

**BENEFITS NIGERIA DERIVES FROM THE FORUM ON CHINA-AFRICA
COOPERATION (FOCAC) , 200-2024**
OYENEYIN RONKE RASHIDAT
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, BAZE UNIVERSITY
ABUJANIGERIA
EMAIL: ronkeoyeneyin@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper examines the dynamics of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, focusing on the advantages for Nigeria as an African nation. This paper uses a qualitative research approach to examine in detail how recent changes in the world have affected the strategies and effectiveness of the FOCAC. The study will improve our comprehension of how the China-Africa relationship is changing, with a particular focus on Nigeria. It will look into how FOCAC is modifying its strategy to address the opportunities and challenges brought about by the pandemic, shifting trade laws, shifting geopolitical landscape, and insecurity. It will also offer insightful information about how China and African countries, like Nigeria, are cooperating to navigate this momentous time and fortify their strategic alliance. This paper concludes that the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is crucial for establishing a partnership that benefits both China and Africa and promotes collaboration, advancement, and shared prosperity. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is an important platform for collaboration between China and African nations, even though it has yielded positive results, there are increasing questions about China's sincere intentions. This paper recommends that in order to advance a more just and beneficial relationship between China and Africa, it is essential that these criticisms be addressed.

Keywords: intercontinentalism, integration, regional integration, regional blocs, economic alliance

Introduction

FOCAC, or the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, is an official platform that promotes cooperation between 53 African states and the People's Republic of China, with the exception of the Kingdom of Eswatini. A wide range of topics are covered by this multilateral platform, such as soft power, trade, aid, investment, finance, and security. With the exception of the Kingdom of Eswatini, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is an important forum for cooperation between the People's Republic of China and African states. China founded the FOCAC for a number of reasons, including securing its political and economic clout in Africa, opposing the formation of comparable organizations by other powerful nations, balancing the influence of the European Union, and promoting the political and developmental interests of developing nations. In addition to other areas of cooperation, FOCAC serves as a multilateral forum for discussions on trade, aid, investment, finance, security, and soft power. It facilitates better planning, communication, and teamwork in the endeavor to strengthen ties between China and Africa.

The intention behind the proposal to establish the FOCAC was to emulate other Western nations that had previously established forums for collaboration with Africa, such as the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the US-Africa Business Forum, the AfricaFrance Summit, and the EU-Africa Summit thereby increasing interaction and collaboration between China and African countries. Unlike informal conferences, the FOCAC was institutionalized when it was founded. Following its first two years of incubation, it followed a clearly defined operating architecture. Sino-African relations are becoming more complex as a result of rising protectionism and regional trade agreements that are changing the global economic landscape. While shifting landscape presents chances for revitalized cooperation, it also makes it more challenging to keep people engaged and deal with new problems. Every day, FOCAC must navigate this altered global environment, which presents both new opportunities and challenges. This study aims to give valuable insights into how China and African Nations, like Nigeria, are cooperating to navigate this transformative period and strengthen their strategic partnership. It will examine how recent global shifts have affected FOCAC's strategies and effectiveness, and it will explore how the organisation is adapting its approach to tackle the challenges and seize the opportunities presented by the pandemic, changing trade policies, globalisation, climate changes, and shifting geopolitical contexts.

Materials and Method

This paper employed the historical descriptive research design and collected secondary data from books, journals, periodicals, reports, and internet sources. A theoretical framework that explains and justifies the subject of study also lends support to this paper.

Literature Review

Since its founding in the year 2000, FOCAC has undergone multiple phases of growth. FOCAC was created in response to African proposals and the need for a structured framework for cooperation and engagement. It is a multilateral partnership platform, a forum for collective dialogue, and a mechanism for cooperation between China and 53 African states with the exception of Eswatini (*Africa LSE*, 2022). FOCAC seeks to promote peace, development, and win-win cooperation in a variety of disciplines, including economics, politics, culture, and the

environment. The then-African leader, Madagascar's Foreign Minister Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, actually proposed FOCAC, despite the widespread misconception that China started it. Following the proposal, China launched the FOCAC in 2000. It functions as a platform for partnerships built on the ideas of equality and South-South cooperation (Kimenyi & Lewis, 2021).

