

GENOCIDE OLYMPICS: THE CAMPAIGN TO PRESSURE CHINA OVER THE DARFUR CONFLICT

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Abstract

What is the impact of a domestic-based social movement's efforts to promote international conflict resolution? To end to the conflict in Darfur, the US-based Save Darfur Coalition (SDC) has pursued a strategy of international venue-shopping to seek additional sources of leverage on the government of Sudan. The SDC identified China as Sudan's staunch ally in the international arena. During the period leading up to the Beijing Olympics in August 2008, the SDC and its member organizations explored traditional and innovative channels for pressuring the Chinese government. This article will examine the emergence of China as a target, the development of the China Campaign, and the impact on Chinese foreign policy. The reconstruction of the strategies of the SDC is based on a systematic content analysis of the web sites, organization archival material, and newspaper accounts of activities. The main data source consists of in-depth interviews conducted with SDC leadership, Darfuri activists, Congressional legislative aides, and officials from the Chinese Embassy and the Department of State.

1. Introduction¹

As the decades-long North-South conflict in Sudan was coming to a close in 2004, a United Nations Human Rights Coordinator for Sudan cautioned that a region called Darfur now posed "the

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world's greatest humanitarian crisis."² The government of Sudan was waging war against rebel groups in Darfur. That summer, a group of concerned organizations and individuals in the United States came together to form the Save Darfur Coalition (SDC) and advocate for conflict resolution. With unprecedented scope, the SDC embarked on a strategy of *international venue-shopping*, a process by which the Coalition sought additional targets beyond the US national arena in order to generate leverage over the government of Sudan. From 2004-2008, the SDC highlighted and targeted crucial linkages in the international arena while staying rooted domestically in the US. As an ally of the government of Sudan and the host of the Olympic Games in 2008, China was regarded as a vulnerable target.

During the Beijing Summer Olympics 2008, China welcomed over 200 countries for the quadrennial ritual of competition, fellowship, and sportsmanship. China's hosting of the Olympics prompted aggressive media attention around its human rights policies. When actors such as the United States and the United Nations failed to compel the international community to respond to Darfur, advocates in the US began a unique campaign to target China focusing on the venue of the Olympic Games. This campaign included a lethal re-branding of the Beijing Games as the "Genocide Olympics." Overall, the China Campaign created a public relations storm that threatened the positive image that China had wanted to project. China's response to the campaign came in fits and starts as the country grappled with this unexpected torrent of negative attention connected to a foreign policy issue. This article lays out the narrative of the campaign against China launched by advocates on behalf of Darfur during the Beijing Olympics 2008.

The case of the SDC's China Campaign offers a window into the expanding opportunities for non-state actors on the world stage and their potential for political impact. The use of an international venue-shopping strategy reflects the complexity of the global

2 Mukesh Kapila quoted in "Sudan: Gov't stresses commitment to just and peaceful solution to Darfur conflict," United Nations International Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 24 March 2004, [database online]; available at: www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=49251 (accessed 10 July 2009).

landscape and the growing capability for non-state actors to tap into additional channels of access to political bodies like states and international institutions. As a non-state actor, the SDC's strategy shaped global politics by multiplying target venues in the international arena. Between 2007 and 2008, the SDC targeted China's foreign policy and crafted a campaign that aimed to exploit the Olympic Games as a pressure lever. In this article, I argue that the SDC's targeting of the Beijing Olympics followed what I call an international venue-shopping strategy and that, to pursue this strategy, the SDC made use of critical linkages in the geopolitical landscape. The reconstruction of the strategies of the SDC is based on a systematic content analysis of the web sites, organization archival material, and newspaper accounts of activities. The main data source consists of in-depth interviews conducted with SDC leadership, Darfuri activists, Congressional legislative aides, and officials from the Chinese Embassy and the Department of State. Some of the questions I consider include: How does the China Campaign reflect the movement's international venue-shopping strategy? How did the SDC manipulate critical international linkages of the geopolitical landscape? Did the SDC influence China's foreign policy towards Darfur?

In this article, I lay the foundation for the SDC's advocacy's international venue-shopping strategy and assess the impact of the China Campaign. First, to situate my topic in the larger theoretical context, I review the literature surrounding non-state actors, social movements, and transnational relations. In the second section, I appraise China's foreign policy by reviewing its historical connections to Africa. Here, I detail the close relationship between the governments of China and Sudan. In the third section, I narrate the emergence of the US-based SDC's efforts to target China. I map the main players and goals of the China Campaign leading up to the 2008 Olympic Games and the extent of official US support. Finally, I examine China's interaction with the China Campaign and assess the SDC's degree of influence using a typology of policy responsiveness.

2. Non-State Actors and Transnational Relations

2.1 Social Movements on the World Stage

Today's world order includes numerous non-state actors interacting with states and international institutions. These non-state actors may include corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and social movements. The encounters and exchanges between non-state actors and states across borders come under the heading of transnational relations.³ In one subset of these interactions, social movements often seek to shape and influence state behavior around human rights norms and practices.

This article stands at the intersection of the study of social movements and transnational relations. Two contributions to the literature can be distinguished. First, by constructing a case study of an international campaign, I highlight the role of non-state actors such as social movements in an increasingly integrated world. Second, I attempt to analyze the impact of social movements on international actors by measuring the degree of influence on a country's foreign policy. For both tasks, I shift methodological tools developed at the domestic level to analyze the activity of social movements at the international level. I marshal the data from this case study to argue that the Save Darfur Campaign made a considerable impact on China's foreign policy towards Sudan.

Traditionally defined, a social movement is "a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities."⁴ Tackling the study of social movements beyond the state demands that we carefully distinguish among different

3 I take my cue from Thomas Risse-Kappen's definition of transnational relations as the "regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organization." Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Bringing transnational relations back in: Introduction," in *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-state actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*. Ed. Thomas Risse-Kappen. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 3.

4 Charles Tilly, *Social Movements 1768-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004), 3-4.

levels of claim-making. A conventional framework dissects a movement campaign into at least three main parties: group of claimants, object/target of claims, and an audience/public. Then this campaign is placed on a level of orientation: local, regional, national, and international. Normally, these parties operate on similar levels of engagement, i.e. local claimants match with local objects, etc.

In the field of transnational relations, social movements wreak havoc on a customary level-of-analysis typology. No longer are national systems the primary targets of advocacy, nor are nationally based movements constrained to lobby their own governments. Throughout the twentieth century, social movements expanded the scope of their sites to incorporate targets outside the domestic arena such as foreign governments, regional and international organizations and multinational-corporations. These social movements pursue policy in international policy-making arenas, make claims in other countries, or sustain broad coalitions across regions.

The expanding space for transnational political action offers abundant ways for people across borders to influence decision-making within different venues. The strategy of international venue-shopping captures this process of multiplying sites for political advocacy. Previously, the term venue-shopping has been used to describe the political strategy of advocacy groups operating in the domestic arena.⁵ In this article, I shift levels to analyze social movement activity in the international arena.

2.2 Measuring the Impact of Social Movements

At both domestic and international levels, scholars have long sought to classify how social movements act as vehicles for political change. Understanding the outcomes of a social movement often involves determining success: whether the goal

⁵ Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998): 18. For an example of the use of this term at the domestic level, see Frank R. Baumgartner and Brian D. Jones, "Agenda Dynamics and Policy Subsystems," *The Journal of Politics* 53 (4, November 1991): 1044-1074.

has been reached. From this point of view, it would seem that the SDC has failed to meet its goal of resolving the conflict in Darfur. As one journalist declared, "Save Darfur cannot claim the one success that really matters: stopping the killing."⁶ But in measuring the Campaign's impact, we need to look past this fact and focus on other consequences.

For many social movement scholars, the narrow focus on success or failure overlooks other important outcomes of political strategies like degree of influence. Even if the goal of a social movement might be a particular policy that is never enacted, we can still track the causal dynamics under-girding decision-making and untwine the relationship between the social movement and the political actor. As one way to understand the incremental outcomes of social movements, it is constructive to look at different moments in the decision-making process of the political actors. In their work on transnational advocacy networks, Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink identify broad stages where influence can be measured.⁷ But in their case studies of environmental and women's rights movements, the networks advocated over periods of years and even decades at many different levels of politics including global policy arenas and international institutions.

