

China and the West in Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Towards Political Stability and Economic Growth

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Abstract

The thesis examines why is there a convergence between China and the West in peacebuilding interventions, towards a focus on economic growth and political stability. With the disillusionment in the idea of liberal peace, most of the Western actors have slowly been distancing themselves from the emphasis on building democratic institutions and neoliberal market economies, towards a state led economic growth, private sector development and stable political institutions in their peacebuilding interventions. China's recent more proactive engagement in peacebuilding has had a very similar focus. China has officially tried to distance itself from the Western approach to peacebuilding and make non-interference, economic cooperation and win-win rhetoric the center of its official policy towards conflict-affected states. However, there is a growing engagement from the Chinese side with issues of political stability as well as China's increased participation in United Nations' (UN) peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. This is counterintuitive for China who, in its rhetoric has shown ambition to change the current principles of peacebuilding and make its own approach significantly different from the West. This thesis argues that China and the West are converging around political stability and economic growth in peacebuilding interventions because of their different economic interests, geopolitical interests, previous failures of peacebuilding interventions, and the new emphasis on development effectiveness. Post-conflict engagement of both China and the West in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) illustrates how this convergence is happening. In DRC, the UN, World Bank as well as bilateral donors, are focusing heavily on stabilization and supporting the government with infrastructure and private sector development interventions, aiming to make DRC an investment friendly environment. China, while engaged in infrastructure building and investment in DRC, has also taken part in the more politically sensitive interventions both as part of the UN peacebuilding efforts as well as bilaterally. This shows that while the two have different reasons for their shifting approaches

to peacebuilding, the outcome is convergence around the two main principles of stability and growth.

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Acronyms

AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CASA	Conflict Affected States in Africa
CREC	China Railway Engineering Corporation
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
EU	European Union
EXIM Bank	Export Import Bank of China
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IDA	International Development Association
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISSSS	International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
SEZ	Special Economic Zones
STAREC	Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo
UN	United Nations
UNPBD	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

Introduction and Literature Review: The End of Liberal Peace?

Introduction

The last three decades have seen a number of significant changes in the approach to international peacebuilding¹ and post-conflict interventions around the world. Both in the United Nations (UN) policy documents and in academia there is a general disillusionment with liberal peacebuilding due to the failure of post-conflict interventions to establish democratic societies and long-term sustainable peace in countries emerging from conflict. The changes in the peacebuilding approach, particularly among actors such as the UN, Western bilateral donors and the multilateral development institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and others, are reflected by a bigger emphasis on economic growth and development, stronger focus on the private sector development in post conflict states and a movement from the attempt to establish democratic political institutions towards political stability and efforts to establish strong institutions with a capacity to maintain stability and not slide back into conflict.

There are several reasons for this shift. First, Western donors' peacebuilding and development interventions are motivated by a self-interest and this has become more visible after the recent economic crisis.² The strong emphasis on development effectiveness is visible from the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, as well as many bilateral Western donors' policy documents on the need to increase the benefits of development engagement for donor countries. Second, decades of failed and costly interventions in many post-conflict and

¹ There are numerous possible definitions of peacebuilding as well as opinions on what peacebuilding means. For the purposes of this thesis, I will use a very broad definition of peacebuilding from the Boutros Boutros-Ghali's "An Agenda for Peace", where peacebuilding is defined as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict." (Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping", United Nations, June 17, 1992).

² Peter Kragelund, "Towards Convergence and Cooperation in the Global Development Finance Regime: Closing Africa's Policy Space?," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 28, no. 2 (April 3, 2015): 246–62, doi:10.1080/09557571.2014.974141.

conflict affected states have resulted in a call for a more comprehensive engagement, which involves not only an effort to build democratic institutions but also an effort to address the basic needs of conflict affected populations through development assistance. This, coupled with the influence of new donors like China with a history of rapid development through growth, all impact the changing approach towards peacebuilding and contribute to the increased emphasis on growth and development.

What much of the literature pays little attention to is the role of new and emerging donors in peacebuilding. China, since its more deliberate engagement with post-conflict intervention and peacebuilding, has had, in its official policy rhetoric, a strong emphasis on economic development as a way to achieve peace, economic growth, win-win cooperation and non-interference. However, a set of factors has been driving China's approach to peacebuilding towards engagement of a more political nature. First, China's economic interests in many fragile and conflict affected states have led it to carefully engage in diplomatic efforts to help bring peace and stability. Second, as an emerging power China has been under pressure both from those fragile states where it is economically involved, and from the Western powers to engage and act as a more responsible power. China's own policy ambitions to be an active part of and to shape the global governance system according to its own values, have prompted it to become more involved in the UN peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions. All this has driven China towards a more political engagement in conflict-affected states together with its more standard economic engagement.

Therefore, the main argument of this thesis is that all of the reasons above, although different for the Western actors and China, are driving the two closer together around common principles of economic growth and political stability in peacebuilding and post-conflict interventions. This is the way in which the two converge, making peacebuilding interventions, mostly focused around economic growth and political stability.

To illustrate this claim, in chapter one, I will show why the mainly Western actors are moving towards political stability and economic growth as the central principles of post-conflict peacebuilding. In chapter two, I will explain why and how China is moving in the same direction despite its efforts to be different from the West. Chapter three will show this convergence through post-conflict peacebuilding engagement of the two actors in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). DRC is an important case study because both the Western actors and China have been significantly involved in attempts to build peace there with little success. The case presents a failure of liberal peacebuilding but also a continued long term engagement from the West. China has also played an important economic and political role in DRC and has interacted with the Western actors significantly making DRC an important case study. Further justification for the case selection is presented in the methodology section.

A number of important caveats should be noted at the beginning. First, while the changing norms I describe are significant for the more general trends in peacebuilding and while some conclusions can be made about the future of post-conflict engagement from this analysis, the thesis exclusively focuses on China and a select number of Western actors such as the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, select western bilateral donors, and excludes other important regional actors such as the African Union (AU) who also play a significant role in peacebuilding and contribute to the ever changing norms and practice. Second, the thesis also does not address how the recipient countries affect these principles and norms, and this constitutes an important part of the story. While aware that none of the other players in the field are merely the passive recipients of aid and intervention, I limit my analysis to the two major donors and assess their specific role in the field of peacebuilding. Therefore the analysis should be viewed as only one part of the very complex peacebuilding story. Third, neither China nor the West are uniform actors. The West denotes a set of actors which all have their separate interests and will not always choose to act unitarily. China also consists of a set of complex

entities with different political and bureaucratic players who have different interests. Thus the terms “China” and “the West” do not intend to ignore or simplify this fact. Additionally, I acknowledge the limits of basing my analysis and arguments on a mixed single case, the DRC. While the case presents an important policy space where changing norms can be visible through direct engagement, it is also unique and requires comparison to other conflict affected states for a deeper and a more detailed analysts.

Methodology

Methodology I employed in this thesis is a qualitative case study analysis. I compare China’s engagement in in post-conflict peacebuilding with the engagement of the West and apply the broader trends I identify to the case of DRC, in order to examine whether the broader rhetorical and practical engagement of China and the West is reflected in their post-conflict involvement in DRC. To identify the broader trends of post-conflict engagement of China and the West, I rely on a variety of academic and policy literature including academic papers, books on post-conflict intervention, reports, policy documents and project evaluations from the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, Department for International Development (DFID), multiple NGO reports and analysis, official statements of politicians, ambassadors, and governmental bodies.

When looking at whether the broader trends are applicable to the case of DRC, I again use a variety of academic and policy literature, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) database of aid flows and look at the recent history of the Western and Chinese engagement in DRC.

DRC was selected as a case study for several important reasons. First, the country has been entangled in one of the deadliest conflicts in the world’s recent history with an estimated death toll of 5 million people. It is also one of the longest and most costly missions in the UN’s history. The conflict is known as Africa’s First World War and it has drawn Rwanda, Uganda,

Angola, Zimbabwe, Sudan and other African countries into the war, having an important impact on the continent. In addition to the deadly conflict, DRC is a country with a great amount of natural resources that have been of interest to both the West and China. China has been DRC's top export partner in 2013 with most of the exports being ores and metals³ and their relations have been growing stronger, particularly since 2006 and DRC's first democratic elections.⁴ However, despite DRC's overall importance as a post-conflict case study and its significance to China and the West it is essential to note that a single case analysis has many limitations when attempting to make conclusions regarding the broader trends in peacebuilding. This is particularly so because DRC is a unique case and it is debatable whether it should be categorized as post-conflict given the ongoing fighting in certain parts of the country. A comparison with other post-conflict cases is necessary and could generate important additional insights regarding broader trends in peacebuilding and post-conflict engagement.

Literature Review

*"[T]he growing impatience of non-western states and the increased pluralism of international society means that support for more such projects will not be forthcoming. Liberal states will remain involved in peacebuilding. But they will no longer fall into what have invariably turned out to be costly and long term commitments which, rhetoric aside, they lack the competence, stomach and legitimacy to fulfill."*⁵

Many argue that the inherent assumptions behind liberal peacebuilding were naïve and set out to fail at their very outset. The West, finding themselves in a post-Cold War era, a world dominated by liberal values, assumed that those liberal values, if transferred to fragile and conflict affected states will inevitably lead them out of fragility into development and

³ "General Profile: Dem. Rep. of the Congo" (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2013), <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/CountryProfile/180/en180GeneralProfile.html>.

