

Bilateral Cooperation between China and Congo-Brazzaville: The Other Side of the Ledger

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Abstract

The relation forged between China and Africa during these recent years has been and remains topical at this time. Researchers coming from all over the world say that it is rich, solid, well-rounded, dynamic, ambiguous, win-win, tenuous, etc. Despite all of these paradigms which characterize this South-South approximation, numbers made Beijing a powerful economic partner for Africa nowadays. A relation that has shown a diversified and variable cooperation per country and geopolitical area. In that case, Congo-Brazzaville was one of the first nations in Central Africa to create fraternal relationship with the Middle kingdom. A bilateral cooperation that evolved over time. With this in mind, 53 years later, it would be interesting to make a global assessment of the ties developed between this Asian giant and that small state, sixth oil producer in Africa. Therefore, our main aim will be to carry out a thorough research and to propose some practical ideas to make this bilateral cooperation better. In order to reach this goal, we are going to conduct a desktop study by collecting and analyzing documents and audio-visual materials through a qualitative approach. Besides, we will also report conferences, seminars, interviews and official visits of heads of states including both parts.

Keywords

Congo-Brazzaville, China, Bilateral Cooperation, Central Africa

1. Introduction

2000 marks the first ministerial conference of Forum on China and Africa Cooperation (FOCAC 中非合作论坛). In 2004, the Chinese president, Hu Jintao (胡锦涛), used the “win-win cooperation” concept for the first time in his opening speech during the *BOAO Forum for Asia's* conference. Thereafter, this

term became a motto employed by Chinese government to talk about the nature of the approximation they want to establish with the rest of the world. In that list, we have many African countries. Indeed, Beijing's interest for Africa is not a secret.

In 2013, it was not a coincidence if the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, newly elected, chose to visit Congo-Brazzaville during his African tour. Firstly, we could say that the Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) wanted to highlight the fiftieth anniversary of diplomatic exchanges between the two countries in 2014. Secondly, we could affirm that it was an acknowledgment. Incontestably, the Republic of Congo has often been considered as a dynamic model of mutuality in Central Africa.

Five years later after this official state visit, we suggest tracing the history of Sino-Congolese's symbiosis. Nonetheless, we want to avoid misunderstandings. Therefore, we would like to recall what exactly international cooperation means. Foremost, in the field of international relations, we define it as being collaboration among nations about a specific problem or a common objective to reach. It can be applied to various domains such as science, politics, diplomacy, military, economics, culture, etc. Thereupon, the cooperation is generally accomplished through an agreement, a treaty or a declaration. It could be bilateral or trilateral. Concerning our study, the cooperation is bilateral because it includes two actors. Thus, this latter is related to the assistance policy by which a state supports different development fields of another partner. As a matter of fact, in this kind of international aid, one of the countries is necessarily more advanced, developed or richer. An important point to be emphasized according to the inequality often presents between the one who helps and who is helped.

Obviously, the objective of our article is not to denigrate those two states, but to analyze things about the topic with fresh eyes. Some of the researchers would say that Africa is changing due to the Chinese momentum, and others would agree to the fact that China has realized more projects over the last decade than usual previous Africa's partners (European Union, United States of America, France...). However, buildings, roads, bridges, scholarships, loans, donations and foreign direct investments given by Beijing raise a myriad of questions concerning the whole black continent. Accordingly, the following interrogations may serve as the research questions of our study: To whom is this cooperation really beneficial? How is it working? If it is not good, how could we make it better? Hence, our interest to lead a linear investigation based on the links' genesis unifying the Republic of Congo and the People's Republic of China; the assessment of cooperation's main characteristics established between the two states; the analysis of all data, and the political and philosophical development of a theory in order to improve this relationship in a near future.

2. The History of Cooperation between China and Congo-Brazzaville (1960-2014)

Relations between China and Congo were established in 1964. However, it was not their first contact. Moreover, China has already been in Africa since the

Middle Ages (1371-1433), 600 years ago, before Portuguese, English and French thanks to Zheng He's travels (郑和) during the reign of the third Chinese Emperor, Ming Yongle (永乐帝). In fact, the approximation between the two countries was in 1929 throughout the construction works of Congo-Ocean railways. Due to some problems of building this route of 502 km, the French company *Batignolles* will bring foreign labor. In that respect, Julien Bokilo, Congolese socio-economist declares that: "Difficulties led to desertion of black workforce. In this chaos, French authorities used Chinese workers to back up native laborers. Recruitment of Chinese took place in Kwang-Chou-Wan and Hong Kong. The government chartered a ship with 800 Chinese men. After two months of navigation, they landed in July 1929 at Pointe-Noire (today's economical capital of Congo Brazzaville). Four hundred were sent to a Chinese camp (with huts) in M'Boulou (major labor force tank in Mayombe). Chinese were progressively replacing local workers" (Bokilo, 2012). A part of these Chinese stayed in Pointe-Noire at the end of their efforts. Then, it is since this date that the first Chinese migrated to the Republic of Congo in order to do businesses.

