

MONITOR

DEVELOPMENT POLICY

THE ROLE OF NON-TRADITIONAL DONORS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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A Double-Edged Chinese Sword

China's Development Cooperation as a Challenge and an Opportunity

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- › Even though the People's Republic of China is the second largest economy in the world, it is still classified as a developing country by the OECD. At the same time, it has become one of the largest donors in development cooperation in recent years.
- › Unlike Western donor countries, China is not a member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and therefore not bound by its standards.
- › It does not define itself as a donor, but still as a development partner in the South-South cooperation and uses this framework in order to further its economic and geostrategic ambitions worldwide.
- › Without doubt, the Chinese approach is a major challenge for value-based German development policy, but it also provides opportunities.

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Introduction

The People's Republic of China is not a new actor in international development cooperation. In the early 1950s, it already began supporting the emergent decolonised nation-states in Africa and Asia within the framework of South-South cooperation². As far back as then, the focus was on agriculture, health and infrastructure initiatives. Even though most of this aid had not to be paid back, China did not act altruistically but rather pursued a clear goal of “laying a solid foundation for its long-term friendly cooperation with developing countries”³. The efforts paid off: on 25 October 1971, most representatives of developing countries in the UN General Assembly voted to recognise the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of China at the United Nations⁴.

Until today, the People's Republic uses the tool of development cooperation specifically for the promotion and assertion of its own global interests, and with ever-increasing means. This plays a key role in the looming systemic competition between the West and China, as was clearly visible at the USA-China summit in March 2021. Politbüro member Yang Jiechi sharply stated that “most countries in the world do not recognize that the U.S. values represent the international values”⁵, meaning China and a large number of developing countries the People's Republic supports within the framework of South-South cooperation.

Principles and practices

Chinese development cooperation has been reformed multiple times since the 1950s. But its core is still based on the “Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries” that Zhou Enlai announced during a visit to Ghana in January 1964. Besides the assurance of high quality standards, he claimed above all that the recipient countries' sovereignty would be respected, there would be no interference in their internal affairs, and they would be treated as equal partners for mutual benefit⁶. In its latest white paper on international development cooperation from January 2021, the Chinese government affirmed its adherence to these principles once again. According to official data, Chinese development cooperation currently focuses on eight areas:

1. Ready-to-use infrastructure projects
2. Goods and materials
3. Technical cooperation
4. Cooperation in human resource development
5. Sending Chinese medical teams
6. Sending Chinese volunteers
7. Humanitarian emergency aid
8. Debt relief⁷

When it comes to practical implementation, China uses different standards than the DAC member states. The key financing instruments, i.e. subsidies, interest-free loans and concessional loans, are used combined rather than separately for financing bilateral development cooperation projects. Furthermore, commercial and development policy measures are not clearly separated from one another, but deliberately mingled. These practices – characterised by western donors as non-transparent – present major challenges for the recipient countries, particularly since the volumes have increased significantly, especially for infrastructure projects, in the last twenty years. Furthermore, the main beneficiaries are the involved Chinese state-owned enterprises, whose contracts are predominantly financed by loans that many recipient countries cannot afford⁸. Various developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have already fallen into a debt trap in recent years due to this approach, leaving them economically and politically dependent on China. A well-known example is Sri Lanka, which is heavily indebted to the People's Republic and was eventually forced to lease the Hambantota deep water port, built by Chinese companies, to a Chinese state-owned enterprise for 99 years in 2017⁹. Even European countries are not immune – the most recent example is Montenegro¹⁰.

