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English Abstracts

**The Five – Year Progress and Future Path of the
African Continental Free Trade Area**

Wei Yuanyuan, Yu Minghong and Zhao Yaping

Abstract: On January 1, 2021, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was officially launched, marking a significant milestone in Africa’s economic integration process. The establishment of the AfCFTA stems from both a long – standing vision for integration and pressing developmental needs, while also being shaped by external factors such as geopolitical restructuring and disruptions in the multilateral trading system. Over the past five years, key achievements in building the AfCFTA have included: a maturing policy framework supported by flexible and clear negotiation mechanisms; the gradual improvement of supporting facilities, which has enhanced endogenous drivers of trade growth; and the successful coordination of unified positions among member states, fostering greater unity and self – reliance. However, the AfCFTA concurrently faces a series of challenges: slow national decision – making processes leading to implementation delays; the persistent prevalence of non – tariff barriers that hinder trade flows; and overlapping regional mechanisms that complicate policy coordination. Looking ahead, the future development of the AfCFTA necessitates strengthening institutional implementation to boost compliance willingness and capacity, advancing digitalization and standards harmonization to reduce trade barriers, and clarifying the functional roles of institutions to enhance coordination between sub – regional and continental levels. China actively supports Africa’s integration by

providing strong support for the AfCFTA in key areas such as standards coordination, digital trade, and infrastructure connectivity.

Keywords: African Continental Free Trade Area, African integration, China – Africa cooperation, regional trade

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From Total Dependency to Limited Autonomy :

The Historical Evolution and Continuation Logic of the African Franc Zone

Xia Ranruo and Xu Wei

Abstract: From the colonial era to the present, the economic model of the CFA franc zone has undergone a transformation from “complete dependency” to “limited autonomy. ” Its evolution reflects the coexistence of transformative momentum and persistent resistance within African nations. Initially established as a monetary arrangement under the colonial system, the CFA franc zone bore distinct characteristics of dependency. With the rise of African independence movements, shifts in the Cold War landscape, and the advancement of European integration, African nations gradually reduced their unilateral dependence on France through proactive adjustments, thereby strengthening their autonomy. Nevertheless, the CFA franc system persists to this day, underpinned by a dual logic: Objectively, France’s strategic positioning, institutional inertia, and

coordination challenges among member states form structural barriers that are difficult to overcome; Subjectively, Franc Zone nations voluntarily maintain the current equilibrium of “limited autonomy” driven by demands for economic stability, caution toward transition risks, and the preservation of elite interests. Consequently, this paper proposes pathways for reflection across ideological, institutional, technical, and strategic dimensions, centered on gradually reducing external dependencies while safeguarding economic stability to explore a risk – managed path toward greater autonomy. This model of transformation prioritizing stability amidst change offers a valuable reference for Global South countries seeking to enhance their autonomy within real – world constraints.

Keywords: CFA franc zone, neo – colonialism, France – Africa relations, the Global South

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Artificial Intelligence Development in Africa and New Opportunities for China – Africa Cooperation

Ren Chunlei and Hou Yuyou

Abstract: Artificial intelligence, as a potent transformative force, is profoundly reshaping the political – economic order and social development of human society through technological integration. The Africa needs to confront and respond to this profound transformation. At the current stage, AI development in Africa exhibits multidimensional and composite characteristics; in terms of

technological innovation, it is distinctly application-driven while suffering from structural weaknesses in core technologies; regarding policies and regulations, top-level design is accelerating, yet governance models are under dual pressures from insufficient endogenous capacity and heavy external reliance; at the market level, growth is driven by multiple factors but marked by structural imbalances; in talent cultivation, there are deep-seated challenges such as talent loss and persistent educational disparities. Driven by underlying logics across economic production, social governance, and international politics, AI is becoming a new engine for Africa's post-colonial development and modernization, a novel approach to addressing social risks, and a fresh opportunity to escape marginalization. It holds significant importance in reshaping Africa's economic growth and socio-cultural structure. In the context of the deepening all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era, the two sides can pioneer digital infrastructure cooperation, use governance experience exchange as a bridge, and forge a model for AI collaboration among Global South countries. China and Africa should seize the wave of the global AI revolution, jointly construct a high-level cooperative framework, and propel their AI partnership into a new phase of high-quality and sustainable development.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, African modernization, South-South cooperation, China-Africa community with a shared future

