

CHINA DJIBOUTI STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP THROUGH BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE: GEOSTRATEGIC VIEWPOINT

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Abstract

This article aims to explain the effect of increasing threats to strategic changes in China's foreign policy. In order to protect its interests abroad, the strategic partnership with Djibouti is an effort made by China on the African continent. The Strategic Partnership between the two countries is seen as a vehicle for foreign policy goals in the form of cooperation with an interdependence pattern. This study uses secondary data through literature study with official documents from the official websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Djibouti as well as online data searches. The author uses qualitative research methods that refer to the concept of strategic partnership and the theory of interdependence. As a foreign policy instrument, strategic partnerships are able to support the demands of global dynamics and fulfill China's interests in the global sphere. This study finds that the strategic partnership with Djibouti is the first step in increasing the global integration of the African continent towards China

Keywords: China, Cooperation, Djibouti, Interdependence, Strategic Partnership

INTRODUCTION

Djibouti is a country located in eastern Africa with barren land and few natural resources and has only an insignificant role in global governance. Djibouti is surrounded by conflicting countries but has a fairly strategic bargaining value. Bordered by Ethiopia to west and south, Eritrea to north, Somalia to southeast, Djibouti's eastern maritime borders are The Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. Between Yemen and Djibouti located 19km-wide Bab el Mandeb Strait. The Strait passes through more than 4.8 million barrels per day of crude oil and refined oil products. (Daly, 2018)

Djibouti's location at the tip of the Horn of Africa facilitates accessed to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait connecting to Mediterranean sea with Red Sea and Suez Canal to the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. Those lines are the most important lines in the world. Every 8–9% of the world's international trade and 4.8 million barrels of crude oil (2.5% of the global total) passes through the Red Sea every day. As it becomes the gateway (Erica Downs, 2017) from Red Sea to Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, it is becoming important for foreign military bases increasingly. The country was home to the U.S.-Horn of Africa Command (CJTF-HOA) Joint Task Force based at Camp Lemonnier. Djibouti support facilities for operation of

multinational anti-piracy in the coast of Somalia and hosts a French military presence. In 2015, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) opened a liaison office in Djibouti. The goal is to increase regional anti-piracy efforts. China opened its first overseas military base in 2017 (Collins, 2019).

With limited resources, small industry and barren land, Djibouti's economy relies heavily on trade and services sector through international investment complex. The important source of income are revenues and rents from foreign militaries. As such, The country has an agenda of transformation into commercial trading center for wider territory. Ethiopia, a country with population more than 100 million people, has no ports, so it depend on Djibouti for 90% of its official trade. With China's new railway facility among two countries, the development of China's relations with Djibouti has many aspects. From major investments of infrastructure to the establishment of naval bases in the country, China's development of relations has become more diversified. As it holds the majority of Djibouti's external debt, China considers the country part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also known as One Belt One Road (OBOR), with the purpose to connect with countries with China's global trade routes (Collins, 2019).

China's BRI is part of President Xi Jinping's most serious economic and foreign policies. The purpose of wisdom is to empower Beijing's economic leadership through an extensive infrastructure development program across neighboring China. (Cai, 2017). BRI is dividing 2 routes in its initiative, namely the land route (Silk Road Economic Belt) and the sea / maritime route (21'st Century Maritime Silk Road). The main goal of the implementation of BRI in the 21st century (Cai, 2017) is to open cooperative relations with various countries that can help it in carrying out this major project, one of which is Djibouti.

From a geostrategic point of view Djibouti is an attractive place for China to expand its power to the Horn of Africa country. Construction of commercial port in a partnership between the government of Djibouti and China began on 2012. Djibouti has been a target for Chinese investment since the 2000s. This target was targeted after President Xi Jinping took power in 2012. Xi inaugurated the BRI the following year. The relationship among China and Djibouti is a sample of how Beijing gain benefit from global infrastructure of

investment strategy (BRI) to nurture economic power and cement as Africa's best investor — a top priority of geopolitics, with a rapidly growing economy and population. In 2014, Government of China signed a defense agreement with Djibouti. Two years later, China began building "support facilities" in Djibouti rest and naval supplies. Foreign minister of Djibouti stated that China taken 10-year contract worth \$20 million per year with many facilities that accommodate "several thousands" personnel (France, 2021) (Cabestan, 2019).