In the course of China's foreign policy reorientation under Xi Jinping's leadership¹¹, also development cooperation is undergoing a structural change that is far from complete. Until 2018, the State Council, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce were responsible for the planning and administration of this sector. It was clearly visible from the allocation of funds where the priorities lay: the Ministry of Commerce had more than 90 percent of the bilateral development cooperation project funds at disposal. But there was a lack of an overarching coordinating authority being responsible for the strategic focus of development cooperation. A first milestone in this direction was the establishment of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDACA) in April 2018. Although this new government agency only has a small budget and relatively few staff, it, nevertheless, reports directly to the State Council, which emphasises its importance. Officially, it is responsible for the development and coordination of the Chinese development cooperation strategy. This also includes international branding: in January 2020, the CIDACA presented a standardised, striking logo with the wording "中国援助 China Aid for Shared Future", which is now displayed on all Chinese aid supplies¹². However, the Ministry of Commerce – which continues to have the majority of the bilateral development cooperation funds at disposal – remains the key player in Chinese development cooperation.¹³

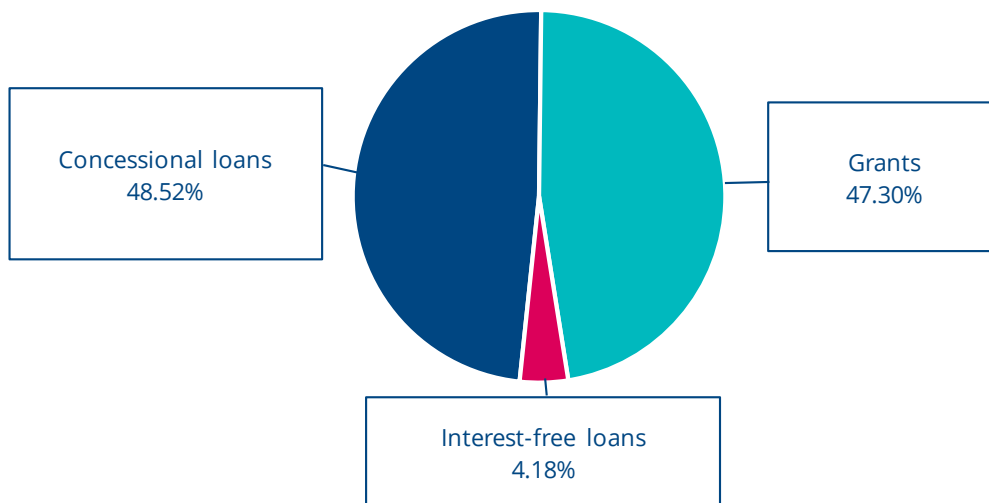


Source: CIDACA,
http://en.cidca.gov.cn/2019-11/29/c_427670.htm.

Priorities and objectives

China publishes little data on its development cooperation. Western actors have long criticised the associated opacity, which runs counter to their paradigm of transparency. The little official data can be found in the Chinese government's white papers. The first two were published in 2011 and 2014¹⁴. A third, the most comprehensive to date, followed in January 2021. The white papers contain information concerning both the financial volumes and the priorities and objectives of Chinese development cooperation.

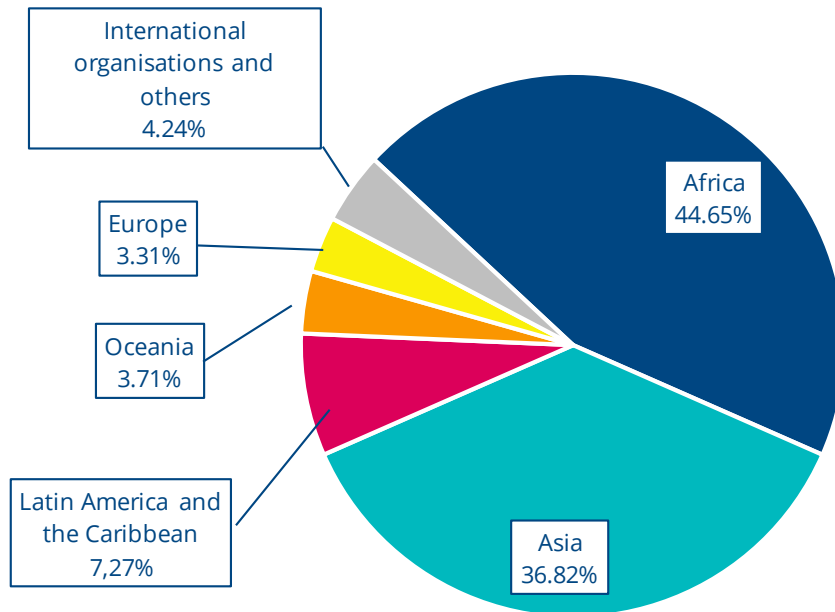
Graph 1: Categories of funds for Chinese development cooperation, 2013-2018



Source: Own representation based on The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era.