In contrast, to assess the actions of a focused campaign unfolding over the course of one year against a single international target, an alternate measure is needed. Paul D. Schumaker gave the study of social movements a useful typology that focuses on policy responsiveness.⁸ For Schumaker, responsiveness is "the relationship between the manifest or explicitly articulated demands of a protest group and the corresponding actions of the political system which is the target."⁹ To my knowledge, this

6 Richard Just, "The Truth Will Not Set You Free: Everyone we know about Darfur, and everything we're not doing about it," *The New Republic*, 27 August 2008 [data-base online]; available at: www.tnr.com (accessed 6 October 2008)

7 Keck and Sikkink, 25.

8 Paul D. Schumaker, "Policy Responsiveness to Protest-Group Demands," *Journal of Politics* 37 (2, May 1975): 488-521.

9 *Ibid* 494.

typology is often cited in the social movement literature but its application is rare and restricted to cases of domestic social movements with domestic claims.¹⁰ The index has been cited at times to classify agenda-setting and responsiveness in policy-making issues as varied as abortion, agrarian reform, and anti-war protests.¹¹ The advantage of this typology is that allows for comparison. The methodological challenge has been operationalizing the types of responsiveness; a nuanced case study can address this. Overall, the typology enables us to measure the impact of a social movement by tracking the degree of influence across various stages of an advocacy campaign. In this article, I employ a modified version of this typology that shifts the level of analysis from measuring influence on a domestic institution to an international actor.

3. China's Foreign Policy

3.1 China's Resource Diplomacy in Africa

China's relationship to Sudan is the product of extensive engagement between China and Africa in recent decades. Centuries of Chinese history reveal a mixed foreign policy that vacillated from exploration to isolation to imperial campaigns. With its establishment as the People's Republic of China in 1949, the country inaugurated a new chapter of relating to the world beyond its borders. In addition to seeking relationships to the global superpowers of the US and USSR, China closely identified itself as part of the developing world and cultivated extensive ties to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.¹² China's role as an

10 See Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (London: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 235.

11 See Doug McAdam and Yang Su, "The War at Home: Antiwar Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973," *American Sociological Review*, 67, (5, October 2002): 696-721; Lisa Kowalchuk, "Peasant Struggle, Political Opportunities, and the Unfinished Agrarian Reform in El Salvador," *The Canadian Journal Of Sociology* 28 (3, Summer 2003): 309-340; Brayden G. King, Marie Cornwall, Eric C. Dahlin, "Winning Woman Suffrage One Step at a Time: Social Movements and the Logic of the Legislative Process," *Social Forces* 83 (3 March 2005): 1211-1234; Sarah A. Soule and Brayden G. King, "The Stages of the Policy Process and the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972-1982," *AJS* 11 (6, May 2006): 1871-1909.

12 This included courting Arab governments as part of a pro-Arab policy. Mao Yufeng, "China's Interests and Strategy in the Middle East and the Arab World," in *China and the Developing World: Beijing's Strategy for*

international leader was solidified during the 1954 Bandung Conference, which hosted delegates from 29 Asian and African countries and heralded an era of Asia-Africa solidarity that led to the "Non-Aligned Movement."¹³ These efforts at multi-polarity cemented China's ties with numerous countries in an otherwise bipolar era.

When China's brutal clampdown of the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations led to Western approbation, China reasserted its relationship to the Third World. The 1990s saw China opening its burgeoning economy to global flows of capital and investment. Following the path of economic growth laid by Deng Xiaoping a decade before, this "recommitment" to the Third World linked economic and foreign policy.¹⁴ In 2002, Beijing declared a "go out" strategy with the plan to invest heavily in the developing world.¹⁵ For China needed ample natural resources to fuel its rapidly expanding economy, especially in the area of energy.¹⁶ China follows a unique approach by seeking to be in command of oil at its source in order to guarantee a steady flow of supply and shield oil from fluctuating market prices.¹⁷ To detach itself from reliance on Middle Eastern oil suppliers, China has made a concerted effort to control African oil sources. Since 2004, China has become the second largest importer of African oil, after the United States.¹⁸ This monopoly is the outcome of a decades-long

the Twenty-First Century, ed. Joshua Eisenman, Eric Heginbotham, and Derek Mitchell (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 115.

13 Derek Mitchell and Carola McGiffert, "Expanding the "Strategic Periphery": A History of China's Interaction with the Developing World," in *China and the Developing World: Beijing's Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Joshua Eisenman, Eric Heginbotham, and Derek Mitchell (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 14.

14 Chris Alden, *China in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2007), 11.

15 Martyn Davies with Hannah Edinger, Nastaya Tay, and Sanusha Naidu, *How China delivers development assistance to Africa* (Stellenbosch: Centre for Chinese Studies, 2008), 4.

16 While China may be a gigantic country, its holdings of known oil reserves are miniscule; the country's percentage of the world supply stands at a mere 1.3%. BP Company, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2008* (London: BP Company, 2008), 6.

17 Joshua Eisenman, "China's Post-Cold War Strategy in Africa: Examining Beijing's Methods and Objectives," in *China and the Developing World: Beijing's Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Joshua Eisenman, Eric Heginbotham, and Derek Mitchell (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 38.

18 The oil-supplying countries from Eastern and Southern Africa are nearly exclusively focused on exporting to China. BP Company, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2008* (London: BP Company, 2008), 20.

cultivation in certain Africa states involving diplomatic and economic links, a combination that has been dubbed "resource diplomacy."¹⁹

In the post-Cold War era, Africa held little strategic interest for the US. China began to capitalize on neglected pariah regimes, where the absence of Western political and economic ties left a field with little competition. Since the 1990s, China has maintained extensive ties to African countries as part of far-reaching foreign policy agenda that centers on "soft power."²⁰ This "soft power" influence is not focused on extending military might; rather, this influence includes resources like foreign direct investment (FDI)²¹, trade²² and development aid.²³ China also offers its African partners a variety of initiatives and exchanges in the medical, agricultural, and technological sectors. The relationship was further cemented through the creation of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum in 2000.²⁴ Early in 2006, China consolidated its objectives in a white paper "China's Africa Policy" that outlined an era of further cooperation.²⁵

19 See Ian Taylor, "Unpacking China's Resource Diplomacy in Africa," in *China in Africa* (Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute, 2007).

20 According to Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments." Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Soft Power and American Foreign Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 119 (2, Summer 2004): 256.

21 The term Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) "refers to investment in domestic structures, equipment and organization by foreign private sector or government." Wolassa L. Kumo, "Foreign Direct investment in Africa: Trends, Opportunities and Challenges," *American Chronicle*, 7 January 2009, [database on-line]; available at: www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/87089 (accessed June 24, 2009)

22 In the area of trade, China has an increasing surplus though trade is focused on five commodities: oil, iron ore, cotton, diamonds, and wood.

23 Extensive investments in infrastructural projects to build capitalism in Africa have also generated massive amounts of goodwill. China also spurs economic development through grants, debt relief and low-cost loans. Without the onerous demands of World Bank and IMF aid programs, China offers attractive terms for trade and investment, a winning combination for developing countries in Africa. Joshua Eisenman, "China's Post-Cold War Strategy in Africa: Examining Beijing's Methods and Objectives," 46.

24 Meeting every three years at the ministerial level, the China-Africa Cooperation Forum has unified and amplified the political voice of China and its African partners.

25 In particular, China will pursue exchanges with countries in Africa "on the basis of the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The purpose of such exchanges is to increase understanding and friendship and seek trust and cooperation." Ministry of

Critically, China's relationship to Africa follows the central tenets of Chinese foreign policy, which include respect for sovereignty and non-interference. One observer described this as a variation of the golden rule, "China considers other countries meddling in its affairs unacceptable, and it's assumed its friends feel the same way."²⁶ Diplomatically, it is the African nations who have supported China at international bodies like the United Nations.²⁷ In return, China refrains from criticism of its African allies; as one observer noted: "Nor will China be leading any campaign to encourage democratization in Africa."²⁸ Thus, African nations and China represent a mutual effort for buttressing censure in both regional and international arenas.

3.2 China in Sudan

China's position as Sudan's staunch ally in the international community followed its pattern of diplomatic engagement with its African partners. China's relationship with Sudan began in 1959 but was slow to develop as pro-Soviet elements in Sudanese political spheres caused difficulties when China and the USSR were in conflict. When the Sudanese government sought to crush the Sudanese Communist party following a failed coup attempt in 1971, China stepped in to provide military supplies and training. Since that intervention, China has remained a key source of arms for Sudanese political leaders.

Though oil was discovered in Sudan in the 1950s, early production efforts by American and European based major companies in the 1970s failed to get traction. When Southern

Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "China's Africa Policy January 2006," [database on-line]; available at: www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t230615.htm (accessed June 24, 2009)

26 Howard W. French and Lydia Polgreen, "China, Filling a Void, Drills for Riches in Chad," *The New York Times*, 13 August 2007, A3.

27 Among its African partners, China has garnered allies for its campaign to isolate Taiwan as part of its "one-China principle."