Besides strategic value of land as military base lease, according to the IMF 2016, (IMF, 2016) Djibouti's economic growth is very high and sustainable (growth that does not fall below 6% in its projections for 2019) and foreign investment makes Djibouti economically attractive. Nonetheless, emphasis is placed on fact that the unemployment rate (which stands at 48%) and extreme poverty (suffered by about 22% of the population) are the two biggest challenges to the country's economic well-being.

The BRI has also implemented closer political relations between the two countries through a direct meeting of the heads of state of China and Djibouti in 2017. In the meeting produced an agreement to build a strategic partnership. On September 2, 2018, Djibouti officially became a partner of BRI (Dutton, 2014). Djibouti's relation to major global shipping lanes create it as strategic location for China.

Djibouti and the World: Geostrategic Interests

Djibouti's geostrategic importance can be seen from location of the country. Djibouti is one of the "guardian" countries of Bab el Mandeb Strait, with the trade in hydrocarbons and oil as its lifeblood. Most of the trade among the China, European Union, India, Japan, and other Asian countries passes through the strait in addition to 30% of oil — including natural gas from the Persian Gulf — heading to the West, calculated 3.8 million barrels per day (Mountain, 2011). Although these figures are not comparable to the Strait of Hormuz or Malacca (17 and 15.2 million barrels respectively), the Bab el Mandeb Strait has an advantage in the fastest route so the collapse or closure of those lines will drive up prices. Another route is Cape of Good Hope which will make the price very expensive. This is what makes Djibouti's stability indispensable for the sake of price stability on the world stage.

Djibouti is the main gateway to East Africa and COMESA (Common Market for East and South Africa), a customs union comprising 20 countries and about 500 million inhabitants. The exponential increase in trade between member states and the high birth rate in the region make COMESA one of the largest projected markets in the world. Djibouti thanks to its geographical location can be an exit and entry for exports and imports for South Sudan, Uganda or the Democratic Republic of Congo that do not have sea access.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Strategic Partnership

The first Strategic Partnerships were established in early 1990s. It was a period characterized by increased economic, technological, and person-to-person exchanges. In an estimated decade after end of the cold war, impact of globalization underscores importance of upholding international rules and principles governing state access to international organizational regimes. This allowed for a thaw in relations between countries as the ideological stalemate of the Cold War slowly ensued. Finally, emerging powers desire to be part of the world community and influence the new world order.

According to Anna Michalski, (Michalski, 2019), Strategic partnership is defined as a special form of bilateral engagement between two actors in international system. The goal of strategic partnerships is to create perfect bilateral relations. When state and non-state actors are formed, these partnerships contain a number of goals that are not mutually exclusive, such as shaping the international environment through the projection of world norms and views, achieving material or immaterial foreign policy goals, as well as the realization of goals related to international positions. actors through enhancing their international status and reputation (Michalski, 2019).

Strategic partnerships are formed through the initiatives of dominant actors with specific objectives. The hidden aim of the partnership may be to create informal alliances with like-minded countries to reinforce a particular worldview, or to strengthen regional organizations. Strategic partnerships formed among more equal partners, whether good or evil, often have the primary objective of managing bilateral relations. In dynamic of world

order, the goal of strategic partnerships can be achieved by establishing a framework for diplomatic engagement through structures for information exchange and problem solve.

The establishment of strategic partnerships with international organizations and other countries around the world is part of strategy to meet foreign policy objectives. These objectives relate to position of actors in international system such as spreading values and norms, recognizing world views and achieving international roles and strengthening international ones, standing and prestige. Thus, strategic partnerships can be understood as places, or privileged settings where actors engage in persuasion, or other types of social interactions. It can be understood as a tool used to pursue the interests of ideas, materials, or strategies.