A major change in Sino-African relations was brought about by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) establishment in 2000, which represented China's strategic decision to increase its engagement with Africa and concentrate more on Nigeria. According to Alden and Alves (2017), the formation of the FOCAC was a component of a larger Chinese plan to establish a closer alliance with the African continent. The goal of this initial arrangement was to lay the groundwork for a more strategic and integrated partnership by addressing a number of bilateral cooperation-related issues, such as trade, investment, and cultural exchange. Gaining an understanding of these fundamental components is essential to understanding the evolution of the FOCAC and its influence on Sino-African relations. FOCAC has developed from a venue for diplomatic discussion to a multifaceted nexus that includes economic, political, security, and soft power dimensions. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, and Finance handle FOCAC's core secretarial functions. While the FOCAC strives for multilateralism, China's state capacity effectively shapes 53 pairs of bilateral ties inside a single architecture (Kimenyi & Lewis, 2021).

FOCAC has developed into a vital tool for strengthening Sino-African ties over time. Li and Wu (2019) argue that China's foreign policy toward Africa underwent a significant shift with the formation of the FOCAC, which was a response to China's growing interest in the economic potential and geopolitical significance of Africa. The FOCAC framework comprises triannual ministerial-level meetings, with main secretarial functions placed in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, and Finance. The inaugural FOCAC meeting was held during the reign of Chinese President Jiang Zemin. At this point, FOCAC acted largely as a forum for diplomatic interchange and development-related debates. FOCAC's initial focus was on improving diplomatic connections, but it has subsequently extended to include economic, cultural, and security cooperation (Amoah, 2020). It paved the way for future cooperation between China and African countries. From 2000 to 2006, FOCAC focused on political discourse and development support. It sought to deepen political connections, encourage economic cooperation, and address development concerns (Alden and Alves, 2027).

In 2006, FOCAC achieved a significant milestone by gathering over 40 heads of states or governments from Africa for the first time, overseen by then Chinese President Hu Jintao. This marked the first time such a large-scale assembly took place, demonstrating the forum's growing importance. FOCAC reached a watershed moment in 2006, when it brought together over 40 African heads of state or governments for the first time, under the leadership of then Chinese President Hu Jintao. This was the first time such a large-scale assembly was held, reflecting the forum's increasing prominence. From 2006 to 2015, FOCAC broadened its mandate to encompass economic cooperation, investment, and infrastructure development. The Beijing Action Plan and the Addis Ababa Action Plan were adopted as guidelines for collaboration. Since 2015, FOCAC has focused on industrialisation, agricultural modernisation, poverty alleviation, and people-to-people exchanges. The 2015 Johannesburg Summit was historic, with China promising \$60 billion in financial help for Africa (Alden and Alves, 2017).

Under Xi Jinping's leadership, FOCAC broadened its focus to include health, the environment, commerce, finance, security, politics, ideology, and human development. During the Xi Jinping period (2013 onwards), FOCAC grew into a comprehensive strategic multilateral structure. It evolved from a forum for diplomatic exchange and a development-focused organisation into a complete economic-political-security-soft power nexus that is consistent with China's long-term vision for Africa. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has progressed through numerous critical stages to become a complete venue for China's long-term vision in Africa. FOCAC has evolved from a diplomatic platform to a comprehensive cooperation encompassing economic, political, security, and soft power components. Its institutionalisation and regular ministerial-level meetings have strengthened its role in influencing China-Africa ties over time (Sun, 2023).

