

Energy independence khartoum

The bird-eye view of Khartoum Refinery, a China-Sudan joint venture hailed as a model of China-African cooperation that showcases China's contribution to African development. (Xinhua photo/Li Ziheng)

KHARTOUM, Aug. 25 (Xinhua) -- Through fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation with Sudan, China is turning the African nation's two major resources in black and white, namely oil and cotton, into gold.

Thanks to the funding and technological aid from China, Sudan has largely achieved energy independence by establishing its own oil industry. Similarly, China is helping Sudan transform its economy, through its efforts to create a cotton industry with a complete chain of production.

"Our relationship with China is historical, deeply-rooted and strategic. This is a model relationship that we hope will continue and shift to wider horizons," Awad Ahmed al-Jaz, a Sudanese presidential aide in charge of Sudan's ties with China, told Xinhua in an interview.

Located on the east bank of the Nile river 70 km north of Sudan's capital Khartoum, the 50-50 joint venture between Sudan's Ministry of Energy and Mining and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), has successfully turned the oil-rich African country from an importer of petroleum products to an exporter.

In the past 20 years, the Sudan oil industry, including the refinery and other oil-related investments, has generated over 100 billion U.S. dollars in direct and indirect revenues for Sudan's economy, according to official estimates.

Jia Yong, general manager of CNPC International (Nile) Co., the Chinese partner of the Khartoum Refinery, said the refinery is a model showing how China helps an African state realize industrialization.

In addition to the economic benefits, China's oil investments have also brought about huge social benefits for local communities. For example, China has trained a contingent of Sudanese oil engineers and technical workers, many of them are even later recruited by oil-rich Gulf nations.

Over the years, CNPC Co. has contributed more than 120 million dollars to varied charity and poverty relief projects in Sudan, by building and donating 104 schools, 50 hospitals and clinics, and 400 water wells, to fulfill its social responsibilities.

"So far, we have made progress in helping Algeria, Chad and Niger build similar refineries, following the Sudan model," Jia said, adding that this model could be applied in China's Belt and Road Initiative.

In addition to oil, Sudan is also famous for growing quality cotton. But it has failed so far to establish a



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complete industry with a production chain from cotton farming, processing, to textile and clothing making.

China has already achieved success in helping Sudan improve its cotton farming. In Al-Faw in Al Qadarif state, 260 km southeast of Khartoum, a China-funded modern cotton research center, China Aid Agricultural Technology Demonstration Center, has successfully introduced a new type of quality cotton seeds from China.

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