics Model.

INTRODUCTION

In examining China's foreign policy it is evident that actors outside the traditional state decisionmaking apparatus influence policy decisions. In this article it is argued that bureaucrats involved in the Sudan-Darfur issue did not focus on any one issue e.g. peacekeeping, but rather on many diverse intranational problems that could advance their respective domains. According to Graham Allison, bureaucrats are players who act in terms of there not being any consistent set of strategic objectives. Their actions follow various conceptions of the "national interest", but equally organizational and personal goals are prominent (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 255).

The Chinese bureaucrats who played a role in the Darfur decisionmaking process were the Chinese assistant foreign minister, the special and deputy representatives to the United Nations (UN), the special representative for African Affairs, People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers, ambassadors from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and officials from other departments. These individuals contested power and differed on what had to be done to persuade the Sudanese government that peacekeeping could restore peace and stability in Darfur. Every player held certain beliefs and preferences about what was important for their own departments and this was then extrapolated to being the interest of China more broadly. These bureaucrats were often players in the economic and oil fields and considered how the peacekeeping issue could advance their own personal and departmental interests. The Chinese players in Sudan consequently used the power at their disposal very effectively

through bargaining and compromise to deliver results. In playing the game, reputations were enhanced and power was invested wisely.

It is significant to note that priorities and perceptions of the actors were shaped by their respective positions. Responsibilities shouldered by the special representative for African Affairs, the ambassadors from the MFA and the officers and commanders of the PLA, encouraged differences in their perceptions and judgments regarding the UNAMID mission. Second, negotiating a solution to the Darfur issue was not only centered on advancing state-to-state relations, but also focused on the management of piecemeal streams of decisions. This can be seen as evidence of the BPM assumption that what the government decides is more difficult than selecting the preferred solution (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 258). The Chinese government decided to participate in UNAMID because of the influencing and persuasive power of their diplomats. The subsequent peace agreement came as a result of such negotiations, and was not due merely to the government's steady-state choices. For example, in the words of Liu Guijin: "Chinese diplomats were instrumental in a diplomatic breakthrough earlier this month when Sudan's government finally agreed to let a strong force of U.N and AU peacekeepers be deployed in Darfur (Permanent Mission of the PRC to the UN, 2008)."

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE BPM

The following assumptions shed light on the application of the BPM in this article. The first assumption of the BPM is that policy outcomes are the result of "bargaining games" between representatives of different government agencies, rather than reflecting the interests of some assumed unitary state. A policy outcome is depicted not as representative of a rationally chosen solution to a particular problem, "but rather results from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unique influence (Yetiv, 2004: 122)." Policy outcomes are also constrained by the political "bargaining along regularized channels among individual members of the government (Yetiv, 2004: 122)." Thus, while decision makers are assumed to be rational, final decisions are often representative of the outcomes of collective "pulling and hauling", rather than careful cost/benefit analysis (Allison, 1971).

Secondly, positions taken in such bargaining games are reflective of parochial interests as functions of organizational roles. The most famous formulation of this assumption of determinacy is known as Miles' Law, which asserts: "Where you stand depends on where you sit (Neustadt & May, 1986: 157)." For example, the Minister of Defense would be normally expected to take policy positions that promote the budgets and prominence of the Ministry of Defense (MOD), often viewing problems as either military in nature, or with a military solution. Conversely, the MFA would be expected to promote the interests of the MFA and favour the usage of diplomatic tools of statecraft that are the department's stock and trade. Such primacy of parochial interests is what allows broader expectations about bureaucratically unitary action to be made, rather than requiring the analyst to peer inside the mind of bureaucratic leaders and account for personal bias and preference (Quaintance, 2009: 35).

Thirdly, the ability of bureaucratic decision makers to influence policy outcomes is assumed to be a function of their relative bargaining power (Yetiv, 2004: 122). In the short term, relative bargaining power is argued to be a function of the political influence, knowledge of the "rules of the game", and the ability and will to use bureaucratic leverage held by the decision maker in question (Neustadt, 1976). Neustadt takes this notion of shared power

beyond the familiar context of intranational bargaining into the relations between nations. The intranational game can indeed include foreign participants, particularly in relations among and between close allies (Neustadt, 1990). The special representative for Africa, China's ambassadors, and commanders of the peacekeeping contingents can be said to have been involved in this international bargaining game.