28 David H. Shinn, "China's Approach to East, North and the Horn of Africa," Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, July 21, 2005, [database on-line]; available at: www.uscc.gov/hearings/2005hearings/written_testimonies/05_07_21_22wrts/shinn_david_wrts.htm (accessed January 17, 2009)

Sudanese forces attacked production facilities in 1984, Western oil companies left Sudan.²⁹ A decade later, Sudan's entanglements with Osama bin Laden and terrorist networks led to sanctions from the United States and other members of the international community.³⁰ The US still considers Sudan a "rogue state" due to its support of international terrorism.³¹ These sanctions prevented Sudan from exporting oil and buying weapons from participating countries, a group which did not include China.

In the absence of major competition, Sudan's oil finds caught the eye of the Chinese government since the oil had a low sulfur content that was desirable for China's refineries.³² By 1997, the state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) had grabbed the lion's share of Sudan's nascent oil industry as China swept into the country bringing massive amounts of capital. CNPC met the demands of Khartoum's evaluations of potential companies and outmaneuvered the other bidders by throwing in the offer to build an oil refinery.³³ When Sudan formed a consortium known as the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) to develop its oil sector, China took a 40% share.³⁴ With the influx of FDI, Sudan built a 930-mile pipeline from the oil fields to Port Sudan that began transport in 1999.³⁵

29 By the early 1990s, oil companies from Western countries had exited Sudan en masse due to shareholder pressure and international sanctions over Sudan's human rights record and support for terrorism.

30 In 1993, the Clinton Administration placed Sudan on the list of state sponsors of terrorism on the basis of evidence of international terrorist activity and imposed sanctions on the country in November 1997. In 1996, the United Nations Security Council passed two resolutions passed in 1996 condemning Sudan's activities as a "threat to international peace and security" and called upon states to honor sanctions against the country.

31 See Ted Dagne, "Sudan: Humanitarian Crisis, Peace Talks, Terrorism, and U.S. Policy," (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 2006): 11.

32 Joshua Eisenman, "China's Post-Cold War Strategy in Africa: Examining Beijing's Methods and Objectives," 39.

33 Luke A. Patey, "State Rules: Oil Companies and Armed Conflict in Sudan," *Third World Quarterly* 28 (5, July 2007): 13.

34 The state-owned company Petronas of Malaysia purchased a 30% stake.

35 Meanwhile, the growing partnership between China and Sudan did not go unnoticed in Washington, DC and advocacy circles. In 1999, when China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) attempted to access US capital markets by going public on the New York Stock Exchange, the effort was rebuffed by criticism of CNPC's operations in Sudan.

At the time, CNPC's investment in the oil sector in Sudan was China's grandest international oil project. Today, China's consumes two thirds of Sudan's oil exports.

China's domination of Sudan's oil sector provided entrée into a closer relationship with Khartoum. As the largest provider of foreign investment, China has poured over \$15 billion into the country since 1996 for the construction of roads, bridges, and utility stations.³⁶ In 2003, China sent around half a million dollars in FDI; in 2006, this amount was nearly 500 million.³⁷ Between the years 2003-2006, China was the country's primary supplier of weaponry delivering \$55 million worth of small arms amounting to 90% of Sudan's small arms since 2004.³⁸ The scope of China's engagement in Sudan encompasses many sectors and areas of development.

3.3 China in the Post-Cold War Era

In the recent past, China's foreign policy has become difficult to characterize. In its external relations, China needed to overcome enormous misperceptions. At the end of the Cold War, China launched a new era of engagement with the world order under the leadership of Presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. Rather than employing the use of military force to address territorial disputes, the post-Cold War era has seen China deftly utilizing diplomatic channels.³⁹ China purports to rise as a global superpower through economic and political means.

36 "No strings: Why developing countries like doing business with China," *The Economist*, 15 March 2008,14.

37 China Trade In Services, 2006 Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment, [database on-line]; available at: preview.hzs2.mofcom.gov.cn/accessory/200710/1192783779118.pdf (accessed June 24, 2009)

38 Human Rights First, *Investing in Tragedy: China's Money, Arms, and Politics in Sudan*, (New York: Human Rights First, 2008), [database online]; available at: www.humanrightsfirst.org/pubs/pubs.aspx (accessed June 1, 2009)

39 Zhongqi Pan, "China's Changing Image of and Engagement in World Order," in "Harmonious World" and China's New Foreign Policy, ed. Sujian Guo and Jean-Marc F. Blanchard (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008), 47.

Yet, internationally, there was growing concern over China's close ties to pariah and rogue states as part of its resource diplomacy, relationships with "no strings attached."⁴⁰ China's business ties undermined international sanctions that aimed to punish dictators. Washington, in particular, urged China to be a responsible stakeholder in the cooperative formulation of policies towards states that support international terrorism. While enduring much criticism for its foreign policy, there are signs that Beijing tempered its support of rogue states.

Indeed, China has demonstrated its intention to be a conscientious member of the international community. Since the 1990s, China has begun to pursue a foreign policy that is "more proactive and flexible."⁴¹ This includes efforts at multilateralism, the use of "soft power", and participation in international bodies. At the international level, China supported United Nations peacekeeping efforts by contributing 5,872 personnel to 15 UN peacekeeping missions, the majority being African missions. From membership in only one international governmental organization (IGO) between 1949 and 1971, China now participates in over 50 IGOs. This increased involvement signals that China was falling in line with other members of the international community "on a number of international normative questions".⁴²

No one doubts that China's strategic interests, both economic and political, are at stake. As a country that has moved from Communist rule to state-led capitalism in three short decades, China's definition of itself is evolving rapidly. Many have noticed a reorientation of China's global outlook within traditional international relations frameworks. In its aggressive pursuit of strategic partnerships and focus on resource diplomacy, China demonstrates a realist stance. Yet, with efforts at multilateralism

40 Chinese leadership professed support for Iran, North Korea, and Sudan among other unpopular countries and was the largest trading partner of each of these countries and the second largest to Burma and Zimbabwe. See Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "China's New Dictatorship Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* 87 (1, Jan/Feb 2008): 38-56.

41 Eric Heginbotham, "Evaluating China's Strategy toward the Developing World," in *China and the Developing World: Beijing's Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Joshua Eisenman, Eric Heginbotham, and Derek Mitchell (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 195.

42 Cited in Pan, "China's Changing Image of and Engagement in World Order."

and confidence building, China exhibits liberal objectives to be a responsible superpower. Overall, China's national interests are considered to be a "work in progress."⁴³

China long sought to host the Olympics as a way to present itself positively to the world. The government's first bid for the 2000 Olympic Games was unsuccessful and may have reflected discomfort with China in the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square violence.⁴⁴ When the International Olympic Committee announced its decision to award the 2008 Olympic Games to Beijing, Wang Wei, the senior Beijing Olympic official, asserted, "Winning the host rights means winning the respect, trust, and favor of the international community."⁴⁵ The prospect of global media attention offered the opportunity for China to give a positive narrative of its ascendancy as a young superpower. Observers referred to the 2008 Olympics as China's "coming out party" to signify the country's "reinvention for world recognition."⁴⁶ China established its official game motto as "One World, One Dream" to highlight its membership in the international community.

3.4 China's Early Response to the Darfur Conflict

Since its independence from Britain in 1956, Sudan has endured multiple civil wars, regional disputes and border skirmishes. In the early part of the 21st century, the international community devoted great energy to advancing the North-South peace process, ending 30 years of conflict between government forces and Southern rebel forces. But during the spring of 2003, reports surfaced with descriptions of a new pattern of violence in the western region Darfur. For decades, Darfur had long suffered at the hands of the ruling elites in Khartoum, which failed to address

43 Heginbotham, "Evaluating China's Strategy Toward the Developing World," 209.

44 Frank Ching, "From Mao to Now: Three Tumultuous Decades," in *China's Great Leap: The Beijing Games and Olympian Human Rights Challenges*, ed. Minky Worden (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008)

45 Elizabeth C. Economy and Adam Segal, "China's Olympic Nightmare," *Foreign Affairs* 97 (July/Aug 2008), [database on-line]; available at: www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64447/elizabeth-c-economy-and-adam-segal/chinas-olympic-nightmare (accessed 26 June 2009)

46 Monroe E. Price, "Introduction," in *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China*, ed. by Monroe E. Price and Daniel Dayan (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 6.

under-development, scarce resources and internal conflict.⁴⁷ Now, a counter-insurgency movement sponsored by the government was sending waves of horsemen named *janjaweed* to destroy villages and kill Darfur's inhabitants.⁴⁸ Despite extensive coverage and attention, the Darfur crisis revealed the turbidity and ineffectiveness of the conflict-resolution process.

