



## Evaluation of China's Foreign Aid Policy to Africa through Islamic Perspective

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the discussion of evaluating foreign aid policies implemented by China to Africa using an Islamic perspective. In practice, China has several motives in its foreign aid policy such as natural resources, political and economic motives. This study uses a qualitative approach by using literature as the source. This study found that the concept of foreign aid applied by China has a fundamental difference with the concept of aid in the Islamic perspective. The difference lies in three main things, namely the intention, form, and motive of assistance. The intention of the assistance provided by China is of interest while Islam is more on the pleasure of God. The form of aid distributed by China is material, while in Islam it is both material and non-material. The motive for the assistance carried out by China is based on the interests of natural resources, politics, and the economy, while in Islam it is more on humanism, karamah al-insan (glorifying humans), ukhwah basyariyah (solidarity).

**Keywords:** *Foreign Aid; China; Africa; Ta'awun; Islamic Perspective*

### **Introduction**

Foreign aid is one of the most common instruments used by international actors – in this case the state – to realize their foreign policy goals (Lengauer, 2011). Many foreign aid practices have been carried out, especially since the end of World War II. Foreign aid itself has several forms such as money, goods and services, military and food. The most commonly used forms are money and goods and services, while the most recent foreign aid innovations are military and food aid. In recent years, countries classified as 'the economic power shift' such as China, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Korea, India and Brazil have paid a lot of attention to the development of foreign aid in the international arena. The reason is that some of these actors tend to change the foreign aid system from the previous pattern. In this case, donors have been able to increase the volume of their assistance to the 'least developed countries' of their choice without any of the donors belonging to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The People's Republic of China (PRC, China) is one of the most prominent in this donor pool (Lengauer, 2011).

China itself first provided foreign aid in the early 1950s, to North Korea to support reconstruction after the Korean War and then to Vietnam and other recently decolonized neighbors in the South and Southwest, to ensure independence and develop friendly relations (Lin, The Foreign Aid Policy of the

People's Republic of China: A Theoretical Analysis, 1993). Cambodia, Nepal, and Egypt were the first non-communist countries to receive foreign aid from China in 1956 (Bartke, 1989).

Basically, China's foreign aid policy is used to support its political and economic interests in the destination country or region. First, China's economic interests through foreign aid policies can be seen from its need for large resources. China has surpassed the United States as the world's largest energy consumer. China has been importing clean oil since 1993 because it cannot rely on domestic oil and gas reserves (Lengauer, 2011). In addition, mineral and agricultural resources are also important for China's continued development. Therefore, the need for resources is one of China's motives for investing in developing countries that are rich in fossil fuels and other natural resources.

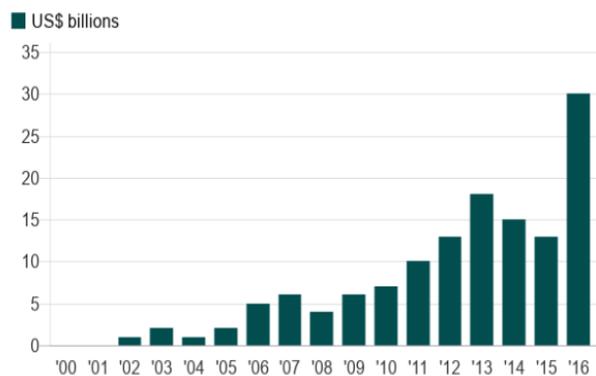
Second, China's political motives through foreign aid policies can be seen as an important instrument of China's diplomacy. This can be traced in the opening of the English and Chinese versions of the White Paper on Foreign Aid which states that,

*Through foreign aid, China has consolidated friendly relations and economic and trade cooperation with other developing countries (Fuhcs & Rudyak, 2017).*

Since then, Beijing has increasingly provided assistance in the form of infrastructure projects, technical and public health assistance and scholarships to enable students from recipient countries to study in China. In 2000 the China-Africa Cooperation Forum (FOCAC) was formed in Beijing during a China summit meeting with leaders of 43 African countries. FOCAC is a comprehensive effort initiated by China to build mutually beneficial economic, development, trade and political relations with Africa rooted in the principle of South-South cooperation (Dambisa, 2010). Currently aid to Africa accounts for about one-third to one-half of China's total aid (De Haan, 2011).