⁴ "Evaluating China's FOCAC Commitments to Africa and Mapping the Way Ahead" (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2010), <http://www.ccs.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/ENGLISH-Evaluating-Chinas-FOCAC-commitments-to-Africa-2010.pdf>.

⁵ James Mayall and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, eds., *New Protectorates: International Tutelage and the Making of Liberal States*, 1 edition (S.I.: Oxford University Press, 2011).p.28

democracy.⁶ However, this did not happen both because such a type of exogenous state-building is not possible and because these interventions were carried out in an ad-hoc manner with an assumption that the implementation of the liberal system sets a country on a peace and development trajectory.⁷ Paris compares liberal peacebuilding to the “mission civilisatrice”⁸, because it attempts to impose what the Western powers believe is the right way to govern and be as a state and completely ignores local context, agency, and the everyday needs.⁹ According to him, international agencies involved in peacebuilding are trying to build Westphalian states that are liberal market democracies. He explains how in almost all of the peacebuilding interventions from the 1990s onwards, market liberalization and democratization have been forced onto the warring parties during peace-agreements and that those peace agreements would not have been likely to contain any such provisions otherwise.¹⁰

This not only resulted in the failure of these interventions but it “generated destabilizing side effects in war-shattered states, hindering the consolidation of peace and in some cases even sparking renewed fighting.”¹¹ Paris points to examples of Bosnia, Mozambique, El Salvador and Nicaragua to highlight where economic liberalization has threatened stability and reignited the conflict.

Another inherent flaw Paris and others highlight is that market democratization allows for and creates societal competitions which war-shattered states are ill-equipped to manage.¹² Pugh points to the fact that liberal economic policies largely ignore socioeconomic problems

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Roland Paris, “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice,’” *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 04 (October 2002): 637–56, doi:10.1017/S026021050200637X.

⁹ Oliver P. Richmond, “Becoming Liberal, Unbecoming Liberalism: Liberal-Local Hybridity via the Everyday as a Response to the Paradoxes of Liberal Peacebuilding,” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 3, no. 3 (October 20, 2009): 324–44, doi: 10.1080/17502970903086719.

¹⁰ Paris, “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice.’”

¹¹ Roland Paris, “Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (October 1, 1997): 54–89, doi: 10.2307/2539367.p.56

¹² Ibid.

of general populations, even aggravating them by increasing vulnerability and shadow economic activity. He explains that one of the main problems is depoliticization of economic reforms while powerful interests guide economic activity.¹³ Pugh sets DFID as a positive example of an alternative approach to post-conflict reconstruction because they promote pro-poor policies, provision of basic services, and removal from strict aid conditionality.¹⁴ Ahearne confirms Pugh's claim by analyzing Structural Adjustment Programs' (SAPs) immediate impact on society and finds that "the immediate social effects of SAPs may be characterised as follows: sudden rises in unemployment, a deepening of poverty particularly impacting on the poor, a worsening of income inequality, and questionable longer term impact on poverty reduction."¹⁵

This lack of adequate economic engagement has been criticized by Collier and Call and Cousens who argue that there is too little attention dedicated to economic policies in peacebuilding. They suggest that economic policies may be a much more underlying reason for conflict and for the risk of its recurrence.¹⁶ Collier states that "economic recovery [is not only] important in an absolute sense for risk reduction, it also looks important relative to the other strategies available to a post-conflict government. Neither democracy, in general, nor elections, in particular, appear to reduce post-conflict risks. Indeed, if anything, they appear to increase risks."¹⁷ Collier also finds that economic opportunities to which he refers as greed, are much more likely to be the cause of conflict than grievance. Grievance is, according to Collier,

¹³ Michael Pugh, "The Political Economy of Peacebuilding: A Critical Theory Perspective," *International Journal of Peace Studies* Vol. 10, no. 2 (2005).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ James Ahearne, "Neoliberal Economic Policies and Post-Conflict Peace-Building: A Help or Hindrance to Durable Peace?," *POLIS Journal* Vol. 2, no. Winter (2009), <http://www.polis.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/students/student-journal/ma-winter-09/james-ahearne-winter-09.pdf>.

¹⁶ Charles T. Call and Elizabeth M. Cousens, "Ending Wars and Building Peace: International Responses to War-Torn Societies," *International Studies Perspectives* 9, no. 1 (February 1, 2008): 1–21, doi:10.1111/j.1528-3585.2007.00313.x.

¹⁷ Paul Collier, "Post-Conflict Recovery: How Should Strategies Be Distinctive?," *Journal of African Economies* 18, no. suppl. 1 (January 1, 2009): i99–131, doi:10.1093/jae/ejp006.

much more present in the narrative of warring parties, however the underlying reasons are usually economic.¹⁸

This failure of appropriate economic engagement and the lack of direct peace dividends for the conflict-affected populations, has resulted in local resistance to liberal peace and a movement into, what Richmond calls “post-liberal peace” that is “less encumbered by idealistic prescriptions and more locally resonant”¹⁹. He argues that the hybridity that is emerging in different pockets of liberal peacebuilding could lead to perhaps illiberal but more locally relevant, stable and autonomous forms of peace.²⁰ The broader argument he makes is that a rethinking of liberal peace is necessary. As a result of the liberal failures and to an extent condescending attitudes towards everything non-liberal, resistance is emerging, and that resistance could provide new solutions.²¹

However, Richmond and others don’t elaborate extensively on those new solutions for peacebuilding and alternatives to liberal peace nor do they explicitly state who is at the forefront of bringing the new solutions. As Soares de Oliveira shows, the alternatives to liberal peacebuilding are not always positive, often romanticized, focused on medium level processes such as grassroots deliberative democracy or traditional justice and fail to address central state level questions.²² He explains that most consequential processes of autonomous recovery are state centric.²³ This, as he points out makes ‘the indigenous’ processes somehow legitimate disregarding the inherent causes of conflict and the unresolved crisis of legitimacy these societies still have. Additionally, even if one disregards the fact that majority of these processes

¹⁸ Mats R. Berdal and David Malone, *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000).

¹⁹ Richmond Oliver, “Liberal Peace Transitions: A Rethink Is Urgent,” *openDemocracy*, November 2009, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/oliver-p-richmond/liberal-peace-transitions-rethink-is-urgent>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Illiberal Peacebuilding in Angola,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 49, no. 02 (June 2011): 287–314, doi:10.1017/S0022278X1100005X.

²³ Ibid.

were elite-controlled, focused on the strengthening of the state apparatus and the construction of a “stable but non-egalitarian political order”²⁴, economic/developmental results are also usually not beneficial to the population. The case of Angola illustrates that the Angolans themselves didn’t benefit from the reconstruction.

The question of new alternatives points to an important gap in the literature and that is a lack of discussion about how has liberal peace changed and evolved in the last decades, due to what factors and what the outcomes are. Are the alternatives really local as Richmond argues or are they potentially a make-over of the old principles, emerging as a result of lessons learned and political and economic changes in the international system? While understanding that liberal peace has failed due to its flawed assumptions, and that a lack of targeted economic intervention is important, it certainly does not imply that peacebuilding interventions are over or that they are unchanging. Hameiri explains that even if liberal peacebuilding is ideologically and practically in decline, there is no overall decline in international intervention or statebuilding.²⁵ There is rather an exchange of liberal peace for a more feasible concept like stability, development or growth. In addition Western powers are no longer the sole actors in international peacebuilding. As Mayell and de Oliveira pointed out, the US and Europe are not the only players in the field of peacebuilding anymore. The presence of BRICS and in particular China brings new considerations to the table.

For a long time China has been present in fragile and conflict affected states and in recent years it has been more explicitly involved in the questions of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, particularly in Africa. Through its Resource for Infrastructure Deals, it has financed post conflict reconstruction in Angola, DRC and other places. Many have argued that China offered an alternative to the Western-style of peacebuilding potentially becoming a

²⁴ Ibid.p.308

²⁵ Shahar Hameiri, “The Crisis of Liberal Peacebuilding and the Future of Statebuilding,” *International Politics* 51, no. 3 (May 2014): 316–33, doi:10.1057/ip.2014.15.

competitor to the International Financial Institutions (IFIs).²⁶ China has also been, at least in its official rhetoric, a strong opponent of the liberal peace ideas.²⁷ Some scholars argue that China is becoming a norms maker in the area of peace and security.²⁸ Large and Alden point to the growing discourses among the Chinese policy making circles regarding the country's role in peacebuilding, stating that when it comes to Chinese engagement in African peacebuilding, an alternative to the liberal peacebuilding – state building with Chinese characteristics in Africa is “highly plausible”.²⁹

The alternative is often described in the literature as focused on development. Wang Xuejun, a Chinese scholar outlines his views on China's peacebuilding approach which is the idea of “developmental peace or peace through development”.³⁰ This theory states that socio-economic development is a key to achieving and maintaining a stable peace. As Xuejun explains, China has a very reserved stance towards democratization typical for a Western-style intervention and focuses on infrastructure-constructing –investing in building roads, bridges, hospitals and more.³¹ In addition, the developmental peace thesis emphasizes local ownership and sovereignty in both conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.³² This alternative is important to consider and examine further particularly because of China's growing role in the international system and its involvement in fragile and conflict affected states.

In the case of peacebuilding in DRC, China's role has often been portrayed as either overly positive, providing the alternative to the lack of Western dedication to proper economic

²⁶ Kragelund, “Towards Convergence and Cooperation in the Global Development Finance Regime.”

²⁷ “China's Growing Role in African Peace and Security” (Saferworld, January 2011).

