Ethio-China 50th Years of Diplomatic Ties

Belayneh Zelelew Negash



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A friend in need is a friend in deed

Ethio-China People's Friendship Association

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About ECPFA

Ethio-China People's Friendship Association (ECPFA) is non-political, non-profit making organization that is striving to enhance people to people relation and cultural exchange between Ethiopia and China. The Association aims at enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries through promoting people-to-people relationships and cooperation between Ethiopia and China on various aspects.



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Ethiopian People's Friendship Association

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'The relationship between two countries depends on the affection between its two peoples'

Old Chinese Saying

Belayneh Zelelew Negash, Ethio-China People's Friendship Association, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2020

Both China and Ethiopia are countries with long history, ancient civilization and splendid culture. The exchanges and friendship between the Chinese and Ethiopian people can be traced back to ancient times. According to historical documents, since the Chinese Qing and Han Dynasty, which is about first Century A.D, ancient China had already established some indirect contacts with Axumite kingdom and other African civilizations through the Balkh in Eurasia and Parthia in the Persian Plateau (EEA/EEPRI, 2009).

The relationship between Ethiopia and China is as old as human civilization. China's first contact with Africa could be traced back to ancient times in spite of the two regions being separated by vast distance between them (Muna, 2015). The first contact of China with the horn of Africa particularly with Ethiopia may have been began around 1000 AD, when the Chinese started to import rhinoceros horn from Ethiopia (Gamora & K.Mathews in eds. Harneit-Sievers et al, 2010). Various sources reveal that China and Africa have a long though unofficial history of relations dating back as far as 202 B.C. Some scholars attribute China's early contact with the Horn of Africa especially with Ethiopia was based on two factors; the first is the fact that Chinese were importing rhinoceros from Abyssinia. Second, It has also been suggested that there was a degree of phonetic similarity between Hough Chih (the then Chinese language and Ge-eze the then literary language of Ethiopia) (Gedion & Mathews, 2014; Gedion, 2009; Muna, 2015). According to the sinologist A. Hermann, a live rhinoceros that was arrived at the court of the Chinese Emperor Ping between AD 1 and 6 was from the country of the "Agazi" or "Agazian" at the Horn of Africa (Muna, 2015; Gedion, 2014).

According to some studies, People-to-people contacts between China and Ethiopia can be dated back to more than 2000 years ago, when Ethiopia was called Axumite Kingdom and

considered as one of the 4 great empires together with China, Rome and Persia. Thriving trade between east and west in Red Sea ushered in the gradual rise of Axumite, who traded ivories, gold and mastic for Chinese silk, and resold them to the Europe. According to Du huan, a Chinese traveller in Tang Dynasty visited Axumite and wrote down his experience there. Flourishing interactions along land and maritime Silk Road resulted in closer exchanges between the two countries, which could be vividly manifested by the copper coins from Northern Song Dynasty recently unearthed in Harla, the great ancient town near Dire Dawa of Eastern Ethiopia.



Photo Source: Professor Timothy Insoll

Similarly, Melaku (2014) believes that both Ethiopia and China had some sort of relations starting from the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D). During this period the Chinese were acquainted with at least part of the Horn of Africa and traded with the peoples of the Eastern African coast, obtaining "elephant tusks, rhinoceros horns, pearls and the musk of the civet cat ambergris, and slaves.”. Starting from the Yuan dynasty the Chinese began to increasingly trade directly with Africans, which is attested not only in contemporary documents, but from archeological finds of Chinese coins and porcelain (Melaku, 2014; Muna, 2015).

The Ethio-China relationship has historical evidence that indicates the relations were on their way even during the pre-modern period. According to Seifedin (2012), about seven hundred years ago, when the Song Dynasty (960-1276) ruled China (the Middle Kingdom) and led the world in nautical technology, merchandise trade from China was brought to Ethiopia. A portion of this historical period in China also coincided with the heyday of the Axumite civilization in Ethiopia, which participated in the maritime trading system that linked the Roman Empire and India (Seifedin, 2012).

However, similar to other parts of Africa, the relation between the two countries was not formal until 1950s. Because it was after 1955 (the year marked the Bandung Conference held in Indonesia) China become active in Africa and African issues (Anshan, 2007). The two countries had made official relationship when they opened embassies in their respective capitals beginning from 1972. This relationship has reached a greater level over the past two decades (Ethiopian Investment Commission, 2019). Subsequently, the Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie visited Beijing in 1971, where Mao Zedong received him.