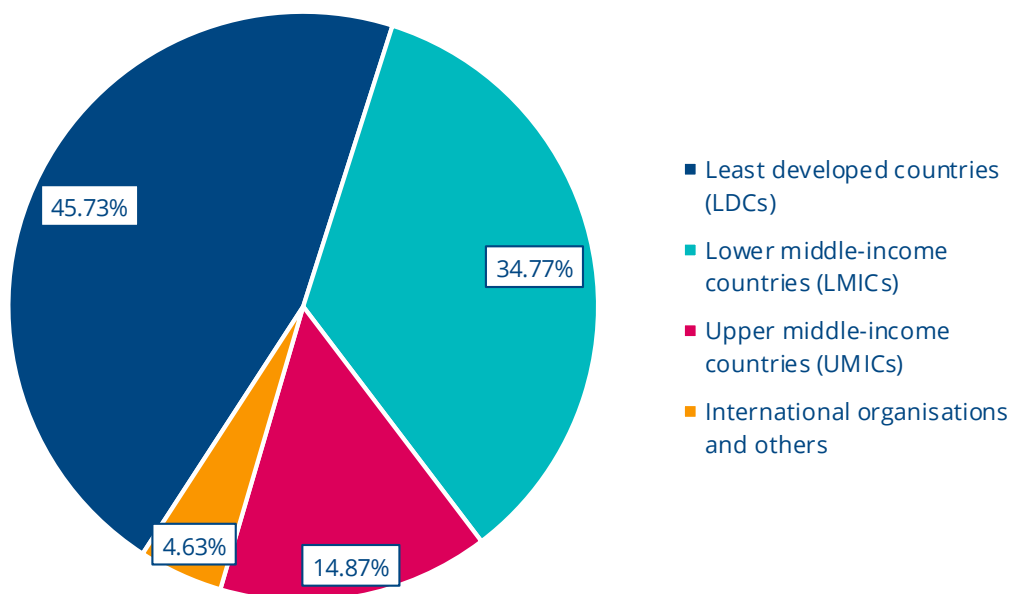
According to the latest white paper, China has continuously increased its development cooperation budget from 2013 to 2018 and spent a total of RMB 270.2 billion (approx. EUR 35 billion) in this period – approximately a third of the amount that Germany as the second largest DAC donor provided in those years¹⁵. Subsidies for projects in the social welfare sector and concessional loans predominantly for industrial and infrastructure projects each made up close to half of this. RMB 11.3 billion (4.18 percent, approx. EUR 1.5 billion) was provided for interest-free loans which were used to finance projects for the construction of public facilities and measures for the improvement of living standards in partner countries. From these funds, 122 countries benefited, of these 53 in Africa, 39 in the Asia-Pacific region, 22 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 8 in Europe. More than 80 percent of the aid was provided to African and Asian countries, and around 45 percent of the total amount was provided to least developed countries (LDCs). In addition, also 20 regional and international multilateral organisations benefited, but, all together, received just 4.63 percent of the funds.¹⁶

Graph 2: Allocation of Chinese funds for development cooperation by region, 2013-2018



Source: Own representation based on The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era.

Graph 3: Allocation of Chinese funds for development cooperation by income groups, 2013-2018



Source: Own representation based on The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era.

Actually, the budget for development cooperation projects is likely to be significantly higher, depending on what kinds of investments in the global south are added. China frequently links aid with economic projects, meaning that the total volume of development financing remains non-transparent. “We estimate that, in the meantime, China is the largest public donor to developing and emerging countries by a significant margin,” economist Sebastian Horn from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy recently stated in an interview with *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. “China provides more loans than any other member of the Paris Club, of which the USA, Japan and Germany are also members,” he explained. “And China provides more loans than the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF).”¹⁷

Since President Xi Jinping took office, the Chinese government has launched numerous multi-billion initiatives that are relevant for development cooperation. These include the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund, a China-UN peace and development fund and the South-South Climate Cooperation Fund. The government is also taking steps in the academic field: The Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development (ISSCAD), dedicated to train talents from the Global South, was established at Peking University in April 2016. With these and a few other initiatives, China is involved in all key areas of international development cooperation.