²⁸ Chris Alden and Daniel Large, “On Becoming a Norms Maker: Chinese Foreign Policy, Norms Evolution and the Challenges of Security in Africa,” *The China Quarterly* 221: 123–42, accessed May 4, 2015, doi: 10.1017/S0305741015000028.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Wang Xuejun, “Developmental Peace: Understanding China's Policy towards Africa in Peace and Security,” accessed February 20, 2015, <http://ias.zjnu.cn/uploadfile/2014/0912/20140912121304640.pdf>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

reconstruction and an alternative to conditionality backed loans, or as a sponsor to the already corrupt state structures³³. It has also often been left out of the story in critiques and explanation of peacebuilding failures in DRC. Many argue that in DRC it is the earlier described flaws within the liberal peacebuilding that were the main cause of failure. Autesserre states that the peacebuilding framework in DRC, which established elections as a favorite and the only legitimate post-conflict mechanism, overlooked the more important local drivers of conflict and made local conflict resolution appear illegitimate and unnecessary.³⁴ She also hints towards the fact that money provided for such an extensive liberal intervention could have been used for development projects such as building schools or hospitals and establishing links between local communities.³⁵ While with a different flavor, this argument reflects the critique of liberal peacebuilding idea, placing it as the central culprit for peacebuilding failure in DRC.

Tull similarly criticizes the elections which, driven by liberal ideas and the need to create a legitimate government, only created corrupt predatory state structures that brought no benefits to the local populations and the different groups in DRC.³⁶ While the elections were internationally legitimized, they have not created a legitimate government.³⁷ Eriksen also assigns part of the blame for peacebuilding failure in DRC to liberal universalism. He states that policies of external actors, while trying to reaffirm the existence of the state in DRC based on the liberal premise, caused the emergence of the state structures that brought about reproduction of state weakness.³⁸ Kuditschini brings an economic perspective to the story

³³ Stephanie A. Matti, "The Democratic Republic of the Congo? Corruption, Patronage, and Competitive Authoritarianism in the DRC," *Africa Today* 56, no. 4 (2010): 42–61, https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/africa_today/v056/56.4.matti.html.

³⁴ Séverine Autesserre, "Hobbes and the Congo: Frames, Local Violence, and International Intervention," *International Organization* 63, no. 02 (April 2009): 249–80, doi: 10.1017/S0020818309090080.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Denis M. Tull, "Troubled State-Building in the DR Congo: The Challenge from the Margins," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, no. 04 (December 2010): 643–61, doi: 10.1017/S0022278X10000479.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Stein Sundstøl Eriksen, "The Liberal Peace Is Neither: Peacebuilding, State Building and the Reproduction of Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *International Peacekeeping* 16, no. 5 (November 1, 2009): 652–66, doi:10.1080/13533310903303289.

pointing out that a big part of DRC's struggle lies in the liberalization of access to mining and other natural resources, resulting in the profit of the big multinational companies with negative consequences for local governments and the population.³⁹

While the authors above all rightly point to the flawed framework of liberal peacebuilding and hint towards unrealistic and unfounded expectations that democracy and legitimacy will emerge after foreign intervention, they all potentially overstate the power of the liberal framework, which in practice may not be as definite as it is in theory. Neither was the intervention in DRC purely liberal, nor have the Western actors been the only key players in DRC's peacebuilding process. The following chapters will point out precisely this, liberal peacebuilding framework in DRC has not been dominant for too long, neither have the Western actors been the sole players in the country's peacebuilding process. While I will not be analyzing why peacebuilding has failed but rather deconstructing the type of peacebuilding interventions that have unfolded both from China's side and the West, this analysis can be helpful for a different view on why peacebuilding in DRC has failed or what the implications of different aspects of these interventions are.

³⁹ Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditshini, "Global Governance and Local Government in the Congo: The Role of the IMF, World Bank, the Multinationals and the Political Elites," *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 74, no. 2 (June 1, 2008): 195–216, doi: 10.1177/0020852308090773.

Chapter 1: A Shift in the Western Post-Conflict Intervention: Economic Interests, Past Failures and the New Donors

1.1 Lessons Learned, Self- Interest or Both?

At the turn of the 21st century the Secretary General of the United Nations at the time, Kofi Annan, reflected on the role of the United Nations in the coming years in solving the world's major challenges, one of them being violent conflict. He recognized that poverty exacerbates conflict and that more coordinated efforts on the side of development and peacebuilding actors are necessary. He stated that “every step taken towards reducing poverty and achieving broad-based economic growth—is a step towards conflict prevention”⁴⁰. This assertion was firmly endorsed by the following Brahimi report which recognizing the past failures of the United Nations in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, called for a more integrated action from the side of both development, peacekeepers, humanitarian and other actors in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.⁴¹

These perhaps were the beginnings of a broader movement towards (re)considering the role of development and economic growth in peacebuilding, coming from the Western donors. These considerations were also reinforced years later in the World Bank's 2011 World Development report which stressed job creation in combination with security and justice as a way to prevent recurring conflict. While the report still focused on the role of good governance in prevention of start and recurrence of violent conflicts, it acknowledged that transitions to democracy can cause more instability especially very early in post-conflict situations. The report emphasized “confidence building” through creation of institutions that provide jobs,

⁴⁰ Annan Kofi, “We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century” (The United Nations, 2000), http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/We_The_Peoples.pdf.p.44

⁴¹ Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (The Brahimi Report)” (United Nations, August 2000), http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/brahimi_report.shtml.

security and justice.⁴² While not necessarily a shift from liberal ideas of democracy, human rights protection and good governance, the report acknowledges the importance of development beyond the one size fits all macro-economic policies towards a more gradual approach that fits a particular context.⁴³

While economic growth and development have for a long time been part of the liberal peacebuilding framework, previously, there has been very little discussion that goes beyond market-liberalization and neoliberal economic policies implemented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The aforementioned institutions tended to work separately from those engaged in peacebuilding. As Gerson puts it, “[t]he United Nations has traditionally been preoccupied with the politics of peace, tending to dismiss the role of economics in conflict resolution. The World Bank, preoccupied with macro-economics, long ignored the political realm, as beyond its mandate to eradicate poverty”.⁴⁴ This acknowledgement that more needs to be done in cooperation, that development needs to be an essential part of peacebuilding hints towards the harsh realization of both the peacebuilding and the development community that previous efforts have failed and that a change in approach is necessary in order to achieve better results in post-conflict and conflict affected states. However, as further analysis will show, there is much more to this shift than what would seem to be an altruistic attempt to do better in post-conflict societies.

A big component of the (return to) economics as a focus in peacebuilding efforts, is the role of the private sector, more specifically businesses in creating and maintaining stability after a conflict. Rather than this being an effort specific to post-conflict peacebuilding, the increased focus on the private sector seems to be coming up as a part of the relatively new

⁴² “World Development Report 2011 : Conflict, Security, and Development” (World Bank, 2011), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4389>.

⁴³ Ibid.p.168

⁴⁴ Allan Gerson, “Peace Building: The Private Sector’s Role,” *The American Journal of International Law* 95, no. 1 (January 1, 2001): 102–19. p.102

discourse on “development effectiveness” among the international community overall and Western donors more particularly.⁴⁵ This is visible in particular from the outcome of the Busan Conference in 2011 where the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation recognized the “central role of the private sector in advancing innovation, creating wealth, income and jobs, mobilizing domestic resources and in turn contributing to poverty reduction”.⁴⁶ This, together with a strong emphasis on the job creation in the 2011 World Development Report seems to point to a return to economic growth “as the central plan of development effectiveness”⁴⁷. These development effectiveness discourses reflect the existing reservations regarding impact of aid⁴⁸ and the pressures that exist among the Western donors to make aid more effective.

This highlights an important consideration that any peacebuilding discourse among donors now cannot be separated from the broader discourses on issues related to aid and development effectiveness. The “fragile states agenda”, some argue, emerged in the 1990s as a result of wars such as Rwanda, Yugoslavia, terrorist attacks and other crisis and the inability of the international community to adequately respond to those crisis. Questions about effectiveness of humanitarian aid, development, and peacebuilding became more frequent. The outcome was an increase in the number of international conferences “exploring the links between sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, human rights, good governance and international and human security.”⁴⁹ Thus it is arguable that the “fragile states agenda”, which emerged from this, was a new form of peacebuilding that attempted to integrate politics

⁴⁵ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London; New York: Zed Books, 2012).p.210

⁴⁶ Brian Tomlison, “Aid and the Private Sector: Catalysing Poverty Reduction and Development” (Philippines: The Reality of Aid, 2012), http://www.realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ROA_Report_2012-Aid_and_the_Private_Sector1.pdf.

⁴⁷ Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape*.p.211

⁴⁸ Kragelund, “Towards Convergence and Cooperation in the Global Development Finance Regime.”

⁴⁹ Cammack Dianna, Dinah McLeod, Alina Rocha Menocal, Karin Christiansen, “Donors and the Fragile States Agenda: A Survey of Current Thinking and Practice” (Overseas Development Institute, March 2006).p. 19

and development in order to respond to the emerging crises and increase development effectiveness.⁵⁰

In particular, conflict affected states seem to be on top of the international development agenda as majority of the people who live below the poverty line in the world today are from fragile and conflict affected states group. None of those states has even come close to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank has been concerned about the upcoming challenge with the fragile and conflict affected states recognizing that in the next 15 years, more than half of the poor countries are projected to graduate from its International Development Association (IDA) leaving IDA dominated by the fragile states.⁵¹ The increase in the number of investments and projects of the IFC, a branch of the World Bank that deals with the private sector, reflects this concern. Only between 2005 and 2010, IFC's investments have increased from 5.3 billion in 2005 to 12.6 billion in 2010 and they have almost doubled their number of projects.⁵² Apart from the multilateral donors like the World Bank, other bilateral donors have started significantly investing in the private sector development or have rhetorically reoriented their policies in this direction.