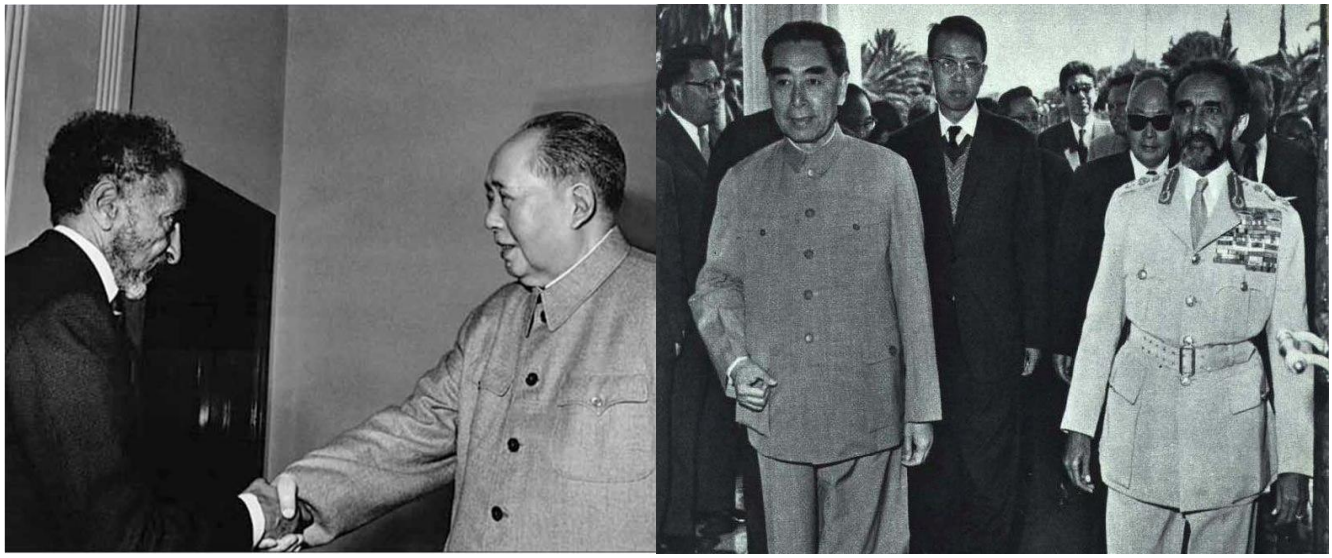


Photo source: Belayneh Zelelew

The year 2020 marked 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the People‘s Republic of China and Ethiopia. It is expected to be celebrating both in Addis Ababa and Beijing. China has become one of the key friendly countries for Ethiopia for the last 50 years. The relationship will mark its 50th anniversary in this year (2020). It was not an idle half-

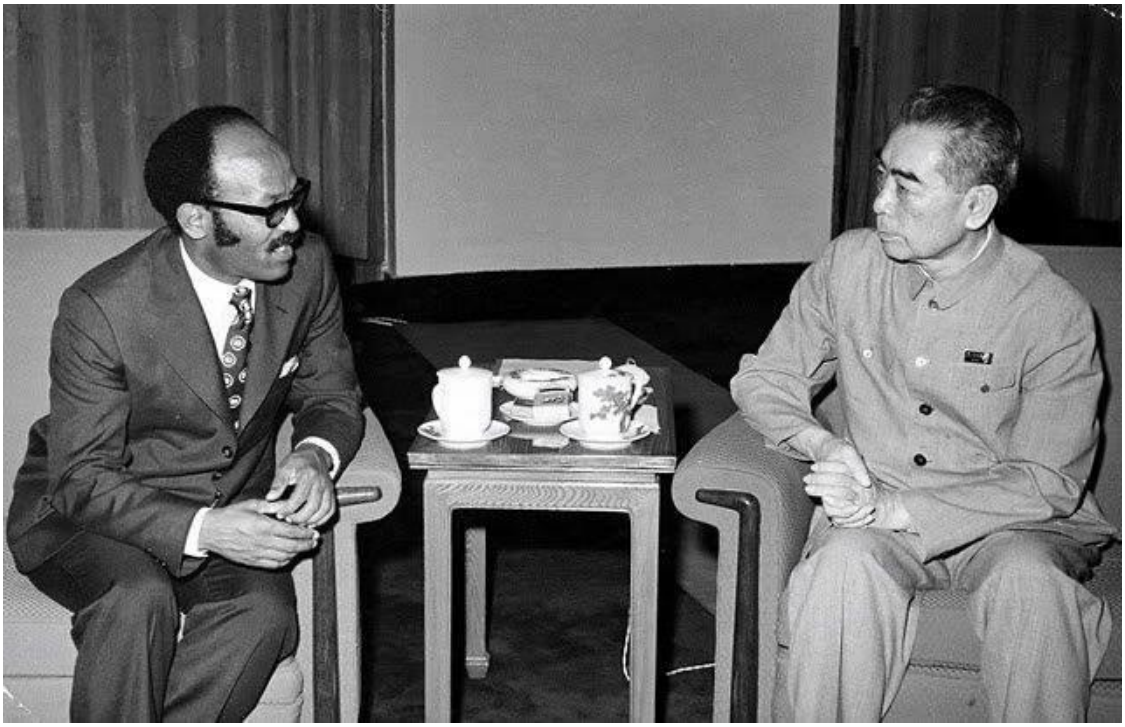
a-century rather one that has seen increasing bonding and understanding between the two friendly nations.