With Khartoum's threats to halt the North-South peace process, the international community hesitated to issue strong demands. Intensive political engagement and diplomacy failed to influence Sudan's behavior.⁴⁹ The UN initiated official visits, fact-finding missions, joint communiqués between the UN and Khartoum, and promises of assistance to the African Union. In 2004, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed five resolutions concerning Sudan; four were focused on the Darfur situation but the threats and timelines were continually ignored. Khartoum refused to allow peacekeeping troops from Western countries and also hampered humanitarian relief efforts; the African Union was the only institution permitted to deploy a peace monitoring force and mediate peace talks.

The situation of Darfur placed China in a quandary: how could China balance its strategic interests in Sudan and its foreign policy principles of noninterference against its rising prominence in the international community and humanitarian affairs? China's leadership initially chafed at pressure to assist the international community in resolving the situation in Darfur. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China's veto threats stymied early resolutions that would have imposed economic sanctions on

47 See Alex de Waal, "Sudan: The Turbulent State," in *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*, ed. Alex de Waal (Cambridge: Global Equity Initiative, Harvard University, 2007); Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War* (London: Zed Books, 2005); Gerard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007)

48 For early reports, see Amnesty International, *Sudan: Looming Crisis in Darfur*, (London: Amnesty International, 2003), [database online]; available at: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/041/2003/en (accessed 26 June 2009); International Crisis Group, *Sudan's Other Wars*, (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2003), [database online]; available at: www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1808&l=1 (accessed June 1, 2009)

49 See Hugo Slim, "Dithering over Darfur? A Preliminary Review of the International Response," *International Affairs* 80 (5, October 2004): 811-828.

Sudan in July and September 2004. In both cases, China also abstained from voting on the diluted versions of the original resolutions. In the initial months of the conflict, China's attitude towards Darfur followed its deep-rooted policy of noninterference, refusing to meddle in the internal affairs of sovereign countries. Meanwhile, as early as 2004, media coverage began linking China to the atrocities committed in Darfur drawing from various human rights reports that highlighted bilateral ties based on oil, arms, and diplomatic support.⁵⁰

Soon, China began to modify its stance on its protection of Sudan. In 2005, China began to follow the international community's lead on Darfur while being careful not to act too aggressively towards its ally Sudan. On the Security Council, China was presented with two resolutions that offered "juicy veto opportunities" but ended up abstaining under pressure from other member states.⁵¹ The specter of China's veto rarely came to pass; as one observer put it, "Vetoes are threatened, or hinted at, far more than they are used."⁵² While not blocking wholesale action at the international level, China was still protecting Sudan to some degree. In the meantime, China reaffirmed its support for Sudan in a renewal of military ties during a November 2005 meeting between state officials that led to China to "increase military exchanges and cooperation."⁵³ China appeared to be showing one face to the international community while showing another to its longtime ally Sudan.

50 See Jasper Becker, "China Fights UN Sanctions on Sudan to Safeguard Oil," *The Independent*, 15 October 2004; Dan Blumenthal, "Unhelpful China," *The Washington Post*, 6 December 2004; Peter S. Goodman, "China Invests Heavily in Sudan's Oil Industry; Beijing Supplies Arms Used on Villagers," *The Washington Post*, 23 December 2004.

51 These United Nations Security Council resolutions authorized targeted sanctions against Sudan and referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court. Observers noted that proposals for an oil embargo were dropped and that even members who hadn't signed onto the ICC permitted the passage of the referral resolution. Don Cheadle and John Prendergast, *Not on Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond* (New York: Hyperion, 2007), 96.

52 Adam LeBor, "Complicity with Evil": *The United Nations in the Age of Modern Genocide* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 246.

53 "China, Sudan to Further Exchanges, Cooperation between Armed Forces," *Xinhua General News Service*, 28 November 2005.

Startlingly, China's foreign policy towards the Darfur situation took a major shift over the course of 2006. When the UNSC voted to impose targeted sanctions on four Sudanese officials in April, China abstained following a pattern of noninterference. As the following months saw rising violence and growing instability in Darfur, there was discussion of a possible Western military intervention. China became concerned for the security of its installations in Sudan. By September, China was working with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on arrangements surrounding the deployment of a hybrid United Nations-African Union force of 20,000 troops mandated in UNSC Resolution 1706. During the November UNSC meeting on Darfur, Chinese Ambassador Wang Guangya worked behind the scenes to obtain Khartoum's support for the plan. President Hu also took up the cause and lobbied Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir at the Beijing Africa Conference summit and on a visit to Khartoum in early 2007. Ambassador Wang noted, "Usually China doesn't send messages, but this time they did."⁵⁴ Rather than sitting on the sidelines, China entered the diplomatic fray over negotiating peacekeeping forces in Sudan. But these actions did not represent the full extent of pressure that many believed China could wield in Sudan.

4. The China Campaign

4.1 The Search for Additional Targets

An organized response to the Darfur conflict came early and swift in the United States. On July 14, 2004, concerned individuals and organizations gathered at the Darfur Emergency Summit, sponsored by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Committee of Conscience, the American Jewish World Service and the City University of New York. As an outcome of the Emergency Summit, the Save Darfur Coalition (SDC) was formed with the commitment of more than 75 organizations. Quickly, the Coalition established an umbrella organization in Washington, DC to

54 "China told Sudan to adopt UN's Darfur Plan—Envoy," Bloomberg, 7 February 2007, [database on-line]; available at: www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article20137 (accessed 1 June 2009).

coordinate advocacy efforts.⁵⁵ In its first years, the SDC left China alone and focused mainly on channeling public pressure to domestic targets. Between 2005 and 2006, the SDC successfully lobbied Congress to pass over ten pieces of legislation allocating funds for the African Union troops, supporting divestment campaigns, and denouncing the violence in Darfur.⁵⁶ At the direction of Congress, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) poured hundreds of millions of dollars into addressing the humanitarian situation in Darfur.⁵⁷

From the White House, President George W. Bush signaled his concern for Darfur by decrying the mass killings as “genocide”, signing the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act (2006), and directing the US representatives at the United Nations to propose resolutions taking Khartoum to task for not resolving the conflict.⁵⁸ But with ongoing engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US could not take unilateral steps. Critically, moral authority at the international level had been compromised over rising concerns of US hegemony. At the United Nations, the US was unable to wield effective leadership within the international community.

According to Darfur advocates, it was clear that domestic pressure would not deliver the response needed to the situation in Darfur. Many in the SDC believed that President Bush had reached the limit of what he was willing to do.⁵⁹ The US and China initiated a sub-dialogue on Africa in 2006 and bilateral discussions raised the possibility of coordinating actions around Sudan. China’s diplomatic efforts failed to convince the SDC that

55 Today, the SDC is made up of domestic actors in both official political capacities and non-governmental advocacy and relief organizations. While not always acting as a uniform body, the SDC encapsulates the spectrum of strategies and tactics for ending conflict in Darfur.

56 For a list of Darfur related legislation that has been passed, see www.darfurscores.org/darfur-legislation

57 United States Agency for International Development, “Darfur Humanitarian Emergency,” [database online]; available at: www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/sudan/darfur.html (accessed 26 June 2009)

58 Early on, the President had considered and then vetoed the possibility of a unilateral military intervention into Sudan. See Peter Baker, “Bush Says He Considered Action in Darfur,” *The Washington Post*, 20 July 2007, A06.

59 Gitta Zomorodi, Interview with Author, 5 December 2008.

Sudan was taking concerted steps to end the Darfur conflict. Advocates despaired that the humanitarian situation in Darfur would continue to deteriorate without attention from the international community. In light of this, some advocates began to search more aggressively for additional targets of pressure outside of the domestic arena as part of an international venue-shopping strategy.

As early as August 2004, there were public calls from Americans to pressure the Chinese government to address the situation in Darfur. In a letter to *The Washington Post*, Roberta A. Cohen, a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute, noted, "Were China to use even a small part of its leverage to call Sudan to account, it would go a long way towards saving lives in Sudan."⁶⁰ China and its economic partnerships with Sudan began to figure prominently in the news as a result of a divestment campaign that had been initiated on university campuses.⁶¹ A group called the Sudan Divestment Task Force (SDTF) published reports highlighting the extensive economic ties between Sudan and China.⁶² As part of their divestment campaign, the SDTF targeted US-based assets that included investments in the many Chinese companies doing business with Sudan.