Africa can be considered to be a region that gets serious attention by China in terms of foreign aid. In the China-Africa summit meeting in Beijing in 2006, for example, China promised to provide assistance amounting to US\$ 5 billion and signed an agreement to reschedule or write off debts from more than 30 African countries (Bbc News, 2009). This figure increased in 2007 and peaked in 2016.

Picture 1. China's Annual Loan to Africa (2000-2016)



Source: Bbc News

Referring to the NYU Wagner School's research on Chinese foreign aid which was reported in 62 African, Latin American and Southeast Asian countries between 2001 and 2008, it was found that China's foreign aid totaled up to \$25 billion. Of this, \$16.6 billion, or 66%, was provided in loans (concessional loans or lines of credit), \$7.2 billion, or 29%, representing state-sponsored investments, and the remaining 5% including grants, debt cancellations and debt relief (Lum, Fischer, Gomez-Granger, & Leland, China's Foreign Aid Activities in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, 2009). It should be underlined that free foreign aid only reaches 5% of the total allocation of foreign aid.

Tabel 1. Reported PRC Foreign Aid by Funding Source per Million Dollar

Funding Source	Africa	Latin America	Southeast Asia
Govt.-Sponsored Investment	8,042	24,389	7,429
Concessional Loan	22,379	1,950	7,114
Grant	1,851	421	231
Debt Cancellation	850	0	60
In-kind Aid	21	1	0

Source: NYU Wagner School

This, according to the author, distinguishes it from the concept of aid in the Islamic perspective that the author will explain in the next section.

In Islam, the concept of foreign aid as it occurs between China and Africa is not explicitly mentioned. However, we can use the term ta'awun or help each other in the general sense ('am). The passage that explains this concept is surah Al maidah verse 2 which reads,

... وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ ...

Meaning: “And help one another in (doing) virtue and piety, and do not help one another in committing sins and transgressions. And keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is severe in punishment.”

Furthermore, the concept of foreign aid applied by China to Africa has a fundamental difference with the concept of foreign aid in the Islamic perspective. Ontologically, Islam views that ta'awun or helping is based on the principle of volunteerism. Islam does not recommend expecting rewards in the practice of ta'awun. In other words, the practice of ta'awun must be done with a sincere heart to simply benefit others. Departing from these differences, the authors are interested in further evaluating the foreign aid policy implemented by China using the Islamic point of view.

### Literatur Review

There are several literature sources that are used by the author to compare the research being studied with other sources that refer to the same research. The first study is the article "China's Foreign Aid Policy: Motive and Method" written by Sara Lengauer. This paper describes the motives of China's foreign aid to several regions such as East and Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In this study, at least it is stated that there are three main motives for Chinese foreign aid to recipient countries, namely economic, political, and ideological motives (Lengauer, 2011).

The second literature review is an article entitled "The Motives of China's Foreign Aid" written by Andreas Fuchs and Marina Rudyak from Heidelberg University. This paper tells a lot about the three motives that underlie China's foreign aid policy, namely political, economic, and humanitarian motives. On political motives, the Chinese government explicitly states that aid is a foreign policy tool that should help the country to create a favorable international environment in order to achieve global power status. Then on the economic motive, economic cooperation must be mutually beneficial in terms of Lastly,

China's foreign aid can also be understood as humanitarian aid. However, the portion of this humanitarian aid motive is very low when compared to other motives (Fuhcs & Rudyak, 2017).

Third, the article entitled "China's Foreign Aid Activities in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia". This article examines China's economic impact in three regions, namely Africa, Latin America (Western Hemisphere), and Southeast Asia with an emphasis on bilateral foreign aid (Lum, Fischer, Gomez-Granger, & Leland, China's Foreign Aid Activities in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, 2009).

Fourth, the journal article written by Chris Alden, "China in Africa". This paper explains that the drive to secure energy resources is the main motive behind Beijing's new engagement with Africa (Alden, China in Africa, 2006).

Fifth, a journal article written by Piet Konings, "China and Africa: Building a Strategic Partnership". This study seeks to explain China's renewed interest in Africa since the late 1980s. African interests in China complement much of the agenda promoted by Beijing. Government and business elites in Africa see new opportunities in China such as trade (growing Chinese market for African products) and investment opportunities, ways to enhance regime stability, and strategic partnerships (Konings, 2008).

