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CHINA IS COMMITTED TO PARTNERSHIP IN AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

12 September 2006- Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia and his country's Representative to the African Union, H.E Mr. Lin Lin has hailed the strategic partnership between Africa and China in areas of politics, economics and cultural exchange. Mr. Lin Lin was speaking when he officially opened the Meeting of the Task Force on Africa's Strategic partnership with the Emerging powers, which got underway yesterday at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

Calling the strategic cooperation, a win- win partnership, Mr. Lin Lin recalled the April and June visits to Africa by Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. He said the two leaders put forward their views on how to forge stronger Afro Chinese relationships through:

- Strengthening mutual political trust
- Expanding the win- win economic cooperation
- Increasing cultural interaction, and
- Maintaining close coordination in international affairs

The Ambassador also highlighted the forthcoming 3rd Ministerial Forum on China- African Cooperation, which will be held in Beijing in November, and said a joint declaration by Chinese and African leaders at the Summit is now under discussion, which will summarize the views and common position of the two sides on major international and African issues as well as China African relations. A three-year action plan for the forum will also be adopted, covering the year's 2007- 2009. It is expected to provide a framework for cooperation between the two sides.

Responding to questions from the delegates at the meeting, Mr. Lin Lin said his country is aware of the trade imbalance with African countries and said China is working hard to encourage more African exports. He also

noted that trade with countries like Ethiopia had increased drastically over the past few years. China, he said, had managed to reduce the number of its citizens living below the poverty line from 100 million to 20 million in 30 years and it is willing to share its experiences in poverty reduction with Africa. On the question of China's position on Darfur, Ambassador Lin Lin reiterated his country's position that any deployment of UN troops in Sudan should be with the support of the Government of Sudan.

The meeting on strategic partnerships with emerging economies will run until Wednesday 13 September. Other emerging powers whose experiences will be analyzed include India, Brazil and Venezuela.