After the Bandung Conference (1955), Congo obtained its independence in August 1960. During this period, the Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai (周恩来) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chen Yi (陈毅) recognized and congratulated Congolese people. In 1963, Alphonse Massamba-Débat became the President of the Republic of Congo and the first ever African head state to follow the Marxist-Leninist regime. He travelled to sign the first cooperation protocol between the two nations in February 1964. A few years later, Marien Ngouabi was the new President. At his inauguration, he decided to transform the Republic of Congo into the People's Republic of Congo with a unique party. Thus, Congolese Party of Labor was created and hold its first inaugural conference from 29 to 31 December 1969. From then on, the People's Republic of Congo and People's Republic of China started having solid ties. The two socialist states were a part of eastern bloc countries supported by the former USSR during the Cold War. Even if Congo returned to its capitalist status, we can already notify the diversification of their bilateral cooperation with China from this moment (*Éditions des Affaires Mondiales*, 2014).

The fiftieth anniversary of this cooperation was celebrated in 2014. Nowadays, China is the first economic partner of Congo-Brazzaville in various fields. The two countries are closer than before. The mutual trust that united them has often been tested, but it has never been betrayed. We have some examples to corroborate this argument. When Congo was damaged after the civil war of 1997, China was one of the first nations to reopen its embassy in Brazzaville. It played an important role in the renovation of the city. Contracts and loans coming from Beijing were allowed to Congolese people. Besides, we can say that both countries were helping each other in case of troubles. In 2008, for the Wenchuan's earthquake (Sichuan), Congo gave a symbolic donation of USD 1 million to China. In 2010, a second earthquake hit Yushu (Qinghai), and Congo built a primary school bearing the name of the Congolese President, Denis SassouN-

guesso. Accordingly, these diplomatic interactions encouraged China to intensify its investments on the Congolese territory (Magazine Look We, 2014). Now, the cooperation is not only economical, but also cultural, educational, medical, professional, etc.

3. Characteristics of the Sino-Congolese Cooperation

3.1. On Behalf of a Dynamic Cooperation

Economics is the most important field of China-Congo's cooperation. This is why this chapter is only dedicated to talk about it. Indeed, economical exchanges between Beijing and Brazzaville got improved in the 2000s. Actually, we could affirm that the major part of the tender calls for new projects is obtained by China. The Republic of Congo is becoming modernized with multiple constructions made by Chinese companies based on the spot. In 2003, China represented more than one third of Congolese exports. The plenipotentiary Ambassador of the People's Republic of China said then, the number of those exchanges reached out USD 5, 870 billion in January and November 2013 against USD 290 million in 2002 (Guan, 2014). Such numbers illustrate not only the evolution of the economic cooperation, but also the Chinese government's endeavor to play a big role in the development of the country. Among these Chinese enterprises that are gaining all great projects, we can cite: Beijing Construction Engineering Group, China Residential Development Group Corporation, Zhengwei Technique Congo, China Fangsu International Group, China Gezhouba Group Corporation, Weihai International Economic and Technical Cooperative Co, Huawei, etc.

To provide right numbers and to understand how main African and Chinese actors are collaborating is something hard because their respective states don't easily share it. However, we attest that using institutions such as the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM); National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC); State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE), Chinese government is a centerpiece concerning all delivery of services and financing services in Africa (Pairault, 2016). According to this theory, the Sino-Congolese's cooperation of this research paper would appear as follows. For instance, we have a Chinese enterprise of infrastructure with public capital operating in Congo. After getting a contract for a project, this latter will use sponsorship from the economic institutions cited above (MOFCOM; NDRC; SAFE). Once the project is registered and meets all of the required criteria, the Export-Import Bank of China will release funds for the beginning of constructions. At this stage, the Chinese government contacts the Congolese government. Therefore, it is a bilateral cooperation that includes investments coming from both of them. Nonetheless, the Congolese tendency would be to borrow money from the Chinese bank in order to fulfill its part. Interest rates and the repayment periods of loans are not stable and it should be acknowledged that the country always experiences the Chinese's goodwill. This situation of reliance made the Asian giant an important

beneficiary of raw materials in the Republic of Congo. As a matter of fact, many Congolese debts are paid in natural resources. Thus, in 2014, China exported USD 1 billion and imported USD 5.5 billion, the whole of goods (*Économies Africaines*, 2017). It is mostly about oil and wood. It should, moreover, be recalled that this hypothetical cooperation's pattern could be modified at any time.