Sixth, the article entitled "The Tenuous Hold of China Inc. in Africa" by Bates Gill and James Reilly. This article explains that China's interests in Africa lie not only in the aspect of natural resources but also in the political and business aspects. This article also reviews that Beijing's ability to rely on corporate agents to advance its interests will also be further reduced (Gill & Reilly, 2007).

Seventh, the article entitled "China's foreign aid system: structure, agencies, and identities" written by Denghua Zhang & Graeme Smith. This paper finds that China's aid system is characterized by fierce and ongoing competition among actors, particularly MOFCOM, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Ministry of Finance (MoF), as well as companies responsible for implementing Chinese aid projects (Zhang & Smith, 2017).

Eighth, a journal article written by Efem N. Ubi with the title "Foreign Aid and Development in Sino-African Relations". This article speaks of great optimism about the potential benefits of China-Africa aid cooperation despite the skepticism expressed by "Sino-skeptics or sinophobes." This belief stems from two things: first, because China, which shares a history of oppression and underdevelopment with Africa, sees itself in a better position to actually help Africa, and second, Africa has a lot to learn from China, namely the development experience (Ubi, 2014).

Ninth, the paper written by Naohiro Kitano and Yumiko Miyabayashi with the title "Estimating China's Foreign Aid: 2019-2020 Preliminary Figures". This paper presents revised and updated estimates of China's foreign aid. China's foreign aid on a grant-equivalent basis is estimated as the key figure from 2015 to 2019 and is projected for 2020. The 2020 projection also includes China's share of spending on its international cooperative response to the Covid-19 virus (Kitano & Miyabayashi, 2020).

Last but not the least, an article entitled "China, Africa and the International Aid Architecture" written by Deborah Bräutigam. The study found that China's regulatory practice of development aid and finance deviates from OECD standards and norms on transparency and definition, soft export credit management, and sovereign debt management (Bräutigam, 2010).

From several studies above, the author sees that there has not been a comprehensive discussion that evaluates China's foreign policy to Africa using a certain perspective. Therefore, this study will explain about the evaluation of China's foreign policy to Africa using an Islamic perspective.

## Research Methods

In this study, the author uses a qualitative method by focusing on the nature of the descriptive approach. This method was chosen because the author wants to explain the data in depth with elaboration of explanations without using numbers. In addition, the data collected is used to strengthen arguments and explain issues and phenomena that occur. This is done to find a strong relationship to this research so that the authors conduct text or document studies, observations of objects, news documentation and articles from various reliable sources. Many authors take data from journal articles indexed both internationally and nationally. The author also took data from websites such as BBC News and Mofcom.gov.

## Theoretical Framework the Concept of Ta'awun (Helping) in Islamic Perspective

The concept of helping (ta'awun) has been mentioned several times in the Qur'an, namely in 5: 2, 8:27, 18:19, 3: 110, and also in several other verses (Sugesti, 2019). In surah al-Maidah Verse 2 for example it is mentioned,

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

Meaning: “And help one another in (doing) good and piety, and do not help one another in committing sins and transgressions. And keep your duty to Allah, for Allah is severe in punishment.”

Ta'awun here is mentioned in the form of fi'lu amr (command verb) which means an encouragement from God. Even in the hadith it is mentioned that it is recommended to help your relatives either in a situation where they are doing wrong or are being persecuted.

حدثنا مسدد حدثنا معتمر عن حميد عن أنس  
رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و  
سلم ( انصر أخاك ظالما أو مظلوما ) . قالوا يا  
رسول الله هذا ننصره مظلوما فكيف ننصره ظالما ؟  
قال ( تأخذ فوق يديه )

Meaning: “Narrated from Musadad, narrated from Mu'tamar, from Anas: "Anas said: The Messenger of Allah said: Help your brother, whether in a situation where he is doing wrong or being persecuted." Anas said: "O Messenger of Allah, we will help the persecuted. How to help people who are doing wrong?" He replied: "By preventing him from committing injustice. That is the form of your help to him." (Isma'il, 1987)

The value of the help provided by a Muslim not at large the smallness of the help, however, lies in our sincerity in giving help. The help given to someone should always be taken care of so that the person being helped does not feeling humiliated, humiliated, and hurt his heart.

