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The Chinese Factor in Developing the Grand Strategy of the European Union

Introduction

The European Union (EU) is in need. In need of a comprehensive grand strategy, agreed by all member states, which provides it with the necessary tools and mechanisms to deal with challenging developments in the international arena. One of the major phenomena Europe has to cope with is the one of a “Rising China”. Rapid economic growth, astonishing social changes, bigger and bigger political ambitions make China one of the most influential countries in the world.

The main aim of this article is to present how the rise of Chinese power influences the process of developing a European strategy and how it changes the European strategic position. Two major points will be analyzed: 1. A rising China is one of the factors that force the EU to build a comprehensive, grand strategy – China is a “grand” challenge to European interests from Africa to South East Asia, from climate change to development aid, from trade liberalization to labor standards. If the EU wants to face this strategic challenge, it has to build a strategic consensus and find a strategic response; 2. A Chinese “grand strategy” is in some points surprisingly coherent with European interests – while developing a European strategy we have to be aware of our biggest partners. It seems worthwhile to compare and contrast the European and Chinese strategic visions. The similarities are easy to notice: promotion of multilateralism, stressing peace as a precondition of development and focusing on non-military means. Go into details and one may draw a slightly more nuanced picture.

For the purpose of this article, the classical definition of the “grand strategy” proposed by Paul Kennedy (1991, p. 5) seems to be especially useful, as it states that “the capacity of the nation’s leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term (that is, in wartime and peacetime) best interests”. The author shares Kennedy’s view on “interests” as the fundamentals of every grand strategy, however, being aware of an alternative approach (eg. Vennesson, 2010) which links the “grand strategy” inseparably with “security” of a country instead of a broader term “foreign policy”.

The Chinese ‘grand strategy’

Some experts insist that China does not have a comprehensive grand strategy at all. Wang Jisi, Dean of School of International Studies at Beijing University wrote in *The Foreign Affairs* that a “variety of views among Chinese political elites complicates efforts to devise any such grand strategy based on political consensus” (Wang, 2011). In his opinion, during the times of Mao Zedong, Beijing had no comprehensive grand strategy at all and after that we could only talk about some policy fundamentals, but not about a strategy. They changed slightly from the times of Deng Xiaoping to the current China ruled by Xi Jinping and the Standing Committee of China Communist Party (CCP). In Deng’s times those foreign policy fundamentals were:

1. A peaceful international environment;
2. An enhanced position of China in the global arena;
3. Continuous integration into the existing economic order.

All three were primarily aimed at consolidating the power of the China Communist Party at home. Under the leadership of Hu Jintao (2002–2012) as CCP Secretary General, China was still focused on internal challenges, however, some new priorities have appeared. The Chinese government has stressed promotion of fast economic growth while emphasizing good governance, improving the social security net, protecting the environment, encouraging independent innovation, lessening social tensions, perfecting the financial system and stimulating domestic consumption (Wang, 2011).

But some others (Roberts, 2011) claim that the Chinese ‘grand strategy’ has been in place for a thousand years. When Marco Polo traveled to

China in the 13th century, the Chinese strategy was based on the following priorities:

- Maintain a strong defense but no offense (too expensive).
- Create a genuine meritocracy in government promotion.
- Eliminate corruption at the top and fight it at lower levels.
- Amaze the world with China's advancement and civilization.
- Make foreigners rich, then encourage them to leave.
- Plan 10, 20, and 50 years ahead and work the plan.
- Control the rivers and do great public works.

Not much has changed until now apart from the rhetoric of Chinese foreign policy, which has been adjusted to current political needs: promotion of a harmonious world, stressing peace as a precondition to development and focusing on non-military means. These three phrases give the shortest characteristic of Chinese strategic thinking, however, obviously not a complete one. An alternative point of view could be found (Shambaugh, 2011) in official policy of "major powers are the key, surrounding areas are the first priority, developing countries are the foundation and multilateral forums are the important stage".

Subrat Saha (2010) agrees that China has been consistent in the implementation of its strategy and internal stability has been a major bearing in its strategic thinking, although he indicates factors that distinguish current Chinese strategic thinking from the one of Deng times:

1. China is more and more sensitive to its periphery.
2. International projection of Chinese interests is growing, with emphasis on diplomacy and trade.
3. Beijing tries to reclaim its status of a great power.
4. Expansion of the periphery as much as increasing strategic interests in distant continents is replacing earlier reluctance for expedition.

