

**Embassy of India  
Brazzaville**

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

**India – Republic of Congo Relations :**

India and Republic of Congo [ROC] enjoy warm and friendly relations dating back to pre-independence era of ROC. Our Mission in Kinshasa (DRC) was concurrently accredited to Republic of Congo, till October, 2019. Republic of Congo opened its diplomatic Mission in New Delhi in August, 2012. India opened its diplomatic Mission in Brazzaville, ROC in November 2019.

**Bilateral visits from India to ROC:**

- (i) MOS Railways, Shri Manoj Sinha, visited Brazzaville in July, 2015 as Special Envoy of Prime Minister. He met President of ROC, Mr. Denis Sassou N' Guesso and handed over invitation for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi.
- (ii) Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. M.J. Akbar paid a bilateral visit to ROC, on 5-7 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 Mr. Jean Claude Gakosso.

**Visits from ROC to India:**

1. In 1983, Congolese President Denis Sassou N'guesso visited India to participate in NAM Summit in New Delhi and again in 1987 in his capacity as the President of the African Union for setting up the Africa Fund.
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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.
5. 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 CIIEXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership held in New Delhi.
6. Minister of Trade, Ms. Claudine Munari participated in the 8th CIIEXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership held in India in 2012.
7. 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 CIIEXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership held in Delhi from 17-19 March, 2013.
8. 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.
9. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Congolese Abroad, Mr. Jean Claude Gakosso, visited India to represent Republic of Congo in the third India-Africa Forum Summit from October 26 -29, 2015.
10. Mr. Emile Ouosso, Minister of Special Economic Zones and Economic Diversification of Republic of Congo addressed the session on “ Building World Class Infrastructure for Economic Growth ” on 20 July, 2022 at the 17<sup>th</sup> CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership in New Delhi.
11. A high level Congolese delegation led by Mr. Raymond Zephirin MBOULOU, Minister of Security and Public Order, including Commander of Police, Security Advisor to the Minister and others visited New Delhi to attend 90<sup>th</sup> INTERPOL General Assembly in New Delhi from 18-21 October, 2022.

12. A Defence delegation led by Maj. Gen. BOUKAKA Rene, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Congolese Armed Forces along with Lt.Col. TOUMBA Cherubain visited Gandhinagar from 18-22 October, 2022 to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> India Africa Defence Dialogue (IADD) and DEFExpo 2022.

13. Mr. Denis Christel Sassou N'Guesso, Minister of International Cooperation and Promotion of Public-Private Partnership, Republic of Congo, participated in the 9<sup>th</sup> Session on G-20 (Foreign Minister's Session on G-20) virtually on January 13, 2022, which was chaired by EAM, Dr.S. Jaishankar, as part of Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS), convened by India, as Head of G-20.

14. HE Mr. Charles Richard MONDJO, Minister of National Defense, Republic of Congo headed the ROC delegation for the conclave of Defence Ministers, 2023 Edition, held on the sidelines of AERO INDIA 2023, in Bengaluru, from February 12 – 16, 2023.

15. Mr. Thomas Nicephore FYLLA SAINT-EUDES, Minister of Industrial Development and Promotion of the Private Sector & Mr. Jean Jacques Bouya, Minister of State for Territory Planning, Infrastructure and Road Maintenance, Republic of Congo participated in the 18<sup>th</sup> CII Africa Conclave on India Africa Growth Partnership, held in New Delhi from 14 – 16 June, 2023.

#### **Bilateral Cooperation Mechanism :**

Currently nine agreements are under negotiation between GOI and ROC. :

- (i) MoU on exemption from Visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports.
- (ii) MOU on Foreign Service Institutes of two countries.
- (iii) MoU on Bilateral Investment Treaty.
- (iv) MoU on Cultural Exchange Program.
- (v) MoU on Establishment of Joint Commission.
- (vi) MoU on e-VidyaBharti and e-AarogyaBharti.
- (vii) MOU on Maritime Transport.
- (viii) Draft Cooperation Agreement on the development and promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises and handicrafts.
- (ix) Draft Technical Cooperation Agreement in the Agro-Pastoral Field.

#### **Foreign Office Consultations :**

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. Shri Rajendar Bhagat, Joint Secretary (WA), MEA led the talks in the FO Consultations from Indian side. Ambassador Daniel Owassa, Secretary General in Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of ROC led the Congolese side. Bilateral cooperation was reviewed and the two sides agreed to accelerate mutually beneficial bilateral investment and trade. Under the India Africa Forum Summit-II, ROC

was 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 (d) a Centre for English Language Training [CELT].