Strategic partnerships are divided into several categories. This category makes it possible to identify the various objectives and functions underlying the strategic partnership: (Michalski, 2019)

- Strategic partnerships in replacement alliances, which are formed as a new type of alliance (not very demanding) between actors who share the same tendencies or ideologies to enhance existing state coalitions with the specific aim of strengthening the worldview or international position.
- Strategic partnerships as tools for foreign policy objectives are formed to achieve certain material foreign policy objectives that are strategic, social or economic with antagonistic or friendly partners.
- Strategic partnerships as places that shape the environment to achieve goals, as spreading good principles, norms, and worldviews to shape international environment.
- Strategic partnerships as an arena in enhancing roles are formed to respond certain ambitions regarding the standing of actors in the international system. This is certainly related to non-material interests, such as status, prestige, and identity.

Geostrategy

Geostrategy is the direction of a country's foreign wisdom, an effort by projecting military power and directing diplomatic activities due to geopolitical factors, geographical

factors, interest groups, ideological reasons, or simply the wishes of its leaders. Changes in the geographical component are very slow; Geopolitical change is faster. However, changes in geostrategic problems are much faster and may occur within weeks or months. Geopolitical changes have a direct and indirect impact on the geostrategic context, and may be pushing towards geostrategic change. On the other hand, changes in geostrategic context have a direct impact on geopolitical issues, and pave the way for changes in the internal components of the state. Poor understanding of geostrategic changes and underestimating these changes can lead to sudden or unexpected geopolitical consequences. (Grygiel, 2006)

Grygiel also says geostrategic is related to: (Grygiel, 2006). (1) strategy, including: projection of military strength, presence, strategic planning, prediction of military power, security of military assets, warships, military bases/bases; (2) national goals and will achieve these goals; (3) foreign policy, outward outlook; (4) deliberation of geographical factors on politic in terms of communication lines, strategic position, lynchpin state, and strength of regional resources; (5) pattern of change; (6) being offensively aggressive; and (7) geopolitics sub-sector.

Geostrategy is combined with considerations of geopolitical strategic so that military role is always there. This strategy is using military force to attain goals of public policy. But, geostrategy is not always connect to geopolitical and geographical factors because based on ideology, group, or leader reasons. Geostrategy is the foreign policy of a country that is influenced by strategic considerations and geopolitics. (Lanfranchi, 2021)

In addition, Brzezinski said that good geostrategic players are countries which have national capacity. they will train influence or power beyond their borders to change geopolitical situation. They have fluctuating geopolitical tendencies or potency. For whatever reason—looking for ideological fulfillment, national greatness, economic expansion or religious messianism; some countries seek global standing or regional dominance (Brzezinski, 1997).

Horn Africa located in an important geostrategic position. The waters of the African region have had rapid naval connections between the Middle East, Euro-Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and eastern Africa since opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. It has been estimated that 10 to 20 percent of global trade today – including more than 6 million barrels of oil per day - there are transits along the coast of the Horn of Africa. This makes region a major geostrategic center for global countries. A large number of external players are active in the Horn of Africa. This is due to the interesting position of the horn of Africa, followed by political, economic, and security considerations. This rift between geopolitics and local politics is particularly evident in the experiences of Somalia and Djibouti. On the one hand, the geostrategic positions of these two countries on the coast of the Horn of Africa have historically attracted many foreign players who have greatly influenced the local political landscape. On the other hand, local political actors have taken their struggles to regional and global levels by leveraging foreign support for the group's benefit. The external players involved in the Horn of Africa, make this region to smooth their own interests. Thus, the development of alliances with local political actors is used, through the placement of representatives in a wider international competition. (Lanfranchi, 2021)

Figure 1 - Location of the Horn of Africa



Source: <https://thearabweekly.com/geostrategic-position-draws-foreign-powers-djibouti>

For a century after Napoleon's inauguration, Europe pursued "African Encroachment." After the second world war, political sovereignty was delegated to 54 countries from Egypt to South Africa to all of Africa, foreign countries tried to maintain their military access and economic influence (Daly, 2018). Djibouti was valued for its geostrategic position.