3.2. Congo-China, Diversification and Expansion of Their Relations

Foremost, the agreement on the economic and technical cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Congo was signed in October 1964, then, another one concerning the joint cooperation committee—that allows the scientific and technical partnership; humanitarian assistance and the forum on China-Africa's cooperation—was signed in May 1982 in Beijing. Since these two symbolic dates, the cooperation between the two countries counts numerous sectors of the development. Based on the **Table 1** below, it is not only focused on the economic field.

This table gives to us an overview of Congolese GDP by fields between 2011 and 2016. Apart from the oil industry decrease, other domains got improvements. And it is impossible to say that Chinese involvement has nothing to do with these numbers (*African Economic Outlook*, 2016).

Firstly, China has widely contributed to the professional formation of Congolese workers. Many journalists, public officials and athletes study and participate to seminars in different cities in China. Secondly, Beijing gives around thirty full scholarships to Congolese students every year. Always about education, in 2012,

Table 1. GDP by sector (percentage of GDP at current prices).

	2011	2016
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3.6	8.3
of which fishing	0.3	0.8
Mining and quarrying	71.5	38.6
of which oil	71.1	38.3
Manufacturing	3.5	7.4
Electricity, gas and water	0.6	1.5
Construction	3.0	4.2
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of vehicles; Household	5.6	12.4
of which hotels and restaurants	0.8	1.7
Transport, storage and communication	4.1	8.3
Finance, real estate and business services	4.6	10.4
Public administration and defence	3.4	9.0
Other service		
Gross domestic product at basic prices/factor cost	100	100

Source: Data from domestic authorities. a: Statistics above are made by African Economic Outlook that is a specialized website in statistical data and analyses of African economies.

a Confucius Institute was created as a part of Marien Ngouabi's university. Today, it is a collaborative knowledge exchange network between the two countries. In 2017, thanks to simple administrative procedures, China has become the most popular destination of young Congolese. The growth rate is estimated at 10% per year over a hundred of self-support students registered in Chinese universities. Besides, we have the library inaugurated by the Chinese President Xi Jinping at Brazzaville. It attracts a lot of people interested in Chinese language and culture in order to get hired by Chinese companies. Thirdly, on the medical field, more than 600 hundred Chinese doctors have been sent to Congo for helping the local medical teams. For his visit, the Chinese President also inaugurated the Sino-Congolese Friendship Hospital at Mfilou in the seventh district. Talking about constructions, we can cite the Base Hospital of Makélékélé in the first district and Talangai Hospital in the sixth district of Brazzaville. Recently, some Chinese enterprises were renovating the specialized Mother-Child's hospital of Blanche-Gomez in the center of the town.

Finally, for culture and arts, shows and activities have been realized in 2012 for the purposes of celebrating Chinese New Year. Congolese like movies and actors of Kung Fu (Jackie Chan, Jet-Li, Bruce Lee...). That is why the performance delivered by a troop of martial arts coming from the Shaolin temple was so successful in Brazzaville. Young and old people like style of clothes which is called "Zhongshan suit" as well. The Minister of Culture of Congo had also travelled to Beijing for an exhibition of Congolese artists wood carvings.

4. Problems and Challenges of Cooperation between Governments

For those who want to get further information, we gathered various examples of bilateral cooperation jointly realized by the Republic of Congo and China. The **Table 2** will give you a glimpse of exchanges made between 2006 and 2017. It

Table 2. Some Exchanges of the Sino-Congolese Bilateral Cooperation.