Interviews and electronic correspondence were a primary source of collecting information because they provided first-hand accounts of bureaucrat's positions and statements toward the decisionmaking process. This primary information added an empirical value to the application of the BPM. The bureaucrats and departments who had a stake in the peacekeeping issue are addressed in the sections that follow.

CHINA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Ambassador Wang Guangya (王光亞), the Chinese special representative to the UN, released a statement on April 25, 2006 stating that the Chinese side has adopted a prudent attitude toward sanctions imposed by the UNSC and would abstain from resolutions 1556, 1564, 1591 and 1672 (Chinavivae 2013a). The ambassador also encouraged the parties concerned to sign the peace agreement package presided over by the African Union and that an appropriate solution to the Darfur issue not only concerned security and humanitarian action in the region, but also had a bearing on the peace process between the North and the South of Sudan, neighboring Chad, and the security and stability of the Central Africa and the sub-region as a whole (Permanent Mission of the PRC to the UN, 2008).

Director, Zhu Weilie, director of Middle East and North African Studies at Shanghai International Studies University, who has links with the MFA, had a different position than ambassador Wang. He said on occasion that Chinese diplomats in their negotiations with the Sudan government should not only consider the peace process, but also focus on China's oil interests in the region. The protecting of oil interests is an indispensable part of China's African strategy and should be included in any discussion of bilateral cooperation with Sudan (Goodman, 2004: 1). In analyzing the statements of ambassador Wang and Director Zhu, the deduction is that they viewed China's involvement in Sudan through different lenses. The ambassador acted in the true spirit of a negotiator and wanted to emphasize China's role as a peacemaker. His actions placed China's notional interests at the centre. Director Zhu as an academic, did not necessarily feel that China's role in the negotiation process would have any direct benefits to China (for example, the promotion of image, earning respect as an influential negotiator, and strengthening Sino-Sudanese relationships). He viewed the situation from a position of securing and promoting oil interests. Zhu's assumption was possibly driven by his desire to increase his personal reputation by influencing the interests of commercial actors.

The bargaining and influencing power Liu Guijin, China's envoy to Africa to deal with the Sudan crisis, exercised over the Sudanese government and his meetings with dignitaries of the U.N, AU and U.S. impacted the decision of the Chinese government to send peacekeeping troops to Darfur (Africa Confidential, 2008). The ambassador's role in mediating the Darfur conflict did not end with the leadership's decision to send troops to Darfur, but continued right up until South Sudan gaining independence from the North on 9 July 2011.

In order to understand the role that Liu Guijin played, it is necessary to examine the course of events that gave rise to his appointment. Over the years, the Sudanese government has cooperated with the AU in addressing conflicts among and between local communities in Darfur (Liu & Lin, 2007). Some Western countries accused Khartoum of genocide in the region, an allegation that was subsequently questioned by an on-site UN investigation. Highly suspicious of the motives of Western countries, the Sudanese government had refused to allow any troops from outside the AU into Darfur, even under the banner of a UN operation (Liu & Lin, 2007). The situation became more complicated as the West threatened to impose escalating economic sanctions on Sudan. The move caused agitation within the AU, while Sudan vowed to fight for its sovereignty (Liu & Lin, 2007).