Globalization has not eased geostrategic concerns because trade occurs by sea, air, and land. Instead, globalization is pushing to protect profits and trade deals. For example, "about 40% of China's imported oil goes to the Northwest through Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz". Stability of this sea lane is very important for the economies of China and other countries in Asia and Europe. Therefore, it is very important for Tiongkok to monitor and protect and patrol these routes. This makes China a major power in territory and plays a vital role in shaping the region's geostrategy. Global powers not only have indirect effects on the geopolitics of local countries, but they also have a direct effect in some cases. (Khalil, 2013)

Belt and Road Initiative

BRI of China is one of President Xi's economic and foreign policies. The purpose of BRI is to increase Beijing's economic leadership through an extensive infrastructure development program across neighboring China. Some of motives behind the BRI by China's pressing economic concerns. One of BRI's main goals (Cai, 2017) is to overcome China's deepening regional differences as modernization of economy. Beijing hopes transnational infrastructure development program will cause growth in China's seat belts and underdeveloped hinterlands. This initiative resulted in a heavy domestic focus. Government of China will use BRI as a platform to resolve the country's chronic overcapacity (Cai, 2017).

President Xi Jinping announced BRI (OBOR). Xi's vision is an infrastructure development program that connects China's less developed border areas with neighboring countries. BRI is one of the largest development plans in modern history (Cai, 2017).

China's purpose connecting the country's backward hinterland to Europe via Central Asia on land. The route is dubbed The Silk Road Economic Belt. The second plan is building a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road was linking Asia territory to China's southern provinces through the development of rail and port facilities (Cai, 2017).

Figure 2- One Belt One Road Route



Source: https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2016_14.

Xi has launched the BRI when China's foreign policy is becoming overbearing. (Johnson., 2016). It means that the BRI emerged as more geopolitical plan than an economy. The focus on the geopolitics dimension of the BRI obscures its main geoeconomic drivers, particularly with changes in China's domestic industrial policy. (Johnson., 2016).

This new and more active of China's policy has strengthen perception that BRI was driven by broader geostrategic objectives. Several elements of BRI are consistent with this goal. The main example is on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It was regarded as one of BRI's flagship projects. The project was supported by Islamabad and Beijing. The proposed corridor could link Gwadar Port in Baluchistan province with Kashgar in Xinjiang in China's far west. These ports can be used as transshipment points for China's energy supply given the port's proximity to the Persian Gulf. Thus, the distribution of goods does not need to pass through the Malacca Strait in Southeast Asia (Banerjee., 2016).

In addition, China uses the BRI to demand it's regional leadership through an extensive economic integration program. The goal is to make a regional production chain where China will become advanced manufacturing and innovation hub as well as a standard maker. The main objectives of BRI in terms of economic development in general are; (Cai, 2017)

1. encourage regional development in China by integrating with neighboring economies
2. improving Chinese industry while exporting Chinese standards

3. resolving the problem of overcapacity.

OBOR was officially included in national economic development strategy of China in Central Economic Work Conference in 2014. At conference, Beijing announced three regional development plans, one of which was OBOR. This regional development plan is designed to overcome big problem of uneven development in China. The gap among the inland west and the more prosperous east coast states was major challenge for China. For example, the coastal mega-metropolis of Shanghai is five times richer than the inland province of Gansu which was part of the old Silk Road (Yifei., 2016).

Beijing will try a diverse approach to reviving these backward provinces. BRI has been praised as one of the main solutions. The reasons of economic behind it are simple; Instead of the central government giving these provinces more money, it is better to integrate them into the regional economy.

METHOD

The research design is a descriptive research using qualitative research approach that uses a literature review to explore data and facts. The literature review assists in problem analysis, analytical philosophical support, and information. This information comes from various publications such as books, official news outlets, and interviews, the author then concludes by elaborating and reinterpreting the text that has been analyzed. This study described the geostrategic viewpoint of China Djibouti strategic partnership focuses on BRI. In study, data analysis is more focused on data collection, processing, and analysis in the field. The stages of data analysis follow the process of reduction, verification, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

China-Djibouti Strategic Partnership

China established official relations with Djibouti in 1979, two years after the country's independence from French rule. Over the next three decades, the two countries had limited economic and military ties, Chinese construction companies built several government buildings, stadiums, and schools in Djibouti City and senior military leaders

from the two countries rarely held exchanges. Since the late 1990s, as political and economic partnerships between Addis Ababa and Beijing grow, China's presence in Djibouti has gradually increased. (Peace., 2020) (Cabestan, 2019)

The strategic partnership between China and Djibouti started in 2015 when the two countries signed an agreement to build a port in Djibouti which would be China's first military base outside its territory. The port, known as Doraleh Port, is now managed by a Chinese company and is the region's main transport and logistics hub. Since then, relations between the two countries have grown closer. China is also building a military base near the port which hosts thousands of troops and serves as an operations center for China's maritime operations in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea regions.

