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Institute for a Community  
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## **Securing the Insecure:** **Chinese GSI enhances African Security**



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If Eurocentric politics was the echo of the past, Asian centric politics lead the world today then Africa is indeed the region of the future. Yet this future is marred by challenges of instability and insecurity both internal, as well as, external. Recurring civil wars, rise of subnational actors and race for African resources among major power enhances vulnerability of the African region. Never has been the case that an arrival of an external power provided any security assurance to Africa; rather colonial powers exploited it. From slave trade to blood diamonds, African political history has been a tale of sorrow, exploitation, subjugation and racism. However, recently, African engagement with China is changing these traditional rules of engagement. Strictly adhering to non-interference and respect for territorial integrity, Chinese outreach to African region provides a great opportunity to the countries of region. The Chinese reach to Africa is meant to collaborate and enhance bilateral and multilateral relationships without pre-conditions, fear and malicious intent of exploitation.



### **Introducing Chinese GSI:**

Chinese growing ties with Africa in terms of trade, investment and economic projects will remain vulnerable to sabotage from internal and external actors and factors. In this context the existing Forum for China Africa Cooperation commonly known as FOCAC must be supported by solid security provisions. Hence, this very initiative is dependent upon



another Chinese led Global Security Initiative commonly known as GSI. Announced at the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022, the initiative is aimed to provide security guarantee for many Chinese global initiatives including Belt and Road Initiative and Global Governance Initiative. While highlighting the very intent for announcement of this security initiative, President Xi delivered a keynote speech and said that “security is the precondition for development,” and quoted a Chinese axiom that “Stability brings a country prosperity while instability leads a country to poverty.” The stability indeed is dependent upon provision of security goods. All of this need firm resolve and commitment.

### **Fundamentals of Global Security Initiative:**

Chinese GSI is based upon some core concepts and principles that make it very unique, attainable and preferable. It is based upon developing comprehensive, sustainable and cooperative framework with focus on addressing the legitimate security concern of everyone. Less often is the case, where a major power makes a smaller nation an equivalent partner and security commitments are aimed addressing genuine concerns of everyone. Traditional security alliances and partnerships are based upon the interests of power projection of the major power and while little is available to the security of weaker nation, as intra-alliance bargains are dominated by bigger power. Therefore, recognizing the legitimate security concern of partner countries makes everyone as equal partner from the word go. Further the strictly committing to non-interference and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as the basic rule of engagement put partners at ease. Moreover, adherence to UN Charter makes it complimentary to the existing norms of the world’s



largest organization of nations. The most important feature of security initiative is indeed its emphasis on peaceful conflict resolution. The idea makes it clear that the initiative will be free from bullying by major power. The preference of doing negotiation as way of solving mutual disagreements mean, the initiative is aimed at maintaining cordial relations among all. The encompassment of the global security initiative covers both traditional and non-traditional security domains. One can easily sum these operating principles of Chinese GSI, as inclusive, comprehensive, cooperative and is based upon common endeavors.

### **Security goods for Africa:**

Three years since its announcement, Chinese GSI has taken up a shape to deliver security goods. Especially in case of Africa, GSI is supplementing African concerns. The initiative like China Africa Youth Military Leaders Forum was convened in Chinese Nanjing city. This forum focused on three key themes including capacity building, defense cooperation and approaches to non-traditional threats. The forum turned out to be an extravaganza as at least 90 officers from 40 African nations participated in the forum.’ The discussion between Chinese and African military leadership was crucial, as it paved the way for joint collaborations and consultations. This was rare opportunity for African military commanders to learn from their Chinese counterparts. The forum was having multiple activities including discussions, thematic presentations, and brain storming sessions with keynote speeches by experts. This forum also provided opportunity amongst the participant to exploit opportunities available for enhanced defense cooperation. There was consensus building among military leaders on variety of issues and views were shared to enhance

mutual understanding. The success of this joint military endeavor has led to raising of eyebrows from the top military leadership of other countries including USA.

On the other hand, China-Africa military cooperation is increasing by every passing day with ambitions plans set to enhance this security coordination. The FOCAC action plan has set a target of training of 6000 mid to senior rank



military officers of Africa to undergo training in Chinese military institutions, whereas capacity building of around 1000 police officers will also be undertaken till 2027. This is indeed a very extensive broad security cooperation plan that once undergone will provide ample avenues for further security cooperation. Moreover, around 500 early career African military officers will be trained at Chinese military academy as well. This will enhance defense cooperation between Chinese and African region, which in turn will support many Chinese led economic and infrastructure projects undergoing at the moment.

From above, it can easily be summed up that Chinese Global Security Initiative will be net security provider to the other developmental project led by China, which in turn ensures future of Africa with more sustainable and peaceful environment.