This shift, as Mawdsley suggests, may be due to the emergence of a "new global development governance regime"⁵³ in which modernization theories and trickle down economies are being recalled by the rising powers who have been active in this agenda, and now traditional donors are leaning towards it more. She points to the fact that China's success in reducing poverty as well as China's role in raising African GDP is an example that is now

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Benjamin Leo, Vijaya Ramachandran, and Ross Thuotte, "Supporting Private Business Growth in African Fragile States A Guiding Framework for the World Bank Group in South Sudan and Other Nations" (Center for Global Development, 2012),

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1426061_file_Leo_Ramachandran_Thuotte_fragile_states_FINAL.pdf.p.xi

⁵² Nelson Jane, "The Private Sector and Aid Effectiveness: Toward New Models of Engagement" (Brookings Institution, 2010), http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2010/9/development-aid/09_development_aid_nelson.pdf.p. 23

⁵³ Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape*. p. 213

being widely discussed among the Western donors (e.g. through China-DAC study group).⁵⁴ The Western donors are no longer the only players in the field of peacebuilding. This coupled with a general disillusionment and lack of success of the many interventions in the past leads towards a shift in thinking. Furthermore, majority of the fragile and conflict affected states have, in the last 10 years moved from the low-income to the middle income countries and are no longer eligible for the concessional loans.⁵⁵ This makes development assistance in itself much less influential in the conflict affected states⁵⁶. This may be pushing donors to find new forms of engagement such as the private sector development in order to preserve their fading relevance.

Another reason for such a shift is the general reduction in available aid from Western donors as a result of the financial crisis. A number of Western development agencies have been re-absorbed into their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, resulting in the need for an agenda that benefits them more.⁵⁷ The re-emergence of the private sector is motivated by donor countries' own commercial/economic interests "*vis-à-vis* those of other countries (and other donor countries in particular)".⁵⁸ Kragelund argues that the Western donors' national interests have always been present in development financing but now donors have become much more open about their national and economic interests.⁵⁹ The European Union's aid to China for example, now pays more attention to environmental sustainability, not only because it contributes to the global good but also because it helps European companies to export green technologies.⁶⁰ Thus

⁵⁴ Ibid.p.211

⁵⁵ Sadaf Lakhani, "Business as Usual in Fragile States? Part 1. Leveraging Aid for Private Sector Development," *International Network for Economics and Conflict*, June 17, 2013, <http://inec.usip.org/blog/2013/jun/17/business-usual-fragile-states-part-1-leveraging-aid-private-sector-development>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Emma Mawdsley, "DFID, the Private Sector and the Re-Centring of an Economic Growth Agenda in International Development," *Global Society* 29, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 339–58, doi:10.1080/13600826.2015.1031092. p.13

⁵⁸ Lau Schulpen and Peter Gibbon, "Private Sector Development: Policies, Practices and Problems," *World Development* 30, no. 1 (January 2002): 1–15, doi: 10.1016/S0305-750X(01)00097-3.

⁵⁹ Kragelund, "Towards Convergence and Cooperation in the Global Development Finance Regime."

⁶⁰ Ibid.

the focus on the private sector and improvement of regulatory environments is no surprise as it encourages Western companies to invest in what are now high-risk areas.

However, Mawdsley rightly points out that this return to the idea of economic growth at the center of development is not something new, but that poverty reduction as the central thinking was an outlier, that growth never dropped out of the agenda and now it is only expanding as a consequence of the challenge to traditional donor identity, rise of the new donors and the material crisis traditional donors are facing.⁶¹

1.2 Private Sector and Growth: No Promising Outcomes

Given this re-orientation or the expansion of the growth agenda through the private sector development as the central piece, an important question becomes how this is manifested in practice and what backs up the assumption that this form of engagement will yield better results? Unfortunately, the answers to these questions do not seem to be very promising.

Kindornay argues that beyond the basic idea that the private sector is an engine of growth which provides jobs and tax revenues for the governments to use to address poverty, there is no consensus among donors regarding the trickle down of the benefits brought by the private sector to the poor. Her study finds that donors have not clearly articulated the extent to which they incorporate human rights, environmental sustainability and other development concerns in their programs. She shows concern that the private sector engagement may result in mainly promoting commercial interests of the private sector.⁶² While there is a lot of focus on promoting good regulatory environments that attract the private sector investments and on the idea that the market self-regulation will somehow result in the pro-poor development, it is

⁶¹ Mawdsley, "DFID, the Private Sector and the Re-Centring of an Economic Growth Agenda in International Development."

⁶² Shannon Kindornay and Fraser Reilly-King, "Investing in the Business of Development" (The North-South Institute, January 10, 2013), <http://www.nsi-ins.ca/publications/investing-in-the-business-of-development/>.

particularly interesting to consider how such assumptions may play out in the fragile and conflict affected states context.

While many argue that it is still early to assess the content of this shift towards the private sector as an engine of peacebuilding, some critics are already concerned about the assumptions made behind it. First, as Mawdsley points out in the case of DFID's shift towards the private sector development, there is no consideration given to the extent to which the states and donors will ensure that the private sector development actually provides benefits to the poor. While DFID's argument is that the UK companies have much better corporate standards than those of BRICS for example, there is no mention of the issues such as labor standards or other damaging practices caused by the market competition inevitably creating winners and losers.⁶³

The new Dutch policy shift towards the private sector engagement has also been widely criticized as a mismatch between the business needs on ground and the interests of the Dutch private sector.⁶⁴ "Most PSD programs today are a one-size fits all founded upon the idea of supplying a series of key standardized inputs, which will make the developing country private sector more like the private sector of developed countries".⁶⁵ However, given that the local businesses are often unaware of the fact that mechanisms for support of the private sector even exist since those are mostly focused on supporting donor countries' companies to invest, it is unclear how such initiatives will support the needs of fragile states' markets nor how can they eventually bring the states out of fragility.

⁶³ Mawdsley, "DFID, the Private Sector and the Re-Centring of an Economic Growth Agenda in International Development."

⁶⁴ Rens Twijnstra, "Pull, Don't Push! Servicing the Motor of a Fragile Economy," *The Broker*, accessed April 8, 2015, <http://www.thebrokeronline.eu/Articles/Pull-don-t-push!-Servicing-the-motor-of-a-fragile-economy>.

⁶⁵ Schulpfen and Gibbon, "Private Sector Development."p.13

This shift towards the private sector and the general focus on development in peacebuilding is still relatively new and reflects a new attempt to deal with the old security problems. There still is a focus on good governance, however, there is less emphasis on democratic elections and human rights and much more on development effectiveness, stability and an assumption that development can move the countries out of fragility.

There are, as the chapter outlined, a number of reasons for this shift. First, the general realization that the approach to peacebuilding needs to encompass economic considerations that go beyond market liberalization became obvious in the 1990s resulting in more cooperation between development and peacebuilding. Additionally, the economic crisis and the general skepticism around effectiveness of aid pushed the Western donors to more explicitly than before focus on their own economic interests. Development of the private sector seems to be an excellent opportunity for this. Under the banner of economic growth, job creation and development as a way to peace, the Western private companies will have more and better opportunities for investment in what are often considered to be high risk countries. Last, given the emerging donors' experience of fast economic growth and the decreasing relevance of the Western donors for fragile and conflict affected states a shift towards growth and the private sector aims to make the Western donors more relevant and aid interventions more effective.

This new strategy significantly resembles China's approach to peace-building and hints towards an interesting convergence in approaches from the two sides. Being fairly new and relatively careful in their approach to peace-building China has evolved from a complete resistance to involvement with peacebuilding towards a significant participation in peacekeeping operations and a selective political engagement in fragile and conflict affected states. The following chapter explores China's engagement in peacebuilding and points to the reasons for the evolution in their approach as well as in what ways it converges with the West.

Chapter 2: China's Approach to Peacebuilding: Navigating and Reshaping Liberal Ideas

This chapter outlines China's evolving approach to peacebuilding and post-conflict involvement. The chapter argues that even though China does not have a defined policy on peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction China has been moving towards an emphasis on economic growth and political stability in its peacebuilding and post-conflict engagement.

To demonstrate this I first describe China's economic engagement in fragile and conflict affected states, visible both in their official rhetoric and in practice. This constitutes an important part of China's involvement in fragile states. Then I explain why and how China has been engaged politically in peacebuilding efforts both in their official rhetoric and in practice. I emphasize that China's political engagement is still a careful and a selective one as China is struggling to balance between the need to engage while resisting the Western neoliberal type of interventions and trying to maintain the principle of non-interference. However, China is seeing that purely economic engagement is not enough and their more politically sensitive engagement is gradually visible both from their official rhetoric in the policy circles, their current cooperation with the international community and their bilateral conflict resolution efforts. The result of these developments is bringing China's peacebuilding style closer to the peacebuilding style of the West, which is as previously described increasingly more oriented towards questions of economic growth and investment, and maintenance of political stability.