Apart from that, in the economic sector, China is the main investor in Djibouti by building important infrastructure in the country, including roads, railways and power plants. China is also expanding its presence in the trade, energy and telecommunications sectors. In general, a strategic partnership is a partnership that goes beyond a business contract and includes a long-term commitment between two or more parties. This involves exchanging resources, technology and knowledge, and strengthening each party's position in the global market. Strategic partnerships can also help increase efficiency and profits, expand the range of products or services, and strengthen competitiveness in global markets.

In the context of relations between China and Djibouti, this strategic partnership can provide benefits for both parties. China can take advantage of Djibouti's strategic location to develop its presence in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea regions and expand its interests in Africa, while Djibouti can obtain investment and infrastructure support from China to develop the country's economy.

In general, the implementation of the strategic partnership between China and Djibouti can be explained below:

1. Port of Doraleh: This port was built by a Chinese company in 2017 and is the main port in Djibouti. This port is used by cargo ships connecting China and countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

2. Chinese military bases: China built a military base in Djibouti near the port of Doraleh in 2017. This military base is the center of China's maritime operations in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea regions and hosts thousands of troops.

3. Infrastructure projects: China has been building infrastructure projects in Djibouti, including roads and a rail link connecting Djibouti with neighboring Ethiopia. These projects are expected to improve connectivity between Djibouti and countries in the region.

4. Chinese investment: China has been a major investor in Djibouti. China has invested heavily in the energy, telecommunications and tourism sectors in Djibouti.

5. Economic partnership: The partnership between China and Djibouti also includes the economic sector, with China assisting Djibouti in economic development and creating new jobs. This partnership also opens opportunities for Djibouti to increase market access to China and countries in the region.

Overall, the implementation of the strategic partnership between China and Djibouti covers various fields, including economy, infrastructure and security. Chinese investment in Djibouti includes infrastructure projects, such as ports, airports, roads and railways, as well as energy, telecommunications and tourism projects.

The China Djibouti strategic partnership is the fulfillment of China's foreign policy in achieving its national interest in securing energy supplies and establishing a springboard in efforts to instill influence on the African continent through the BRI. Djibouti was chosen as the right location for China in an effort to increase its influence in the international world, especially in Africa, because of its strategic geopolitics and also as a gateway on the Red Sea. In general, China Djibouti's strategic partnership can be seen from the economic and defense security sectors.

China-Djibouti relations in economics

The construction of commercial ports began partnership with the government of Djibouti in 2012. Beijing has been targeting its investment in Djibouti since the 2000s, China

increased after Xi Jinping being a president in 2012. Then, he inaugurated BRI in following year. Relationship between Djibouti and China illustrates the way of Beijing used its BRI to grow up economic influence and cement its position as top investor in Africa - a top geopolitical priority, with a rapidly growing economy and population. (France, 2021)

The BRI make more political ties between two countries, with in 2017 China's head of state meeting with Djibouti's head of state resulting in an agreement to build a strategic partnership. Djibouti officially became a partner of BRI less than a year later, on September 2, 2018 (Dutton, 2014).

Djibouti's proximity to the main global shipping lane create strategic location for countries that have ambitions in global maritime. After signed defense agreement with Djibouti in 2014, two years later, China build "supporting facilities" in the region as a base for resting navy (Cabestan, 2019).

There was three major achievements under Xi Jinping. First, the multipurpose port of Doraleh; second, the railway line among Ethiopia and Djibouti; third, the gas pipeline among two countries. Djibouti also hosts the China-made International Free Trade Zone. Because of that, businesses can operate without paying any variety of tax. The \$3.5 billion Free Trade Zone project is expected to be the largest in Africa. (Cabestan, 2019)

Ethiopia depends on Djibouti to transit 90% from official trade, which was facilitated by new railroad track between two countries. This pathway was operated by two Chinese companies, partly funded by the Export-Import of the Bank of China. China spent \$ 14 billion in total for loans and investments for Djibouti between 2012 and 2020 (Cabestan, 2019).

