

China forgives 17 African countries of their debt

By  Katja Hamilton

23 Aug 2022

China this month [announced](#) that it will forgive 17 African countries 23 interest-free loans that matured at the end of 2021.



Source: [Pxabay](#)

The [statement](#) was made by State Councilor Wang Yi at the coordinators' meeting on the implementation of the follow-up actions of the eighth (FOCAC) ministerial conference.

The FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) conference was held in Dakar, Senegal last November.

[Research](#) reflects China loaned a total of \$143bn to African governments and state-owned enterprises between 2000 and 2017.

In 2020, the African countries with the largest Chinese debt were Angola (\$25bn), Ethiopia (\$13.5bn), Zambia (\$7.4bn), the Republic of the Congo (\$7.3bn), and Sudan (\$6.4bn).

Boosting Africa's industrialisation process

"We are pleased to see that - despite the evolving international situation, rising global challenges and repeated external disturbances - China and Africa have stayed our course in enhancing solidarity and focusing on cooperation," Yi said.

"Since the Dakar conference, China has completed several major projects including the Foundlougne Bridge in Senegal, the Nairobi Expressway, the Kribi-Lolabe Highway in Cameroon, and the 10th of Ramadan LRT in Egypt.

"All these have lent a strong boost to Africa's industrialisation process," Yi said.

Yi highlighted China's effort to tackle the food crisis in Africa by signing exchange letters with 12 African countries on zero tariffs for 98% of their export items to China.

He said Chinese businesses are increasing their investment in Africa's agricultural sector, growing more grains through the initiative "100 companies in 1,000 villages".

Yi said Chinese companies have invested \$2.17bn in Africa.

"We are prepared to, through the International Monetary Fund's two trusts, to rechannel \$10bn of its special drawing rights (SDR) to Africa, and encourage the IMF to direct China's contributions to Africa," he concluded.

According to [research](#) conducted as part of the Jubilee Debt Campaign in October 2018, African debt to China rose from \$10bn in 2010 to more than \$30bn in 2016.

ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

Katja is the Finance, Property and Healthcare Editor at Bizcommunity.

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