At a crucial moment, China emerged to promote a political resolution of the Darfur issue. It adopted a clear-cut stance that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sudan should be respected and that sanctions were not conducive to resolving the issue. In order to avert a possible escalation of the crisis, China immediately embarked on a series of diplomatic efforts (Permanent Mission of the PRC to the UN, 2006). As a gesture of commitment to find a solution for the Darfur issue, China dispatched five groups of envoys to Darfur. In May 2007, the leadership appointed Liu Guijin as the special envoy on the Darfur issue (Africa Confidential, 2007). In one of his earliest speeches, Liu said that sanctions on Sudan, as proposed by the West, would only complicate the issue and described China's role as unique, since Chinese and Africans speak and act in a similar manner and have a mutual desire to promote peace and stability in the region (Africa Confidential, 2007). The implication is not that only the Chinese and African leaders care about peace in Darfur, but that it is a concerted effort by the international community to bring peace and stability to the region. It is true that China through their support of African countries in their liberation struggles during the colonial past, developed a strong sense of unity and affiliation with these governments. In this respect, China and Sudan also vowed to establish long-lasting friendship built on the principles of mutual respect and resolution of conflicts when and where they should arise.

In a series of talks, Liu met with President El-Bashir and several government ministers in a bid to persuade them to show greater flexibility on issues such as the proposal put forward by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on deploying an AU-UN joint peacekeeping force in Darfur in three phases (Consulate-General of the PRC in San Francisco, 2007). The proposal was the result of a year of mediation by AU and other countries. The ambassador made it clear to the Sudanese side that it was in the immediate and long-term interests of Sudan to accept the Annan proposal, since it was universally recognized as a comprehensive solution to the Darfur issue. As commented by Liu: "China has been trying every possible channel to carry through the message to Sudan and the Sudanese government apparently agreed with us (Consulate-General of the PRC in San Francisco, 2007)."

On 12 June 2007, Sudan declared in a joint statement with the AU and UN that it had explicitly accepted the third and final phase of the Annan proposal without reservation (Liu & Lin, 2007). Under China's presidency, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1769, which paved the way for an AU-UN peacekeeping force entering Darfur, but without asserting pressure or imposing sanctions against Sudan (Liu & Lin, 2007). However, Liu in a statement released on 21 August 2008, warned that "any kind of peacekeeping mission will be useless if it does not have the support of the Sudanese government (Permanent Mission of the PRC to the UN, 2008b)." This statement is an affirmation of the traditional style of peacekeeping, which says that consent of the host government is necessary before peacekeeping troops can be dispatched to a mission area.

Liu's outstanding characteristic was his bargaining skills and will in using the skills to persuade the Sudanese leaders in an outcome for the Darfur conflict (Africa Confidential, 2007). Allison notes that bargaining advantages also determines individual and collective player's impacts on results (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 300). However, China's need for Sudan's energy resources led to the establishment of an arguably dependent oil relationship, which impaired the abilities of the Chinese diplomats to have a bargaining advantage. In actual fact, neither one of the parties was in an advantageous situation. For Sudan, the case was one of attracting continued Chinese investments and building a strong economic relationship. Environmental constraints, such as the hostile attitude of rebel groups toward the presence of Chinese peacekeepers in the Darfur region and the inability to reconcile the goals of the leadership with the needs of the local population, were detrimental to having a bargaining advantage. The loss of bargaining advantage was substituted by superb bargaining skills (Africa Confidential, 2007).

A reference is given here to the conflicting viewpoints China's Assistant Foreign Minister, Zhai Jun (翟隽) and China's special envoy to Sudan had on the peace process (Chinaviva, 2013b). Both officials perceived the hybrid-peacekeeping mission as having specific benefits for their domains. In a meeting with Sudanese officials from August to September 2008, the Assistant Foreign Minister stated that all the stakeholders in the peace process should contribute to resolving the Darfur issue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, 2008). Liu Guijin instructed his delegation to draw up an agenda. What adds special weight to the bargaining power of Liu's delegation were their keeping notes of group meetings with representatives from the Sudan government, a task that delegates of other countries involved in finding a solution to the conflict, did not consider as important (Forum on China Africa Cooperation, 2010). The argument is that China's immediate stakes in the conflict were of such a nature that formal meeting procedures were followed to the book. This would present the Chinese delegation with evidence in the case of inquiries that could be made later into their conflict resolution agenda. The diplomats that accompanied Zhai did not consider the setting of an agenda as giving them a bargaining advantage over Sudan officials. They handled meetings on a day to day basis and wished that a positive outcome could be reached after lengthy discussions. This did not happen due to the diplomat's disagreeing on the finer details of the bargaining process, which impaired their ability to influence Sudanese diplomats toward reaching a common point of understanding.¹