Mitsuru Kitano (2011) proposed a quite useful framework for analyzing the Chinese foreign policy strategy. He argues that recently it has been shaped by four major trends. Firstly, the "one-nation course" reflecting nationalism that emphasizes "domestic revitalization". Secondly, internationalism which emphasizes "domestic revitalization" ("opening course"). Thirdly, "responsible-great-power course" that could be described as internationalism in the context of "emphasis on increased foreign influence". Finally, "China-centric order course", nationalism in the context of "emphasis on increased foreign influence".

The strength of those vectors is constantly changing in time, thought seems that for a few years the China-centric order course has become the dominant and now represents the mainstream of Chinese foreign policy. This is due to the fact that the national strength of China has increased and its relative importance in the international community has grown.

Although there are different views on Chinese strategy, one can without a doubt say that China is focused on itself. It is interesting that “apart from the issue of Taiwan, which Beijing considers to be an integral part of China’s territory, the Chinese government has never officially identified any single foreign policy issue as one of the country’s core interests”. Moreover, we can observe “persistent sensitivity to domestic disorder caused by foreign threats” (Wang, 2011).

The above-mentioned voices are quite consistent with the predominant view among China watchers that since the mid-1990s the Chinese diplomatic purpose is to “maintain the international conditions that will make it feasible for China to focus on the domestic development” (Goldstein, 2001). If “China’s diplomacy is geared totally towards China’s own development” (Shambaugh, 2012), the West should not expect too much from China, which perceives all global problems mainly from an internal perspective. It results in a generally risk-averse foreign policy, which we have observed in the previous years. However, some Chinese scholars (Cui, 2012) argue that there is a growing realist consensus in China concerning the need for the country to act as a surging world power in world affairs. In previous years such assertive acting was easy to notice in negotiations regarding environmental issues or in the territorial disputes with neighbors (Dyer, 2010)

Where do European and Chinese strategies meet?

Following debates on Chinese foreign policy, at the utmost slightly touched upon in the above paragraphs, one can easily notice that ‘nation interests’ are at its core. When the Chinese are talking about strategy, they are talking about interests. Realism is clearly the most dominant school of thought in China, however, not the one and only. Shambaugh (2012) characterized seven different groups in the Chinese discourse: Nativism, Realism, Major Powers, Asia First, Global South, Selective Mul-

tilateralism and Globalism. Their impact on government and policy has differed in time, though generally realists and public opinion supporting a multipolar world prevail.

The realist school of thought is not homogeneous as well. Realists in China may be sub-divided at least into 'offensive' and 'defensive' camps, with the latter being particularly influential. Although both are focused on securing national interests, defensive realists do not seek security by intentionally decreasing security of others and do not believe that conflicts of interests are not irreconcilable (Tang, 2008, p. 150). Conflicts of interests between actors do matter, however, cooperation is a possible option for their resolution (Glasser, 1994). Tang (2007) persuasively proves that the Chinese strategy is deeply rooted in defensive realism, which means that Beijing will be focused on national interests though rather reluctant to seek coercive ways of resolving conflicts with other actors. It also indicates that for the purpose of this article, analyses of interests seem to be crucial in order to understand the Chinese "grand strategy".

National interests can be divided into three basic categories: vital, essential and general interests. They are defined (The Venusberg Group, p. 16–17) as follows:

1. Vital Interests are those, which are critical to the functioning of political, economic and social structures of the country. If threatened, such interests must be secured by all possible means, incorporating the full spectrum of military capabilities, including nuclear deterrence.

2. Essential Interests are those that are not critical to the functioning of vital systems and structures. However, securing such interests does not normally require the full scale of diplomatic and economic means in the first instance. Military force can be used in their defense if it is believed that the loss of such interests will in time undermine vital interests.

3. General Interests are those that define the aspirations of an actor to shape the international order. These are formal and informal codes of conduct, driven by long-range goals concerning the future position of the international environment, especially the structure of international system, future opponents or allies, hegemony or independence, etc.

With the use of this framework, only sovereignty and preventing disintegration of the country, energy security and maintaining rapid economic growth, could be classified as Chinese vital interests (see table no 1)

Table 1. The major interests of China

Vital interests	Essential interests	General interests
Sovereignty and preventing disintegration of the country	Combatting Strategic Terrorism and International Crime	Creation of a multipolar world with decisions taken by a few major powers including China
Energy security	Environmental Security	
Maintaining rapid economic growth	Preventing and Managing Pandemics	
	Preventing WMD Proliferation	
	Stability and development of important economic partners such as African countries	

Source: own research based on the Author search query.