2. The Second round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and the Republic of Congo (ROC) was held on 13th April, 2023 in New Delhi. It was co-chaired by Shri Sevala Naik Mude, JS (C&WA), and Ambassador Gisele Bouanga-Kalou, Director of Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ROC Government. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations, covering political, trade and commerce, investments, defense & security, development partnership, capacity building, and culture & people to people linkages. They also discussed ways to further strengthen the ties between India and ROC. Both sides exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest and agreed to enhance cooperation in the multilateral fora.

### **Cooperation in UN & International Organisation**

The ROC has always supported India's candidature at various International forums.

In February, 2023, Republic of Congo joined the International Solar Alliance by signing the @isolaralliance Framework Agreement by their Ambassador in New Delhi.

### **Development Partnership – LOC, Grants, Projects**

Following GOI Lines of Credit have been accorded to ROC:

(i) **Rural Electrification Project:** A Line of Credit Agreement of US \$ 70 million for Rural Electrification was signed on 14 December 2011 by Mr. Gilbert Ondongo, Minister of Finance, Budget and Public Portfolio, ROC. The contract for design & engineering, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of the project was awarded to M/s. Overseas Infrastructure Alliance (India) Pvt. Ltd. (OIA) in March 2013. Currently the project is under execution with physical progress at 54% and the financial progress at 90%. Efforts are underway to finish the last remaining part of the project by August 2024.

(ii) **Urban Transportation System:** A Line of Credit Agreement of US \$89.90 million for Development of Transport System in the capital city of Brazzaville and the port city of Pointe Noire was signed on 09 March 2014. The contract awarded to the consortium of SRS Real Infrastructure Ltd and ERA Infra Engineering Ltd. became effective under the LOC in 31 March 2016. Buses under the project are being supplied by Ashok Leyland. The project aims to develop transport system in the capital - Brazzaville and the port city of Pointe - Noire and the scope of work includes the development of five Bus Depots, supply & installation of depot equipment,

maintenance facility, construction of two terminals and 50 Bus stations and supply of 354 buses. The project has been delayed due to EPC contractor, a consortium of SRS Real Infrastructure Limited [SRSRIL] and Era Infra Engineering Ltd, being declared as Non-Performing Asset (NPA). The contract needs to be terminated by ROC side.

(iii) **Rotary Kiln based Cement Plant Project:** In 2014, the GOI also approved another LOC of US \$ 55 million for a Greenfield 600 tpd rotary Kiln based Cement Plant Project in ROC. The Agreement was signed on 25 February 2015. This project is being implemented in two phases. Phase-I (Mining development – US\$ 8.5 million) and Phase-II (Cement Plant – US\$ 46.5 million). National Council for Cement and Building Materials (NCCBM) is the PMC for the project. Contract for Phase-I & Phase – II was awarded to Promac Engineering Industries Ltd. in consortium with Ercom Engineers Private Ltd. The project is likely to be completed by end 2024.

### **Commercial, Economic and Trade :**

**Trade between India & ROC from April’2022 to March 2023:** Bilateral trade stood at USD 2204.69 million during FY 2022-23; Exports being USD 178.50 million and imports USD 2026.19 million. The main items of export are rice, cereals, meat, pharmaceutical products, inorganic chemicals, vehicles and parts thereof, while imports are mainly petroleum oils & crude oils, which constituted more than 80% and metals. Bilateral trade figures (in USD millions) over the last seven years including current financial year 2023-24 (April-July) are given below :

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (Apr-July)
Exports	117	124	113	110	162	178.5	51.40
Imports	199	403	587	246	1309	2026.19	484
Total Trade	316	527	700	356	1471	2204.69	535.40

**During the FY 2021-22, India successfully achieved the target of USD 162 million of exports to Republic of Congo, against the target of USD 156 million set by Department of Commerce. During FY 2022-23, India increased its exports to USD 178.5 million.**

### **Humanitarian 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.
- (iv) On 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 Ambassador handed over a cheque of US \$ 100,000 in equivalent local currency to Prime Minister Clément Mouamba as Government of India's humanitarian assistance for flood relief to the ROC.
- (v) On June 23, 2020, a medical aid of over six tons was provided by Government of India to the Republic of Congo to fight against COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Jean Claude Gakosso, Minister of Foreign Affairs, cooperation and Congolese abroad said during the handing over ceremony that "this is a real gesture of friendship on the part of the people and Government of the Republic of India. On June 26, 2020, Dr. Jacqueline Lydia Mikolo, Congolese Minister of Health, while appreciating the gesture of Government of India to support the public health system of the country, said that this is one of the largest consignments of medical aid the ROC has received to combat COVID-19.