Allah Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā commands human beings to each other help one another in goodness with reverence for Him. Because in piety, there is the pleasure of Allah. Ridha Allah is the main foundation or motive of the help we give. Whoever combines between the pleasure of God and the pleasure of man, indeed his happiness has been perfect and enjoyment for him is abundant (Qomaro & Oktasari, 2018).

## **Result and Discussion**

### **History of Chinese Foreign Aid to Africa**

The history of diplomatic relations between China and Africa began about six centuries ago through the instrument of gift exchange ceremonies. Chinese explorers brought cargo ships of porcelain, silk, and pepper to the East African coast and were then rewarded with a giraffe (Brautigam, *Chinese Aid and African Development: Exporting Green Revolution*, 1998). However, it was not until the Cold War that Sino-African relations became closer. The Chinese became more involved in Africa in the 1960s, when they supported communist political movements under Maoist ideological lines. In the late 1970s and 1980s Beijing was less active in providing aid to Africa, as it focused on reform and development of its domestic economy (Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*, 2011). Foreign aid contributions were given only in small amounts until 1996, when Jiang Zemin, the first Chinese president to visit Africa, introduced new terms for relations between China and Africa (Alden, *China in Africa*, 2005).

### **Motives of China's Foreign Aid to Africa**

#### **Natural Resources Motive**

China's aid to Africa is largely driven by the interest of securing access to oil and minerals for its economic growth. African oil is reported to account for 80% or about one third of oil imports from China's trade in the region (Lum, Fischer, Gomez-Granger, & Leland, 2005). Nearly 70% of China's infrastructure financing in Africa is concentrated in Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Sudan, all of which have oil fields (Building Bridges, 2006). Angola, Congo and Sudan are major oilfield owners and pay most of their aid or loans from China with oil. Sudan, for example, is reported to ship 60% of its crude oil to China (Hanson, 2008). However, Europe and the United States remain the largest buyers of African oil with details of Europe buying 33% and the United States buying 36% of African oil exports (He, 2007). China buys African oil in the 10%-16% range, although the PRC is reported to be playing a larger role in the African minerals market. China's turning point in terms of resources occurred before 1993, when China had gone from a net exporter to a net importer. crude oil. Ten years later, China consumes 5.46 million barrels per day (bbl/d), surpassing Japan's 5.34 million bbl/d though still some distance away. from the United States who consumed 19.7 million bbl/d (Downs E. , 2004).

The collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the early 1990s led to a reduction in the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) country aid budgets (Burnell, 2009). At the same time, the reduced pool of available DAC assistance is becoming more conditional through the adoption of structural adjustment policies. This phenomenon then created the foundation which became known as the "Angola Model" (Fuhcs & Rudyak, 2017). Beijing then encourages Chinese (mostly national) extractive companies to "get out" to offer developing country aid and soft loans in return for access to natural resources (Downs, 2007).

The Chinese government's efforts to secure sources of vital commodities are also not confined to oil and natural gas. The company BHP Billiton, for example, set up a \$9 billion joint venture with four Chinese steel mills to secure 12 million tonnes of iron ore per year for approximately 25 years (Alden, *China in Africa*, 2005). In fact, industry analysts see the potential for Billiton to expand its operations in coking coal and manganese in Africa

#### **Economic Motive**

Basically, the economic or business motive in China's foreign aid adopts the foreign aid model adopted by Japan (Shimomura & Wang, 2012). In 1992, China pioneered a foreign aid joint venture that combines aid with trade and investment. In the same year, China officially introduced it as a mode of

cooperation in the mid-1990s, along with soft loans channeled through the newly established Export-Import Agency by the Bank of China (Exim Bank) (Huang & Liu, 2013). This was followed by the end of Apartheid in South Africa in 1994 which brought macroeconomic stability to the entire region and at the same time made the African continent a strategic object of China's economy (Johnston & Rudyak, 2017). The following year, China's president, Jiang Zemin, proposed a new concept called "comprehensive cooperation" between China and Africa. This cooperation emphasizes its function on joint ventures and soft loans carried out by Chinese companies based on international agreements between the Chinese government and recipient countries. Thus, the cooperation that is built can be a "door opener", allowing companies to operate in a relatively risk-free environment and introduce their products to developing countries paid for with official Chinese finance (Fuhcs & Rudyak, 2017). This phenomenon also illustrates that the ease of presence of Chinese companies such as Sinohydro, China Railway Engineering Corporation, China Railway Construction, CRBC, CNPC, CCECC and other large companies in Africa is thanks to foreign assistance. This relationship between soft loans and companies was strengthened by the statement of the Vice President of Exim Bank, Zhu Hongjie in 2012. Zhu Hongjie said that,

*"We need to further expand the scope of soft loans, and actively encourage and support strong and reputable Chinese companies to participate in soft loan programs. While serving the country's political and economic diplomacy strategy, we need to take advantage of soft loans to promote Chinese exports."* (China Economic Net [Zhongguo jingji wang], 2012).