The Assistant Foreign Minister and Liu also clashed on the impact Chinese officials had with the UN and Sudan. Liu was of the opinion that bargaining should first and foremost combine the goals of all the parties in reaching a result for the Darfur issue, while Zhai viewed the advantages such bargaining could have for his department. It should be noted that a peaceful and stable Sudan would create huge opportunities for the MFA to promote departmental interests and open up the playing field for Chinese role-players to enter Sudan. The stakes were high for the MFA to project a favorable image of China in Sudan and for Sudanese to see the benefits of Sino-Chinese cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, 2008). Liu and Zhai thus hoped to advance the parochial interests of their domains and colored the bargaining process through different faces (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, 2008). It can also be argued that they were in competition to receive status and recognition for their efforts by the Sudanese government and to elevate their standings in the Chinese government hierarchy.

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA)

The positions, influence and competing preferences of PLA commanders and officers attached to UNAMID also had an impact on peacekeeping decisionmaking. Dai Shao'an, deputy director of the peacekeeping affairs office with the National Defence Ministry, commented in an interview with Xinhua in March 2008 that China's peacekeepers have made contributions to Sudan's peace, stability and development (Embassy of the PRC in Liberia, 2008).

What factors shaped the deputy director's stance on the contributions of Chinese peacekeepers to the resolution of conflicts. Allison notes that "factors encouraging organizational parochialism also exert pressure upon the players who occupy positions on top of or within organizations. Representatives of the organization to a group decision will be sensitive to the organization's orientation (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 298)." It is assumed that the director enhanced the image of his organization and the broad international goals of peaceful development and co-existence. Stemming from the deputy director's stance on the contribution Chinese peacekeepers makes to the situation in southern Sudan, it is reliable to predict that he also advanced China's interest, with projecting a favorable image of the PLA to the region as showcasing the potential of this military unit.

Wen Xian, a senior PLA editor, elaborated that "any actions taken by Chinese peacekeeping troops should take into account the maintenance of Sudan's national unity, and be favorable to the conditions of the mission area (Ministry of Defence of the PRC, 2007). In fact, the restoration of stability at all costs is imperative to ensure that the territorial integrity of Sudan is not eroded (Shichor, 2007: 1-3). Lu Yidong, captain of the engineering team in Darfur during an interview in 2009 said: "Chinese peacekeeping troops assisted neighboring peacekeeping contingents in camp construction and helped the southern Darfur states in economic construction (Xinhua News, 2009)." Although it is not evident that the captain used his position to consult with other officers, it could be reasonably argued that he exercised influence to bargain with the neighboring peacekeeping contingent in addressing their needs and how such a camp could be constructed.

Li Wei, deputy military attaché of the Chinese Embassy to Sudan, acknowledged that the PLA peacekeeping troops are making a contribution to world peace and that Chinese peacekeepers assist with the peace process and reconstruction of Darfur (Xinhua News, 2009). Although it is not clear what the deputy military attaché's own position was, the judgement could be made that Li had a strong affiliation to his department. Military attachés are appointed by the MOD and have influence to produce results to military issues in foreign countries (Sinodefence, 2013).

According to Peng Guojun, head of logistics group of the 6th peacekeeping engineering detachment, rotating peacekeeping troops on an eight-month basis allows for the clear handover of hardware supplies and smooth operation of future peacekeeping missions (China News, 2011). This means that soldiers gain knowledge and experience on a continuous basis, which they can use to boost the military modernization program at home and the actions taken abroad. As mentioned in chapter three, peacekeeping holds advantages for the PLA for a number of reasons. Peng's stand on the rotating of troops and what it means for future peacekeeping missions, determined the benefits of peacekeeping for the PLA under African conditions.

