

Remarks
By
H.E Mr. Seyoum Mesfin,
Ambassador of the Federal Democratic
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at the Seminar on Governance and
Development Experience of China and
African Countries

Beijing, China
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Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,
Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my singular honor and privilege to have been invited to attend and make some remarks at the “International Conference on Governance and Development Experience of China and African Countries. I would like to express my appreciation and many thanks to the sponsors and organizers for their noble initiative that brought us all together to this august Conference. By promoting open discussion about the achievements and challenges of sharing experience on governance and development between China and African countries, both the organizers and participants aim to further strengthen partnership and cooperation on the basis of mutual respect common understanding and mutual interest.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the theme of the Conference, Governance and Development Experience of China and African countries is strategic, inspiring and timely indeed.

Strategic, because the question of governance and development has become the question of survival particularly for developing nations. In today’s world, development and governance is casting shadow on viability of states in the developing world. It has become a matter of to be or not to be, and hence, sharing

experience on governance and development between African countries and China is not a matter of choice, but of necessity and a strategic one.

It is inspiring, because African countries are acutely aware of China; a developing country itself has made an effulgent and flaming achievement in governance and development. The scale and speed of growth and transformation achieved by China has been unprecedented in human history. The statistics and figures given are astronomical and simply mesmerizing.

China has lifted over 600 million people out of poverty and backwardness and are now leading a modern life. China has followed a unique development model that has transformed its backward agrarian economy into “factory of the world” in about three decades. The “one-size-fits-all” solution and the mantra that there is no alternative to the neo-liberal market fundamentalism has been challenged by a new way of an “alternative modernity”. “Never before in human history has a society as large grown as quickly for as long; none has ever raised as many people out of poverty” This is what Peter L. Berger and Ann Bernstein have said about China’s success stories. African countries are inspired by the shining achievements and transformation of China and see China as a powerhouse of ideas and alternative system of its own characteristics. African countries are also inspired to draw on many sources to accelerate governance and development in their respective countries adapted to their own characteristics.

It is also timely, because on one hand, China's domestic production has moved up the value chain into higher technology, knowledge and skill based higher value added industries and services.

The cost of production such as land, labor, utilities, etc for labor intensive manufacturing industries have become less and less competitive. Consequently, many Chinese enterprises are readily going abroad supported by government 'Go global policy'

On the other hand, African countries' governance and development trajectory has started to move away from hopelessness and Afro-pessimism which gripped the continent for far too long. The average annual economic growth for the continent for over a decade has been between 5-6%. It is also projected that seven out of ten fastest growing economies in the world will be in Africa in the next five years. As a matter of fact, Africa, the second populous continent after Asia is also the fastest growing following the Asian continent. It is thus timely and imperative to promote experience sharing on governance and development between China, the largest developing country and African the continent with the largest developing countries to keep the momentum of South-South Cooperation going. As the saying goes in China, we shall not try to borrow combs from shaven monks. Africans know well where to go and from which experience they wish to share and benefit. We can tell better

what we are doing with China. We will therefore leave no stone unturned to draw up necessary lessons from the achievements and challenges of China, and we will surely learn by doing.

Chairperson,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- On the basis of the foregoing, China and Africa have developed a well established system to carry their partnership forward:-
- FOCAC was established in the year 2000. The declarations and Action plans of successive Summits and Ministerial meetings are serving as a mark of China's Commitment to Africa, and the vice versa.
- During the 5th Ministerial Meeting of FOCAC convened in Beijing on July last year, China pledged USD 20 billion for Africa's infrastructure development, investment, capacity building including by training 30,000 African young professionals and by providing scholarships for 18,000 African students to study in Chinese universities in the next three years between 2012-2015.
- To expand the scope and depth of the people-to-people relationship FOCAC mechanism is designed to involve many public and private institutions including government departments, financial institutions, national parliaments, enterprises and businesses, universities, scholars, think

thanks, women, youth and the media.

- Within the framework of FOCAC Declaration, China is committed to support the African peace and security architecture by supporting the AU in capacity building.

On the question of cooperation and experience sharing between China and African countries in the areas of governance and institutional capacity building China's contribution has become exemplary. China and African countries fully understand that nation building and transforming the political, economic and social structures of societies cannot be delivered by weak and fragile institutions. Therefore, it goes without saying that it is incumbent on China and African countries to sharing experience and fully co-operate in building efficient and effective institutions with the ownership and full participation of our respective people and all other development actors based on objective realities of our respective countries. Both sides adhere to the principles of mutual respect, equality, trust and common interest. One need not act bully to enter into dialogue and sharing experience on governance with third parties. We are not interested in the creation of powerful gods whose moods define the weather. We enjoy an all-weather partnership and friendship based on trust and understanding.

Dear Participants,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The partnership of sharing experience in governance and development between China and Ethiopia may epitomize China's engagement in Africa. Ethiopia has achieved shining success in building modern infrastructure in all sectors mainly with the financial credit support and grant from China. Ethiopia and China are also moving ahead cooperating in the area of light manufacturing including footwear and apparel. During the last ten consecutive years Ethiopia has registered an annual average GDP growth of 10.6%. Ethiopia's economy (PPP) has grown to the 5th largest economy in Sub-Sahara Africa. It is also the fastest growing non-oil economy in the continent.

Suffice it to say that China and African countries cooperation and partnership within the FOCAC framework is quite comprehensive and growing robust. With this perfect backdrop, I wish once again to thank and commend the sponsors and organizers of the Conference, China-Africa-Joint Research and Exchange Program of FOCAC, Institute for International Studies of the Party School of the Central Committee of CPC, and Zhejiang Normal University's China Society of Asia and Africa for organizing such a distinguished international conference at the prestigious and center of excellence to which scientific ideas and leadership matter. It is my earnest hope to see more such forums in the future.

In conclusion, I wish to express my confidence that the distinguished scholars and other eminent participants of the Conference will exchange candid discussion that can and must further enrich experience sharing and cooperation between China and African countries in all the priority areas as articulated in FOCAC Programs and Action Plans. I also hope that you would be able to explore the possibilities for Africa's traditional partners to partner themselves with us for the common good of all. Africa and China are calling on all partners to join hands to transform Africa, a young continent endowed with immense natural and human resources into a global growth pole. After all, war on poverty is the cause of all humanity. Africa peaceful, prosperous and united will have massive and prominent contribution toward collective effort to meet global challenges. I wish you all success in your deliberations.

I thank you.