Many African countries have joined FOCAC because it acts as a multilateral coordination platform between Africa and China, promoting political dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural exchanges. Since its inception, each FOCAC meeting has resulted in a three-year action plan that includes Chinese commitments for loans, grants, and export credits. While the African Union coordinates efforts through CASC, each African state represents itself in FOCAC, with activities carried out bilaterally between China and individual African countries. As of 2022, the members of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) are 53 African countries, excluding the Kingdom of Eswatini, China as a key participant actively participates in FOCAC, The African Union Commission has a role in FOCAC, some North African governments, including Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia, are members of both CASC and FOCAC (Sun, 2023).

The Forum on China-Africa collaboration (FOCAC) does not operate under a formal treaty, but rather as a platform for collective discourse and collaboration between China and African countries. Unlike treaties, which are often legally binding agreements, FOCAC allows for ongoing exchanges, high-level visits, and collaborative efforts without the need for a formal treaty. Its relevance stems from the development of deep and complicated links between China and Africa, as well as the strengthening of the developing world's voice in international organisations. FOCAC's legislative tools include action plans, ministerial-level meetings, and institutional frameworks that foster collaboration and build the long-term relationship between China and Africa.

The Dakar Action Plan (2022-2024) was adopted by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation during its 8th Ministerial Conference in Dakar, Senegal, in 2021. This action plan sets out the strategic priorities, targets, and collaborative projects for the next three years. Political cooperation, economic development, commerce, health, the environment, security, and human development are some of the topics it addresses. FOCAC encourages exchanges between Chinese and African leaders at the highest levels, these visits and talks help to promote bilateral relations, foster mutual understanding, and encourage cooperation across sectors. Several bilateral agreements have been signed at subsequent FOCAC summits, demonstrating the dynamic character of Sino-African relations. FOCAC has made significant progress, particularly in commerce, investment, and infrastructure development across Africa.

Between 2000 and 2023, commerce between China and Africa increased dramatically, making China Africa's greatest commercial partner (Kimenyi & Lewis, 2021). FOCAC has also allowed Chinese investment in African infrastructure, particularly in roads, trains, and energy projects. These investments have been critical in accelerating economic growth in various

African countries. For example, Chinese businesses sponsored and built Kenya's Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, which is frequently touted as a showcase FOCAC project (Cisse, 2022). Furthermore, FOCAC has aided Africa's industrialisation via programs. Furthermore, FOCAC has aided Africa's industrialisation through projects such as the "Belt and Road" partnership, which intends to integrate African countries into global value chains (Sun, 2023).

In the dynamic realm of world politics, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has emerged as a major player, particularly with regard to the relationship between China and Africa. FOCAC has developed into a crucial hub for strengthening economic, political, and cultural ties between China and African countries since its founding in 2000, serving as more than just a forum for discussion (Alden & Alves, 2017). From its humble beginnings as a forum to promote trade and investment, it has developed into a comprehensive framework addressing everything from infrastructure development to the advancement of health and education (Brautigam, 2009).

China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence mutual respect for territory and sovereignty, mutual nonaggression, mutual non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence serve as the foundation for the FOCAC's emphasis on political cooperation between Africa and China. FOCAC fosters cooperative discussion and hands-on cooperation, advancing a robust and advantageous partnership between China and Africa. The FOCAC plays a big and broad role in international relations. China's foreign policy underwent a significant change as a result, going beyond conventional aid and actively participating in Africa's development. China has worked to become a major player in Africa's economic development through the FOCAC, leveraging its economic might to finance trade, invest in infrastructure, and assist a range of industries throughout the continent (Large, 2008).

China's influence in the region has increased and global dynamics have changed as a result of this strategy, which has led to a surge in Chinese investments and trade with African nations. We currently inhabit what is being referred to as the "new normal," a period of significant disruption and change in world geopolitics. This phrase encapsulates the profound changes resulting from recent international occurrences, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, changing trade regulations, and evolving geopolitical approaches and security concerns. Particularly, the pandemic has had a significant impact on international investment and trade, exposing flaws in supply chains and changing the way nations conduct business (Zhang & Zheng, 2021).