N°	Chinese Projects and Achievements in Congo-Brazzaville	Budgets, Donations and Investments	Start or Finalization's Years
1	Modernization of Maya-Maya's airport.	119 billion CFA	2006
2	Chinese donations after the explosion of the armored regiment of Mpila.	3 billion USD	2012
3	Liouesso's hydroelectric plant of 19, 2 MW by China Gezhouba Group Company Limited.	54 billion CFA	2012-2016
4	Construction of Mag Minerals Potash Congo's factory in Mengo.	1364 billion USD	2013
	Participation of Sinohydro Tianjin (13 - 24 months) in the following construction works in Brazzaville:		
5	1) Waste treatment; 2) Construction of a four-lane cornice; 3) Construction and maintenance of roadways in Bacongo and Makélékélé; Construction of a viaduct; 4) Renovation of the 2 nd North exit with the section PK0930 and the national road N° 2.	Amount varying from 34 billion 946 million 246 thousand 529 CFA to 52 billion 110 million 282 thousand 529 CFA TTC	2014
6	Donations of medical equipment to prevent Congolese from Ebola virus.	432 million CFA.	2014

Continued

7	Construction works of the sports complex of Kintélé by Beijing Construction Engineering Group; CEEDI; Dawa Engineering; China Geo Engineering Corporation International; Zhengwei Technique Congo; Sinohydro Tianjin and China Stadium Corporation and Equipment Company.	379 billion 845 million CFA.	2014
8	Interconnection Congo-Gabon through optical fiber by Huawei.	12 billion CFA	2014
9	Inauguration of Forspak's cement plant able to produce 300,000 tons per year and hire 120 Congolese and 60 Chinese.	Around 68 million USD	2014
10	Inauguration of the section Brazzaville-Ouessou (194 km) in the Sangha's department.	170 billion CFA	2006-2015
11	The vice governor of the Export-Import Bank of China, Sun Ping declares the financing of 42 projects in Congo.	24 billion USD	2016
12	Chinese financial assistance to the park of Odzala-Nkokouain order to fight poaching.	1 st part: 100 000 USD; 2 nd part: 70 000 USD	2016
13	The Congolese bank BCH (Banque Congolaise de l'Habitat) starts discussions with the Chinese company specialized in public constructions, Sino Great Wall (CGW) and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) to finance a wide program of 5000 accommodations by 2019.	300 million USD.	2016
14	Commissioning of the national road N° 1's second sector, Brazzaville-Pointe-Noire built by China State Construction Engineering Corporation that mobilized 8964 workers.	867 billion 195 million CFA	2007-2016
15	Construction of the BSCA Bank's headquarters (Sino-Congolese Bank for Africa) by the Agricultural Bank of China (50%); Société de Participation des Actionnaires Privés Congolais (21.5%); Société Nationale des Pétroles du Congo, SNPC (15%); the Congolese state (12%) and Mag Minerals Potash Congo (1.5%). Construction works will be executed by China State Construction Engineering. This bank intends to hire 200 agents over 5 years.	30 billion CFA	2016
16	Inauguration of the first cable-stayed bridge of the country on the road of the south cornice in Brazzaville by China Road and Bridge Corporation.	72 billion CFA financed by the Congolese state.	2016
17	China will support the project of a Civil aviation center within the Denis SassouNguesso university built by Chinese companies.	8.5 billion CFA.	2017
18	The Chinese company CIETS Industrie Sarl is going to invest in cashew nuts in Loudima, (Niari's department in the south of Congo).	53 billion CFA.	2017
19	Chinese donations for the future Congolese parliament's building during the visit of the Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, Qian Keming. Construction works will be executed by Jiangsu Provincial Corporation.	34 billion CFA.	2017
20	The Mayéyé's mining exploration permits in Lékoumou (South of the country) given to Zhengwei Technique Congo.	1.2 billion CFA.	2017
21	Kola-Banda's mining exploration permits in Niari (South of the country) given to Saison Zhong.	3 billion CFA.	2017

b: Chinese companies operating in the Republic of Congo are in red wording. All of the data used in this table above are coming from various E-journals and gathered by the online information website Africa time.

represents a global idea on Chinese achievements in Congo through the numbers of budgets, donations and investments. In addition, it also shows the evolution of their partnership and the place that China occupies in the Congolese economy nowadays.

According to these examples of cooperation above, we cannot deny the growing Chinese involvement and influence in the Republic of Congo. A truth that

could be applied to the entire continent. Despite the fact that African people began to intensify their ties with China in the 1900s, the Sino-Congolese cooperation has really taken off in 2007. However, for us, the number of foreign direct investments, donations, loans, imports, exports and other exchanges got improved from 2012 to 2013. Indeed, this period is characterized by great construction works launched by Congolese in order to sustain the development. Ipso facto, the two states successively realized many projects in the sector of buildings and public works.