2.1 China's Economic Involvement: Rhetoric and Practice of Peace through Development

On the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China- Africa Cooperation held in Beijing in 2012, China committed to establishing the Initiative on China Africa Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Security and to providing its financial and technical support to peace

operations and post-conflict reconstruction and development.⁶⁶ This is only one of the recent efforts, out of many from China's side to take on a more active role in peace and security issues in Africa. It points to the fact that China is becoming an active player in the field of peace and security.

An important part of their active role in this arena is the economic aspect of their engagement. Economic growth and development as means to achieve peace and as the core of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in war-torn states has been present in the Chinese foreign policy rhetoric for some time. Ambassador Wang Min for example stated at the Security Council Open Debate on the Post Conflict Peacebuilding two years ago that “socioeconomic development should be the main way to build peace”⁶⁷ and that “[r]eal investment is often lacking”⁶⁸, urging the international community to dedicate more attention to socioeconomic development as the international community has overly focused on the issues of human rights, rule of law and security sector reform⁶⁹. Similarly, Liu Zhenmin emphasized development in his speech at the same event in 2009 stating that “[o]nly by achieving economic recovery and reconstruction at an early date and ensuring that people enjoy the peace dividends can there be a stable political foundation for the peace process. Judicial justice and the rule of law are necessary conditions for the stability and development of post-conflict regions and countries. Without development, however, justice and the rule of law are only castles in the air.”⁷⁰

⁶⁶ “The Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China- Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2013-2015)” (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, July 23, 2012), <http://www.focac.org/eng/dwjbzjjhys/hywj/t954620.htm>.

⁶⁷ “Statement by Ambassador Wang Min at the Security Council Open Debate on the Post-Conflict Peacebuilding” (Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, April 30, 2013), <http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/thematicissues/peacebuilding/t1036388.htm>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ “Statement by Ambassador Liu Zhenmin at Security Council Open Debate on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding” (Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, July 22, 2009), <http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/thematicissues/peacebuilding/t575181.htm>.

The economic engagement is also evident in practice. Chinese scholar Zhang Chun illustrates this in the example of China's engagement in South Sudan, explaining that right after South Sudan's independence in 2011 China has emphasized its standard "development-first diplomacy" focusing on South Sudan's socioeconomic development and reconstruction after independence.⁷¹ In addition to South Sudan, China has been involved in post-conflict reconstruction in Angola, Liberia, DRC, and Sierra Leone among others.

When looking at these concrete examples of Chinese post-conflict engagement, the emphasis on economic development is highly visible in practice but it is unclear to what extent this is a targeted post-conflict engagement rather than one that is purely economically beneficial for China and framed as post-conflict. Looking at the cases of Sudan, Angola, DRC or Libya, some of which are considered the typical examples of an alternative to liberal peacebuilding, the intention and the usefulness of Chinese engagement is hard to interpret. For example, China insisted on its involvement in Libyan reconstruction efforts but mostly emphasizing its own economic interests and a concern that the United States and NATO would take over the role of the UN in this.⁷² In Sudan, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was identified as an opportunity for projects of commercial nature which were started by many Chinese companies, both those already present in Sudan and new ones.⁷³ While their activities were not named as post-conflict reconstruction, some argue that this could be interpreted as an effort to support peace.⁷⁴ In both the cases of Angola and DRC, the Resource for Infrastructure investment contracts, which are often interpreted as an alternative to the financing of the IMF and the World Bank, are also a very convenient way to ensure against the problem of political

⁷¹ Chun Zhang, Mariam Kemple-Hardy, "From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Prevention: China in South Sudan," CPWG briefing (Saferworld, March 31, 2015), file:///C:/Users/Dragana/Downloads/from-conflict-resolution-to-conflict-prevention---china-and-south-sudan%20(1).pdf.

⁷² Silvia Menegazzi, "China Reinterprets the Liberal Peace" (Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), December 2012), <http://www.iai.it/pdf/DocIAI/iaiw1230.pdf>.

⁷³ Large Daniel, "Between the CPA and Southern Independence: China's Post-Conflict Engagement in Sudan," *South African Institute of International Affairs*, no. Occasional Paper No. 115 (April 2012).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

risk from a purely business perspective.⁷⁵ With this in mind, it is important to consider that China's emphasis on economic development as a way to create and maintain sustainable peace in fragile regions may be a way to frame their past and present economic activities as peacebuilding.

While the extent to which China's economic engagement is intentionally post-conflict peacebuilding is difficult to determine. However, a similarity between China's emphasis on "real investment", and development as a way to peace and the Western focus on the private sector development and economic growth is evident. With the West as with China, the impact is uncertain, as the benefits to the conflict affected populations from both sides are debatable.

2.2 China's Political Involvement in Peacebuilding

China's emphasis on development and economic growth in peacebuilding may also be a way for China to distance itself more from the liberal peacebuilding principles, including the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and present the Chinese approach as unique, reflected in its history of creating stability through economic growth and its incredible success in achieving economic growth in a short period of time⁷⁶. China has openly criticized the Western/liberal approach to peacebuilding, stating that peacebuilding needs to be done with less arrogance and on a more equal footing⁷⁷, that peacebuilding is not a one size fits all recipe, and that strategies should be distinctive depending on the affected country's needs.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Dunia Zongwe, "On the Road to Post Conflict Reconstruction by Contract: The Angola Model," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, December 23, 2010), <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1730442>.

⁷⁶ Wang Xuejun, "Developmental Peace: Understanding China's Policy towards Africa in Peace and Security."

⁷⁷ "Statement by Ambassador Wang Min at the Security Council Open Debate on the Post-Conflict Peacebuilding."

⁷⁸ "Statement by Ambassador Liu Zhenmin at Security Council Open Debate on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding."

China has also strongly emphasized non- interference, sovereignty and the primary role and responsibility of the concerned country for peacebuilding.⁷⁹

However, it is becoming more evident that a purely economic engagement is not enough as a peacebuilding strategy for several reasons. First, China's economic engagement in Africa is growing and this has political implications. China's economic involvement in Africa has been increasing especially since the 1990s. From 2000 until 2005 only, trade between China and Africa increased for almost 30 billion USD and China became the third largest trade partner for Africa. By the end of 2008, there were approximately over 2000 Chinese companies with a branch in Africa.⁸⁰ This economic involvement entails China's significant presence in some of Africa's most war-torn states⁸¹. While this means that China has managed to encourage businesses, finance resource investments and infrastructure projects in some of the regions that might have otherwise been neglected by the West and the cautious approach of many other investors⁸² it has also meant that conflict and fragility in those states have significant economic and political consequences for China.

China's economic interests have been targeted by the opposition regimes in countries like Sudan, Ethiopia, and Nigeria among others.⁸³ Uncertain regulatory environments and corruption have resulted in denial of licenses and in nationalization of Chinese enterprises in places like Chad, Nigeria, Angola and Sudan. "In 2004, rebels abducted Chinese workers who

⁷⁹ "Statement by H. E. Ambassador Wang Min, Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, at the Security Council Debate on Post-Conflict Peace Building" (Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, January 21, 2011), <http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/thematicissues/peacebuilding/t824196.htm>.

⁸⁰ Simon Zadek, Chen Xiaohong, and Li Zhaoxi, "Responsible Business in Africa: Chinese Business Leaders' Perspectives on Performance and Enhancement Opportunities," Working Paper No. 54 (Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative, November 2009).

⁸¹ Alden and Large, "On Becoming a Norms Maker."

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Chris Alden, "Seeking Security in Africa: China's Evolving Approach to the African Peace and Security Architecture" (Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center, March 2014), http://www.peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/357f0f6e29c92422ce98ce152a9e4819.pdf.

were working in southern Sudan. In April 2006, a separatist movement detonated a car bomb in the south of Nigeria, warned that investors from China would be “treated as thieves,” and threatened new attacks on oil workers, storage facilities, bridges, offices, and other oil industry targets. A spokesperson for the militant Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta condemned China for taking a \$2.2 billion stake in oil fields in the delta.”⁸⁴ There are also increasing concerns about Chinese citizens being taken hostage and other various crimes against Chinese businesses and tourists.⁸⁵ Thus conflict is becoming a direct threat to economic engagement and successful investment for China.

In addition to the direct economic consequences of involvement in fragile and conflict affected states, China is also facing increasing demands to engage, both from a number of African countries and from the Western powers. For example, in 2006 and 2007 China was urged by Chad to pressure Sudanese government into resolving the conflict in Darfur which was spilling over to Chad.⁸⁶ They also came under serious scrutiny by the West regarding the conflict in Darfur and China’s support of the Sudanese government. Western actors have also put pressure on China to become a “responsible stakeholder”⁸⁷ in the international system. Consequently, China’s evolving economic engagement in fragile states but also its growing role in the international system overall, are placing China in a position where re-consideration of its peace and security principles is necessary and where the non-interference principle is starting to be replaced by a gradual and selective intervention and political involvement. As can be seen from the cases of Sudan and South Sudan after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, as well as with the most recent conflict in South Sudan, Chinese economic interests

⁸⁴ Holslag Jonathan, “China’s New Security Strategy for Africa,” *Parameters*, Summer 2009, <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/09summer/holslag.pdf>.p.24

⁸⁵ Chris Alden, “Seeking Security in Africa: China’s Evolving Approach to the African Peace and Security Architecture.”

⁸⁶ Holslag Jonathan, “China’s New Security Strategy for Africa.”

⁸⁷ Robert B. Zoellick, “Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?,” *Department Of State. The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs*, September 21, 2005, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/d/former/zoellick/rem/53682.htm>.

are becoming directly entangled with the politics of some of those countries and engagement in peacebuilding is a new terrain where China has to balance between some of the established principles of non-interference and the new need to preserve its economic interests and be a responsible global power.