Due to its overlap with the ongoing crisis in Darfur, China's shining moment on the world stage as host of the 2008 Olympics became a venue of great potential for the SDC. The media circus surrounding the Olympics promised months of lead-up stories as well as extensive coverage beamed to homes in every country. Spurred by the search for levers on Sudan, the SDC rested its sights on China as a vulnerable target for exerting mass pressure. Indeed, the SDC would not be alone in contesting China's image of itself. The 2008 Olympics had already taken on a new

60 Roberta A. Cohen, "Calling on China," *The Washington Post*, 5 August 2004, A18.

61 In April 2005, the Harvard University Advisory Board on Shareholder Responsibility bowed to student demands and divested the university's endowment fund from the Chinese parastatal oil company Petrochina, the primary oil field operator in Sudan. Other divestment campaign targets such as state pension funds soon followed.

62 Sudan Divestment Task Force, "Home Page," [database on-line]; available at: www.sudandivestment.org/home.asp (accessed 26 June 2009).

importance as longstanding human rights advocacy campaigns jockeyed to challenge China's official representations.⁶³ By 2007, global criticism of the human rights situation in China was mounting: newspapers covered stories of domestic repression that included forced removals, jailed journalists and dissidents. Numerous agendas would clash as both outsiders and internal reformers sought to "hijack" the official Olympic platform with its positive presentations of China's domestic policies.⁶⁴ Joining the chorus, the SDC maneuvered to shape China's foreign policy towards Sudan.

4.2 Dream for Darfur Is Born

In 2006, long-time Sudan activist Eric Reeves persuaded *The Washington Post* editorial board to publish an editorial incorporating the provocative phrase "Genocide Olympics."⁶⁵ He continued to publicize the connection between China and Sudan through Op-Ed articles and website postings.⁶⁶ As a phrase, "Genocide Olympics" banked on global familiarity with the Darfur situation and summed up "the accumulated discontent, anxiety, and suspicion about China and human rights."⁶⁷ In January 2007 during a SDC strategy meeting, Reeves proposed targeting the Beijing Olympics. Surprisingly, the coordinating organization of the SDC wasn't enthusiastic about the idea; Reeves recounted, "Save Darfur was interested in selling bracelets and in consciousness-raising."⁶⁸ With the aim to target China more aggressively, Reeves and a couple of other activists sought to

63 The list of advocacy groups included Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Human Rights in China, Reporters without Borders, Students for a Free Tibet, and the Fair Labor Association. See Sharon K. Hom, "The Promise of a "People's Olympics,"" in *China's Great Leap: The Beijing Games and Olympian Human Rights Challenges*, ed. Minky Worden (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008).

64 Monroe Price considers a platform to be "any mechanism that allows for the presentation of information and its transmission from a sender to a receiver." Monroe E. Price, "On Seizing the Olympic Platform," in *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China*, ed. by Monroe E. Price and Daniel Dayan (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 87.

65 Monroe E. Price, "On Seizing the Olympic Platform," 105.

66 Eric Reeves, "Holding China accountable for complicity in Darfur's ongoing genocidal destruction," 17 December 2006, www.sudanreeves.org/Article142.html (accessed 28 May 2009)

67 Monroe E. Price, "On Seizing the Olympic Platform," 104.

68 Quoted in Ilana Greenberg, "Changing the Rules of the Game."

found a separate organization but were slow to find funding and support.

The tide changed in the spring when actress and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Mia Farrow published an Op-Ed in *The Wall Street Journal* that ratcheted the stakes a bit further. Singling out Beijing for not doing enough to address the conflict in Darfur, Farrow and her son Ronan noted that "rather than "One World, One Dream," people are beginning to speak of the coming, "Genocide Olympics."⁶⁹ In their Op-ed, the Farrows also took Hollywood director Steven Spielberg to task as "the Leni Riefenstahl of the Beijing Games." In 2006, China had invited Spielberg to be an artistic adviser to the opening and closing ceremonies of the Beijing Olympics. Mia Farrow began to lambaste the government of China in newspapers and on TV with vitriolic attacks.

Reeves recalled, "Now we had a campaign, a phrase and a target."⁷⁰ Shortly after the Op-Ed was published, the organization Dream for Darfur was born with Mia Farrow and Eric Reeves serving as advisors. The Dream for Darfur was buoyed by a half a million-dollar grant from Humanity United, a foundation that addresses slavery and mass atrocity. But the Campaign against China began in an atmosphere fraught with skepticism. Executive Director Jill Savitt recalls, "People just said that it wasn't going to work. Can't influence China; can't influence China on Darfur."⁷¹ Still, the organization aimed high. Dream for Darfur explicitly distinguished its mission as not leading a boycott campaign; rather, the goal was "to leverage the Olympics to urge China to use its influence with the Sudanese regime to allow a robust civilian protection force into Darfur."⁷² Within the US advocacy community, the consensus was that bilateral negotiations between the US and China had failed to secure the results needed.

69 Farrow, Ronan and Mia Farrow, "The 'Genocide Olympics'," *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 March 2007.

70 Quoted in Ilana Greenberg, "Changing the Rules of the Game."

71 Jill Savitt, Interview with Author, 10 March 2009.

72 Dream for Darfur, "Not a boycott," [database on-line]; available at: www.dreamfordarfur.org (accessed 26 June 2009)

The first task was to increase *linkage awareness*, which I identify as a measure of the extent to which a particular relationship is highlighted within global politics. The China Campaign deployed extensive efforts for publicizing the many ties between China and Sudan. Dream for Darfur consulted with experts on China to better understand the unique leverage points. In directing attention beyond the government of Sudan, Dream for Darfur was unrelenting when it came to pointing the finger squarely at China for its implicating role in the conflict in Darfur. On the organization's website, Dream for Darfur laid out the case as follows:

No country has done more to support the regime in Khartoum than the People's Republic of China: no country has offered more diplomatic support, nor done more to provide money to buy the weaponry that fuels the engine of genocidal destruction. And no country has done more to insulate Khartoum from economic pressure or human rights accountability.⁷³

The strategy included targeting both the government of China and a number of indirect targets to place pressure on China. In its direct targeting, Dream for Darfur initiated correspondence and requested meetings with senior government officials including the Chinese Ambassador to the United States. In eight formal encounters with Chinese officials, Dream for Darfur held meetings that were "pleasant and diplomatic, but not productive."⁷⁴ In what the campaign called "bank shots," Dream for Darfur focused attention on a number of indirect targets, which included the International Olympic Committee, the US Olympic Committee, corporate sponsors, Steven Spielberg, athletes, media, and decision-makers in US Congress and the United Nations. For the most part, Dream for Darfur was unable to persuade corporate sponsors⁷⁵ or the International Olympic Committee to strongly condemn the host, China.

73 Dream for Darfur, "China's Role," [database on-line]; available at: www.dreamfordarfur.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=57 (accessed 26 June 2009)

74 Dream for Darfur, "DFD Final Report," (New York: Dream for Darfur, 2008)

75 See Dream for Darfur, "The Big Chill: Too Scared to Speak, Olympic Sponsors Still Silent on Darfur Fearing Economic Reprisal, Sponsors Pay for China-Sudan Ties," (New York: Dream for Darfur, 2008)

By this time, the coordinating organization of the SDC had joined the China Campaign⁷⁶ and produced graphics, briefing papers, and fact sheets outlining the “problematic partnership” between China and Sudan and how China could “contribute to solving the Darfur crisis.”⁷⁷ On its website, SDC offered a petition for visitors to send to President Hu stressing China’s “tremendous responsibility to help end the violence in Darfur.”⁷⁸ With the Coalition’s combined global membership of 130 million⁷⁹, the campaign gained tremendous political power as a mass movement. Wielding this vast membership became a threat to corporate sponsors and China alike. As 2008 rolled around, the China Campaign gathered speed in the months leading up to the Games.

4.3 Enlisting the US Government as an Ally

As part of the China Campaign, the SDC engaged in indirect targeting through the US Government. Domestic pressure on the US government to condemn China proved a relatively easy course since many Congressmen had long been concerned with China, either from a human rights standpoint or security.⁸⁰ Targeting China for its inaction on Darfur found little resistance.⁸¹ The support for the China Campaign was unsurprising to the advocates; as Savitt noted: “Congress likes to beat up on China.”⁸² Longtime critics saw the nexus of complicity with Sudan as further evidence of China’s poor behavior. US legislators took

76 Henceforth, the China Campaign refers to the body of activities undertaken by Dream for Darfur along with the coordinating organization of the SDC and its member organizations.