The emergence announced in 2025 by the Congolese government is undoubtedly the leitmotif that pushed head states to spend a lot of money in big infrastructure. Nevertheless, this initiative could have worked if we did not have the world's oil crisis. The experts said that the price of Brent decreased from USD 110 to USD 35 per barrel between 2014 and 2016 (*Investir-Les Échos-Bourse, 2016*). This drop caused several troubles to oil producer and consumer countries in economic and geopolitical fields. Therefore, Congo was very affected because all of its exports are based on petrol exploration. Thus, due to this lack of economic diversification, the revenues of the Congolese state have been in difficulties from bankruptcy.

This is why China, the first international investor in Congo slowdown its participation within every area of the cooperation between 2015 and 2016. Some projects were paused and others were delayed or stopped. Businessmen became doubtful about the refund's capacities of a country with a debt corresponding to 77% of its GDP. In 2015, even banks such as China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation and Export-Import Bank of China were cautious concerning Congolese loan applications because of insolvency (*Nganzi, 2017*). After winning elections of 2016, hardly recognized by the international community, the Congolese President Denis SassouNguesso tried to fix the economic crisis of its country. So, with that, the openness of the Congolese economy became not only vital to ensure his political survival, but also necessary for the sake of local people.

It was within this framework that the Congolese President asked for Chinese help. He went to China for the fourteenth time. A state visit that was beneficial. The two Presidents made their partnership global and strategic. That is to say their exchanges will henceforth concern all sectors. Then, Congo was also declared pilot country of China such as Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia. It means that the country will be an important transit point thanks to its international seaport in the Gulf of Guinea (geostrategic oil exploration area located in Central Africa). In addition, many agreements of cooperation were signed and interviews with Chinese investors were organized to discuss the economic potential of Congo. An agreement about the Yuan convertibility was also initialed and signed to facilitate financial transactions between both countries, and another important agreement was based on the construction works of special economic zones.

In 2017, this diplomatic good will refreshed the relations between China and

Congo. Indeed, the strong desire of the Congolese government to cooperate with the International Monetary Funds in order to adjust its budget reassured Beijing. The visits of the Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, Qian Keming (钱克明) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi (王毅) in Brazzaville illustrate this renewed confidence. Finally, we can conclude that the Sino-Congolese bilateral cooperation is not declining, but it was just deteriorated by the global economic environment. However, from 1964 to 2017, is this the best model of cooperation? For us, the answer is “no”. This cooperation is young and needs to learn from its past mistakes for becoming bolder. Therefore, the real question might be focused on how to improve it?

At first sight, the Sino-Congolese cooperation just between states has shown its limits. In international relations, even if it is widely accepted that the state is the supreme international protagonist, we should recall that world is changing each day. So, we have multiple new players in this international stage which are more or less powerful than states. We could support this point of view with the first Chinese socialist concept based on the “Three World Theory” (三个世界的理论), a Maoist interpretation of International relations: hegemonic countries (namely with the two former superpowers, the USA and USSR); the capitalist Great Powers (Europe and Japan) and the third world (China and other poor aligned and non-aligned countries of the South). Being in the third group, the People’s Republic of China must intensively cooperate with the last two worlds to fight against the imperialism of the first world which is represented by the USA nowadays (Brailard & Djalili, 2016). Following this theory, define the Sino-Congolese cooperation such as a face to face debate only reserved to states is an ineffective approach. Obviously, many governmental and non-governmental organizations were created at the end of the Second World War with the goal to humanize head states’ decisions. The idea is not to disclose sensitive information, but to invite Congolese people during these meetings. Even if the local population could have a civil society, the importance of its participation still not be something granted. So far, everything that has been made between the two states is good, but more implication from the Congolese nation could make things better. It has already been proven that politicians’ attitude is more exemplary when their actions are public.

Secondly, proceeding like this would help the fight against the number one enemy of development: corruption. It is a scourge that does not allow local entrepreneurs to freely exploit the Congolese market to the fullest on equal terms with Chinese. Additionally, small businesses of the informal market are the first victims of the corruption. It means fiscal mismanagement and bribes as the unique way to progress in an old Congolese administration.

In the end, projects previously cited are not able to create a sufficient number of jobs on the Congolese territory. Furthermore, this situation triggered the brain drain and mass immigration of young talents looking for a better life abroad. A dangerous phenomenon because the youth is the economic lifeline of

any country. This is why the Congolese state role should not be only limited to construction works. It should push and teach these young people to entrepreneurship. In order to do it, they must hire competent professionals in their cooperation's offices and favor those who seriously studied in China. The enrollment of relatives is universal, but it is very harmful for the system when becoming a blind nepotism.