A new development is the Chinese government's clear commitment to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which, for the first time, is defined as a central goal in the 2021 White Paper¹⁸. Within this framework, it provides support to developing countries, predominantly in Africa and Southeast Asia, in the fields of poverty alleviation, food security, high-quality education, gender equality, infrastructure development, sustainable and innovation-driven economic growth, and environmental protection¹⁹.

The Belt and Road Initiative in the context of Chinese development cooperation strategy

Nowadays, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or New Silk Road launched in 2013 is particularly important for Chinese development cooperation. In this initiative, the government is bundling massive investments, primarily in the infrastructure of more than 80 countries – according to the plan. In the 2021 White Paper, the Belt and Road Initiative is officially defined as a core element of the Chinese development cooperation strategy, which is also a new development, even though it goes far beyond the scope of development cooperation and also includes numerous infrastructure investments in developed countries, including Germany and other EU countries²⁰. China is thus exporting its development model to the world and systematically strengthening its geostrategic position under the premises of development cooperation and securing international trade routes²¹.

For many developing countries, particularly this initiative is a double-edged sword because, as noted earlier, the extensive construction projects that they would not otherwise be able to implement are usually financed with Chinese loans, and, in most cases, the main beneficiaries are Chinese state-owned enterprises. Some partner countries have already fallen into this debt trap and, as a result, become dependent on China. This has damaged the international reputation not only of the Belt and Road Initiative, but also of the People's Republic. However, the extensive initiative also entails considerable financial risks for China: in many partner countries, the financial situation has deteriorated significantly because of the ongoing crisis caused by the Coronavirus, so that far more loans cannot be (fully) serviced than had previously been calculated.

Against this backdrop, it is remarkable that more emphasis is now being placed on the Belt and Road Initiative in the context of development cooperation and it is defined as an integral part of

the development cooperation strategy. In the 2021 White Paper, five focus areas are listed under the headline “Boosting International Cooperation on the Belt and Road”:

1. Enhancing policy coordination
2. Strengthening infrastructure connectivity
3. Promoting unimpeded trade
4. Deepening financial integration
5. Fostering closer people-to-people ties

At the core are large-scale infrastructure projects in Asia, Africa and Europe through which China aims to closer bind its partner countries politically, economically, and even militarily:

- › By “connecting the six corridors and six routes”, China is seeking to revive the old silk roads – a well-chosen term that evokes positive, romantic associations in many countries. Concretely, it is about extensive BRI infrastructure projects in South Asia, Southeast Asia and Central Asia. Through the construction of roads, railways, bridges and tunnels, China wants to establish six direct overland route ways to all important regions of Eurasia. All countries involved, above all China itself, are supposed to benefit from this initiative. The route ways leading directly to Europe have priority, and here China also sees the greatest success: According to the 2021 White Paper, “connecting over 100 cities across more than 20 countries in Europe and Asia, the China Railway Express to Europe has made an outstanding contribution to stabilizing international industrial and supply chains during the Covid-19 pandemic.”²²
- › With the establishment of a “logistics corridor on the 21st century maritime silk road”, China is pursuing the goal of expanding and securing the sea routes to Europe. This includes not only the “classic” routes, but also new, alternative routes, e. g. via ports in Pakistan and Myanmar which (are envisaged to) get a direct rail connection with China, or the polar silk road through the Northeast Passage. The expansion of the “Nouakchott Friendship Port” in Mauritania, which was built by Chinese companies in the 1980s, is explicitly highlighted in the 2021 White Paper.
- › China also puts a geostrategic emphasis on aviation by expanding “air transport hubs” in Asia and Africa. The Chinese government specifically names seven countries where it supports the modernisation and expansion of airports with the defined goal of more strongly integrating them into the Belt and Road Initiative: Pakistan, Nepal, the Maldives, Cambodia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Togo.