Djibouti had planned position of a major container transshipment logistics center since 2008. The Djibouti Port and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA) opened the Port of Doraleh Container Terminal (DCT) and asked Dubai Ports World (DPW) that year, that has a 33.3% stake in it, to be managed. This predates the BRI but proclaims the idea that Djibouti is the gateway connecting Africa to global markets. (World, 2014)

The Djibouti government together with the World Bank launched the Djibouti 2035 vision in June 2014. Djibouti's vision is an ambitious plan to increase the growth of port

cities and turn it into Singapore in the Horn of Africa. In addition, Ismail Ommar Guelleh also supports China's offer of economic cooperation, because although he wants to make his country "Singapore in Africa", he has a (World, 2014) significant drawback because There is no country that is willing to fund a new train between Djibouti and Addis Ababa or multipurpose port. Or also, no one is willing to open a free trade zone next to the port. In other words, only China is willing to propose long-term partnership with Djibouti. (Soudan., 2017)

Djibouti is also a bridge to Inland African countries, including Ethiopia which is promising country economically. This is also what underlies China's close relationship with Djibouti.

Strategic Partnerships in Security and Defense Aspects

According to defensive logic, all countries form strategic partnerships because of their national interests according to Feng Zhongping and Huang Jing, as Vice President and Assistant Researcher of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). In addition, in china's Defense White Paper published from early 1998 to China's Defense White Paper 2019, China's observable interests are state security, state sovereignty, economic development, national reunification, and territorial integrity.

The 2015 China Defense White Paper officially mentioned China's ambitions for the open ocean. The document also highlights the intention to maintain "active defense" to achieve the "Chinese dream of the rejuvenation of the nation," a metaphor for China's revival as a rich country and a global power (China T. S., 2019). There are several things that underlie China in waiting for military bases in Djibouti , including:

First, its geostrategic location is asset of China's most important economic interests. A significant percentage of Beijing's trading with European Union is worth more than \$1 billion a day, passing through the Gulf of Aden, and 40% of China's total oil imports pass through the Indian Ocean. Djibouti controls access to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, (Igbinoba, 2016) then connecting The Horn of Africa, the Persian Gulf, and Europe. It

located at the Red Sea estuary made Djibouti as an ideal transshipment center. (Hossain, 2016)

Therefore, China firmly protects this path from various threats such as piracy which can destabilize economic activity. Building a military base in Djibouti will make it easier for the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in its operations because of its close and complete supply of logistics hubs for the operating fleet. In addition, Djibouti is an ideal base for conducting non-combatant evacuation operations such as when China used the country to evacuate its foreigners and citizens in April 2015 from Yemen. (Panda, 2015)

Second, China's economic engagement with all countries in the world continues to increase, where various strategies are being pursued by the Beijing government to develop its economic power, one of which is the entry of the Djibouti region as the Maritime Silk Road. Djibouti is an ideal place to be included in the BRI, China's base in Djibouti will allow increased trade through the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, then make country increasingly important for successful implementation of BRI connecting Europe and Africa with Asia.