Wu Shuchen, the Chinese military attaché to Sudan and Ambassador Luo Xiaoguang had a clash of interests after president Al-Bashir praised the reconstruction and development efforts of the engineering contingent more than the coordination of humanitarian assistance by the MFA (China Army, 2011). This led to conflict between the MFA and PLA to establish their domain of influence in UNAMID, which was also a result of advancing departmental interests. Moreover, the argument is made that military attaché's want to promote the capabilities of the peacekeeping troops, while ambassadors have an inclination to build diplomatic relationships with host countries. Whereas it might be true that Wu and Luo agreed on the overall contributions of Chinese peacekeeping troops to Sudan, competing for power, influence and resources, placed the interests of these bureaucrats at odds with each other and caused a rift in the relationship between the PLA and MFA.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA)

Ambassadors from the MFA made a valuable contribution with regards to UNAMID. Three aspects are considered that provided results to peacekeeping decisionmaking. They embarked on these actions as part of the positions occupied in the government machinery. Allison describes the position of the government actor as follows: "The governmental actor is neither a unitary agent nor a conglomerate or organizations, but rather a number of individual players. Groups of players constitute the agent for particular government decisions and actions. Individuals become players in the national security policy game by occupying a position in the major channels for producing action on national security issues (Allison & Zelikow, 1999: 296). First, the ambassadors as representatives of China played an active part in bargaining for an outcome on the Darfur issue and second, they helped to persuade the government of Sudan that peacekeeping troops could help restore peace and stability to the region. These are their broad achievements. The positions and bargaining power of the individual representatives are to be examined.

a) *Li Chengwen (鄭麗文) (2007-2011)*

Li Chengwen was appointed ambassador to Sudan in the period after the signing of the Abuja agreement in 2006 and the signing of the Doha agreement in 2011 (Sudan Tribune, 2011). What was China's position on the Doha peace agreement that was signed after intense bargaining of officials from various countries? As discussed previously, Liu Guijin was instrumental in persuading the government of Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir to enter negotiations on finding a solution to the Darfur conflict and allowing for UN peacekeeping troops. Did China keep its obligation in drawing the parties together after Liu's role was over, or did bureaucrats from the MFA take a lesser firm position? The comment of Ma Zhaoxu a spokesman for the MFA sheds light on this question. Ma said: "China appreciates the active efforts made by the Qatari government and AU-UN chief mediator Djibril Bassole on the resumption of Doha peace talks between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebel group Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) in June, 2010 (Forum on China Africa Cooperation, 2010)."

Going back to 2007, Li Chengwen stated that China's efforts to help resolve the Darfur issue and the positioning of peacekeeping troops in the region is in line with China's policy to realize peace and development (China.org.cn, 2007). Chinese diplomats worked behind the scenes to promote development and construction in the Darfur region that would be beneficial to protecting China's interests and put Sudan on the path of peace, progress and prosperity. Li and his personnel also worked in collaboration with the UN to resolve the

Darfur issue through political means (China.org.cn, 2007). The bargaining that occurred between Li and his staff pointed to reaching a compromise and providing results for further action. The adoption of resolution 1769 on 31 July 2007 authorizing the deployment a hybrid UN and AU force in Darfur marked the achievement of such action.

An incident took place on 24 November 2007 in which the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group threatened to attack the hundred and fifty-five Chinese peacekeeping engineers in Nyala (Cable searchgate, 2007). It started when JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim Muhhamed said: “They (the Chinese engineers) are not welcome; they can never come into our area. I am not saying I will attack them, I will not say I will not attack them (Cable searchgate, 2007).” On 27 November, JEM spokesman Ahmed Hussein Adam remarked: “In spite of the fact that Darfur people do not welcome the Chinese troops who are the main ally of Khartoum government and its principle provider of weapons, we will not target the Chinese peacekeepers (U.S. Department of State, 2007).” Li, as China’s top diplomat in Sudan on 28 November was reported as saying: “Up to now there has been no incident, but we are deeply concerned about the matter (U.S. Department of State, 2007).” In response to this incident, the American embassy contacted the Chinese embassy in Khartoum on 28 November and talked to political officers Shen Ang and Yu Chunhua (People’s Daily, 2007). When asked about China’s responses to the JEM threats, Ang said that the threats are against all UNAMID peacekeepers of which the Chinese peacekeepers are a part and that it was expected that UNAMID is responsible for their protection. He added that these troops are not infantry but engineers who are there to support the entire Darfur Peace Agreement (People’s Daily, 2007). It is not exactly clear what Li’s role in this incident was, but as China’s top official in Sudan, he must have been involved in bargaining and using his influence to avert a possible attack on the Chinese peacekeepers. In addition, due to UNAMID’s responsibility to provide security for all the peacekeepers under its control, Chinese peacekeepers could not be left to their own mercy in the case of such an attack happening. China’s support of the Khartoum government further exacerbated possible negotiations that could occur between Chinese diplomats and the leaders of rebel movements.