Based on the planning and implementation of these infrastructure and construction projects, China’s primary geostrategic goals become clear: On the one hand, the People’s Republic is doing everything in its power to open up alternative trade routes, which do not pass through the bottleneck of the Strait of Malacca. On the other hand, it wants to open up new markets and continuously expand its own sphere of influence.

“Mask and vaccine diplomacy”

In the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese government wants to provide increased health sector support to partner countries. According to the 2021 White Paper, “Contributing to a Global Community of Health for All” is a primary field of activity for China’s future development cooperation besides support for the implementation of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and improvement of its capacity for cooperation.

The expansion of health infrastructure in countries of the Global South has actually been an – albeit marginal – part of the *Belt and Road Initiative* for more than five years. This area has become much more important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In recent months, China has developed an extensive “mask and vaccine diplomacy” which also extends to numerous developed countries and is well orchestrated for propaganda purposes. Up to now, according to official information, China has delivered medical supplies to 10 international organisations and 150 countries around the world during the pandemic – although the products’ quality has greatly varied from time to time²³. Other aid measures were added, e.g., dispatch of medical teams. However, also developing countries have to pay for the majority of medical equipment and vaccine doses delivered by China.²⁴

Challenges and opportunities for German development cooperation

Germany and the other DAC member states are faced with huge challenges by Chinese development cooperation. The People’s Republic offers an alternative partnership to many developing countries that is not based but on western values but – at least officially – on the principles of South-South cooperation. In particular, this applies to countries with authoritarian or dictatorial governments where DAC members implement hardly, if any development projects due to their value-based approach. In Chinese development cooperation practice, commercial and development policy measures are firmly combined, while DAC standards provide for a strict separation. Furthermore, the People’s Republic consistently dedicates its development cooperation to geopolitical and geostrategic interests in order to further expand its sphere of influence.

Chinese development cooperation practices have long been subject to sometimes sharp criticism by Western donor countries. However, to date there is no coordinated approach for how to respond to it.²⁵ In October 2020, the Research Services of the German Parliament took on this topic and developed recommendations for Germany and other DAC member states, which indicate both the opportunities and challenges when dealing with China’s development cooperation:

- › Actively and firmly representing our values, without terminating cooperation and dialogue with China.
- › Continued cooperation with China to further align at least the technical criteria of its development cooperation with international standards.²⁶
- › Cooperating with China’s partner countries in order to strengthen their governments so that they can formulate their own interests vis-à-vis China more clearly, implement them through strategies and thus benefit themselves from cooperation with China.
- › Criticising and warning about negative developments such as debt traps or undermining of human rights, environmental or labour law standards.
- › Critically scrutinising our own paradigms in light of the partially impressive success of Chinese development policy.²⁷

Ultimately, the same premise applies for dealing with Chinese development cooperation as applies from the EU Commission’s and the German Federal government’s point of view for dealing with the People’s Republic in general: China is a partner as well as a competitor and a rival.²⁸