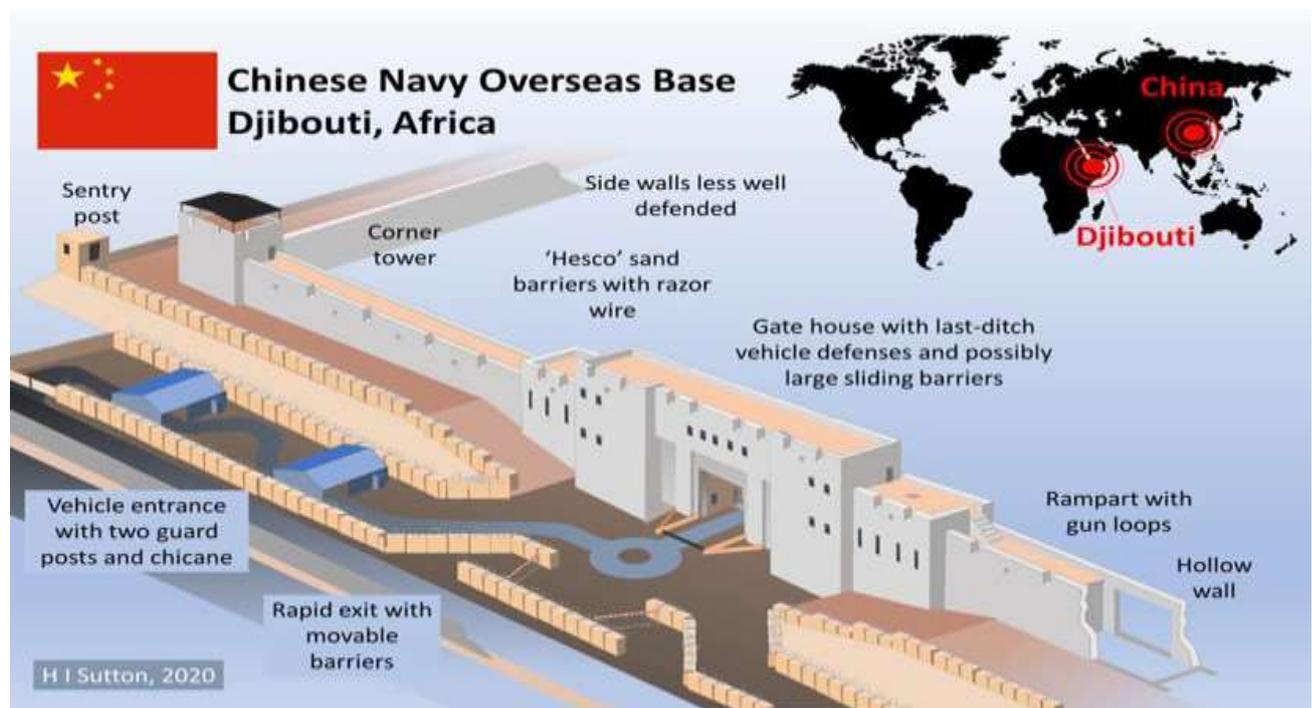
The military base in Djibouti can protect Chinese companies including those on the African continent with approximately 10,000 companies involved in various projects. On a larger scale, T-1's stake in Africa is huge with many of them extracting enormous resources on the continent in addition to infrastructure and manufacturing. (Rajaram, 2017)

The presence of Chinese military bases will allow Beijing to respond more to more proactive to each regional crisis or changes in security that developed around the Africa, Middle East, and Europe. Military presence of China in Djibouti allows Beijing to deploy its air and naval assets, so as to bolster its intelligence to conduct non-combatant evaluation operations, counter-piracy and counter-terrorism operations. (Chaziza, 2018). Countries deemed important to protect the country are likely to be China's strategic partners.

Djibouti is positioned in the maritime trade route which is important for the Chinese economy strategically. Considering that Djibouti's history has accommodated other external military power and was involved in a military base diplomacy, this was a logical consequence for Beijing to develop the military in territory. Beijing announced establishment of the

Chinese military base in Djibouti officially in November 2015, then opened in August 2017. The establishment of this military base is based on need to protect their interests in the region.

Figure 3- China's Military Base



Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hisutton/2020/05/15/chinas-new-fortress-near-the-middle-east-and-indian-ocean/?sh=3c33c9f94066>

China tries to present appropriate military power in line with strong political and economic developments on the global stage. The construction of a military base in Djibouti is a sign of fundamental change in Beijing's Security and Foreign Policy. The policy of China (Erica Downs, 2017) of non-intervention is in line with Beijing's principle of opposing and criticizing concept of military bases on foreign soil as neocolonialistic and hegemonic effects. The Chinese government has used flexible approach to traditional non-intervention principles over two decades ago, along with the development of foreign interests. By strengthening economic involvement in Africa, China is recognizing the difficulties in keeping its country's distance from regional conflicts with closely related political and economic issues. (China T. S., 2019)

Beijing was be careful in supervising the military base in Djibouti with logistic support to aid Tio's ability to carry out its overseas missions. The facility served as a resting and recovery site for Chinese troops as well as ship maintenance and repair. However, placing the base in Djibouti is not solely due to logistical needs for the PLA, but also signals China's increased military power in Africa and securitization of the BRI (Cabestan, 2019) (Dutton, 2014).