China's economic motives in Africa can at least be seen from the following practices. First, providing manufacturers based in Africa. As a result, China's metal imports have increased. In 2003 for example, nickel imports hit a 13-year high of \$13 per tonne, while in 2004 zinc hit a seven-year high and platinum hit a 23-year high of \$800 per oz (BBC Online, 2004). Second, China's investment in agriculture, fisheries and secondary production facilities. This practice is supported by China's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC). MOFTEC continues to strive to encourage Chinese investment in Africa by arguing that Chinese investment firms involved in agricultural machinery production, agricultural processing and trading of small products targeted for world markets will find enormous business potential in Africa (Shelton, 2001). In practice, Chinese investors have set up joint ventures for fish processing in Gabon and Namibia, with some of the world's richest fish industries and leased agricultural land in Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (Alden, China in Africa, 2006).

Another example that can clearly illustrate the motive for Chinese aid is their entry into the energy business on the continent. China's state oil company, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), for example, has invested heavily and established partnerships with several countries such as Sudan, Angola, Algeria and Gabon in the oil and natural gas sector. China is even alleged to have used various other economic instruments such as financial aid, construction projects and arms sales to strengthen relations with these oil-producing countries. In early 1993, while establishing a long-term relationship with the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) government in Algeria, the Chinese government purchased several oil refineries in the country for \$350 million. In Sudan, in 1996, CNPC purchased the largest stake (40%) of the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) and has used its technical expertise and relationships with other Chinese government companies to turn the industry into a major export producer for Khartoum. Analysts describe Sudan as China's largest foreign investment target to date and as China's main offshore oil source and base for oil interests in the region (Alden, China in Africa, 2006).

In its strategy, China prefers to buy equity stakes in established oil fields rather than buying rights for future exploration and development. China's ambition to become a major global player in the energy business is accompanied by several steps. CNPC and other state-owned oil companies such as Petrochina and CNOOC for example, are always looking for equity positions that have minimal risk, enhance the ability to learn from established industry practices, and enable technology transfer.

## Political Motive

In general, China's interests in Africa lie not only in economic motives but also in political motives. China's political motives are a response to Western hegemony, especially the hegemony of the United States (US) in the world since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union (Konings, 2008). Information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China states that political relations trumps short-term economic benefits, because it is impossible to develop good economic relations without good political relations. This explains why China then sent high-level delegations to small Pacific countries such as Tonga (Zhang & Smith, 2017).

Practically, China's political motives through foreign aid to Africa can be seen in several ways. First, to get international support. This can be seen from the increase in its foreign aid budget which reached about a third from US\$223.5 million in 1989 to US\$374.6 million in 1990 (Lin, 1996). This increase occurred after China received economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation by many countries due to human rights violations in the Tiananmen Square student protests in June 1989. Therefore, foreign aid remains a tool to secure political support for developing countries against China, even though China had joined the UN in 1971. Foreign aid also explains why China's human rights record has received little scrutiny at the UN Human Rights Council despite China's crackdown on Tibetan and Uighur protesters as well as lawyers and political activists who linked to the Charter 08 movement. In 2016, the support of African countries allowed China to remain on the UN Human Rights Council despite the sharp criticism at the time. Furthermore, the correlation between Chinese foreign aid and international support is strengthened by several studies. Strüver, for example, found some evidence that the similarity of votes between recipient countries and China in the UN General Assembly was greater if the recipient countries received Chinese aid projects more often (Strüver, 2016). Similarly, Pang and Wang stated that the more aid a country receives from China, the less that country chooses a country like the US in the UN General Assembly (Pang & Wang, 2017).