According to China‘s Foreign Policy towards Africa, Li Anshan (2006) argued that China‘s African policy emphasis is put on cooperation, bilateralism and win-win pattern, followed by the change of China‘s aid pattern, from the unitary aid given gratis to multiple forms, such as government deducted interest loan on favorable terms, aid combined with co-investment, and aid gratis.

Even though regional and international situations militated against Sino-Ethiopian relations the two countries were inclined to build upon cultural diplomacy. To complement the coming of cultural troupes to Addis Ababa in the previous years, a 71 member Ethiopian cultural delegation arrived in Beijing in August 1961. The cultural missions went to China for three weeks performance in the major cities of the country including Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and others. On the other hand, sending journalists with the cultural delegation was already underway as a symbol of strengthening ties. To diversify such a beginning the Chinese government had already started sending its journalists to Addis Ababa on different occasions. Subsequently the Ethiopian government also began dispatching its journalists as of early 1960s to China on yearly basis. While journalists from the Ethiopian Economic Review were the first to go to China on official invitations, they were followed by representatives from the Ethiopian Herald in 1964. China Journalists Association and the China-Africa Friendship Association were founded in 1960. On that basis exchanges between the two countries had made slight improvements (Wang, 2014).The mid 1960s marked greater interaction between Ethiopia and China. One significant affair worth mentioning is that China was one of only five governments that refused to recognize Italy's occupation of Ethiopia in the middle of the last century.

In 1963/64 a high level Chinese delegation led by Premier Zhou Enlai visited ten African countries, including Ethiopia. The visit was described by the Chinese as a ‘good will mission’. It was the first high-ranking official mission to tour the principal independent states of Africa. The

main aim of China was to build up on common interests. In addition, it was a very important trip aimed to gain African support for Beijing not only in matters of general politics but also for her admission to the United Nations. Moreover, it was a campaign to assure the Africans that China would still stand by the side of the Africans in their struggle for independence and national sovereignty. The visit by the delegation to Ethiopia was thus part of China‘s overall endeavor to strengthen ties with Africa (Wang, 2014).



China's first visit to Ethiopia, was to Asmara

Ethiopian diplomat Ketema Yifru meeting with China's Premier Zhou Enlai

During the signing of formal diplomatic ties, the two countries have agreed on the basic principles of diplomacy as a guideline for friendly and cooperative relations. These included the Bandung Conference tenets:

- ✓ Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity,
- ✓ Mutual non-aggression,
- ✓ Mutual non-interference in other‘s internal affairs,

- ✓ Equality and mutual benefit and,
- ✓ Peaceful coexistence.

These principles were all extension of values which China usually enunciates while forging diplomatic relations with different countries. They became the basis for future relations between China and Ethiopia.

Currently, the bilateral relations is multifaceted and keeping the economic growth of both countries promising. On the other hand, many Chinese companies are engaged in several development projects in Ethiopia. Road, railways, and telecommunications are among the major projects that the Chinese companies are involved in.

Driven by the momentum gathered from the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), and the Belt and road Initiative, notable achievements were achieved in China-Ethiopia relations in 2019.For instance, Reiterating remarkable achievements in China-Ethiopia relations in the year 2019, including the cooperation on successful launch of Ethiopia's first ever remote sensing satellite, dubbed ETRSS-1.

The relationship between the two countries have been further strengthened and characterized by close and comprehensive consultation and cooperation for a win–win socio-economic development; not only through strong government-to-government relations but also through party-to-party ties and people-to-people contacts.