77 Save Darfur Coalition, “China and Sudan—A Problematic Partnership,” [database on-line]; available at: darfur.3cdn.net/7216fbc9a790fef2d4_tum6v6hna.pdf (accessed 5/28/2009)

78 Save Darfur Coalition, “China Please Bring the Olympic Dream to Darfur,” [database on-line]; available at: www.savedarfur.org/page/content/china/ (accessed 5/28/2009)

79 Save Darfur Coalition, “About Us,” [database on-line]; available at: www.savedarfur.org/section/about/ (accessed 1 June 2009)

80 A Congressional-Executive Commission on China, created in October 2000, held the specific legislative mandate “to monitor human rights and the development of the rule of law in China, and to submit an annual report to the President and the Congress.” Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “About the Commission,” [database on-line]; available at: www.cecc.gov/ (accessed 26 June 2009)

81 Congressional Hill Staffers, Interviews with Author, 18-20 March 2009.

82 Jill Savitt, Interview with Author, 10 March 2009.

a bold step in May 2007 when 108 members of the US House of Representatives and the Senate signed a letter to President Hu Jintao with veiled threats against China's image during Beijing's 2008 Olympics. Without mincing words, the US legislators declared that "if China fails to do its part, it risks being forever known as the host of the 'Genocide Olympics.'"⁸³

Throughout 2008, the reception to the China Campaign was warm on Capitol Hill and last minute hearings and resolutions supported the campaign in its final days.⁸⁴ Special public appeals were made to Presidential candidates Senators Barack Obama and John McCain to support China-targeted legislation. Resolutions in the House and Senate, which included references to an Olympic Truce submitted by the SDC, met with considerable support. Over a dozen Congressmen signed a letter requesting that President Bush not attend the Olympics Opening Ceremonies; this plea was ultimately unsuccessful.⁸⁵ With these measures, the US government enthusiastically joined the chorus of China critics.

In addition to Congressional support, the US government made no effort to curtail the activities of the SDC in their engagement with Chinese diplomats and officials. The SDC met with the US Department of State to discuss the Campaign and there was no opposition to the SDC conducting meetings with Chinese officials.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, Dream for Darfur held regular calls with Special Envoy for Sudan Richard S. Williamson (appointed in 2008) to discuss putting pressure on China through the UNSC.⁸⁷

83 United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Lantos, House Colleagues Send Strong Message to Chinese President, Demand Action on Darfur," 9 May 2007, [database on-line]; available at: www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/press_display.asp?id=345 (accessed 26 June 2009)

84 Some observers viewed the focus on China as an abnegation of the US failure to halt the violence. Critics assailed: "In pointing the finger at China, proponents of stronger action on Darfur are merely helping the White House evade moral responsibility for a humanitarian disaster that it labels a "genocide."" Morton Abramowitz and Jonathan Kolieb, "Why China Won't Save Darfur," *Foreign Policy*, June 2007, [database on-line]; available at: www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3847 (accessed 26 June 2009)

85 Associated Press, "US Congress Lawmakers Urge Bush Not to Attend Beijing Olympics," *The International Herald Tribune*, 1 April 2008.

86 Confidential Interview with Author, 13 April 2009.

87 Allison Johnson, Interview with Author, 19 November 2008.

SDC engaged directly with political spheres in China with the tacit support of the US government.

4.4 Pivotal Month: February 12, 2008

Six months before the Games, China received two prominent messages. In February 2008, Steven Spielberg resigned as artistic adviser to the opening and closing ceremonies. After his role as artistic director was highlighted in the Farrows' Op-ed, Spielberg had immediately responded by twice writing to the Chinese president urging him to help resolve the conflict in Darfur. When this effort failed to yield any results, Spielberg publicly issued a statement to the Chinese ambassador and the Beijing Olympic committee saying that his "conscience will not allow me to continue with business as usual."⁸⁸ Spielberg's resignation followed on the heels of a dramatic Day of Action on February 12th coordinated by the Dream for Darfur campaign. A letter to President Hu was delivered to the Chinese Mission at the UN that had been signed by eight Nobel Peace Prize laureates, 13 Olympic athletes and 46 parliamentarians from around the world.

4.5 Global Dimension of the China Campaign

Though the main organizations of the China Campaign were based in the US, there were concerted efforts to foster a global movement by mobilizing resources to both raise linkage awareness to China's relationship with Sudan and foster transnational networks among particular swathes of the global public. To raise linkage awareness globally, the SDC poured millions of dollars into an ad campaign, which ran in leading European, Asian, African and U.S. publications in February 2008. The advertisement said "The games China is hosting in Beijing can't hide those it's playing in Darfur."⁸⁹ A network called Globe

88 Helene Cooper, "Spielberg Drops out as Adviser to the Beijing Olympics in Dispute over Darfur Conflict," The New York Times, 13 February 2008, 12.

89 The Save Darfur Coalition Olympic advertisement reads: "China is doing everything possible to publicize its role as host of the 2008 summer Olympic Games. But that won't make the world forget about China's role in Sudan - which is anything but a game. As Sudan's largest foreign investor, key arms supplier, and chief diplomatic sponsor, China has more power than any other nation to stop the suffering of people in Darfur. Yet

for Darfur led by SDC's main European partner Crisis Action⁹⁰ launched a sub-group on the China Campaign to coordinate activities across the world. During the February 12th protests, advocates in eleven countries on four continents paid visits to Chinese embassies and consulates. While efforts were made to link a global audience around Darfur, outreach to groups within China was considered risky.

In addition to engaging concerned citizens across the globe, the SDC took steps to foster transnational networks of like-minded groups in various countries with high degrees of media visibility and credibility. One transnational network was a set of Olympic athletes who became advocates for Darfur. US Olympic Gold Medalist Joey Cheek and UCLA Water Polo player Brad Greiner founded Team Darfur in the summer of 2007 as "an international coalition of athletes committed to raising awareness about and bringing an end to the genocide in Darfur, Sudan."⁹¹ Team Darfur received funding and staff from the SDC and opened up its own office in Washington, DC. As the Executive Director Martha Bixby described, the idea was to make Darfur a public issue in the international community as it was in the US.⁹² Team Darfur grew to include over 450 athlete members from over 60 countries. As ambassadors, the transnational network of athletes formed a media savvy network eager to help journalists fill sports pages with athlete biographies and the cause of Darfur.

Besides participating in protests and symbolic torch relays, Team Darfur athletes were among many to deliver testimony to Congressional representatives. But the organization found itself hampered in its ability to send a strong message due to the

China's gestures at Darfur diplomacy have been little more than attempts at public relations. Any cheers for Beijing will be silenced by our tears for Darfur. JOIN CITIZENS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE IN SAYING: CHINA MUST DO MORE TO SAVE DARFUR." Save Darfur Coalition, "Olympic Ad," [database on-line]; available at: www.savedarfur.org/olympic_ad (accessed 26 June 2009).

90 The organization Crisis Action also facilitated high-level advocacy discussions in European Union Capitals and launched a Muslim Coalition on Darfur. See crisisaction.org/en/

91 Martha Heinemann Bixby, "Introducing Team Darfur," Blog for Darfur, [database on-line]; available at: blogfordarfur.org/2008/07/18/introducing-team-darfur/ (accessed 26 June 2009)

92 Martha Heinemann Bixby, Interview with Author, 4 November 2008.

sensitivity surrounding protest and politics at the Olympics. Indeed, the Team Darfur campaign moved hesitantly as it tested the waters of advocacy during the Olympics. Athletes began to be concerned about possible repercussions for their engagement.⁹³ With these concerns in mind, Team Darfur limited their plans for the Games to encouraging its roster of athletes to raise awareness to Darfur during interviews and panels held outside of official venues.

Dream for Darfur financed and coordinated a transnational network of survivor communities in countries that had experienced genocide. This linkage tapped into an international group that could speak with moral authority and held great potential for media coverage. Over the course of the year leading up to the Games, Dream for Darfur orchestrated a symbolic Olympic torch relay through Rwanda, Armenia, Germany, Cambodia, and Bosnia. Members of Dream for Darfur along with a Darfur survivor traveled to each country for a torch lighting ceremony with other genocide survivors holding events and press conferences. Critically, the Torch lighting in Cambodia garnered over five days of press coverage on Darfur when the government, under pressure from the Chinese government, withdrew the permit for the relay. Mobilizing a global survivor network had never been done before and as the Dream for Darfur International Organizer Allison Johnson noted, "that message was really powerful."⁹⁴

Beijing Summer Olympics 2008

Since activism during the Olympic Games is limited by strict codes of conduct, there were few plans for promoting the Campaign inside China during August 2008. Indeed, China's forceful responses to other human rights organizations like the Free Tibet campaign and the arrests of domestic activists had

93 Sponsors threatened to cancel contracts and the national committees of the International Olympic Committee contacted their athletes and warned them not to sign public statements.