Beyond all of these arguments, we think that the responsibility in this cooperation should be common. The People's Republic of China could use its influence without interfering Congolese internal affairs. As a matter of fact, Chinese can share their experience in particular concerning corruption. The Chinese President Xi Jinping is well known for his anti-corruption campaign after being elected in the end of 2012. He established an efficient *zero-tolerance* approach toward corruption that allowed to punish *black sheep*. We are talking about those people who were rich because they used their position within Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to get abusive advantages. For us, time has come for Congolese patriotism to become the milestone of this cooperation. Of course, individual who loves his country works three times more than the cupid one. To go even farther in this argument, Chinese partners could do more expertise and further investigations about the real needs of Congo. Thus, they will only accept to finance projects able to create more sustainable wealth and jobs. We call it legitimate investments. China's efforts to reduce the number of its working forces on Congolese soil and to recruit more local people are great. Since 2012, technology transfers are numerous. In spite of this, the Congolese State should generate a work ethic properly defined for the Chinese companies which want to do their businesses in Congo. It includes, namely, contracts with good work conditions, health insurance, fixed salaries, but above all the respect of employees, whatever their function. Last point, it would be interesting for local small and medium-sized enterprises to have more visibility and access to projects. The competition is unnecessary at this level because they do not have the same financial means such as Chinese multinational companies.

With more confidence between the state and the nation, self-sufficiency could come true. We think it is imperative that the Congolese government formulate debt thresholds to avoid future generations to be puppets playing in what some researchers call "debt-trap diplomacy" nowadays (Chandran, 2017). As a reminder, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative reached by Congo in 2010, approved by the World Bank and the International Monetary Funds in order to reduce the country's debts overseas, is now obsolete. An example which shows that Congolese foreign policy needs to be modified. As long as peace and political stability last, Chinese investors will not ignore this land of opportunities. Nonetheless, if this cooperation is not rectified on time, economic emergence could take the shape of stagnation in 2025. We have the American dream. Recently, people are talking about the Chinese dream. Tomorrow, why not to consider a Congolese dream capable of bringing back talents? But to do

this, Congo may need the international community. The first step will be to polish its national image. The challenge is difficult but not impossible as long as each partner collaborate in *Unity, Labor and Progress* (Motto of the Republic of Congo).

5. Conclusions

Since 1964, Congo suffered from several civil wars and went through numerous periods of political and economic instability. During all of these years the People's Republic of China remained a trustful friend. 53 years later, bilateral cooperation between the two states has gradually evolved to be a model for South-South relations. After becoming its first commercial partner, the Middle kingdom sustains now a global strategic partnership with Brazzaville. The two governments are improving the living conditions of the Congolese population. In return, China earns the right to import raw materials and export its manufactured products to Congo.

Mostly economic, interactions about the two states reached other domains of development. The country is modernizing and everybody seems to be a winner. However, this cooperation is not totally equal, but it is more dynamic and beneficial than maintained relations with old partners such as France. It is also flexible and without political interference. Therefore, the Achilles heel of this union could be the Congolese government which doesn't have a long-term proper foreign policy. With the data that we used in this article, it clearly appears that the Republic of Congo suffers from a lack of a solid strategy concerning Sino-Congolese cooperation. In fact, Chinese aid could be the most important medicine for healing Congolese poverty, but side effects could also rise if corruption and mismanagement present in the country are not tackled in time.

China should guarantee the legitimacy of its investments. This is to say, "win-win cooperation" could be fully effective, if only Chinese stopped having a blind cooperation with Congolese heads. They could set up some conditions for the purposes of redistributing wealth across the territory. If China understood that being internationally open is good for the interest of its future generation, then, Congolese interests generated by this cooperation remains ambiguous. Indeed, the country has the Congo River, the second biggest in the world after the Amazon; the country's biodiversity is incredible; the country is the sixth oil producer in Africa and the thirtieth in the world ([US. Energy Information Administration, 2016](#)). Nevertheless, half and maybe more of the Congolese population lives below the USD 1 per day poverty line. Therefore, we have a good example of a rich country with poor people, a Congolese paradox on the scale of Africa.

In 2018, the seventh ministerial conference of Forum on China and Africa Cooperation will be held at Beijing. An opportunity for Congolese state, African states and Chinese state to discuss their relationship. In this regard, all of these head states should only bear in mind one question: how could we improve the

Sino-African cooperation to be more proletarian in the 21st century?

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