The two countries relation is strengthened by people-to-people ties and is being built on solid foundation. In the year 2016 Ethio-China People's Friendship Association (ECPFA) established as non-political, non-profit making organization that is striving to enhance people to people relation and cultural exchange between Ethiopia and China. The Association aims at enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries through promoting people-to-people relationships and cooperation between Ethiopia and China on

socio-economic areas. To meet this aim the association under taking various types of activities through involving members of the association and stakeholder's (Belayneh, 2017).

Economic Cooperation and Trade Relations

Ethio-China economic cooperation is historical and strategic based on mutual friendship and non interference principle of South-South Cooperation and their respective foreign policies. Since the initiation of official diplomatic relationship in 1970, Ethiopia and China has signed different agreements to strengthen their economic cooperation in general and increase trade in particular.

As Ethiopia strives to become the manufacturing hub of Africa, more and more Chinese companies are showing an interest in investing in the east African country. Economic interests remain the basis to bringing states closer to each other. These could be either through trade, aid and investment or one or two of them. Predominantly improvement of relations between Ethiopia and China was clearly observed in the development of trade relations. Even though the two countries had no agreement on trade relations, there were trade exchanges underway on a limited scale. Trade relations between the two counties flourished since Bandung conference and the visit of the Chinese cultural mission to Ethiopia in 1964. But exchanges from both sides were so limited that it could provide little benefit to both countries.

The first Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement was signed in October 1971 and stated that Ethiopia and China agreed to forge trade relations on equal and mutual basis. The agreement laid down a formal ground for exchanges in terms of import-export without contradicting the domestic laws and regulations of the two countries. Furthermore it provided for a mutual consent on the commodities to be imported and exported, and on the transits, utilization of warehouses, shipment, aspect of customs duty, taxes and other expenses levied giving the most-favored nations treatment. Most favored nation, also called normal trade relations was a status awarded by one nation to another in international trade. It means that the receiving nation would be granted all trade advantages-such as low tariffs. Accordingly,

Ethiopia and China agreed to treat one another to the lowest tariffs in their import-export trade, a further improvement in their bilateral relations. The agreement was to be valid for one year with provision of renewal and protocol to its implementation (Wang, 2014).

China-Ethiopia relationship has enjoyed comprehensive and rapid development in recent years, which was elevated to "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership" as jointly stated by top leaders of the two countries. The period of high growth rates in Ethiopia was also marked by an intensification of Ethiopia–China economic relations. Bilateral trade between the two countries expanded rapidly, and China is currently the country's top export and import partner. Ethiopia is Africa's second-most populous nation, with a mostly young population of about 100 million. It hopes its investments will meet the demands of the job market and keep the nation stable and prosperous. The contribution from Chinese companies is massive and highly visible across the country.

According to the Chinese ambassador to Ethiopia Tan Jian on the economic front, bilateral pragmatic cooperation has achieved remarkable progress, in the areas including among others, the Addis Ababa Riverside Green Development Project, Ethiopia-Djibouti railway project, oil and gas project, and airport expansion project and others successful projects. Similarly, according to the statistics by Ethiopian Investment Commission, from January to October in 2019, Ethiopia approved 147 FDI projects from China, with a year-on-year increase of more than 12 percent, accounting for 60 percent of the newly-approved FDI projects in Ethiopia in the year 2019. In the area of capacity building and education, the ambassador has also recalled that a total of 1,590 Ethiopians travelled to China for training, among which 234 people were awarded the scholarships for their master-degree and doctoral-degree programs in the same year. With regard to the bilateral cooperation in the area of hi-tech, Tan Jian recalled that China's Alibaba Group, the global e-commerce giant, has decided to establish Alibaba electronic World Trade Platform, digital trade hub in Ethiopia, which would help the country develop its digital economy. And the ambassador mention that feasibility study would be started for the

project of China-Africa Bamboo Center in Ethiopia, and the Chinese government are planning to establish a Luban Workshop to train technicians (Xinhua, 2019).

Different studies show that, China's contribution to Ethiopia's economic development is quite significant in infrastructure, information and communication technology and hydroelectricity projects. Chinese investors in Ethiopia are creating thousands of jobs both at lower and upper positions, while providing various training to their employees.