Obviously the classification presented above is to some extent arbitrary, however, it gives us an opportunity to compare Chinese interests with European ones. Nowadays, Europe is rich and powerful – 500 million people, 25% of world GDP, and as such is a global political actor with global responsibilities. The EU must have the capability and capacities to protect its political and economic interests, though what is widely known is that it is poorly organized and at times “to the point of dysfunction” (The Venusberg Group, p. 16). Smith (2012) argues that the EU complicates the classical view of grand strategies as state-centered and proves that one can talk about a grand strategy in the context of such integrated international organization like the EU. Moreover, he insists that a “collective grand strategy would be greater than the sum of its parts (EU member states) and would provide some clear “value-added” to the (normal) process of grand strategy conducted by EU member states” (Smith 2012; p. 146). Using the same analytical framework as in case of China (alternative framework see: Smith, 2012) one can divide European interests into three categories (see the table below).

Table 2. The major interests of the EU

Vital interests	Essential interests	General interests
1	2	3
Energy security	The Stability and Development of Africa	Human Security

Table 2 (cont.)

1	2	3
Combatting Strategic Terrorism and International Crime	Environmental Security	Effective Disaster Response
Preventing WMD Proliferation	Balanced migration and preventing demographic changes	
Preventing and Managing Pandemics		

Source: The Venusberg Group, 2007.

The list of EU interests could obviously be extended. For instance, in the context of economic crisis, the preservation of the euro-zone’s integrity seems to be arguably “vital” for the future of Europe. However, accepting that any such list would be controversial and incomplete, it is possible to point out some general features of the grand strategy, based on common European interests.

1. The EU recognizes the limits of offensive military power and peace as a precondition to development. Military operations might make matters even worse for those who exercise it (Smith 2012, p. 148). Handling complex problems requires the deployment of a vast range of instruments: economic, political and socio-cultural as well. Such a view was clearly presented in the European Security Strategy (ESS, 2003) and in the context of difficult conflict management in Afghanistan or Iraq, seems to be generally accepted.

2. The EU is pursuing a more liberal approach to global strategic action rather than a more military-centered strategy favored by the realists (Smith 2012, p. 146). It can lead to a construction of a “consensual new positive-sum multilateral world order” (Howorth, 2010, p. 467) in which all players “increasingly recognize the advantages of co-operation over conflict”. In such a world, national sovereignty is subordinated to commercial and investment interdependence, as well as such issues like climate change, environmental degradation or migratory flows.

3. The EU clearly is an “aspiring” actor of the world stage – it seeks to “do more” at the global level in line with its economic weight and interests. This does not necessarily mean a complete change of the existing international order (Smith, 2012, p. 148), though a series of bilateral

or multilateral trade-offs between the rising and the declining powers are unavoidable.

If we agree with Smith's (2012, p. 146) claim that the grand strategy is really about "making the world safe for European values and interests", we can easily notice that neither values nor interests are always common for Europe and China. Even if sometimes they are rhetorically similar, in fact both actors do not perceive them in the same way. It appears to be no surprise when we compare political entities contrasting so sharply in terms of policy, culture, historical experiences and the state of their economies.

However, there are at least three points where the strategies of China and the EU meet together.

1. The notion that "peace is precondition of development" is deeply rooted in Chinese strategic thinking. A peaceful international environment is perceived by elites as a condition *sine qua non* to economic development of the state. As a consequence, Chinese leaders are not militarists prone to seek forcible solutions, as sometimes presented mainly by American scholars (Mosher, 2004). Quite the contrary – Chinese elites generally share the view that military means are not adequate to deal with complex security problems. It is true that the Chinese defense budget soared to 91.5 billion USD in 2011 (12.7% more than the year before) and many experts say that the actual expenditures are far higher than the government claims (BBC News, 2011). However, Chinese military capabilities are still relatively low, which in turn means that the state is unable of using this kind of power in the way that Americans use it.