FOCAC has had a huge impact on China-Africa trade and investment trends, radically transforming the region's economic environment. According to Brautigam (2009), FOCAC has served as a catalyst for greater Chinese investment in Africa's infrastructure, mining, and energy sectors. Under FOCAC, Chinese investments have flooded into African infrastructure projects such as roads, trains, and ports, which are critical to the continent's development.

Recent worldwide developments, most notably the COVID-19 epidemic, geopolitical shifts, and evolving international trade policies, have resulted in substantial strategic revisions to China's foreign policy towards Africa. Zhang and Zheng (2021) argue that the pandemic exposed flaws in global health systems, prompting China to increase its attention on health cooperation within FOCAC, this involves expanding help to African nations for medical supplies, vaccines, and health infrastructure. The COVID-19 outbreak affected global supply

chains, causing economic disruption and shifting priorities around the world. This disturbance caused FOCAC to reconsider its operational strategies. The pandemic emphasised the importance of resilient and diverse supply networks, forcing FOCAC to prioritise health cooperation and pandemic response. This trend is reflected in China's greater emphasis on medical aid, vaccine distribution, and public health collaboration with African countries. Zhang and Zheng (2021), go on to explain how these developments have influenced FOCAC's tactics and aims, highlighting major adaptations and changes. The Covid-19 pandemic changed diplomatic and political dynamics in addition to upsetting economic trends. China and African countries are reassessing their strategies and priorities in light of the review of global supply chains and the escalation of geopolitical tensions (Gonzalez & Mertens, 2022).

In addition to the pandemic, changes in international trade policies have altered the FOCAC's strategy. The growth of protectionism and the shift towards more bilateral trade agreements have forced FOCAC to navigate a more complicated global economic climate. This has resulted in changes to trade and investment strategies, with an emphasis on strengthening local production capabilities and reduced reliance on global supply chains. FOCAC has responded by incorporating these new goals into its framework, focusing on both acute health needs and long-term economic sustainability. The forum's latest activities are part of a larger goal to promote Sino-African relations through comprehensive collaboration that includes not just economic and trade issues, but also health and technological sectors.

The "new normal" in global economics, impacted by supply chain disruptions and altering trade regulations, has had far-reaching consequences for trade and investment trends in FOCAC. The pandemic has hastened movements towards digitalisation and local manufacturing, as shown in FOCAC's present economic strategies (Zhang & Zheng, 2021). Trade patterns have evolved, with a significant growth in projects including digital infrastructure and green technologies. Investment flows are increasingly being focused towards essential areas such as healthcare and renewable energy, which correspond with global economic recovery priorities (Large, 2008). As a result of this changing environment, FOCAC is under pressure to change and remain a valuable platform for collaboration.

Furthermore, geopolitical developments and the growth of protectionism have required a rethinking of China's engagement strategy. China has emphasised the importance of bilateral agreements and regional alliances in protecting its interests and ensuring the continuity of African connections (Large 2008). Awareness FOCAC's contemporary significance requires an awareness of its adaptation to new political realities, as well as its impact on sociopolitical relations between China and African countries. The changing political context, marked by rising nationalism and geopolitical competitiveness, has changed how African countries interact with FOCAC and China (Large 2008).