94 Johnson, Interview with Author. After the Olympics, the transnational network survivor network transitioned into the Genocide Prevention Project.

made many nervous.⁹⁵ For Team Darfur and its participating athletes, how China would behave as a host was a “big unknown.”⁹⁶ Meanwhile, the Olympic Charter of the International Olympic Committee restricts political demonstrations within Olympic arenas and sites.⁹⁷ Proscriptions against clothing bearing “propaganda” meant that the Team Darfur athletes and other activists could not identify themselves except outside of Olympic areas. Away from Beijing, Dream for Darfur held a parallel event called the “Darfur Olympics,” a weeklong, daily broadcast that was hosted by Mia Farrow from a Darfuri refugee camp.

In advance of the Olympics, China demonstrated its wariness at importing hotbeds of Darfur activism. China waited until two days before the start of the Games to revoke the visa of Joey Cheek, the co-founder of Team Darfur. When China was asked to explain its action, the organization’s director noted, “The Chinese said they weren’t required to give a reason.”⁹⁸ Subsequently, the media storm surrounding the Cheek story once again brought Darfur to the forefront of the Olympic Games. The White House and various Congressmen protested the visa revocation and stories about Cheek and Team Darfur appeared in major newspapers across the globe. As a message to the Chinese government, the US Olympic team chose a Sudanese-born athlete and Team Darfur member Lopez Lomong to represent the US as flag-bearer during the Opening Ceremonies.

The SDC’s lobbying of US official circles made an impression on the White House Administration. During an interview held at the Olympics, President Bush was asked his thoughts on Joey Cheek’s visa revocation and the prospect of leveraging China on the

95 Amnesty International, “People’s Republic of China: The Olympics Countdown—Crackdown on Activists Threatens Olympic Legacy,” [database on-line]; available at: www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?id=ENGUSA20080401002&lang=e (accessed 26 June 2009)

96 Bixby, Interview with Author.

97 Article 51 (3) reads “No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas.” International Olympic Committee, “Olympic Charter,” (Lausanne: International Olympics Committee, 2007): 98.

98 Linton Weeks, “Beijing Revokes Visa of Activist Athlete,” NPR, 6 August 2008, [database on-line]; available at: www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93341134 (accessed 26 June 2009)

subject of Darfur during his time in Beijing. The President responded that he was sorry about the revocation but assured, "Joey Cheek has just got to know that I took the Sudanese message for him." Further, Bush acknowledged the Sudan-China connection: "My attitude is, if you got relations with Mr. Bashir, think about helping to solve the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. That was my message to the Chinese government."⁹⁹ While athletes may have been barred from campaigning, the US President picked up the torch.

5. Measuring the Impact of the China Campaign

5.1 Degree of Influence

Let us now turn to measuring the incremental outcomes of the SDC's campaign to shape China's foreign policy towards Sudan. On the whole, the goal of ending conflict was not achieved. Yet, in terms of lobbying China to take certain steps, a degree of influence can be measured. Below, I assess the outcomes of the SDC's campaign based on Schumaker's typology of policy responsiveness with some modifications. Schumaker tracks responsiveness to an issue by zeroing in on stages of policy or issue acceptance. The increments highlight the path by which a lobbying group or an NGO insinuates itself and its issue into the decision-making process of a governmental body. These stages are: access, agenda, policy, output and impact.¹⁰⁰ Though conceived as domestic markers, I adopt these categories to analyze the response of an international actor like China. As one modification, within the categories of policy and output responsiveness, I include the prospect for a "plan of action" in addition to legislation that might be adopted by the political system. Adopting a plan of action better reflects the behavior of an international target such as a government, which might not necessarily pass a specific piece of legislation on a foreign policy

99 The White House Office of the Press Secretary, "Interview of the President by Bob Costas, NBC Sports," [database on-line]; available at: georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080811.html (accessed 26 June 2009).

100 Author's modifications to the original typology are in brackets. Paul D. Schumaker. "Policy Responsiveness to Protest-Group Demands." *Journal of Politics* 37 (2, May 1975): 494-495.

concern. By moving through these stages, we can elucidate the broader impact of the SDC:

The first step of gaining access is the critical point of entry for any group or issue. As Schumaker defines, "access responsiveness" is "the extent to which authorities are willing to hear the concerns of such a group."¹⁰¹ Not all advocacy groups are given access to political spheres. Overall, the SDC gained a high degree of access to the official channels of the People's Republic of China. The Chinese gave audience to the SDC through official meetings on a number of occasions to hear the concerns surrounding Darfur. There is much evidence that China was closely following the Campaign. During a meeting at the Chinese Consulate in New York, the acting general consul had printed out the entire Campaign website and written notes on what he called "inaccuracies."¹⁰² Significantly, China made efforts to understand the issue and took special care to respond to and refute the claims made by the SDC.

Subsequent to various events in the China Campaign, the Chinese leadership took pains to respond publicly to the SDC through statements and position papers. The high profile defection of Steven Spielberg prompted the dismay of the Chinese leadership who had expected Spielberg's star power to add glamour and prestige to the Olympic ceremonies. The Chinese Embassy in Washington issued a response to Spielberg's resignation in February 2008 alluding to the claims of the SDC's campaign noting, "As the Darfur issue is neither an internal issue of China nor is it caused by China, it is completely unreasonable, irresponsible and unfair to link the two as one."¹⁰³ Meanwhile, China responded crisply to US government measures; when resolutions criticizing China were brought before Congress, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao decried, "This action itself is a blasphemy to the Olympics and runs counter to

101 Ibid 494.

102 Dream for Darfur, "D4D Final Report," (New York: Dream for Darfur, 2008)

103 Helene Cooper, "Spielberg Drops out as Adviser to the Beijing Olympics in Dispute over Darfur Conflict."

the aspiration of people of all countries including the U.S.”¹⁰⁴ The public criticism of the Campaign indicated that the SDC had touched the nerves of the Chinese government.

Table 1. China's Responsiveness to the SDC

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>China's Response to the SDC</i>
Access Responsiveness	the extent to which authorities are willing to hear the concerns of such a group	China met with the SDC on numerous occasions
Agenda Responsiveness	The demand...is made into an issue that is placed on the agenda of the political system	China responded publicly to the claims made by the SDC
Policy Responsiveness	The degree to which those in the political system adopt legislation [or a plan of action] or policy congruent with the manifest demands of protest groups	China took steps to address the situation in Darfur; China took steps to curtail SDC activities
Output Responsiveness	Measures are taken to ensure that the legislation [or plan of action] is fully enforced	China supported the establishment of an AU-UN peacekeeping mission
Impact Responsiveness	The underlying grievance is alleviated	none

With intense global criticism being leveled against China's domestic and foreign policy during the period leading up to Olympics, the China Campaign succeeded in entering the issue of Darfur on the agenda of the Chinese government. As Schumaker defines, "agenda responsiveness" occurs when "the demand...is turned into an issue that is placed on the agenda of the political system."¹⁰⁵ In addition to publicly rebuffing the claims of the Campaign, China took a number of steps to curtail its activities. Various cyber attacks that seemed to originate in China began to

104 Josh Gerstein, "Senate Presses on Darfur as China Fumes over 'Evil' House Vote," The Sun, 1 August 2008.

105 Schumaker 494.

plague the email accounts of the Save Darfur Coalition, Team Darfur and Dream for Darfur.¹⁰⁶ In response to the torch relays held around the world, Dream for Darfur maintains that the Chinese government attempted to restrict activities in Rwanda and was successful in shutting down the relay portion in Cambodia. China's revocation of Joey Cheek's visa indicated the close attention paid to SDC leadership and expectations for potential disruption of the Olympics. Team Darfur would later learn that a number of its athletes had been placed on a special watch list that was given to the United States Olympic Committee by the Chinese Embassy in Washington DC.¹⁰⁷

Strikingly, there is further evidence of a shift in policy within the decision-making realm. As Schumaker defines, "policy responsiveness" is "the degree to which those in the political system adopt legislation [or a plan or action] or policy congruent to the manifest demands of protest groups."¹⁰⁸ In the month following the publication of the Farrows' Op-Ed in the spring of 2007, the possibility of boycotting the Olympics over China's relationship to Sudan was raised in Congress and in media circles. Steven Spielberg's letter to President Hu added a highly public figure to the chorus of critics.¹⁰⁹ China began to more forcefully address the situation in Darfur. Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun made a well-publicized visit to three Darfur refugee camps. At a press conference following his trip, Zhai insisted "China is willing to continue to play a constructive role on the issue of Darfur" and described efforts to urge the Sudanese to accept a UN peacekeeping plan.¹¹⁰ Days later, the Chinese government convinced Khartoum to allow the deployment of over 3000 interim UN troops to strengthen African Union forces.¹¹¹

106 Greenberg, "Changing the Rules of the Game."

107 Christine Brennan, "China listed U.S. athletes as possible troublemakers," USA TODAY, 10 October 2008.

108 Author's modifications in brackets. Schumaker 494.

109 See R.Scott Greathead, "China and the Spielberg Effect," in *China's Great Leap: The Beijing Games and Olympian Human Rights Challenges*, ed. Minky Worden (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008)

110 Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Australia, "Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun Holds a Briefing for Chinese and Foreign Journalists on the Darfur Issue of Sudan," [database on-line]; available at: au.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/sudandarfurissue/t311958.htm (accessed 26 June 2009)

111 Edward Cody, "Chinese to Deploy Soldiers to Darfur," The Washington Post, 9 May 2007, A11.

These reinforcements included 300 Chinese military engineers, an act signaling a shift in foreign policy towards Sudan.

