



Investing in Tragedy

China's Money, Arms and Politics in Sudan

Report Overview

In the lead up to the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, the government of China is trying to promote itself as a harmonious and peaceful rising world power. But behind this façade is another China, one that places its economic development and energy needs over its human rights responsibilities. *Investing in Tragedy* makes the case that through its money, arms and politics, China has helped to sustain the violence in the war torn region of Darfur, Sudan. After more than five years of conflict that has left at least 200,000 people dead and more than 2.5 million people homeless, China continues to strengthen its relationship with the government of Sudan despite the government's record of mass atrocities in Darfur.



A primary reason that China has maintained and strengthened its relationship with Sudan can be found in Sudan's large reserves of crude oil. China is hungry for oil to drive its economic development and has therefore made large investments in creating the infrastructure necessary to extract and ship oil from Sudan. Over 90% of oil Sudan shipped in 2006 went to China, a total of \$4.7 billion dollars worth of exports. Moreover, the oil is pumped to Sudanese ports through pipelines built by Chinese companies and is loaded at marine terminals constructed with Chinese financing, by Chinese firms. In short, *Investing in Tragedy* reveals that Sudan's oil development has, by and large, been a Chinese production.

Through its growing oil revenues, the government of Sudan has also been able to greatly increase its arms purchases, which are being used to sustain the violence in Darfur. For decades China has sold Sudan arms, but its small arms exports to Sudan have increased significantly in the last several years. From 1999 to 2005, a period that includes the start of the Darfur crisis, Sudan's imports of small arms increased by 680 percent, and from 2004 to 2006, China made up an average of 90 percent of small arms sales to Sudan. From 2003 to 2006, China sold over \$55 million worth of small arms to Khartoum.

A Security Council arms embargo—initially imposed in 2004 under Resolution 1556 and expanded in 2005 under Resolution 1591—prohibits weapons transfers to Darfur. The government of Sudan, however, has openly stated its refusal to abide by the arms embargo, claiming that it has the sovereign right to transfer weapons into Darfur, which it has continued to do. Faced with the government of Sudan's defiance of its legal obligations, China's continued weapons sales to the government of Sudan, knowing that those weapons have been found in Darfur, puts China in the position of also failing to comply with the embargo.

China has also provided robust political support for the government of Sudan in spite of the violence in Darfur. This is clearly demonstrated in the way China has repeatedly obstructed United Nation Security Council efforts to take action to stop the violence in Darfur by threatening to veto resolutions addressing the conflict. Between 2004 and 2007, the Security Council debated 14 substantive resolutions about Darfur, and China used its power to weaken nine of them. On most occasions, China forced the removal of tough language, including the threat or imposition of targeted economic sanctions.

While there have been moments where China has used its influence with Sudan constructively to address the Darfur crisis, on balance it is clear that China's actions have thus far caused more harm than good. China's attempts to minimize the influence it has with the government of Sudan will fall flat unless China does more, far more, to help stop the atrocities in Darfur, and help ensure those who are most responsible are brought to justice.