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The pandemic that broke out at the end of 2019 surprised the world with its unprecedented scale and the speed of its spread, forcing States to take drastic measures that turned a health crisis into a systemic one. Such a situation seems to bring together the premises of major ruptures on every level, compelling all to enact a paradigm shift in order to adjust to tomorrow's world.

The situation has emphasized the world leadership crisis, highlighting the West's lack of legitimacy and global institutions inefficiency. It shed lights on citizens' relationship to authority and raised questions about democracy. It has, also, plunged the world into great economic distress, forcing States to make strategic choices that will shape the new face of globalization and redefine their role in economy.

Moreover, these circumstances emphasized the vulnerability of the human species and generated a strong expectation of radical changes, most notably, the immediacy of ecological transition and the necessary shift in the relationship between Humans and Nature.

1. The pandemic's impacts on Africa

So far, Africa remained relatively less impacted by Covid-19 spread, with only 3% of the recorded cases. These figures must, however, be put into perspective due to the limited number of tests available and the centralized nature of health systems in Africa, hardly accessible to rural and slum populations. Besides, Africa will still have to face the disruptions occurring on a global scale, exposing it to unprecedented risks that must be tackled collectively.

Politically, the possible postponement of elections in various parts of Africa and the coercive measures taken to contain the virus may lead to political unrest, endangering the rule of law in some countries.

Strategically, the pandemic has underlined the need to focus political choices on meeting populations vital needs, in particular, food supply and health, both affected by the breakdown of supply chains and the deficits of local production.

As for economy, the crisis would likely slow down Africa's economic growth, by 1.7% to 3.4% in 2020 as compared to 2019, according to the African Development Bank, mostly due to exogenous factors. Furthermore, transfers from the diaspora to sub-Saharan Africa, would, according to the World Bank, decline by 23%, from 48 billion US dollars in 2019 to 37 billion dollars in 2020.

2. Sino-African solidarity as a solution

Covid-19 pandemic has boosted the solidarity of African countries, both under the auspices of the African Union and on bilateral level. Morocco has proposed an initiative for an operational framework for managing the different phases of the pandemic. As part of this pragmatic and action-oriented approach, the Kingdom has put the Mohammed VI Polyclinic of Sébéninkoro at the disposal of Malian Covid-19 patients, conveyed emergency aid, as well as medical supplies to about fifteen countries.

Solidarity should, nevertheless, not be circumscribed to the continental level. To overcome the effects of the crisis and to provide structural responses to the imperatives of the post-Covid world, Africa should further strengthen its cooperation with its international partners, in particular China, the continent's strategic partner since 2015 and its first trading partner for over decade.

In addition to infrastructure development, Covid-19 pandemic requires Sino-African cooperation to focus on human priorities and the successful achievement of Africa's ongoing transitions, namely:

- **digital transformation:** China, a Nation with an undeniable mastery in this area, could support Africa in the digital upgrade of its economy, leading to jobs creation and allowing the digitization of services related to education, health and public administration in general.
- **economic transition:** the Chinese model of industrialization has taken advantage of globalization, seizing it as an opportunity rather than a threat. Africa could emulate this experience to implement an industrial strategy that would enable it to accelerate the development of its economy, increase resilience to external shocks and strengthen both its sovereignty and its positioning on the international arena. In addition, Africa could also benefit from the industrial relocation that would follow the evolution of China's economic model. This would open opportunities for industrial skills transfer and Chinese investment in Africa, especially in sectors deemed strategic for the continent.

China could, moreover, assist Africa in the joint upgrading of its raw materials and the creation of regional value chains in specific sectors of the economy of life.

- **green transition:** the current health crisis has fueled a powerful aspiration for a new ecological globalization, in which Africa should engage. In particular, the continent should focus on renewable energies. With the support of China, a world leader in this field, this sector could become one of the spearheads of the African economic recovery.
- **urban renewal:** the containment measures have underlined the need for optimal urban environment and quality housing. Rapid urbanization is one of the major challenges that Africa must meet. A new African urban planning model could benefit from China's experience in planning, developing and modernizing urban areas as well as in building smart-cities.

Besides, cooperation between Chinese and African think tanks should be made an essential component of Sino-African cooperation. These think tanks should be able to adapt to transformations of the international context and contribute to design a renewed cooperation model, in line with the post-Covid world. Moreover, these think tanks should implement innovative communication strategies, highlighting the potential of this relationship and defeating unfounded allegations about this cooperation.

3. **Morocco's engagement in China-Africa cooperation**

In the context of the relationship between Africa and China, the Kingdom of Morocco is bound to play a pivotal role, thanks to the numerous assets it holds, such as:

- **a significant relational capital with China:** Morocco enjoys ancient relations with China, raised, in 2016, to a strategic level. Cooperation between both countries is vivid, rich, diverse and fruitful, fueled by mutual understanding, common commitments and the desire for a "win-win" partnership.
- **a firm commitment to South-South cooperation, a strong orientation of Morocco's foreign policy:** as an African land, Morocco has the firm will to enhance economic, social and institutional convergence of its African fellows. Morocco's African policy is based on mutually beneficial partnerships as well as on an assiduous involvement in favor of the continent's prosperity.

This commitment has materialized by the conclusion of more than 1,000 agreements since 2000 with more than 40 African countries, including 426 signed since 2014 with 15 African countries, involving 80 public and private economic operators and 300 African partners.

- **a strong Moroccan presence in Africa:** more than 1,000 Moroccan companies are active throughout Africa, in several fields (banks, telecommunications, construction, agriculture, fisheries, renewable energies, etc.), making the Kingdom the leading intra-African investor.
- **a modern infrastructure:** Morocco has undertaken, over the past twenty years, to build and develop a modern infrastructure, in accordance with international standards, making it a logistical hub, with state-of-the-art achievements such as the Tangier Med Port and the continent's first high-speed train line.

Finally, Morocco's adhesion, in 2017, to the Belt and Road Initiative has constituted a new turning point, both in its relations with China, as well as in the triangular cooperation China-Morocco-Africa. This commitment illustrates to Morocco's desire to actively participate in the success of this great project by investing its assets to the benefit of Africa's development.