The FOCAC has clearly played an important role in defining Sino-African relations, serving as a paradigm for South-South cooperation. It has established a framework for regular high-level meetings, promoting mutual understanding and collaboration between China and Africa (Ademola, 2019). FOCAC has also helped diversify Africa's international ties by providing an alternative to conventional Western allies (Tull, 2021). However, the forum's future will be dependent on addressing the criticisms and problems it faces, ensuring that the collaboration is mutually beneficial and viable in the long run. FOCAC needs to continuously review and improve its strategies to make sure it continues to foster mutual benefits and meets the needs

of its African partners, even as China modifies its global strategy in response to these changes (Dreyer, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This study employs three fundamental theoretical frameworks to properly explore China's engagement with Africa through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC): realism, neoliberal institutionalism, and constructivism. Each of these frameworks provides unique insights into the complex interplay of Sino-African relations, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of FOCAC and, as a result, providing a comprehensive view of FOCAC, encompassing the strategic motivations driving China's engagement, the institutional mechanisms that facilitate cooperation, and the normative and identity-driven aspects of Sino-African relations. This multidimensional approach will help us better comprehend FOCAC's role in creating the emerging environment of Chinese-African international relations.

Realism provides a prism through which to examine the power dynamics and strategic goals that drive China's participation in Africa. According to Realist theory, international relations are primarily influenced by the pursuit of power and national interests. From this vantage point, China's efforts inside FOCAC can be viewed as a deliberate move to increase its geopolitical influence and secure critical resources. By looking at FOCAC through a Realist lens, we can see how China's activities correspond with its overarching goals of increasing its strength and challenging Western dominance on the continent. This approach emphasises the competitive nature of international relations and the significance of strategic positioning.

Neoliberal Institutionalism offers a different perspective, focusing on how FOCAC serves as a multilateral platform that fosters cooperation and addresses common interests. This paradigm emphasises international institutions' role in enabling inter-state communication and collaboration. Neoliberal Institutionalism can help us understand how FOCAC enables collective action between China and African nations, promotes economic development, and addresses common concerns. It also emphasises the importance of institutional processes within FOCAC that aid in managing interstate relations and achieving shared goals. This viewpoint emphasises the possibility of cooperation and the advantages of structured contact in the international system.

Constructivism helps delves deeper into the importance of identity, norms, and values in shaping relations between China and African countries. Constructivist theory focusses on social constructs and ideological elements that impact state behaviour. Through this lens, we may look at how China and African countries perceive each other, the impact of historical narratives, and the importance of cultural and ideological exchanges in their relationship. Constructivism will provide vital insights into how shared identities and values influence the dynamics of FOCAC, assisting in the formation of mutual understandings and cooperative structures.

Findings and Discussion

China's engagement with Africa through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is deeply political and strategic. Politically, China uses FOCAC to increase its diplomatic leverage and influence, positioning itself as a crucial development partner in contrast to Western nations. This approach enables China to counterbalance Western dominance and position itself as a champion of South-South cooperation, emphasising mutual respect and

noninterference. Strategically, China's goals include obtaining essential resources from Africa, such as minerals and oil, which are critical to its continuing economic expansion.

FOCAC facilitates trade agreements and investment possibilities that are consistent with China's overall economic aims. China sees Africa as a rising market for its products and services, which will help it expand its economic footprint. The conference also provides a platform for China to create strategic alliances and strengthen its geopolitical position, earning support and influence in global forums and talks. In essence, FOCAC is a complex weapon that supports China's foreign policy objectives by balancing diplomatic outreach with strategic positioning.

As FOCAC evolves, it remains a critical venue for strengthening collaboration between China and Africa, particularly Nigeria, and perhaps defining the future of international relations in the global South. Recent developments have indicated major adjustments in the function and efficacy of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in light of the "new normal" established by global events. The COVID-19 epidemic and developing international trade dynamics have had a significant impact on FOCAC's activities, necessitating significant changes to its strategic, economic, and political frameworks. Key studies revealed that FOCAC has effectively reacted to these developments by focusing its tactics on emerging global and regional concerns. The pandemic highlighted the critical need for increasing emphasis on health cooperation, particularly the provision of medical supplies and vaccine distribution, indicating a shift towards meeting urgent health demands. Economic patterns have also shifted, with a greater emphasis on digital infrastructure and environmental projects that match with global recovery aspirations. Politically, the FOCAC has navigated new circumstances marked by rising nationalism and geopolitical upheavals, while maintaining its relevance through strategic bilateral and multilateral involvement.