Staff at the Chinese embassy in Sudan had different opinions on the department’s role before the election in South Sudan. A small group was afraid that the existing capabilities of the department were insufficient to assist with the run-up to the election in South Sudan. For example the department could not provide enough personnel to help with election duties, such as observation and monitoring. This group carried the interests of the embassy at heart and wanted to portray a favorable image of MFA in Sudan (The Guardian, 2010). Another group was concerned about influence and personal goals. In their meetings with officials of the north and south, the gaining of personal prestige and bargaining advantage defined their points of interests. Ambassador Lin decided to act as broker between these two factions in order to protect the mission of the Chinese embassy, the integrity of the MFA in Sudan and possibly his own reputation. This was done to unite the two groups around a common goal. The ambassador said that Chinese diplomats brokering the election in South Sudan should cooperate to seek mutual benefits and not pursue paths of selfless behavior and irresponsible action (The Guardian, 2010).

b) Luo Xiaoguang (羅小光) (September 2011 to present)

Luo Xiaoguang became China’s ambassador to Sudan shortly after south Sudan gained independence from the north (Embassy of the PRC in Sudan, 2010). This was a transitional period characterized by risks and opportunities that arose from electing Salva Kiir Mayardit,

as the president of the Republic of South-Sudan. China faced great uncertainty over the election of Mayardit and the attack by the South Sudanese army on the Heglig oilfield in 2012, and how this would affect the supply of oil to the port of Sudan (BBC News, 2011). Oil from the Sudan fields is transported through pipelines to the port of Sudan where Chinese tankers carry the load back to China. Chinese diplomats have to strike a fine balance to avoid a potentially costly and hazardous intervention between the Sudans, especially during a period of domestic political change in China (Wiggin, 2010). Yet leaving the two Sudans to pursue negotiation among themselves, as might be called for under China's norm of non-interference, misses the complexity of the conflict and jeopardizes China's oil interests in the region (Wiggin, 2010).

Luo Xiaoguang, and more importantly China's Special Representative on African Affairs, Zhong Jianhua were tasked with negotiating a solution to this conflict. The aim was to protect China's interests in the region and the resumption of oil exports to China. The visible presence of Chinese peacekeeping troops in the Darfur region (the UNAMID) had a sizeable impact. Although not instructed to intervene in any direct form of confrontation with the rebel and government forces, they did monitor the situation and kept the warring groups apart.

In Sudans' Darfur region, where the majority of Chinese oil operations take place, Luo Xiaoguang and MFA spokesperson, Hong Lei in March 2012 called that the dispute can only be handled through negotiation and restraint in the latest instalment of conflict that has lasted several decades (Wiggin, 2010). This compromising position of the two MFA bureaucrats indicates a desire to cooperate on issues that have a direct effect on China's interests in the region. It further shows that consultations and agreements between diplomatic staff produce results that influence the decision of the leadership in making security arrangements for the region. The presence of a strong peacekeeping force brings stability to the region and advances relations in other fields, according to a remark made by ambassador Luo in a meeting with Sudan's president, Al-Bashir (China Army, 2011). Maintaining a balance between the demands of the north and the south is one of the ambassador's primary responsibilities (Xinhua Online, 2012). Ambassador Luo was also a keen advocate of providing humanitarian assistance to Sudan, which reinforced the second goal discussed in the RAM section and arguably a driving force for China to keep on sending humanitarian assistance consignments. On occasion, Luo said: "The third batch of humanitarian assistance China has presented to Sudan will provide much for the local people and boost their living conditions (People's Daily Online, 2012)."