The pattern of China's investment in Ethiopia has a number of distinctive features. Chinese investment in Ethiopia has been increasing sharply, amounting to Birr 8.8 billion in 2008 and creating of 82,478 jobs, 32,800 of them permanent(Sumit ,2014). Currently, according to the EIC over 1,000 Chinese investment projects are licensed but only 593 projects are fully operational (Addis and Zuping, 2019). These projects have created more than 52,559 permanent jobs and 52,289 temporary jobs for Ethiopians (Addis and Zuping, 2019). As indicated above, Chinese investments are creating thousands of jobs for Ethiopians.

Agreements between China and Ethiopia

The establishment of diplomatic ties in 1970 also paved the way for further multi-dimensional interactions between the two countries. One of these was the signing of air traffic agreement in Beijing on 30 July 1972. Based on the five principles guiding the diplomatic ties, the two agreed for two ways passengers and cargo transportation. The civil aviation agreement with destinations and stopovers in two cities of both countries (Addis Ababa and Asmara in Ethiopia, and Shanghai and Beijing in China) gave all additional input to the flourishing political and economic ties between the two countries(Wang, 2014).

Following the opening of the direct air transportations, trade relations showed a great progress. The inaugural flight of Ethiopian airlines to China took place on 22 February l973 when the plane carrying about 90 Ethiopian delegates and passengers arrived in Shanghai. The opening of the air route between Ethiopia and China was a breakthrough not only in the relations between the two countries but also an impetus to the Afro-Asian solidarity. Addis Ababa being the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity served as a junction for Chinese and African

leaders. To that effect the Chinese leaders started speaking highly of the Imperial Government of Ethiopia for their efforts in opposing imperialism and colonialism, upholding African unity and supporting national liberation movements in Africa (Wang, 2014).



Photo Source: Ethiopian Airline

Mengistu Haile Mariam led a left-wing military coup in 1974 that toppled the Haile Selassie monarchy. This development complicated China's goal to strengthen relations with Ethiopia because the Soviet Union, seeing an opening after Ethiopian relations worsened with the United States, switched its support from neighboring Somalia to Ethiopia. This occurred at the height of the Sino-Soviet conflict; the Soviets promised the Mengistu regime more than China could offer. China made clear that it was ready to give moral support to Ethiopia's new revolutionary government, but it was not prepared to compete with the Soviets in providing arms and financing(David 1986).

There were no senior visitors from China to Ethiopia until the vice premier/foreign minister came in 1989 and again in 1991. Throughout the Mengistu regime, however, China and Ethiopia maintained diplomatic and trade relations. China continued to send medical teams to Ethiopia, a program begun in 1974, and offered ten scholarships annually beginning in 1988(China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005).

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi made his first visit to Beijing in 1995. President Jiang Zemin visited six African countries, including Ethiopia, in 1996. The two countries signed a series of new agreements, including an important one on trade, economic and technical cooperation.



Photo Source: Xinhua

Premier Wen Jiabao visited Ethiopia in 1996 and 2003. Meles paid a second visit to Beijing in 2004, when he signed additional cooperation agreements and, in 2006, he co-chaired the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing.

In the past two decades and half, the relations have steadily improved, with increasing diplomatic contacts and growing trade and Chinese investment in the Ethiopian economy. Agreements between the two countries include the 1996 Agreement for Trade, Economic and Technological Cooperation; the 1998 Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement; the 2002 Agreement for Economic and Technological Cooperation, JECC - Joint Ethiopia China Commission (1988), Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (2000) and the May 2009 agreement to eliminate double taxation and others until present time.



Photo Source: Xinhua

In 2019 Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's visit to China, that have featured signing of various bilateral cooperation agreements and fruited steady development of bilateral relations oriented under new circumstances.

Interest Free Loan between China and Ethiopia



Photo Source: Belayneh Zelelew

The periods following the forging of diplomatic ties had shown interest free loan between China and Ethiopia. One of the major outcomes of the Emperor‘s visit to China was the signing of Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between the two countries on October 1971.

The loan was granted to be used within a period of five years from January 1, 1972 to December 31, 1976. Apart from the Tanzania-Zambia railway project agreement, it was the largest single loan agreement. As agreed the loan was provided in form of complete project itself, single equipment, technical cooperation as well as general commodities. In the agreement it was stipulated that the loan would help to defray the local expenses for construction projects in Ethiopia.



Photo Source:cpc.people.com.cn

During the visit by President Mengistu to Beijing in 1988, he first met the Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and hoped for further strengthening of relations between the two countries and appreciated China's reform and opening up policy. President Mengistu was given an interest free loan of RMB¥100 million by Beijing, and it marked the biggest assistance ever allocated to the communist government of Ethiopia by China.