Second, to gain international recognition. This motive can be traced when the People's Republic of China (PRC) faced international isolation after its proclamation in October 1949. In this case, the United States and most Western countries refused to recognize and consider Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Republic of China government based in Taipei, as China's legal representative (Fuhcs & Rudyak, 2017). This was followed by a US economic embargo due to its involvement in the Korean War. According to China's official historical texts, it was in this context that China began to provide its first foreign aid, namely to reconstruct North Korea. From this it can be understood that from the start, foreign aid was a means for China to expand its sphere of influence and isolate the Republic of China in Taiwan. This step is also known as the One-China Policy. After the Bandung Conference in 1955, China began to actively provide assistance to Southeast Asian countries in 1955 and newly decolonized Sub-Saharan Africa in 1956. The foreign aid was used by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to engage with countries that were still recognize Taiwan. China's foreign aid program further targets developing countries that recognize China, although in urgent or certain circumstances such as in the case of humanitarian assistance, developing countries that do not have diplomatic relations with China can also become recipients of aid (MOFCOM, 2014).

The peak of China's efforts to gain international recognition occurred between 1969 and 1970, when Chinese aid increased fifteenfold, accounting for 64.9% of all aid provided by communist countries (Copper, 2016). Those efforts paid off in 1971, when the majority of countries voted for Albania's resolution to admit it to the United Nations (UN) and then exclude Taiwan. Today, Chinese leaders openly acknowledge that aid has helped China to secure a vote at the United Nations. This was confirmed by the statement of the Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng. Gao Hucheng emphasized that with foreign assistance, China gained broad support from Third World Countries, managed to get out of international political isolation and enter the United Nations (Gao, 2016).

## Foreign Aid in Islamic Perspective

Islam is a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin. To achieve perfection, a Muslim must pay attention to three important relationship patterns, namely hablu minallah (relationship with God), hablu minnas (relationship with humans), and hablu minal'alam (relationship with nature). Furthermore, the three patterns of relationship must be manifested in the form of good deeds. Charity or doing good in Islam can be realized through spiritual or material care given either personally or collectively to others. The main goal is to get Allah's pleasure and happiness in this world and in the hereafter (Yi, 2018). Thus, foreign aid is a form of embodiment of this good deed.

In addition, Islam also advocates compassion and generosity. One of the charities that reflects this is alms which can be in the form of money, clothing, food, materials, time, energy, service, knowledge, and technology. Islam believes that the most obvious manifestation of the fear of Allah is to give all forms of wealth that Allah has given to those in need. With it, the donor or giver will also receive compensation and various types of assistance. The giver of alms will receive a reward from Allah not only material and spiritual benefits, but also to avoid world disasters and the torment of Hell. The Qur'an states,

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَتَيْتَ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سَنَابِلٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Meaning: *"The parable (of income issued by) those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like that of a seed that grows seven ears, in each ear a hundred seeds. Allah multiplies (rewards) for whom He wills. And Allah is Extensive (His bounty) and All-Knowing."*

The concept of foreign aid or foreign aid is not specifically explained in Islam. However, we can trace it by using a meaningful word, namely ta'awun or please help. The concept of ta'awun as explained earlier has been mentioned in several suras in the Qur'an, namely at 5:2, 8:27, 18:19, 3:110, and several other verses.

There are three basic differences between aid in Islam and aid provided by China. First, the difference in terms of intention. Islam bases aid on volunteerism and seeks the pleasure of Allah alone. Meanwhile, China's aid is based on interests such as the interests of resources, politics, and the economy. Second, the difference in the form of assistance provided. Conceptually, the form of assistance in Islam can be classified into two forms, namely material and non-material assistance. Material assistance can be in the form of money, clothing, food, equipment, and other goods. Meanwhile, non-material assistance can be in the form of smiles, support, services, and so on. For example, Indonesia's support for Palestinian independence in the international community is a form of non-material assistance.

The forms of assistance provided by China are basically only material. This can be seen from the form of China's foreign assistance to Africa such as natural resources extraction or production, infrastructure or public works, humanitarian, military, and technical assistance (NYU Wagner School, 2008).