The delivering of humanitarian assistance did result in disagreement between the Chinese embassy in Sudan and the agencies responsible for the deliveries.ⁱⁱ It was more a question of distributing the material to tribes in an impartial way, so that tribal leaders could not accuse the relief agencies of favoring one tribe above another. In the dry and arid Sudan, tribes have to compete with each other for food, water and land which can lead to bitter battles between tribal groups for these resources. Already after the first relief materials was sent to Sudan, tribal leaders started to point finger to bureaucracies for an uneven distribution of these materials. These included food items, such as maize, canned foods, rice, and flour, and other products, such as plastic sheets, blankets, jerry cans, mattresses and mosquito nets. Tribal leader's hostility to UN workers and peacekeepers in certain areas makes the distribution and delivery of relief items a difficult and sometimes impossible task (Barber, 2009: 377).

The Chinese embassy in Sudan's coordination of these materials presented a challenge to ambassador Luo. He had to consult with responsible personnel in the Sudan government to facilitate the delivery of China's contributions, with his own staff in pressing for deadlines, and with peacekeeping personnel for the material transportation. In Sudan, peacekeeping troops assist with the delivery of relief material to some of the most dangerous and volatile areas. The ambassador did not only have to recognize China's humanitarian assistance contribution but also had to make sure that the materials reach their destinations. This was done by bargaining with the relevant agencies to produce results (People's Daily, 2012). It can also be said that this action boosted the standing of the ambassador among other departments and placed the Chinese embassy in pole position to compete with other embassies in Sudan for the effective distribution of humanitarian assistance.

OTHER BUREAUCRATIC PLAYERS

Officials of MOFCOM visited Sudan on various occasions during the presidency of Hu, engaging Chinese companies in a number of active projects in Sudan, for example oil, hydropower, road and bridge, and housing construction (Ministry of Commerce, 2008). Notable was the visit by Chinese vice Minister of Commerce, Mr. Gao Hucheng to Sudan in November, 2008 to activate economic cooperation and trade between the two countries (Ministry of Commerce, 2008). This visit happened a year after Liu Guijin negotiated the sending of peacekeeping troops to Darfur. Significant was that Gao in his negotiations with Sudanese bureaucrats used China's participation in UNAMID as a recourse for the goals he contemplated for Chinese commercial actors. The actions of the peacekeepers served as a driving force for Chinese companies operating in Sudan to pursue goals and to have probable success rates. This can be deduced from the timing of Gao's visit, one year after UNAMID was officially put into operation. There is evidence of Mofcom officials visiting Sudan and consulting with peacekeeping personnel on the mandate and objectives of UNAMID. They desired to ascertain what the perception of peacekeepers toward the economic reconstruction and development of Sudan is and if the peacekeepers though their actions connects security with business interests. These two questions basically boils down to the assumption that peacekeeping is a tool to advance commercial interests. This information helped the officials to formulate business strategies for Chinese companies doing business in Sudan and influenced bureaucrats of other departments in drawing up proposals for policy implementation. Such proposals now took environmental constraints into consideration, where former policies were based on departmental procedures crafted back in China.ⁱⁱⁱ

China Exim Bank is a significant role-player in the development of Sudan's infrastructure. What does involvement in development projects reveal about the bank's connection with peacekeeping? The emission of peacekeepers is an important part of China's overall diplomacy with Sudan. The bank provides loans to the development of infrastructure and as noted in the RAM, peacekeepers do assist with many of these projects. Some of the funds for infrastructure development are also allocated to peacekeeping units, albeit on a very small scale.^{iv} The water supply detachment drilling wells, the engineering unit's construction of schools and community centres and the delivery of humanitarian assistance are examples where funding from a higher institution facilitate the execution of these projects.^v

In January 2007, Cheng Siwei, the vice-chairman of the standing committee of the NPC declared that China's attempt to influence the government of Sudan to accept peacekeeping troops is a tool that will facilitate cooperation in other areas of interest. He referred to China's Exim Bank's plans for providing loans to development projects and the positive contribution

Chinese troops can make in creating conditions of trust and confidence (Bosshard, 2007). Understood from this statement is the pacifying role peacekeepers can play in connecting security interests with commercial interests.