Peacebuilding is becoming more important for China's foreign policy agenda and as Zhao Lei explains, its peace engagement strategy is part of its overall grand strategy and "cultivation of China's status and influence as a responsible great power in global politics."⁸⁸ China strives to see itself shaping the international system. Wang and Rosenau point out that the development of China's economy has great implications for how the world is governed in regards to a number of issues ranging from trade to environment, human rights and security. Chinese government has to that end, taken a number of initiatives which show its willingness to shape the global governance system according to its own preferences.⁸⁹ At the same time, China is trying to balance its assertiveness and the willingness to shape the international system with its image as a non-threatening power, one that aspires towards peace and development cooperation. This dilemma is relevant for China's peacebuilding strategy and its role in the international peacebuilding and I argue that in their attempt to find this balance, China is converging with the West on a particular peacebuilding approach through selective political engagement focused on political stability. This does not imply that China is becoming more like the West, but rather that this convergence may be coming from both sides. On China's side it is coming from its internal struggle between the aspiration to shape the international system and to be an active non-threatening contributor to it.

⁸⁸ Zhao Lei, "Two Pillars of China's Global Peace Engagement Strategy: UN Peacekeeping and International Peacebuilding," *International Peacekeeping* 18, no. 3 (June 1, 2011): 344–62, doi:10.1080/13533312.2011.563107.p 344

⁸⁹ Hongying Wang and James N. Rosenau, "CHINA AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE," *Asian Perspective* 33, no. 3 (January 1, 2009): 5–39, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704681>.

Concepts of harmonious world and peaceful development illustrate this struggle. The principle of harmonious world depicts the strive of China to both integrate into and re-shape the current system of global governance while the idea of peaceful development responds to the concerns among the Western circles that China is a threat to the global order.

At the United Nations Summit in 2005, Hu Jintao delivered a speech where he described China's idea of harmonious world. While emphasizing some of the existing principles of the United Nations, Hu also proposed some changes which reflect how China views the harmonious world. Hu emphasized sovereignty as well as the country's right to choose their own "social system and path of development"⁹⁰. He also stressed the need for a reform within the UN and particularly the Security Council, to increase the representation of developing countries and to put more emphasis on development overall.⁹¹ His speech shows commitment to the international system and the UN in particular, stressing that China will always abide by the principles of the UN Charter but also hinting towards a dissatisfaction with the same system and a willingness to reshape it. Subsequently in a White Paper "China's Peaceful Development", the government restated China's goal of building a harmonious world, signaling again the serious intention to both be the part of the international system, but also its reformer.

The idea of peaceful development is different but also relevant to China's role in the international system. The concept proposed by Zheng Bijian, advanced the idea that China's development not only strives for a rise, but also adheres to peace and never seeks hegemony.⁹² This later transformed into the idea of "peaceful development" due to concerns that "peaceful

⁹⁰ "Build Towards a Harmonious World of Lasting Peace and Common Prosperity: Statement by H.E. Hu Jintao President of the People's Republic of China At the United Nations Summit" (United Nations, September 15, 2005), <http://www.un.org/webcast/summit2005/statements15/china050915eng.pdf>.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Bonnie S Glaser and Evan S Medeiros, "The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-Making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of 'Peaceful Rise,'" *The China Quarterly* 190 (June 2007): 291–310, doi: 10.1017/S0305741007001208.

rise” may still be too threatening of a discourse. Peaceful development came as a response to the Western concerns over China’s rise and the perception of China as a threat to the international system. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi illustrated these concerns in one of his papers by asking how will China “alleviate the concerns and worries of the international community over its future development”⁹³, “how will China deal with the prejudices and misunderstandings of some countries and how will it thwart the provocations and interventions of hostile forces?”⁹⁴. Hu Jintao first presented the idea of peaceful development at the Boao conference in 2004⁹⁵, stating that “China will follow a peaceful development path holding high the banners of peace, development and cooperation”⁹⁶.

These broader dilemmas are narrowly linked to China’s peacebuilding engagement which is now often described as shifting from non-interference towards selective participation.⁹⁷ Some have labeled China’s evolving engagement as “creative involvement”⁹⁸ or “constructive intervention”⁹⁹. China has certainly been very cautious when it comes to the international peacebuilding operations, because they find themselves in a Western-dominated terrain, “which challenges China’s position on state sovereignty and non-intervention”¹⁰⁰ but at the same time they have actively participated in this terrain. They have contributed a total of 7 million USD from 2006 until today to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF)¹⁰¹

⁹³ Wang Yi, “Peaceful Development and the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation” (China Institute of International Studies, March 11, 2014), http://www.ciiis.org.cn/english/2014-03/11/content_6733151.htm.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Glaser and Medeiros, “The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-Making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of ‘Peaceful Rise.’”

⁹⁶ “Full Text of Hu Jintao’s Speech at BFA 2004 Annual Conference” (Boao Forum for Asia, April 2004), <http://english.boaoforum.org/document2004/11119.jhtml>.

⁹⁷ Alden and Large, “On Becoming a Norms Maker.”

⁹⁸ Pang Zhongying, “The Non-Interference Dilemma: Adapting China’s Approach to the New Context of African and International Realities,” in *China-Africa Relations: Governance, Peace and Security* (Ethiopia: Institute for Peace and Security Studies (Addis Ababa University) and Institute of African Studies (Zhejiang Normal University), 2013).p.49

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Lei, “Two Pillars of China’s Global Peace Engagement Strategy.”p.351

¹⁰¹ “China’s Annual Contribution to UNPBF,” *Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office*, accessed June 13, 2015, <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/donor/00089>.

and a total of 3084 personnel troops, police and military experts to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO).¹⁰² As of 2008 China was the third largest contributor to the peacekeeping operations with a bigger contribution than Russia, the UK and the United States¹⁰³ and has also been supportive of the Brahimi Report.¹⁰⁴ This marks a significant shift from their complete lack of participation in the 1980s to a significant engagement today. It illustrates that China is more willing to be part of the international system and actively participate in peacebuilding signaling the move from non-interference to selective engagement. While China's greater participation in peacebuilding is part of its effort to balance the United States and the Western influence¹⁰⁵ it is also to an extent counterintuitive for China because by doing this it is converging with the West which is no longer focused on liberal peacebuilding ideals and more oriented towards maintaining peace, stability and pushing for investment led economic growth.

Apart from the international peacekeeping and the peacebuilding fund contributions, China has also engaged politically in conflict mediation. In the most recent conflict in South Sudan, China has, contrary to the principles of non-interference engaged in conflict mediation and diplomacy, talking with both the government and the rebels in South Sudan¹⁰⁶. While this is not a pattern but rather a more careful engagement in a country where China has important economic interests, it nevertheless illustrates important shift in China's approach towards fragile and conflict affected states, where China is participating in the international efforts but

¹⁰² "Troop and Police Contributors by Country," *United Nations Peacekeeping*, accessed June 13, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

¹⁰³ Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang, "China's Expanding Peacekeeping Role: Its Significance and Policy Implications" (SIPRI, February 2009), <http://books.sipri.org/files/RR/files/misc/SIPRIPB0902.pdf>.

¹⁰⁴ Director Pang Zhongying Professor, "China's Changing Attitude to UN Peacekeeping," *International Peacekeeping* 12, no. 1 (March 1, 2005): 87–104, doi: 10.1080/1353331042000286597.

¹⁰⁵ Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang, "China's Expanding Peacekeeping Role: Its Significance and Policy Implications."

¹⁰⁶ Chun Zhang, Mariam Kemple-Hardy, "From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Prevention: China in South Sudan."

has also stepped on a politically sensitive terrain to promote conflict resolution and political stability.

The chapter outlined trends in China's peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction approach. I argued that China continues to put emphasis on growth and development as it continues to invest and build in fragile and conflict affected states. At the same time, China is being pushed to engage politically as well, given both the outside pressure to be a responsible power and the negative economic consequences brought about by conflict and fragility. While China has for a long time put a strong emphasis on non-interference, and has tried to distance itself from the Western approach to peacebuilding, the need to engage more substantively and China's broader aspirations to assert itself in the international system have led China to selectively engage both alongside the West and bilaterally to end conflict and promote political stability. While China does not have an ideological blueprint for post conflict and peacebuilding interventions, the present developments point to a combination of continued economic engagement combined with more involvement in questions of political stability.

Chapter 3: China and the West in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Relatively recent peacebuilding history in the DRC is a good example of the convergence between the Western approach to peacebuilding and the Chinese approach. This chapter will illustrate how in DRC, the West has moved from emphasis on democratic governance and human rights protection towards attempting to ensure and maintain political stability in DRC and make the country more attractive for foreign investment. When compared to China, this shift in peacebuilding points to an important similarity between the two. China in DRC maintained its focus on growth through infrastructure and investment in natural resources. However, China went beyond and stepped in with the UN and other Western powers to maintain political stability in DRC, shifting the boundaries of its official non-interference rhetoric into the risky space of political involvement. The case of DRC therefore reflects well that in essence, China and the West are gradually aligning behind the same principles in peacebuilding in fragile states.