Logistics support bases are used to support Chinese anti-piracy operations in Aden Bay. Along with that, the number of PLA personnel participated in the Mission of the UN Peace and Humanity Mission in the Middle East and Africa since 2015. Djibouti's military base construction also reflects important changes in Beijing's foreign and security policies to protect maritime strategic interests and the Sea Communication Line (SLOC) through a military presence abroad. Such changes have been hinted at in several official Beijing publications in recent years most notably in a 2015 defense white paper stating that China needs to develop the structure of modern maritime military power that is in line with national security and development interests. China also needs to maintain national maritime and sovereignty interests, while also protecting the security of strategic SLOCs and foreign interests, as well as participating in international maritime cooperation. White Books encourage supporting strategy for China to strengthen itself as a maritime force (China T. S., 2015).

To overcome weaknesses in overseas support and operations, China is building far-sea power, developing overseas logistics facilities, and enhancing its ability to accomplish diverse military tasks. The PLA maintains strategic SLOCs security, conducts ship protection operations, and conducts overseas maritime rights protection and evacuation operations (China T. S., 2019). China's decision to nurture military foothold in Djibouti demonstrates the country's focus on its long-term global security interests and its intention to adjust its growing global influence and economic footprint to its expanding presence and power projection capabilities.

The reason that China to expand a strategic partnership with Djibouti is as a form of urgency to security and defense of China's foreign interests. China's urgency indirectly

implemented through the construction of first military base in Djibouti. Economic growth of China has resulted in country having to increase its strength as a protection of its interests due to the impending threat both externally and internally. The construction of military bases has shown that China has exercised protection for China's foreign commercial activities.

The partnership built by China gives rise to goals that are actually interrelated, both in material and non-material terms. But China's goals are inseparable from its Foreign Policy which is also stated in the China Defense White Paper, as well as the implementation of its national interests both economically and in China's security defense. The strategic partnership between China and Djibouti is a long-term interest that China has formulated based on the strategic goals it will achieve.

The author sees that the partnership built by China with countries, especially with Djibouti, is a form of relationship that underlies China's interests over its country's goals. China's major project is a response to China's continued development of the relationship China has built with various countries to establish a world order that is more in line with its long-term interests. Strategic partnerships are also built on the belief that long-term cooperation will effectively facilitate its implementation.

CONCLUSION

Global dynamics also change a country's foreign policy in the international arena. Competition and cooperation have become an unavoidable problem in the international system. China is building partnerships with several countries including countries in the African region that have the resources to meet China's domestic interests. Djibouti is a country that has fewer resources than countries in the African region able to grasp the opportunity. China's strategic partnership Djibouti can also be seen in construction of Beijing's military base in Djibouti built on basis of various interests, one of which is the protection of the far sea which was also contained in China's Defense White Paper in 2015. China was building a strategic partnership with Djibouti with strategic objectives in the economic and defense spheres. With this goal, China's vision in realizing the Chinese Dream

is also implemented on BRI with improved relations to form a strategic partnership, which is usually preceded when the two countries already have opportunities for cooperation in various fields.

The expansion of strategic partnership between Djibouti and China also creates a pattern of interdependence. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye state that the theory of interdependence can simply be understood as a reciprocal relationship or interdependence relationship with each other in international relations. Interdependence is also an interdependence if it brings weakness of each country to the comparative advantages of society. This is reflected in the author's analysis of the China-Djibouti Interdependence, in which the two countries create a pattern of interdependence. China has taken an important step in global integration, the mutual relations established with Djibouti have been ongoing since the issuance of its Agreement between The Government of The People's Republic of China and The Government of The Republic of Djibouti on The Promotion and Protection of Investments in 2003. (UNCTAD, 2013) In addition, China and Djibouti are also involved \$3.5 billion Djibouti International Free Trade Zone (DIFTZ) officially launched in July 2018 which is also part of the BRI.

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