China and the United States in Africa

By

Zhu Qin
Embassy of the People’s Republic of China, Washington, DC

1) China's policies towards and interests in Africa

--One continent: Africa is the continent with the most developing countries, and China is the largest developing country. This fact defines the nature of the relationship and cooperation between China and Africa as South-South cooperation.

--Two pillars: one is China's Policy Paper on Africa; the other is the China-Africa Cooperation Forum. China's Policy Paper on Africa demonstrates China's commitment to developing long term and strategic relations with Africa. The China-Africa Cooperation Forum has become the most important platform for China-Africa cooperation.

--Three principles:
Politically: equality and mutual trust; economically: cooperation and a win-win situation; culturally: exchange and learning from each other.

--Four frequently asked questions:

a. Is China's interest and presence in Africa new?

   China-Africa relations date back 3000 years. Over the years, China and a number of African nations have been traditional partners and true friends.

b. Is China developing its relations with Africa merely for resources and oil?

   China's relations with Africa are comprehensive. China develops relations not only with resource-rich countries, but also with resource-poor nations, not only in the fields
of oil and resources, but in a whole range of areas.

c. Is China only interested in economic gains and therefore neglecting other issues such as human rights?

   China respects African countries' dignity and sovereignty, and supports African countries' own efforts to promote good governance.

d. What will China do to help Africa during the current times of difficulty?

   A friend in need is a friend indeed. China will work closely with African countries to tackle the challenges of the global financial crisis.

2) Potential for U.S.-China cooperation in Africa:

--China and the U.S. are both important partners for Africa.

--The goals of China’s and the U.S.’s policies on Africa are identical.

--China and the U.S. have their own edges in cooperating with Africa.

--China and the U.S. should continue to strengthen dialogue and exchange views on Africa.

--African countries should be fully respected and consulted in trilateral cooperation.