In addition, China has contributed food aid on several occasions. During Ethiopia‘s drought in 1984 and 1985, China donated at least 25,000 metric tons (mt) of maize. Other contributions during this period include 1,000 blankets for refugees and 20 mt of the insecticide diazinon to combat locusts in 1986 (Bartke 1989, 63).

Following the collapse of the Dergue regime in 1991 and the dismantling of the socialist state, China significantly increased its aid, trade and investment activities in Ethiopia (Afrodad,

2011).China is providing assistance to Ethiopia in various fields. Soft loans, grants, technical cooperation, human resources development and urban planning are all part of the Chinese support, and this has made China an important development partner for Ethiopia, especially the Government's Five Year Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development Program (PASDP) and Growth Transformation Plan.

The contribution of Chinese development assistance remained increasingly, it gained a much higher profile in the Ethiopian economy from the mid-1990s onwards (Afrodad, 2011).
The diplomatic ties between the two states become closer when Ethiopia hosted the 2nd Ministerial Meetings of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2003 (Thakur, 2009). At the 3rdMinisterial Meetings of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2006, when Hu Jintao announced a number of policy measures including zero tariff for African goods, debt cancellation and joint infrastructure projects, Ethiopia was the only country to benefit from all (Thakur, 2009).



Photo Source: Xinhua

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi successor, Hailemariam Desalegn, as foreign minister and deputy prime minister in 2010, had openly called for following the "Chinese model" (The Economist,2010).

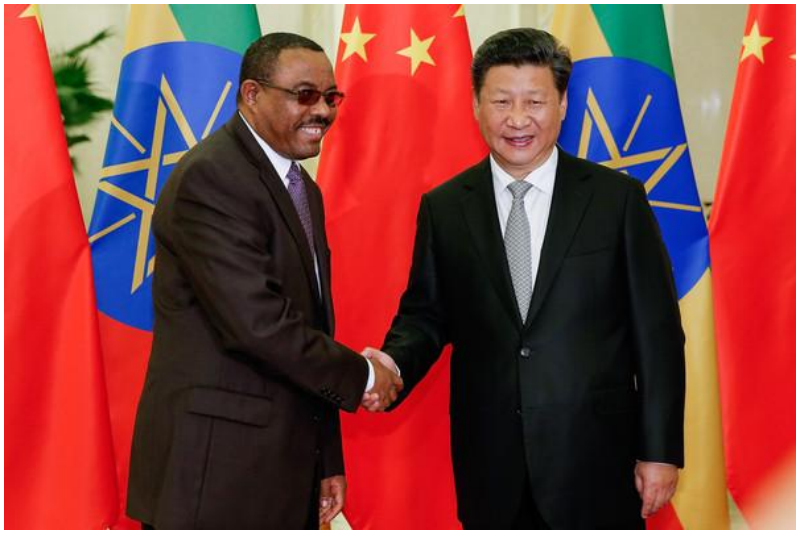


Photo Source: Ethiopian Herald

In addition, both countries have an understanding to support each other diplomatically at international forums. Ethiopia supports China‘s long-standing policy of reinforcing domestic policy in the international arena, especially when the issues of Taiwan and Tibet are raised. In "return‘, China has reciprocated by lending its diplomatic and economic support to the Ethiopian government (Wang, 2014).

Chinese development assistance to Ethiopia differs from western development assistance in many ways. Firstly, Chinese assistance is based on the principles of political non-interference and equal partnership that brings mutual benefits. Secondly, as noted earlier, it is demand driven, that is, based on the requests from the recipient country; hence, it is easy to align Chinese development assistance with national development priorities (Jalata, 2014). China emphasises “win–win co-operation” rather than the traditional donor–recipient relationship. Its foreign aid, trade and investment programs are also closely coordinated, and it uses its development assistance to promote its trade and investment activities. There are some other advantages of China over western donors such as less bureaucratic hurdles and faster aid disbursals.

According Belayneh (2018) most of western aid focusing on awareness creation that mainly focused on longer discussion and meeting that aims “meeting for eating, set another meeting for eating” policy. The Government of Ethiopia is interested in Chinese aid for to the same reasons as other African leaders: it is disbursed fast, it is more certain than Western aid, and

due to its lack of conditionality, it is viewed as compatible with Ethiopia's national goals and strategies.

Main Factors Driving Development of Relations between China and Ethiopia

The question was what were the driving factors for these two countries to come closer to a top level government visit and economic ties? Obviously, a number of factors have strengthened the current bilateral political and economic relations between China and Ethiopia, and make the bilateral relations indeed bright and promising.