There were some differences between bureaucrats on this issue. The president of China Exim Bank, Li Ruogu, did not believe that environmental and social impact studies were a prerequisite for the commencement of development projects. Particularly, his department did not consult environmental impact groups, NGOs, and community leaders before the construction of the Merowe Hydropower Dam started (International Rivers, 2009). This placed him in conflict with the Chinese embassy in Khartoum and Ambassador Li Chengwen, who in collaboration with Liu Guijin were involved in the peace negotiations for Darfur. Such inconsiderate behavior by Li Ruogu would have jeopardized Sino-Sudanese relations at this crucial time of the peace process. This indicates that officials from the MFA and China Exim Bank were influenced by departmental or personal preferences towards the issue. In addition, the MFA was concerned about human rights abuses in the project areas, while commercial actors, (Mofcom and China Exim Bank) were interested in the business sides of these deals (International Rivers, 2009). There was thus a distinction between the goals pursued by the MFA and financial institutions.

CONCLUSION

In looking for attributes in decision making, the BPM examined the roles of bureaucrats in gaining influence or power from the situation in Sudan. The Chinese ambassador to the UN, the special representative for African Affairs, the PLA and ambassadors from the MFA were identified as the main bureaucrats that contributed to peacekeeping decision making.

The 2007 visit of assistant Foreign Minister, Zhai Jhun to refugee camps in Darfur was an open acknowledgement that bureaucrats desire to get involved in decisionmaking (Africa Confidential, 2009). It may be inferred that Zhai Jun placed the interest of the MFA before the national interest, and that the position he held within the department determined his goals and priorities.

Liu Guijin as the special representative for African Affairs was involved in a process of pushing and hauling to advance his personal reputation and possibly his concept of the national interest. Guijin was very professional in affecting the decision, and arguably more significant in the mediating process than other negotiators. He was also persuasive, charismatic and bargained with all the parties to increase his stake in the issue.

Staff at the Chinese embassy in Sudan did not have an easy task in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Sudanese environment presented challenges in almost every area of interaction. The difficulty to implement policy in relation to the goals formulated by the government was perceived as a major obstacle. Sudan was a country devastated by years of war and there was a big mistrust in the intervention of foreign countries to assist with rebuilding the economy and put Sudan on the path of progress.

The difficulty of portraying the intent of peacekeepers in this paper was illuminated by the self-interested acts of bureaucrats, who placed department before national goals, differed on the faces of the issues, and competed for influence and power. However, these conflicting power positions did not mean that bureaucrats were uncooperative in providing piecemeal streams of decisions.

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Interview with Sudanese businessman in Johannesburg, South Africa, August 21, 2013. When asking the businessman how the negotiation process was perceived by Sudan, the answer was that Chinese government representatives definitely played a meaningful role in bringing all the parties together. They had bargaining skills in persuading Khartoum that conflict resolution was a better alternative than prolonging the conflict. On the question if bureaucratic politics was at play in producing a result, the answer was affirmative. The interlocutor noted that at the time of Zhai Jun’s visit, the MFA was drafting a plan of action on how to promote the image of China, after Sudan agreed on the sending of peacekeeping troops to the country. The observation was that the special representative and MFA officials were in conflict as to who gets the credit for the negotiation process.

ⁱⁱ Some of the relief agencies responsible for delivering humanitarian assistance in Darfur are Oxfam International and the Red Cross.

ⁱⁱⁱ Patrick Hsu, e-mail message to the author, November 20, 2013.

^{iv} The Sudanese businessman informed the author that a small portion of the money granted to big projects, such as the Merowe Hydropower Dam and the building of new highways, do end up in the hands of the peacekeeping units. This information was disclosed to the interlocutor in a private meeting with an official of the Ministry of Finance and National Economy of Sudan in 2008.

^v Ibid.