2. Beijing is also a vivid advocate of a more multilateral world order with China occupying a high position. Its rhetoric goes in line with the European one, though for the Chinese sovereignty comes first. Due to this fact, they are reluctant to see the world through "cosmopolitan glasses" like many Europeans do. Responsibility for the global problems, typical for cosmopolitans (Beck, 2002), will always be second to Chinese national interests, if it is actually taken into consideration at all.

3. China is just the same "aspiring" actor as the EU is, similarly reluctant to reduce the existing world order to ashes. Chinese leaders would agree with Ikenberry (2008) claiming that "today's Western order is hard to overturn and easy to join". As a consequence, China aims at rather raising its own profile in existing institutions than building new ones.

Common interests, different values?

Similarly, when we try to compare the major interests of both players, as presented in the tables above, in at least two points they seem to be coherent: energy security and the stability of African countries. Firstly, the EU and China are determined to secure its energy future. Both actors together are responsible for one third of world energy use, which makes cooperation in this area inevitable. The European Commission has stressed this very clearly in its strategy towards China (European Commission, 2006, p. 5). Leaders of both sides have confirmed the importance of this issue in bilateral relations on every summit since 2005. At the 14th EU-China Summit, which took place in Beijing on the 14th of February, 2012, the energy dialogue was pushed onto a higher institutional level. The First High Level Meeting, with participation of Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Li Keqiang, was organized on the 3rd of May, 2012. At the occasion of the High Level Meeting on Energy, the EU and China signed a few declarations stressing the will of broad cooperation (for example, The EU-China Joint Declaration on Energy Security).

It is worth noticing that the EU-China energy dialogue does not end on empty declarations. There are six areas of actual cooperation in the field of energy such as: renewable energy, smart grids, energy efficiency in the construction sector, clean coal, nuclear energy and energy law (European Commission, 2011). Despite the fact that coal is still the most important source of energy for China (70%), renewable energy has started to play a central role as a way to increase domestic energy security as well as mitigate environmental problems that are dangerous to the political stability of the state and the ruling party. The EU leads the world in clean energy investments, spending nearly 81 billion USD in 2010, though China, with expenditures of 54.4 billion USD, is second in rank. China now boasts the largest solar panel and wind turbine manufacturing industries in the world, accounting for nearly 50 percent of manufacturing for both technologies (Pew Center on Global Climate Change, 2011). In transition towards less carbon-intensive growth cooperation with Europe and the United States is crucial. Western enterprises and experts have valuable expertise and experience to offer. Moreover, they are natural business partners (and competitors) for Chinese companies that want to take advantage of the rapid growth of the renewable energy sector in the world (U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission; 2010, p. 187).

Both sides collaborate massively on the political level as far as clean coal technology is concerned. Clean coal-related events are organized regularly under the auspices of the Directorate General for Energy and Chinese National Energy Administration (DG ENER-NEA) Energy Dialogue. The most prominent effect of the cooperation is The Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2), a five-year project initiated in 2010. EC2 aims at promoting clean energy in China and supporting the efforts of the Chinese government to shape a more sustainable, environmental friendly and energy efficient sector (www.ec2.org.cn).

Prospects for cooperation stand a good chance as energy security is one of the vital interests for both parties. However, it is worthwhile to notice that the European strategic approach to energy security links it strongly with environmental security. Chinese politicians, scholars and experts are fully aware of environmental challenges, however, economic development is still at the top of the agenda. Rapid economic growth is the best (perhaps the only) legitimization for the Chinese Communist Party. They are fully aware that “China’s total carbon emission volume will continuously increase in a certain period and low carbon economy development does not mean pursuit of absolute low carbon, but emphasizes on the process of low carbonization and the reduction of carbon intensity” (Zhang H., 2010, p. 396). China must balance between protecting its environment and developing its economy. Due to this fact, Europe should not have big expectations. There are no easy deals with China.

The second point in which the EU and China meet in their strategic concepts is the problem regarding the stability and development in Africa. China has been present there for many years, however, in the last decade Chinese aid, trade, investments and political presence have been rising sharply. China is on track to become the largest trading partner for this continent. Its innovative ways of combining aid with trade and its own political experiment have raised hundreds of millions of Chinese out of poverty, which seems attractive for many Africans (Brautigam, 2009, p. 311). Even if we do not agree that the so-called “Beijing Consensus” or “Chinese model” is something exportable to other countries, it is promoted by the Chinese government to many African countries, receiving a very good reception from them. The top-down control of development and poverty reduction without political reforms are a vision of delight for many autocrats (Kurlantzick, 2007, p. 57).

