

## **Brief on India–Republic of Congo Relations**

India and the Republic of Congo [ROC] enjoy warm and friendly relations dating back to pre-independence era of the ROC. ROC has supported India's candidature at various International forums. Mr. Emile Ouosso, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, visited India in July 2007 at the invitation of the Railway Minister. In his capacity as Chairman of the African Transport Ministers Group [53 countries], he mooted a proposal for holding a summit of African Transport Ministers in India. He also held discussions with RITES and Railway Board. Maj. Gen Jacques Yvon Ndolou, Defence Minister visited India in February-March 2007 at the invitation of Raksha Mantri. Earlier, Foreign Minister Rodolphe Adada and Commerce Minister Adelaide Angollo visited India in October 2005 and November 2006 respectively.

Mr. Basile Ikouebe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, accompanied by senior officials, paid an official visit to India from 13 to 18 March, 2010. Minister in the Presidency, in-charge of Special Economic Zone, Mr. Alain Akouala Atipault visited India from 27-29 March, 2011 to participate in the 7th CIEXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership held in New Delhi. Minister of Trade, Ms. Claudine Munari, Mr. Alain Akouala, Minister of Special Economic Zones and Mr. Anatole C. Makosso, Minister of Youth Affairs and Head of the African Union Commission for Youth Affairs visited India for the 9th CIEXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership held in Delhi from 17-19 March, 2013. She had also participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> Conclave in 2012. Senior Minister of Industrial Development and Private Sector Promotion, Mr. Mvouba Isidore led the ROC delegation to the 10th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership, New Delhi from 9-11 March, 2014. He was accompanied by Ms. Claudine Munari, Minister of Trade, Mr. Alain Akouala, Minister of Economic Zones and Mr. Collinet Makosso, Minister of Youth.

MOS Railways, Shri Manoj Sinha, visited Brazzaville in July, 2015 as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi. He met President, Mr. Denis Sassou-Nguesso and handed over the invitation for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi. Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. M.J. Akbar paid a bilateral visit to ROC, in March 2017. Mr. M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Brazzaville on 5th-6th March 2017. This was the first bilateral visit by any Indian Minister to ROC. During the visit he called on ROC President Denis Sassou Nguesso and met the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean Claude Gakosso.

**Agreements/MOUs:** A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations was signed between the two countries, on 17 March, 2010. The first Consultations were held in Brazzaville on 21 January, 2011. Bilateral cooperation was reviewed and the two sides agreed to accelerate mutually beneficial bilateral investment and trade relationship. Several Agreements/MoUs are under discussion.

**India's Economic assistance to ROC:** Following Lines of Credit have been accorded to ROC: (i) US\$ 70 million LOC for the Rural Electrification Project which is currently under execution; (ii) LOC of US\$ 89.9 million for the Development of an Urban Transportation System, in the capital city of Brazzaville and in Pointe Noire; (iii) LOC of US\$ 55 million for a Greenfield 600 tpd rotary kiln based Cement Plant Project.

**Grant/Assistance:** (i) GOI donated medicines worth US\$ 2,00,000 in 2010 to the Government of ROC; (ii) GOI donated US\$ 500,000 as humanitarian assistance to ROC, in March 2012, in the aftermath of the ordnance depot blast, which claimed many lives; (iii) Tele-education, tele-medicine and VVIP connectivity node have been set up in Brazzaville under the Pan African e-Network Project.

**Offers under India Africa Forum Summits:** Under the IAFS-II, ROC has been offered several projects, namely (a) a Rural Technology Park (RTP); (b) a Food Testing Laboratory (FTL); (c) An Agricultural Seed Production-cum-Demonstration Centre (ASPDC); and (iv) a Centre for English Language Training [CELT]. While ROC has welcomed the offers; formal responses are awaited.

**Capacity Building Programme:** ITEC Programme: 38 slots were utilized during 2010-17; all 10 slots allotted during 2016-17 were utilized; 13 slots were utilized in 2017-18, 24 slots were utilized in 2018-19. Separately, under the AIFS-II Training Programme, 6 Congolese Government officials availed training during 2012-13 and 2 during 2013-14.

**Trade and Commercial Relations:** The main items of export were pharmaceutical products, inorganic chemicals, organic or inorganic compounds of precious metals, vehicles and parts thereof, optical photographic cinematographic measuring, checking precision, medical or surgical instruments and apparatus, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances, while imports comprised copper & articles thereof, mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation, bituminous substances, mineral waxes, natural or cultured pearls, precious or semiprecious stones, pre metals, iron and steel.

Bilateral trade figures are given below (USD million, period April-Feb):

Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<b>Exports</b>	252.89	166.66	135.82	116.69	132.88
<b>Imports</b>	365.52	201.64	156.52	198.81	405.65
<b>Total Trade</b>	618.42	368.30	292.34	315.49	538.53

(Source: Department of Commerce, GoI)

Bharti Airtel acquired Zain Communications Network in 2010. In 2014, M/s. Ashok Leyland signed a contract for supply of 200 buses to Government of ROC. The Gujarat State Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd., is exploring possibilities of setting up an Ammonia-Urea Plant in RoC.

**Indian community:** There are around 500 Indians living in the country, working mainly in the trading and services sector.

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