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- ¹ I would like to thank Dr Zhuang Chengzhan, research associate at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's international office in Shanghai, for his support in the compilation of this article.
- ² An in-depth overview of Chinese development policy and cooperation since the 1950s includes: Zhou, Hong (ed.) 2017: *China's Foreign Aid. 60 Years in Retrospect*, Singapore 2017.
- ³ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China 2011: *White Paper on China's Foreign Aid*, 21/4/2011, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zxbd/nd/2011/Document/896900/896900.htm> [16/6/2021].
- ⁴ Restoration of the Lawful Rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations' General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI), 25/10/1971.
- ⁵ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2021: *Gespräche in Alaska beendet. China und Amerika hatten sich viel vorzuwerfen*, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 20/3/2021, <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/china-und-amerika-beenden-treffen-in-alaska-17254881.html> [16/6/2021]; see also: Xinhua 2021: *Senior Chinese official tells U.S. to stop interference, avoid confrontation*, 19/3/2021, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-03/19/c_139822014.htm [16/6/2021].
- ⁶ Government of China 1964: *China's Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries*, Government of China, Beijing, January 1964, http://english1.english.gov.cn/official/2011-04/21/content_1849913_10.htm [16/6/2021]; Cheng, Cheng 2019: *The Logic Behind China's Foreign Aid Agency*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 21/5/2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/05/21/logic-behind-china-s-foreign-aid-agency-pub-79154> [16/6/2021].
- ⁷ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: *White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era*, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021]. The same categories had also been included in the corresponding 2014 White Paper.
- ⁸ See also: Gelpert, Anna et al. 2021: *How China Lends: A Rare Look into 100 Debt Contracts with Foreign Governments*, Peterson Institute for International Economics, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, Center for Global Development, and AidData at William & Mary, 31/3/2021, https://docs.aiddata.org/ad4/pdfs/How_China_Lends__A_Rare_Look_into_100_Debt_Contracts_with_Foreign_Governments.pdf [16/6/2021]. Since the 1990s, the Exim Bank and the China Development Bank have been the key Chinese lenders in the context of Chinese development cooperation.
- ⁹ Abi-Habib, Maria 2018: *How China Got Sri Lanka to Cough Up a Port*, New York Times, 25/6/2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/world/asia/china-sri-lanka-port.html> [16/6/2021]; Moramudali, Umesh 2020: *The Hambantota Port Deal: Myths and Realities*, The Diplomat, 1/1/2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/01/the-hambantota-port-deal-myths-and-realities> [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁰ Kafsack, Henrik / Mihm, Andreas 2021: *Neue Seidenstraße. Montenegro tut sich schwer mit einem chinesischen Kredit*, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 15/4/2021, <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/neue-seidenstrasse-montenegro-in-chinas-schuldenfalle-17290712.html> [16/6/2021].

- ¹¹ Godehardt, Nadine 2020: Wie China Weltpolitik formt – Die Logik von Pekings Außenpolitik unter Xi Jinping, SWP-Studie 2020/P 19, October 2020, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publikation/wie-china-weltpolitik-formt> [16/6/2021].
- ¹² China International Development Agency 2019: Announcement on launch of Chinese government's new foreign aid logo, 29/11/2019, http://en.cidca.gov.cn/2019-11/29/c_427670.htm [16/6/2021].
- ¹³ Lynch, Leah et al. 2020: White Paper on China's Foreign Aid. A Primer for Recipient Countries, Donors, and Aid Providers, Center for Global Development, 9/7/2020, <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/chinas-foreign-aid-primer-recipient-countries-donors-and-aid-providers> [16/6/2021]; Wissenschaftliche Dienste des Deutschen Bundestages 2020: Aspekte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit der Volksrepublik China. Documentation, WD 2 - 3000 - 084/20, Berlin 2020, P. 9 f., bundestag.de/re-source/blob/809266/2844a74ea1c3a5bbb192e1615a2e858f/WD-2-084-20-pdf-data.pdf [16/6/2021]; see also the official CIDACA website: <http://en.cidca.gov.cn> [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁴ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China 2011: White Paper on China's Foreign Aid, 21/4/2011, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zxbd/nd/2011/Document/896900/896900.htm> [16/6/2021]; The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2014: China's Foreign Aid, 10/7/2014, http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/08/23/content_281474982986592.htm [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁵ The Federal Republic of Germany's net payments for international development cooperation from 2013 and 2018 came to a total of EUR 105.68 billion. Cf. Statista 2020: Deutsche Netto-Zahlungen für Entwicklungshilfe im Rahmen der öffentlichen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (ODA) von 2004 bis 2018, Statista, 5/8/2020, <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/71765/umfrage/deutsche-ausgaben-fuer-entwicklungshilfe> [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁶ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021]; additionally: Kitano, Naohiro / Miyabayashi, Yumiko 2020: Estimating China's Foreign Aid: 2019-2020 Preliminary Figures, JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development Tokyo, 14/12/2020, https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/other/l75nbg000019o0pq-att/Estimating_Chinas_Foreign_Aid_2019-2020.pdf. A good overview of China's DC projects can be found on the AidData website, which is operated by a research laboratory at the American William & Mary University in Williamsburg, Virginia; see: <https://china.aiddata.org> [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁷ Zoll, Patrick 2021: "Many poorer countries have no option other than accumulating debt with China," interview with Sebastian Horn, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 14/4/2021, <https://www.nzz.ch/international/viele-laender-haben-keine-alternative-zu-schulden-bei-china-ld.1611698> [16/6/2021].
- ¹⁸ United Nations Development Programme China 2021: Brief on White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, UNDP China Issue Brief No. 7, January 2021, <https://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/library/south-south-cooperation/issue-brief---brief-on-white-paper-on-china-s-international-deve.html> [16/6/2021].