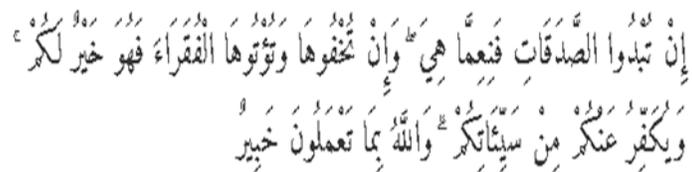
Tabel 2. Form of China's Foreign Aid to Africa per Million Dollar

No.	Form of aid	Total
1	Natural resources extraction/production	9,432
2	Infrastructure or public works	17,865
3	Humanitarian	802
4	Military	4
5	Technical assistance	10
6	Not Specified/Other	5,024

Sumber: NYU Wagner School

Third, the fundamental difference between the aid model in Islam and China lies in the motive. Islam strongly discourages the aid model that has political and economic motives like that of China. Furthermore, the motives for aid in Islam can at least be grouped into three things. First, the motive of humanity. Islam highly upholds human values. So if there is a humanitarian disaster such as poverty, hunger, persecution in a country, Islam encourages other countries to help or provide assistance. Islam even asserts that people who do not love their brothers and only love themselves are not believers. A person who is full while his neighbor is hungry is not a believer. If we remove the difficulties of a Muslim in this world, Allah will remove his difficulties on the Day of Resurrection. In this way, Islam actually encourages Muslims to actively prosper and have good finances, but on the other hand, encourages them to vigorously promote the spirit of charity, almsgiving, and build goodness for future generations.

Second, the motive of *karamah al-insan* (glorifying humans). By providing assistance, we have eased the burden of others. However, the ethics of giving also needs to be considered. Because, maybe by giving, we actually make the party we give feel humiliated or humiliated. Therefore, Islam provides the concept of doing good in secret. The right to give is an "accumulation" deposit for us from God that we must know. There is no need for a witness to the gift or alms that we do because Allah certainly knows better. Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 271,



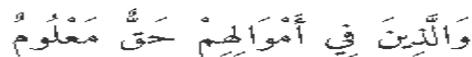
إِنْ تَبَدَّوْا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعْمًا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفَوْهَا وَتُؤْتُوهُا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهِيَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ  
وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: "If you show (your) alms, then it is very good. And if you hide it and give it to the poor, then it is better for you to hide it. And Allah will erase from you some of your faults; and Allah knows what you do."

The naqli argument is reinforced by a hadith from Abu Hurairah which reads,

"There are seven groups that Allah will shade in His shade on a day where there is no shade other than His shade. Among them, a person who gives a charity, his left hand does not know what his right hand gives." (Bukhari dan Imam Muslim)

Third, the *ukhwah basyariyah* (solidarity) motif. The form of assistance that exists in Islam is also a manifestation of concern for fellow human beings. Islam guides Muslims to pursue justice and friendship, is committed to eliminating the gap between the rich and the poor, and does not recognize the absolute right of individuals to their own property. In the property or wealth that we have, there is the right of others to be loved. This is explained by Allah in Surah Al Ma'arij verse 24,



وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَعْلُومٌ

Meaning: "and those in whose wealth is provided a certain share."

This is reinforced by the hadith which states that the parable of those who believe in loving, loving, and caring for one another is like one body. If one member of the body is sick, then the whole body will be awake and hot (felt the pain). (HR. Bukhari no. 6011 dan Muslim no. 2586)

Tabel 3. The Differences of Aid between China and Islam

<i>Object</i>	<i>Intention</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Motive</i>
<b>China</b>	<i>Interest</i>	Materil	Resources
			Politic
			Economics
<b>Islam</b>	Volunteerism	Materil	Humanism
	Seeking the pleasure of god		<i>Karamah al-insan</i> (glorifying humans)
		Non-materi	<i>Ukhwah basyariyah</i> (solidarity)

Source: Processed by the Author

### Conclusion

China as one of the countries with the status of 'the economic power shift' has given a lot of attention to the development of foreign aid in the international arena. There are at least three important motives for China's foreign aid to Africa, namely natural resources, politics and economics. The concept of foreign aid applied by China has a fundamental difference with the concept of aid in the Islamic perspective. The difference lies in three main things, namely the intention, form, and motive of assistance. The intention of the assistance provided by China is of interest while Islam is more on the pleasure of God. The form of aid distributed by China is material, while in Islam it is both material and non-material. The motive for the assistance carried out by China is based on the interests of natural resources, politics, and the economy, while in Islam it is more on humanism, *karamah al-insan* (glorifying humans), *ukhwah basyariyah* (solidarity).

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