3.1 The West in DRC: Investment, Growth and Stability

A change from the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to the new United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DR Congo (MONUSCO) is one of the more obvious examples of change from emphasis on democracy and human rights in peacebuilding in DRC to an emphasis on maintenance of political stability with less regard towards liberal values.¹⁰⁷ MONUC was an extensive peacekeeping mission with a large mandate which included provision of assistance in the implementation of ceasefire agreement, observation of the agreement, humanitarian assistance,

¹⁰⁷ Devon Curtis, "China and the Insecurity of Development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)," *International Peacekeeping* 20, no. 5 (November 1, 2013): 551–69, doi:10.1080/13533312.2013.853950.

human rights protection, observation of national elections and more.¹⁰⁸ The mandate of MONUSCO has a significant difference in that it focuses on strong cooperation with the government and support to the government stabilization efforts. In regards to the security sector reform, the mandate of the mission even states that the government of DRC will have a leading role.¹⁰⁹ While it is clear that this shift in the mandate and acknowledgement and support for the president Joseph Kabila was a result of the president's efforts to have MONUC mission withdrawn from DRC, the official narrative from the MONUSCO resolution states that this shift acknowledges that the country has entered a new stage of transition and that MONUSCO's mandate reflects that. It states that the support for the elections will only be provided upon the specific request from the DRC government.¹¹⁰

Thus MONUSCO is very explicitly supporting the efforts of the government and president Kabila to consolidate the government power and stabilization has very obviously taken importance over legitimacy in this case. As Curtis puts it, the Western powers tolerated corruption and impunity during the first election just to ensure that the transition went forward and have ignored allegations that the 2011 elections were heavily flawed in order to keep the well-known and more predictable Kabila in power.¹¹¹

In the light of stabilization, the UN has also fully funded the government-led 2009 Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (STAREC), supported through International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS) and focused on establishing state authority in eastern parts of the DRC, heavily

¹⁰⁸ United Nations Security Council, "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1279," November 30, 1999, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1279\(1999\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1279(1999)).

¹⁰⁹ United Nations Security Council, "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1925," May 28, 2010, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1925\(2010\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1925(2010)).

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Curtis, "China and the Insecurity of Development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)."

dedicated to security, humanitarian provision and economic recovery.¹¹² No liberal aspects of this plan exist and the terms peacebuilding, democracy or human rights have not even been mentioned in it.¹¹³

The focus on stabilization and security rather than legitimacy, democratic and other liberal values reflects two important aspects of the shift of liberal peacebuilding approach in the DRC but also more broadly. First, one must acknowledge that the shift from MONUC to MONUSCO was done under the pressure of the government of DRC who wanted a withdrawal of the UN from DRC. Given that there was still a strong need for the forces to remain, a certain compromise with the government had to be made shifting the mission entirely towards support for the government consolidation and power, and direct fight against the rebel groups. Second, it reflects the fact that MONUC itself was not successful in achieving what was desired of it.¹¹⁴ Because the fighting continued despite the MONUC intervention, a new approach was taken, one where the international organizations are heavily supporting a government with questionable legitimacy, in order to stop the violence and establish security.

In addition to the stronger focus on the support for the government and stabilization from the side of the UN bodies, big donors in the development sphere have been dedicating a lot of attention to economic recovery. The current strategy of the World Bank for assistance to DRC heavily emphasizes economic growth, job creation and private sector development as part of the country's transition process.¹¹⁵ They even reference the World Bank 2011 report. "In the

¹¹² United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo, "Capacity-Building of the Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan (STAREC) in Eastern DRC," accessed May 17, 2015, <http://monusco.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=10662&mid=14594&ItemID=19243>.

¹¹³ Amani Labda, "Peace Maybe: Joint Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in the Democratic Republic of Congo," Synthesis Report, Vol. 1 (Belgium: Channel Research, June 2011), <http://www.oecd.org/countries/congo/48859543.pdf>.

¹¹⁴ Eriksen, "The Liberal Peace Is Neither."

¹¹⁵ "International Development Association International Finance Corporation and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency Country Assistance Strategy for the Democratic Republic of Congo for the Period FY2013-FY2016" (The World Bank, April 12, 2013), http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/05/16/000350881_20130516171004/Rendered/PDF/661580CAS0Box30C0disclosed050160130.pdf.

absence of appropriate redistribution tools, only a sustained high level of economic growth will help DRC break away from its current poverty level. Achieving this high level of economic growth and ensuring that basic services are provided to the population will require an effective state that creates the conditions for the private sector to thrive and a serious upgrading of governance.”¹¹⁶ Thus the emphasis on state effectiveness in providing broad based economic growth is evident in their approach to the assistance to DRC.

As part of this approach they have financed a big technical assistance project for rehabilitation of power facilities at Inga as well as agriculture and additional infrastructure projects.¹¹⁷ DRC is also part of Conflict Affected States in Africa (CASA) Initiative, led by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and focused mainly on the private sector development.¹¹⁸ One of its strategic objectives is “increasing private sector involvement in providing and rebuilding of infrastructure such as roads, ports, schools and power stations”.¹¹⁹ As a part of this, in 2008 IFC has also worked with the government of DRC to establish Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in the Kinshasa region in order to increase foreign and domestic investment.¹²⁰ The estimated budget for the special economic zones in DRC was \$3,322,271.¹²¹ Bilateral donors like DFID have invested significantly in the private sector development in DRC. A DFID program which started in 2012 has a budget of £92,595,476 majority of which goes to small and medium size enterprises.¹²² Earlier they have made pronouncements that they

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ “IFC’s CASA Initiative in Democratic Republic of Congo Supporting Private Sector Development through the Conflict Affected States in Africa Initiative” (International Finance Corporation), accessed May 20, 2015, <http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/e625d4004af24b3b81b3fb888d4159f8/DRC.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

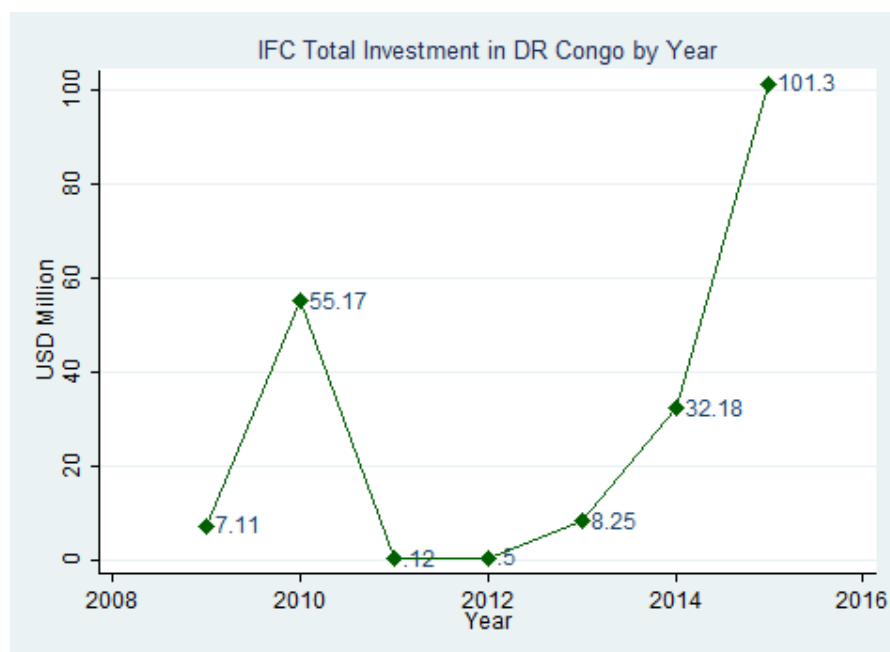
¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ “Democratic Republic of Congo Special Economic Zone Program,” Progress Report (International Finance Corporation, December 2010), <https://www.wbginvestmentclimate.org/publications/upload/DRC-SEZ-Report-July-December-2010-for-Internet.pdf>.

¹²¹ International Finance Corporation, “Developing a Framework for Special Economic Zones in DRC Summary of Advisory Services Project,” accessed May 22, 2015, <http://ifcextapps.ifc.org/ifcext/spiwebsite1.nsf/a24f910d8d23aa078525753d00658ca8/852568b10055270d8525760a004e1090?opendocument>.

¹²² Department for International Development, “Private Sector Development Programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” April 29, 2015, <http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-203161/>.

will dedicate significant focus to private sector development in DRC stating that “[i]ncreased investment and trade will be key factors in driving DRC’s recovery so supporting wealth creation through private sector development will be a major new component to our country programme.”¹²³



Graph prepared by author. Data obtained from OECD database.

The strong focus on economic recovery, private sector development, establishment of special economic zones and infrastructure projects as well as a move from MONUC to MONUSCO and focus on stabilization indicate a shifting approach of the Western donors towards peacebuilding in DRC and one which to an extent resembles Chinese rhetoric of developmental peace and their focus on investment in post-conflict and fragile states.

3.2 China in DRC: Building Peace with the West

China in DRC has both shown the aspects of some of its more well-known approach to peacebuilding but has also to an extent demonstrated a change. China’s involvement in DRC

¹²³ Department for International Development, “Summary of DFID’s Work in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 2011-2015,” May 2011, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67503/drc-2011-summary.pdf.

has often been compared to its involvement in Angola and some have even said that China has applied the ‘Angola Model’ to DRC.¹²⁴ This is the very often mentioned Sicomines deal with the Congolese government. The Sicomines deal was signed in 2007¹²⁵ between the government of DRC and a consortium of Chinese companies. It is a Resources for Infrastructure deal led by a consortium of Chinese and Congolese joint venture named Sicomines consisting of Chinese “Sinohydro, China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC) on the one side and the Congolese parastatal Gécamines on the other”.¹²⁶ The deal consists of the joint venture providing DRC with China’s Exim Bank financed infrastructure projects in exchange for access to mineral resources.