Achievements of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) has provided various substantial benefits to both China and African countries. The benefits of FOCAC include increasing commerce and investment between China and African states. Chinese investments in infrastructure, industry, and other industries have helped to boost Africa's economic growth and development. FOCAC has supported key infrastructure projects in Africa, including as roads, trains, ports, and energy. These initiatives promote connectivity, trade, and regional integration.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is an important achievement here. FOCAC supports China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by encouraging infrastructural connectivity, trade and investment. FOCAC supports capacity building and human resource development through educational exchanges, scholarships, and training programs. This enables African professionals to learn skills and knowledge, hence promoting human capital development. FOCAC offers scholarships to African students to study in China. FOCAC has promoted collaboration in healthcare, illness prevention, and research. China has contributed medical supplies, equipment, and knowledge to tackle diseases such as malaria and Ebola. China assists African countries in building healthcare facilities, educating medical workers, and combatting diseases. China provides debt reduction and concessional loans to African countries to promote economic stability and sustainable growth. FOCAC promotes cultural exchange, tourism, and mutual understanding among Chinese and African residents. China supports peacekeeping activities in Africa.

Criticism of The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

FOCAC has had a considerable impact on Sino-African ties, promoting economic cooperation and infrastructure development throughout the continent. However, its future viability will be determined by how it addresses complaints about debt sustainability, transparency, and equal benefit distribution. Despite its successes, FOCAC has received criticism, particularly for the sustainability and transparency of Chinese investments in Africa.

Critics believe that Chinese loans frequently result in unsustainable debt levels in African countries, jeopardising long-term economic stability (Brautigam, 2020). Concerns have been raised concerning the lack of transparency and accountability in the implementation of FOCAC projects, which some researchers fear may compound Africa's corruption and governance difficulties (Nyadera & Bincof, 2021). Furthermore, FOCAC has been chastised for prioritising Chinese interests above those of African countries, notably in the extraction of natural resources (Odoom, 2023). This disparity has sparked controversy regarding the genuine benefits of FOCAC for Africa, with some advocating for a more balanced and fair cooperation.

Many have criticized China's inconsistent financial contribution during FOCAC meetings. For example, the \$40 billion contribution revealed during the eighth FOCAC was viewed as inadequate when contrasted to the \$60 billion pledged in 2018, this drop represents a deterioration in the China-Africa relationship as a result of Covid-19 and concerns about unsafe lending practices (Scarfe, 2021). While African countries' debt-to-GDP ratios are still relatively modest, the narrative remains. Critics worry that China's lending methods could result in unsustainable debt burdens for African economies (Scarfe, 2021).

There has been argument that FOCAC is dominated by China, leaving little room for African agency. While efforts are made to portray FOCAC as a collaborative effort, issues persist concerning how much influence African countries genuinely have in forging ties at this political level (Ideas, 2021). While China gains from access to African markets and resources, Taylor (2010) raises concerns about whether African countries receive equitable benefits in exchange. Although FOCAC encourages infrastructure development in Africa, there are concerns regarding the quality and sustainability of some projects. There has been suggestion that the emphasis should move from quantity to securing long-term benefits and local capacity building (Taylor 2010).

What Nigeria stands to gain as a member of FOCAC

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) provides major benefits to Nigeria in a variety of sectors, including improved economic, political, and strategic status, as well as assistance in navigating recent global issues. Economically, FOCAC has helped to reshape Nigeria's landscape through greater commerce, investment, and infrastructure development.

Chinese investments in critical infrastructure projects such as roads, trains, and energy have addressed pressing development requirements while also contributing to economic growth. These initiatives not only increase Nigeria's internal connection, but also help to develop trade links with other countries, increasing exports and diversifying trade goods. Furthermore, these investments have produced jobs and boosted local economies, helping to reduce poverty and promote long-term development.