Mark Leonard was probably right noticing that:

The story of next 30 years will be about how a more self-confident China reaches out and shapes the world. For governments in Africa, Central Asia, Latin America, and even Middle East, China's rise means that there is no longer a binary choice between assimilation to the West and isolation. (Leonard, 2008, p. 117)

Beijing has given a choice for many regimes and made the political situation in Africa more complicated than ever. No longer are Western donors and investors the only solution – China has created what Wissenbach (2011) called “healthy competition” for traditional partners.

The European strategic concept towards Africa is somehow similar to the Chinese one. The resemblance is collected in a very interesting document, presented on the EuropeAid (part of the European Commission responsible for development aid) website in March 2007. This is a comparison of European and Chinese policy towards Africa in terms of rhetoric used in strategic papers as well as groundwork. There are three main similarities pointed out by the European Commission (2007):

1. Goals declared by both sides are more or less coherent: promotion of peace and stability, development of African countries and the prosperity of people.

2. Both sides want to concentrate aid on similar areas such as: education, training, agriculture and the natural environment.

3. One of the declared principles of cooperation with African countries both for Brussels and Beijing is equality.

Obviously, both actors may have different focuses, there may be some clear contradictions in values, but neither identical approach nor normative consensus are needed to create functional cooperation (Jing, Barton, 2011). The European Commission is searching for cooperation with China in a triangle: Europe-Africa-China (European Commission, 2008), in line with the principle of multilateralism and dialogue of the EU. Despite differences in values, economic and political competition, the Commission hopes there is much space for trilateral collaboration in Africa (Berger, Wissenbach, 2007). The ultimate aim of the European and Chinese policies towards Africa is the same: to secure trade and investments by the creation of a stable political and economic environment. Common interest is usually a good fundament to build a system of collaboration – which is clear for European idealists and bureaucrats as well as for Chinese defensive realists. Military conflicts, terrorism and ethnic tensions create unfavorable conditions for Chinese and European businesses alike. The more engaged in Africa you are, the clearer for you that is. It is conceivable that Beijing will appreciate the value of effective institutions

(administration, rules of law) thus making it more open for cooperation with the EU in the promotion of good governance. The probability is that China will seek partnership with Europe and other important actors in building infrastructure that allows to transport goods and also to secure energy supplies. The lack of infrastructure causes problems for all investors (Brandtaeg, 2008, p. 20) and the implementation of big infrastructural projects, which are very costly, makes the collaboration of investors do or die. China is also even more aware of the disastrous effects of wasteful exploitation of natural resources, which may engage it in searching for sustainable solutions together with African and Western partners.

The similarity of interests and declared goals do not automatically mean that cooperation will go smoothly. Hitherto effects remain disappointing. Holstag and Van Hoeymissen (2010, p. 11) claim that the Chinese policy towards Africa is not in line with European expectations at all:

There is no evidence that it [China] will assume a level of responsibility in African security affairs that is commensurate with its strong economic presence in the region. China still has a penchant for security free riding. Its support to regional organizations remains nominal. In case of political unrest, China remained disinclined to work with the international and African regional community, and opted for a business-as-usual attitude. Even its mediation in the question of Darfur cannot be considered as a departure from its traditional hands-off approach. Beijing refused to use its growing economic leverage to help combating corruption. Its arms trade policy also shows that even when it does pledge to take measures, their implementation remains problematic. China wants to be seen as a responsible partner in Africa, but responsibility tends to be conceived from the narrow perspective of local political elites, rather than African societies.

It is doubtful whether China will resign from building its policy towards Africa on the basis of good relations with African political elites, often corrupted and oppressive. They “prefer the Chinese way” of cooperation, free from conditions of good governance, human rights and the like, though full of personal benefits (Zhang, 2007). It is even more doubtful whether or not the Chinese government can fully control all Chinese activities in Africa. The oil sector seems to be almost fully under the control of the government or its agencies, however, in other sectors the situation is far less clear. A lot of Chinese companies operating in Africa are private or controlled by regional or municipal authorities. Their behavior often stays in contrast to the political declarations of Chinese leaders and provokes their anger. President Hu Jintao’s speech to Chinese entrepreneurs in Namibia, which was focused on corporate social responsibility and the role of companies in the creation of the image of the state, is a good

example of the state's activities in order to be in control of the situation (Berger, Wissenbach, 2007, p. 18). However, obviously even the autocratic regime in Beijing cannot fully control the greed of Chinese entrepreneurs, who see in Africa a fantastic place to invest and an even better place to export goods to and therefore do not want to take care of social responsibility and sustainable development. To be frank, Western companies used to be reluctant in this regard as well and many of them still are. Ultimately, business relations between European and Chinese enterprises will be defined by a combination of cooperation and competition. The same applies to their political relations.