- ¹⁹ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021].
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ See among others: Hoering, Uwe 2018: Der lange Marsch 2.0. Chinas Neue Seidenstraßen als Entwicklungsmodell, Hamburg 2018.
- ²² The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021].
- ²³ See among others BBC 2020: Coronavirus: Countries reject Chinese-made equipment, BBC, 30/3/2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52092395> [16/6/2021]; Wallenfels, Matthias 2021: Corona Prävention: Bundesbürger tragen meist Schutzmasken „made in China“, Ärzte-Zeitung, 19/3/2021, <https://www.aerztezeitung.de/Wirtschaft/Bundesbuerger-tragen-meist-Schutzmasken-made-in-China-418066.html> [16/6/2021].
- ²⁴ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021]; Rudolf, Moritz 2021: China's Health Diplomacy during Covid- 19. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Action, SWP Comment 2021/C 09, January 2021, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2021C09> [16/6/2021].
- ²⁵ The new US government under President Biden is taking first steps to offset this strategic deficit. A first milestone is the "Build Back Better World" initiative, a global infrastructure partnership between the G7 countries, emerging, and developing countries that was agreed at the G7 summit in mid-June 2021 with the declared intention of counteracting the Belt and Road Initiative. Cf. Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué 2021: Our Shared Agenda for Global Action to Build Back Better, 13/6/2021, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/50361/carbis-bay-g7-summit-communicue.pdf> [16/6/2021]; The White House 2021: Fact Sheet: President Biden and G7 Leaders Launch Build Back Better World (B3W) Partnership, The White House, 12/6/2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/12/fact-sheet-president-biden-and-g7-leaders-launch-build-back-better-world-b3w-partnership/> [16/6/2021].
- ²⁶ Germany has taken clear steps in this regard in recent years, particularly in the context of the strategic partnership for development policy cooperation concluded between the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce in 2010. Here, the Sino-German Centre for Sustainable Development (ZNE), established in 2017, is of particular importance. The ZNE promotes a development policy dialogue between both countries with a focus on the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that China clearly acknowledged for the first time in early 2021. Cf. BMZ 2021: Deutsche Zusammenarbeit mit China, BMZ, version: 16/6/2021, <https://www.bmz.de/de/laender/china> [16/6/2021]; The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China 2021: White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 10/1/2021, <http://english.www.gov.cn/atts/stream/files/5ffa69cac6d0cc300eea77af> [16/6/2021].

²⁷ Cited from: Wissenschaftliche Dienste des Deutschen Bundestages 2020: Aspekte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit der Volksrepublik China. Documentation, WD 2 - 3000 - 084/20, Berlin 2020, P. 18, [bundestag.de/resource/blob/809266/2844a74ea1c3a5bbb192e1615a2e858f/WD-2-084-20-pdf-data.pdf](https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/809266/2844a74ea1c3a5bbb192e1615a2e858f/WD-2-084-20-pdf-data.pdf) [16/6/2021].

²⁸ German Parliament, parliamentary news 2020: China als systemischer Rivale, Auswärtiges/Antwort auf Große Anfrage (hib 683/2020), 30/06/2020, <https://www.bundestag.de/presse/hib/703540-703540> [16/6/2021]; Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland 2020: "China is a partner, competitor and rival," Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in an interview with Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland, 12/7/2020, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/maas-md/2367282> [16/6/2021].

Legal notice

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