First, the bright and promising development of relations between the two countries has been facilitated by the strong political support from both governments. Both China and Ethiopia have the same historical background and both of them are the developing countries. Following the political disturbances in the spring of 1989, China not only suffered from political and economic sanctions imposed by Western countries, but also became a target as a major competitor to the US. Faced with growing challenges on the international arena, China emphasized both safeguarding its national political interest and seeking national economic benefits in its foreign strategy. During that hardship, African countries including Ethiopia were the first countries to standby the side of China. As the Chinese proved and reiterated **"a friend in need is a friend in deed"** (He Wenping, 2006). African countries friendship with China on that issue which had a direct relation with the interpretation on human rights showed their commonality with the country against the Western outlook (Denis M. Tull, 2006).

The Ethiopian government is very keen on looking for insights from Chinese development model and expects to learn much from China‘s experience over the past three decades to further its own economic development. Within the context of globalization, China unwaveringly pursues its "Chinese Dream" and has been deepening the comprehensive reforms involved in this. Ethiopia similarly is committed to its Ethiopian Renaissance, to fulfill its second Growth and Transformation Plan and achieve its Vision 2025 to become a middle-income country.

China is now the second largest economy in the world; and Ethiopia is emerging as one of the fastest growing economies in Africa and the world. Given the complementary needs, both

countries are looking forward to greater opportunities of in-depth cooperation, and we will be expanding bilateral relations in a number of areas.

For China, Ethiopia is a potentially large market and an important investment destination. While Ethiopia now exports few natural resources of strategic interest to China, it is important for other reasons. With a population of about 110 million people, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa after Nigeria. It serves as the headquarters for the African Union. For Ethiopia, China is a major source for the transfer of industrial capacity and technology. Ethiopia will not only be able to improve the infrastructure facilities, but we will also work together for regional connectivity, including establishment of transportation networks, electricity and telecommunication links. The two countries will be able to tap into the great potential for cooperation in the fields of agriculture and mining and energy, especially green, clean, sustainable energy, and upgrade our cooperation to a fully-fledged strategic partnership.

Without a doubt, China is willing to work with Ethiopia to strengthen cooperation in areas such as infrastructure construction, human resource development, construction of industrial parks, integrated development of energy resources from upstream to downstream, investment and financing, boost Ethiopia's industrialization process and independent sustainable development through production capacity cooperation, and build a model of the all-round upgrading of the friendly, mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation between China and Ethiopia.

Challenges facing the Ethiopia and China Relations

The bilateral relations between Ethiopia and China have been greatly developed especially in political and economic fields since 1991. However, there have been many challenges to the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Moreover, though export to China was growing much faster than the import, since the volume of Ethiopian export was very small, the trade balance had been in favor of China. Although trade figures show that the volume of Ethiopian exports to China has increased over time, the trade imbalance remains a structural problem in the trade relations between the two countries.

The imbalance generally raised concerns in the Ethiopian government, which of course the Chinese government also took into consideration. Up to the 4th FOCAC Meeting, China granted Special Preferential Tariff treatment from 187 goods to 440 goods, and China has become the largest export country of Ethiopia.

One of the largest obstacles foreign investors face is trade regulation and customs clearance efficiency and the restrictions on foreign currency transaction and conversion as well as foreign exchange rate risks pose a serious threat to all investors but especially to manufacturing and construction companies which rely heavily on imported supplies and equipment. Besides, tax law explanation is often vague and inconsistent, and another existing challenge is low education levels and inadequate skills of labor force as well as discrepancies in the work ethics.

Additionally, lack of collective dialogue and cooperation between Chinese and Ethiopian youth organizations, help boost their cooperation and exchanges and lay the groundwork for China-Ethiopia friendship from generation to generation, and lack of cultural exchanges of diverse forms between the two nations, which is not recognizing the importance of cultural exchanges and cooperation to maintaining the diversity of human culture, enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the two nations. Other challenges facing the Ethiopia and China relation is the weak exchange of experience and cooperation in science and technology under the framework of the China-Ethiopia Cooperation Forum with a view to promoting economic development and social progress. Chinese interest in Ethiopia has brought about controversies with the local community. Not surprisingly there are segments in the Ethiopian society—with vested interests—that are expressing anxiety given the sheer intensity of bilateral relations.

Finally, Ethiopia became a widely visible beneficiary of China, not only in agriculture, infrastructure, construction, trade, investment, but also in development aid, debt reduction, loan and technical assistances, and human resource development without any political strings attached. Currently, Ethiopia is learning lessons from Chinese development model.