Cooperation with China in Africa is definitely not going to be easy, however, there is no other way, at least for Europe. Its African strategy has to consider China as a key partner in all types of activities on the continent. The thing that Europe needs first and foremost is to develop much more persuasive arguments when dealing with China. Therefore, it should link the standards it promotes to a clear set of common interests. "Departing from common interests will be essential for developing a consensus with China" (Holslag, Van Hoeymissen, 2010, p. 14). Many interests of both actors in Africa are consistent with each other, which is a good base for collaboration, however, Europe should not have big expectations. There are no easy deals with China.

Conclusions

A "Strategic partnership" with China is often perceived as a vague slogan. However, as it has been proved in this paper, there are certain points in which the Chinese "grand strategy" is surprisingly coherent with the European strategic vision. Both sides want to develop a multi-lateral world order, see peace as a precondition for development and focus their policy on non-military means. Both sides have common interests in such areas as those presented in this paper: energy security and stability in Africa. Moreover, one can find many more spheres where cooperation can bring "mutual benefits", to use one of the most popular slogans in Chinese foreign policy rhetoric.

On the other hand, China is one of the greatest challenges for the EU; not only in economic but also in political terms. Being far from seeing China as a foe or a threat similar to the Soviet Union, as some American analysts do (for example Mosher), one can easily point out a few "danger zones". One of them is cyber-security. China has developed significant

capabilities in the area of cyber-attacks (Segal, 2011) and does not hesitate to use it targeting the U.S. and European business and government networks. Perhaps cyber-warfare is still as immature as aircraft were during the First World War, however, it is maturing very quickly and now, according to Eurobarometer, 81% of Europeans perceive cybercrimes as an important challenge to EU security (ENISA, 2012). Hackers of Chinese residence are believed to be responsible for many of those crimes.

Friend or foe, a rising China is one of the most important reference points for the EU at the global stage. Impossible to omit, difficult to cope with, more and more influential in every sphere of international relations, China seems to be one of the major forces which have an impact on European strategic discourse and European strategic choices. What should European leaders, strategist and analysts have in mind looking at Beijing?

First of all they should be aware of the meaning of words as language matters. In Chinese culture language matters even more than anywhere else. Due to this fact one has to be very thoughtful when observing how Chinese speak in official parlance (Mierzejewski 2009; Cui 2012). Chinese and European strategic visions of the world order may seem similar. However, when we go deeper into details the inconsistencies are easy to notice. For instance, the EU strategic thinking is based on a multilateral approach, which means engagement of such organizations as the United Nations and, consequently, China. Beijing officially agrees with this though uses the phrase multipolarization (*duo jihua*) of the world order. The difference is quite clear for every political scientist.

Secondly, Europeans should be careful not to confuse values with interests. China definitely does not agree with the idea of "moral duty" to intervene in countries that threaten human rights. This philosophy, backed by many people and politicians in the West, developed after the end of the Cold War and now it is deeply rooted in European strategic culture. Beijing cooperates with many autocratic regimes around the world and has often a much bigger influence on them than the West. Some Chinese scholars argue that the best strategic option for the EU is to "engage China and benefit from its soft power" (CIIS, 2010, p. 391). Consequently, China must be a part of any solution in such "hot spots" such as Sudan or North Korea. Like it or not, the Chinese point of view has to be taken into consideration in any case if European activities are to be effective and European interests are to be defended.

Finally, the EU has to be patient and consequent. With its growing economic and political position in the world, China is becoming a major

power. It means that in the foreseeable future any EU strategy has to be based on cooperation with China and has to assume engagement of this country. Chinese leaders face many hard dilemmas (environment protection versus rapid economic development; keeping a low profile as a developing country versus bearing the costs and responsibilities as a great power) and are still searching for the right answers to many strategic questions. Europe must be very consequent in putting the right ideas for answers and very patient when waiting for results. We should not have too great expectations. There are no easy deals with China. Without China there are no deals at all.

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