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**The Concept, Model and Contest for Discourse Power in China – Africa
Energy Cooperation: Evidence from Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia**

Weng Bingying and Wu Cen

Abstract: Amidst global structural transformations and the pursuit of sustainable development goals, energy has solidified its position as a core domain of international political and economic cooperation. Africa, with its considerable resource potential, is increasingly emerging as a strategic focal point for the energy diplomacy of major powers. This paper attempts to review the institutional evolution and conceptual changes of China – Africa energy cooperation, focusing on the cases of energy cooperation between China and three East African countries—Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia—to extract their diversified practical models. The study reveals that with the continuous maturation of the Forum on China – Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, China – Africa energy cooperation has progressively moved beyond the early, singular aid – based framework. It is shifting towards a diversified development model centered on using infrastructure construction to drive energy development, integrated whole – industry – chain collaboration in traditional energy sectors, and green innovation in clean energy. This transformation not only embodies the principles of China’s Africa policy – sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, and the concept of sustainable development, but also promotes the formation of a new cooperation model centered on collaborative development, equality, and mutual benefit among countries in the global South at the practical level. Despite existing complex external challenges, the future of China – Africa cooperation is poised to advance the transformation of Africa’s energy structure

and its high – tech industrial landscape. This South – South cooperation practice, characterized by green innovation and grounded in mutual trust and mutual learning, not only provides a practical pathway for addressing global climate change and energy security challenges but also offers an innovative and practical example for improving the global energy governance system, which holds significant strategic importance for promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind

Keywords: China – Africa energy cooperation, energy diplomacy, global governance, South – South cooperation

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An Analysis of South Africa ’ s Post – Paris Agreement Climate Change Policy

Gao Xiaosheng

Abstract: South Africa is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Africa and one of the emerging economies that are actively participating in addressing climate change issues. South Africa ’ s post – Paris Agreement climate policy decisions are choices made after weighing the pros and cons of addressing climate change and achieving economic and social transformation. In the post – Paris Agreement era, South Africa aims to achieve effective responses to the negative impacts of climate change, solve problems in economic and social development, realize sustainable development transformation, and enhance its international image through actively participating in addressing climate change issues. Overall,

South Africa's post-Paris Agreement climate policy has yielded positive results. Not only has it formed a relatively mature climate change response institution and its coordination mechanism, but it has also established a comprehensive and complete climate change response policy system. The goals of addressing climate change have also been well achieved, and South Africa's image and influence in international climate negotiations have been significantly enhanced. However, due to various factors, South Africa's post-Paris Agreement climate policy still faces issues such as insufficient inter-agency coordination, inadequate implementation of climate change response policies, and significant pressure in achieving a low-carbon and equitable economic and social transformation. China and South Africa have great potential for cooperation in climate governance and energy transformation. Through multilateral coordination, experience exchange, and technical cooperation, they can jointly promote a fair and sustainable global climate governance process.

Keywords: Post-Paris Agreement era, South Africa's climate policy, economic and social transformation, the Global South

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Ethiopia's Policies and Actions for Building Climate Resilience

Zhao Bin and Wang Yiyan

Abstract: This article systematically examines Ethiopia's practices, progress, and challenges in building national climate resilience in the context of climate change. As a developing country that is highly vulnerable to climate

change yet a low contributor to emissions, Ethiopia has shifted from a passive response to active adaptation by formulating and implementing a series of policies to adapt to climate change. Its approach revolves around five dimensions: sustainable development, adaptability, resilience, innovation capacity, and social inclusion. This multi-dimensional strategy encompasses actions ranging from agricultural transformation, renewable energy development, and ecosystem restoration to infrastructure enhancement and social protection, yielding phased results. However, Ethiopia still faces structural challenges in building climate resilience: a weak monitoring and evaluation system impedes the tracking of policy effectiveness; conflicts between departmental goals and the lack of coordination mechanisms hinder integrated efforts; and insufficient local implementation capacity coupled with fragmented funding hampers policy execution. These challenges underscore a common dilemma in the Global South: a mismatch between climate governance responsibilities and capacities. Deepening cooperation mechanisms, including technical cooperation, capacity building, and international financing, is of great significance in supporting Ethiopia and other developing countries to achieve a transition towards climate resilience

Keywords: Ethiopia, climate resilience, climate adaptation, sustainable development

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