Conclusion

Both China and Ethiopia are countries with long history, ancient civilization and splendid culture. The exchanges and friendship between the Chinese and Ethiopian people can be traced back to ancient times. This relationship has reached a greater level over the last two decades. Currently, the bilateral relations are multifaceted benefiting both sides. Many Chinese companies are engaged in several development projects in Ethiopia. The socio cultural relationship of the two countries is also the other face of these bilateral relations.

China-Ethiopian relations have been the result of common political and economic strategic interests that were bolstered by common experiences base on principles of mutual respect. China financial assistance to Ethiopia, it helped to ties between the two countries and also helped Ethiopia to tackle some of its problems and leverage the effort for poverty reduction and alleviation. Through the aid programs which focused on financing different projects, China showed its willingness and cooperation with Ethiopia. The FOCAC showed Ethiopia benefits from the multiplicity of interactions and it was served as a strategy aimed at creating a long-term relationship based on mutual respect, understanding and friendship between China and Ethiopia. In addition to increased trade and investment, debt relief and grants from the Chinese side is believed to contribute to Ethiopia‘s attempts at poverty reduction and eradication. There have been many challenges to the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

In sum, the relations between China and Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular are harvesting fruitful achievements in the last two decades. Challenges cannot be the obstacle or barrier to the thriving of growing cooperation between China and Ethiopia. More political and economic interactions and cooperation between the two countries are expected to prospect, under these conditions China and Ethiopia economic, political and people-to-people relations are definite to witness a bright future.

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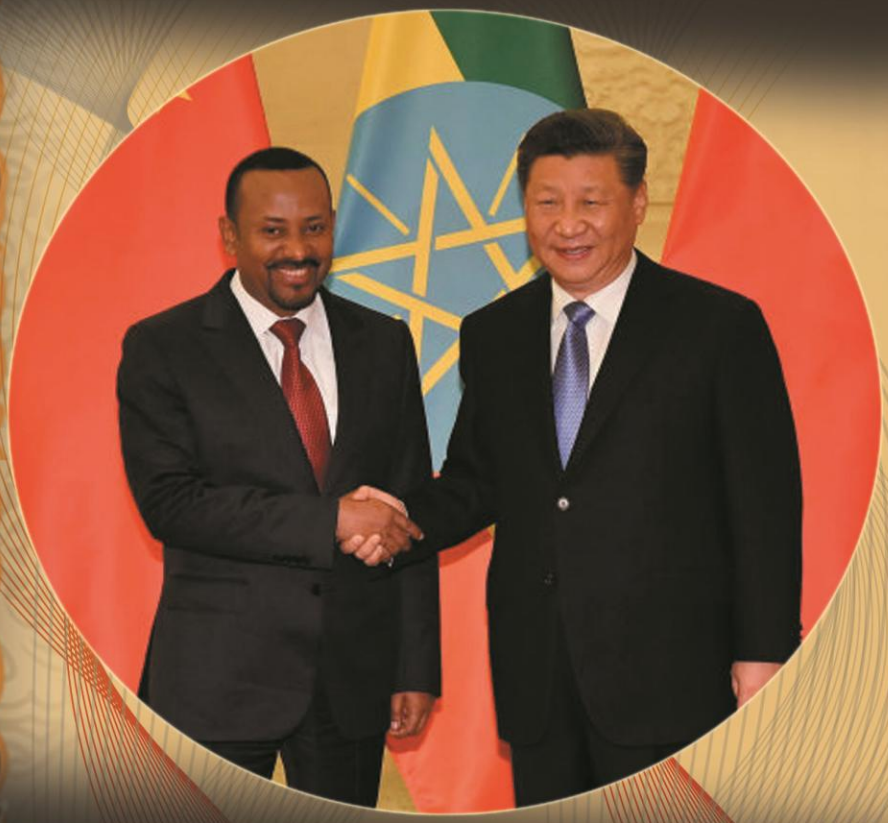
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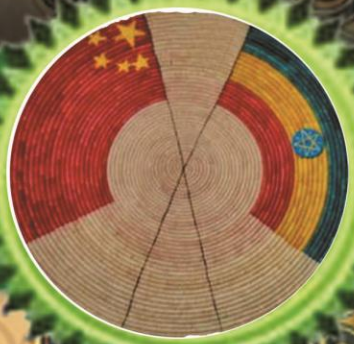
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