### **ITEC Assistance**

10 slots each year were allotted for Republic of Congo (both Civilian and Defence) during 2022-23 & 2023-24.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has been conducting Professional Training courses on Maritime Pollution Response (MLP), Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) and Search & Rescue (SAR) for Officers and Sailors of Coast Guard/ agencies performing duties similar to Coast Guard of Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs) under Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme of Government of India.

During 2022-23, under the programme, 3 officers/sailors from RoC were imparted training at Indian Coast Guard, Goa and Indian Coast Guard, Kochi.

During 2023-24, under the programme, 2 slots have been offered to officers/sailors from RoC at Indian Coast Guard, Kochi.

### **ICCR Scholarships**

1 ICCR scholarship has been offered to ROC for the year 2023-24, which has already being availed by ROC.

## **Other Scholarships**

During 2022-23, an officer from ROC was given scholarship for training under Professional Course of Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.

## **Cultural Cooperation**

India and Republic of Congo (ROC) are in negotiations for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP).

## **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations**

During the years 2021-22, 2022-23 & 2023-24, Embassy organized many events as part of AKAM celebrations. Some of the main events, organized were :

(i) Embassy organized 'Walk for Health' Marathon in association with the Indian community in Brazzaville on 13 February, 2022. The event was supported by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Congolese Abroad, Ministry of Youth and Sports and Mayors' office in Brazzaville. The walk was flagged off by Director of International Cooperation, Mayor's office. More than 100 enthusiastic participants, both Congolese and Indians took part in the walk, which was for a distance of 5 kms from the Embassy to Corniche, in Central Brazzaville.

(ii) Embassy organized the 8<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY'2022) on 19 June, 2022 at "Memorial Pierre Savorgnan De BRAZZA ". There was a large enthusiastic crowd, numbering around 120, consisting of local Congolese, Indian diaspora and members of the Diplomatic corps, who participated in the event. Ms. Belinda Ayessa, DG, in her remarks stated that this is the first time that Memorial De Brazza was conducting such an event and was very happy with the enthusiastic response. Yoga protocol was conducted for 30 minutes for the gathering of yoga enthusiasts.

(iii) Embassy organized AKAM events in the latter half of 2022, which includes Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in the Chancery on 2 October and also a special campaign for Swachhata held in the Chancery on 2,7 & 14 October respectively to undertake the cleaning of the Chancery premises.

(iv) First time in the history of ROC, a Gujarati Folk dance troupe KALAPATH SANSTHA from Bhavnagar, Gujarat, sponsored by ICCR performed in Brazzaville on 28 January, 2023. Their performance was wholeheartedly appreciated by members of Diplomatic Corps, local Congolese, and the members of the Indian diaspora. The Congo TV and the local print media Adiac Congo covered the event.

(v) The Embassy organised week-long activities under the framework of LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment during the third week of April, 2023. The events included donation of eco-friendly products & recycle drive boxes to Orphelinat Yamba Ngai, Orphan home in Brazzaville, planting of 75 trees at Roundabout La Frontier, Brazzaville, and promotion of Indian Millet products at a local supermarket in Brazzaville.

(vi) Embassy successfully organised 9<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY, 2023) for the first time in the port city of Pointe-Noire on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 at the iconic Jaipur Sea Lounge, overlooking the beach. An enthusiastic crowd of more than 100 persons including Embassy officials, Honorary Consul, local Congolese and members of Indian diaspora participated in the event. The event was covered by Congo TV.

(vii) Embassy successfully organised 9<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY, 2023) in the capital city of Brazzaville on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 at iconic Cornice river front, overlooking neighbouring capital Kinshasa. An enthusiastic crowd of more than 200 persons including Embassy officials, local Congolese and members of Indian diaspora participated in the event. The event was covered by Congo TV.

### **Indian Community & Consular services**

There are approximately 800 Indians based in Republic of Congo engaged mainly in trade and service sector including supermarket chains, electronic stores, tour and travels, restaurants, trading, etc. The Indian community in capital city Brazzaville and Port city of Pointe Noire donated edible items including rice, wheat flour, cooking oil, sugar and cereals worth US\$100,000 to local authorities in May, 2019 to support vulnerable families affected from pandemic COVID-19.

Embassy in association with the Association of Indians in ROC organised a chartered flight on 10 July, 2020 from Brazzaville to Mumbai under the Vande Bharat Mission of GOI to evacuate 145 stranded Indian nationals to India.

The Mission commenced rendering of the consular services from 1st June 2020.

\*\*\*\*\*

**August, 2023**