Much debate has happened over the fairness of the deal, in particular that the total USD 9 billion of the credit provided would be much less than the actual value of mineral resources found. Out of the USD 9 billion credit, 6 billion was initially to be used for infrastructure projects and 3 billion for the mining infrastructure. This was later changed to 3 billion for infrastructure under the pressure of the IMF and the World Bank who refused to give DRC the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief only to see them entering into another debt.¹²⁷ China agreed to alter the contract (which also included a removal of guarantee by the DRC) showing its ambition to be part of the international system and take on a greater role in the IMF, especially given the financial crisis at the time.¹²⁸

The project was also very beneficial for the government of DRC and the President Kabila since it came at a time when he did not have any other option to try and fulfil his flagship

¹²⁴ Edinger Hannah and Johanna Jansson, “China and the Democratic Republic of Congo: Partners in Development? China’s ‘Angola Model’ Comes to the DRC,” *The China Monitor*, no. Issue 34 (October 2008).

¹²⁵ Johanna Jansson, “The Sicomines Agreement Revisited: Prudent Chinese Banks and Risk-Taking Chinese Companies,” *Review of African Political Economy* 40, no. 135 (March 1, 2013): 152–62, doi:10.1080/03056244.2013.762167.

¹²⁶ “Evaluating China’s FOCAC Commitments to Africa and Mapping the Way Ahead.”p.53

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Curtis, “China and the Insecurity of Development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).”

policy program, les Cinq Chantiers (the five public works).¹²⁹ These were broad promises to address the country's needs in terms of infrastructure, health, education, water and electricity. Since at that time the Western donors did not focus on this particular type of post-conflict intervention, the Chinese investment was welcomed¹³⁰ even if highly debated regarding its fairness and even though it would have put DRC under a debt which was not desirable at the time, at least in the view of the IMF. There was however, an acknowledgement by the World Bank and the IMF that this initiative is of great importance to DRC and is also in line with the World Bank's objectives of eradicating poverty. Around 3000 Congolese workers have been employed as a result of the agreement.¹³¹

Apart from this agreement, China has also invested in agriculture, transportation and other areas in DRC. It is also important to note that China is not a single actor in DRC or Africa as many small businesses, miners, and others are present in DRC independent of official contracts and loans made by Exim and other banks.

Given the important economic interests in DRC which China has continually expressed, there is also an interest in the stability of the country, which has pulled China to be actively involved in more liberal-style peace interventions. China is an active contributor to first MONUC and later MONUSCO and by 2013 there were 221 peacekeeping personnel serving in MONUSCO.¹³² Chinese peacekeepers have worked on road construction, and have even had their medical personnel help in the Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) process in DRC by providing medical care to former rebel fighters

¹²⁹ Jansson Johanna, "The Sicomines Agreement: Change and Continuity in the Democratic Republic of Congo's International Relations" Occasional Paper No. 27 (October 2011).

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "World Bank, IMF, UNDP and Diplomatic Reps Tour Sicomines Project to Observe Progress of the DRC's First Infrastructure-For-Minerals Partnership Mines," *Database of Press Releases Related to Africa - APO-Source*, accessed May 25, 2015, <https://appablog.wordpress.com/2015/05/21/world-bank-imf-undp-and-diplomatic-reps-tour-sicomines-project-to-observe-progress-of-the-drcs-first-infrastructure-for-minerals-partnership-mines/>.

¹³² Curtis, "China and the Insecurity of Development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)."

and their families.¹³³ Chinese engagement with MONUC and later MONUSCO is not only representative of their interest in a stable DRC given their investment and economic interests but also shows that China is taking a greater role in international peace and security. China has agreed to support the Intervention Brigade which is the first brigade with the “responsibility of neutralizing armed groups and the objective of contributing to reducing the threat posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security in eastern DRC”¹³⁴. This is the first time in the UN peacekeeping history that a brigade with an offensive combat force was created. While China has justified its approval explaining that this was at the request of the government of DRC and it is not a precedent for any future interventions¹³⁵, it represents an important participation of China in the changing norms in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and perhaps also particularly risky as interventions like this could be a precedent for future interventions as well, something that China strongly opposed.

The case shows overall that China and Western actors are not the two opposites in peacebuilding and that their interests and actions seem to be coming closer together. From the side of the West, it is not only the emphasis on stabilization portrayed through MONUC’s transition to MONUSCO but also a stronger collaboration with the central government and the emphasis on the centrality of the state in both development and maintenance of peace that strongly hints towards the changing principles behind comprehensive peacebuilding missions. Private sector development has resulted in a rise of foreign direct investment (FDI) from USD 72 million in 2002 to USD 3.3 billion in 2012.¹³⁶ On the side of China, the business aspect of

¹³³ Guo Renjie, “Chinese Peacekeepers Fulfill DDRRR Mission in Congo (K),” March 4, 2015, http://english.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/photo-reports/2015-03/04/content_6379323.htm.

¹³⁴ “MONUSCO United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” accessed May 24, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/background.shtml>.

¹³⁵ “Explanation by Ambassador Li Baodong Following the Vote on the Draft Resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” *Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN*, March 28, 2013, <http://www.china-un.org/eng/gdxw/t1029607.htm>.

¹³⁶ “The World Bank’s Bad Business in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC),” *Oaklandinstitute.org*, accessed June 2, 2015, <http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/world-banks-bad-business-democratic-republic-congo-drc>.

their peacebuilding engagement has not faded. However, China demonstrated an additional willingness to engage in peacebuilding with the West and in more politically sensitive capacity. As a relatively new actor in peacebuilding, it has both shown the willingness to participate by contributing its troops and even indirectly and carefully taking part in some of the more politically charged processes such as security sector reform or approving the very first brigade with an offensive combat force. It is clear that for China, much of this is tied to their economic interests in DRC as many Chinese investments, small enterprises as well as individuals have important economic stakes in the country which are dependent on stability and peace. But it is also evident that China is slowly experimenting with new norms and establishing itself as a responsible actor both in the existing international system as well as by taking part in its changes.

Conclusion

The thesis argued that China and the West are converging around principles of political stability and economic growth and development, in their approaches to peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction. China and the West are driven towards this type of engagement for different reasons. Western actors after the “death” of liberal peace have been left to deal with fragile states, and relapses into conflict, and have seen the need for a more integrated approach to peacebuilding, one that takes development into account and ties the activities of development actors with those of peacebuilding. This was at the very least the official rhetoric present in the policy circles.

At the same time, with the growing concerns about development effectiveness and the declining availability of aid, Western actors have had to become more explicit about their own economic interests. This has led to more emphasis on promoting private sector development in post-conflict and fragile environments, partly to encourage the Western private sector to invest in risky environments but also to promote economic growth which would in theory trickle down and benefit the conflict affected populations. While economic growth theory and private sector development are nothing new historically they might have partly been reintroduced as a result of the general decline in relevance of the Western actors and conditional aid in some of the post conflict countries. BRICS and in particular China, became more active in the development sphere but in their own way, and have with their experiences of fast growth and development become a new example of success. All of this played a role in pushing the West towards the abandonment of the very non-operational liberal peace towards a more pragmatic engagement.

China’s shift happened for different reasons. China’s economic engagement in fragile and conflict affected states has started to have more intense economic consequences leading to

a greater urge to and inevitability of a political engagement that would protect China's present and future economic interests in those countries. At the same time, with China's rise, more pressure came both from within and from outside for China to engage and act as a responsible power in the international system. The dilemma between strong principles of non-interference and sovereignty and China's willingness to become an influential global power that will shape the international system according to its preferences led China toward careful and selective yet political type of engagement. This was manifested both through its participation in the UN peacebuilding operations and its bilateral conflict resolution efforts. While strongly rejecting the idea of liberal peace and democracy, China's efforts have been oriented towards establishment of politically stable and peaceful countries.

The involvement of both China and the West in DRC illustrates precisely this shift which resulted in the convergence of the two around political stability and economic growth. Western development actors have dedicated serious efforts to make DRC an investment friendly environment while China has been investing in DRC's natural resources. Together with the West through the UN mechanisms, China has contributed to stabilization efforts, peacekeeping missions and has even approved of politically sensitive activities such as the intervention brigade, or its involvement in the DDRRR process.

While the thesis has shown that this convergence has been evident in DRC, some broader conclusions can be made about the trajectory of the international peacebuilding efforts. As many have pointed out in the existing and very critical literature, liberal peacebuilding has failed to bring peace and development to conflict affected and post-conflict countries. Major critiques have revolved around the lack of actual tangible economic benefits to the conflict affected populations, emergence of "hybrid" regimes at best and relapse or perpetuation of conflict at worst. Little can be said however about the results of these particular relatively new peacebuilding developments that I described. The Western actors have not really thought

beyond the theories that private sector development and economic growth will eventually bring prosperity and they have paid little attention to the negative consequences of growth. When it comes to China's economic engagement, both critiques and praises exist about its effects on local populations as their infrastructure investments do bring tangible results fast but who benefits from them remains unclear.

On the aspect of political engagement, and the fading emphasis on democracy as the only acceptable form of governance (or at least fading of the urge to immediately establish democratic state structures) a burning question remains of what kind of systems will and do emerge? Will they be more locally resonant as Richmond hopes and for how long would the struggles for legitimacy continue remains to be further explored.

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