At the same time, China took the extraordinary action of appointing its first Special Envoy for African Affairs to focus on the Darfur issue. In one formulation, Beijing's appointment of Liu Guijin, who had been the former Chinese ambassador to South Africa and Zimbabwe, was regarded "almost certainly a result of global activist pressure."¹¹²

The fourth stage of "output responsiveness" denotes "measures taken to ensure that the legislation [or plan of action] is fully enforced."¹¹³ In terms of an "output" response, China did accord with the wishes of the China Campaign on the critical subject of peacekeeping troops debated during the summer of 2007. On the UNSC, Beijing shifted its stance when Resolution 1768 came up for vote and laid aside its opposition to the proposed joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force. Moreover, Chinese leadership began publicly urging Khartoum to give entrance to the force. On July 31st, on the ultimate day of its control of the UNSC, China signaled its support for the establishment of a 20,000-member UN-AU mission. Through private channels, Beijing insisted that Khartoum accept the resolution. The US deputy of state John Negroponte credited China with playing "a pivotal role in brokering the agreement."¹¹⁴ While these policy steps can never be directly linked with the campaign's activities, there are grounds for a strong time-ordered correlation.

The combination of epistolary messages and global protests during February 2008 may also have pushed China to take action. In the wake of Spielberg's resignation, the Chinese Special Envoy paid another trip to Sudan and made numerous statements attesting to the efforts of the Beijing to utilize its relationship with

112 Colin Thomas-Jensen and Julie Spiegel, "Activism and Darfur: Slowly Driving Policy Change," *Fordham International Law Journal* 31 (April 2008): 852.

113 Author's modifications in brackets. Schumaker 495.

114 John D. Negroponte, "Remarks at the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations Dinner (Washington DC: U.S. Department of State, 2007).

Khartoum. Liu also traveled to the UK, France, and the US to raise the subject of Darfur in diplomatic circles.

The Chinese downplay the influence of the SDC's campaign, as it does not befit a superpower to succumb to global pressure. In conversations with Chinese officials, the appointment of the Special Envoy was shrugged off; China was following a global trend for appointing Special Envoys for hot spots like North Korean and the Middle East.¹¹⁵ Per China's view, its shifting stance on Darfur can be seen as part of program to ensure stability in Africa. China emphasizes this stability in order to ensure economic development; this makes for good friends and good partners. Yet, in engaging with the SDC, China signaled its willingness to listen and take into account the concerns of the global community. Indeed, one official signaled to this author that he was interested in learning more about the SDC and its protests against China.

In conceiving the campaign, Dream for Darfur's mission was "to use the 2008 Beijing Games as a way to press China to use its influence with the Sudanese regime to bring security to the Darfur region."¹¹⁶ Dissenters to the China Campaign will rightly note that the conflict in Darfur continues. Ultimately, the Campaign did not reach the final stage of "impact", whereby "the underlying grievance is alleviated."¹¹⁷ As the Olympics came to a close, one observer bemoaned, "Darfur is today as it was a fortnight ago, and as it was when Steven Spielberg chose to boycott these Olympics in February."¹¹⁸ China continues to support Sudan's leadership despite widespread criticism. As Mahmood Mamdani concluded, "the anti-China campaign failed because China was strong enough to uphold its own

115 Confidential Interview with Author, 17 March 2009.

116 Dream for Darfur, "What Dream for Darfur Accomplished - and What's Next," [database-online]; available at:

www.dreamfordarfur.org/index331b.html?option=com_content&task=view&id=293&Itemid=1 [accessed 5 August 2009]

117 Schumaker 495.

118 Greg Baum, "Bye Bye Beijing," *The Age* (Melbourne, Australia), 25 August 2008. 1.

sovereignty.”¹¹⁹ In sum, China’s interests in Sudan remained paramount.

Despite the prevailing wisdom surrounding China’s realist stance towards Sudan based on strategic interests, the SDC ignored the experts and launched their campaign. The SDC sought to gain China’s attention and shape the course of decision-making on foreign policy towards Sudan. Using the above typology to track the Campaign’s influence, the overall response of China can be considered robust, for China could have simply ignored the Campaign’s provocations. Instead, through its direct communications with the SDC and engagement with the Campaign’s concerns, China’s responsiveness moved through “access” and “agenda” to adopting policies and enforcing them according to the SDC’s demands. Moreover, we see evidence of “policy” responsiveness and some “output” responsiveness. The case of the China Campaign challenges the realist understanding of China’s foreign policy by demonstrating that a state can modify its stance out of concern for global censure. While the “impact” is still lacking since the conflict in Darfur remained unresolved, the SDC targeting of China opened up a new channel for leveraging additional actors to pressure Sudan.

6. Conclusion

The decision to target China reflects the SDC’s international venue-shopping strategy to seek additional leverage on Sudan. Since 2004, the SDC’s success in pushing US legislation had not ended the violence in Darfur. With the US limited in its ability to work with the international community to address the situation in Darfur, the movement needed to look elsewhere to apply pressure. China’s diplomatic efforts to work with Sudan behind the scenes had failed to convince activists that necessary steps were being taken. Pursuing an international-venue shopping strategy, the SDC moved beyond targeting the domestic arena and traditional venues of diplomatic interaction for states and international institutions. The movement’s targeting of China

119 Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War on Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2009), 51.

leading up to the Beijing Olympics reflected the expanding political scope of the Darfur advocacy movement as well as the rising status of China in an interdependent world. As a potential venue, the Beijing Olympics promised global media attention. Here was an opportunity to highlight China's foreign policy alongside the Olympic showcase of international values of harmony.

By choosing to target China, the SDC's Campaign manipulated critical linkages in the geopolitical landscape. China's emergence as a target of the Darfur advocacy movement stemmed from the country's position on a complex and integrated world stage. As part of its ascent as a global superpower, China held mounting importance in international affairs. Crucially, China's foreign policy was considered malleable due to the country's global aspirations to be a responsible member of the international community. Divestment campaigns had already directly targeted the financial connections between Sudan and China. Using the vehicle of the Olympics, the SDC capitalized on this link between China's extensive economic ties and its diplomatic capabilities. During the China Campaign, the SDC was successful in crafting a persuasive argument that China could play a key role in ending the conflict in Darfur. The SDC also tapped into China's growing interest in conforming to international norms around humanitarianism and peacekeeping. The targeting of China intended to influence the country's foreign policy around Sudan by raising linkage awareness to these features of Chinese foreign policy. The SDC maneuvered advocacy efforts to apply global pressure on China to incorporate moral suasion within its policy-making.

The SDC's actions shaped global politics in numerous ways. In devising its campaign, the SDC mobilized resources to internationalize its advocacy efforts and amass a worldwide audience to target China. Many non-governmental organizations and individuals had long been wary of China's human rights record and were eager to cast dispersion on the country's behavior and motivations. Using the venue of the Olympics, the SDC sought to take advantage of the media circus surrounding the event. The Beijing Olympics were an attractive venue for advocacy campaigns to target the intersection of global

interdependence, the international community, and commerce. Additionally, the SDC fostered a number of transnational networks that brought together particular swathes of the global public including Olympic athletes and genocide survivors. Coordinated and funded by the SDC, these transnational networks became crucial vehicles through which to channel attention to the China Campaign.

In pursuing an international venue-shopping strategy, the SDC set its expectations low. That China responded to the Campaign came as a surprise to many in the Darfur advocacy circles. There is evidence that the China Campaign influenced the behavior of the Chinese leadership. While the violence in Darfur still continues, the Chinese engaged with the Campaign and took steps to address the cause of peace. As demonstrated by the typology of policy responsiveness, China was compelled to temper its realist stance and incorporate the liberal objectives of a more responsible stakeholder in the international community. Overall, the confluence of China's positive image promotion, the Olympics 2008 as a global event, and its developing foreign policy on Africa, left China exposed to the aggressive tactics of the campaign. The SDC was successful in directing attention to China's relationship with Sudan and pressuring the Chinese leadership to engage more publicly and forcefully with Sudan.

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