Modern China-Africa relations stem from the 1955 Bandung Asian-African Conference. The rise of the Communist Party left Chinese foreign policy with a practice of non-interference (Mao Zedong) and a focus on economic liberalisation (Deng Xiaoping). Africa has always been important in Chinese foreign policy, especially since the establishment of China’s infamous ‘Belt and Road Initiative’.

More recently, under Xi Jinping, relations have focused more on defence and security; Beijing was host to the first ever ‘China-Africa Security and Defence Forum’ in 2018.

“Numerous grains of earth make a mountain, numerous drops of water form an ocean”

(Xi, 2013: in reference to China-Africa relations)

China has in recent history focussed on its economic relationship with Africa. Since Xi Jinping became President in 2013, China has focussed on developing the security and defence dimension to its relation with African countries. This research 3 important implications this has, including giving China an enhanced role in the Indian Ocean.