On the political and strategic level, FOCAC is an important diplomatic weapon for Nigeria, allowing it to improve relationships with China while maintaining a balanced engagement with other global powers. Aligning with China provides Nigeria with a strategic partner who supports its development aspirations based on non-interference and mutual respect, so counterbalancing Western influence. China's emphasis on obtaining critical resources from Nigeria, such as oil and minerals, ensures ongoing economic engagement and investment, strengthening the connection. This partnership also strengthens Nigeria's geopolitical influence, allowing it to take a more prominent role in global forums and talks, thereby furthering its national objectives on the international stage.

In light of recent global developments, like as the COVID-19 epidemic and evolving international trade policies, FOCAC has exhibited adaptability, which has been critical for Nigeria. The forum's enhanced emphasis on health cooperation, particularly medical aid and vaccine delivery, has been critical in assisting Nigeria in meeting the problems posed by the epidemic, building its healthcare system, and preparing for future health emergencies. Furthermore, FOCAC's transition towards increasing local manufacturing capabilities and decreasing reliance on global supply chains is consistent with Nigeria's aims of economic diversification and self-reliance, ensuring that its collaboration with China continues in an everchanging global environment.

In essence, FOCAC's engagement with Nigeria has produced significant economic benefits, strengthened political and strategic relationships, and offered crucial support in responding to global crises. Nigeria has benefited significantly from its membership in the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). Nigeria's membership in the FOCAC has accelerated economic growth, infrastructure development, and human capacity building. Nigeria's engagement in FOCAC has resulted in greater commerce and FDI. According to available data, foreign direct investment in Nigeria increased considerably, hitting \$19.27 billion in 2019. This is a huge growth from the limited connections established in 1971, when diplomatic relations were first established.

FOCAC has also encouraged economic cooperation, corporate partnership, and investment prospects between China and Nigeria. FOCAC has greatly improved Nigeria's infrastructure. Notable developments include the Abuja-Kaduna railway line, which has improved the country's transport infrastructure. Other infrastructure advancements aided Nigeria's growth and development. FOCAC has helped Nigeria strengthen its human capital, through training programs, scholarships, and capacity-building initiatives that have benefited Nigerian professionals and students. These strategies contribute to the development of a skilled workforce and promote long-term growth. FOCAC has also assisted Nigeria in tackling important issues in power, transportation, agriculture, and humanitarian aid. Chinese assistance has been instrumental in bridging infrastructural gaps and enhancing critical services.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Finally, I believe that the Forum on China-Africa collaboration (FOCAC) is an important forum for promoting shared prosperity, development, and collaboration between China and Africa. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is also critical for developing a partnership that benefits both China and Africa while encouraging cooperation, progress, and shared prosperity. Although the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has yielded good outcomes, there are growing concerns about China's actual objectives; yet, it remains an

important arena for cooperation between China and African countries. It is critical that these criticisms are addressed in order to foster a more equal and beneficial relationship between China and Africa.

To better line with global and regional trends, FOCAC's strategies should prioritise improving health cooperation frameworks and increasing infrastructure, pandemic response, and immunisation access by investing in digital infrastructure and green technology and by supporting African regional integration activities that aim to improve FOCAC projects and promote economic and infrastructure development. While FOCAC has successfully responded to recent global changes, further strategic and policy adjustments are required to maximise its impact and handle new problems. By concentrating on health cooperation, digital and green technologies, and inclusive involvement, FOCAC can continue to play an important role in boosting Sino-African relations.

To boost bilateral and international cooperation through FOCAC, I recommend strengthening bilateral agreements to target specific African nations' needs and ambitions, allowing for more tailored and effective engagement. Regular assessments of FOCAC policies and strategies should promote more inclusive multilateral collaborations with a broader range of stakeholders, including regional organisations and civil society, to ensure that they are responsive to changing global dynamics and emergent concerns.

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