China’s Increasing Engagement in Africa: Opportunity and Futurisk for DRC’s Sustainable Development

[Engagement Croissant de la Chine en Afrique : Opportunité et Futurisque pour le Développement Durable de la RDC]

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Abstract
This paper aims to explain and demonstrate why China’s increasing engagement in Africa presents itself as both “opportunity” and “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development in this new era of globalization. Indeed, combined with DRC’s assets, potential and problems, China’s increasing engagement in Africa presents itself as both “opportunity” and “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development. An “opportunity”: because of its substantial nature in Africa, its pressure to increase formal African exports, demand and prices for raw materials, and its push towards the industrialization and economic diversification of African countries. A “futurisk”: because of the combined effects of two major variables — endogenous and exogenous — respectively “DRC’s political governance” and “conservatives-progressives competition” for the control and supply of DRC’s raw materials. The combined effects of these two variables project four types of traps, “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development, namely: “resource’s trap”, “dependency’s trap”, “debt’s trap” and “production-environmental degradation’s Trap”. And the desirable future for DRC will depend on the effectivenes of its “internal balance” vis-à-vis the rest of the world, before it thinks about its “external balance”. This should pass through the establishment at the heart of its management a “good political governance”, whose practical essence should follow the definition of model “C. DPW. P. H. E. R. T. E. E”.

Keywords: China’s increasing engagement in Africa, DRC’s sustainable development, Opportunity, Futurisk.

Résumé [French]
Ce papier se propose d’expliquer et démontrer pourquoi l'engagement croissant de la Chine en Afrique se présente à la fois comme « opportunité » et « futurisque » pour le développement durable de la RDC dans cette nouvelle ère de mondialisation. En effet, combiné aux atouts, potentialités et problèmes de la RDC, l'engagement croissant de la Chine en Afrique se présente à la fois comme opportunité et « futurisque » pour le développement durable de la RDC. « Opportunité » : à cause de sa nature substantielle en Afrique, de sa pression que fait augmenter les exportations formelles africaines, les demandes et les prix des matières premières, et de sa poussée vers l’industrialisation et la diversification économique des pays africains. « Futurisque » : à cause des effets combinés de deux variables majeures — endogène et exogène — respectivement « la gouvernance politique de la RDC » et la « compétition conservateurs-progressistes » pour le contrôle et l’approvisionnement des matières premières de la RDC. Les effets combinés de ces deux variables projettent quatre types de pièges, « futurisque » pour le développement durable de la RDC, à savoir : "pièce des ressources", "pièce de la dépendance", "pièce de la dette" et "pièce de la production-dégradation environnementale". Et le futur meilleur pour la RDC dépendra de l’efficacité de sa "balance interne" vis-à-vis du reste du monde, avant qu’elle pense de sa "balance externe". Cela devrait passer par l’instauration au cœur de sa gestion d’une "bonne gouvernance politique", dont l’essence pratique devrait suivre la définition du modèle "C. DPW. P. H. E. R. T. E. E".

Mots-Clés : Engagement croissance de la Chine en Afrique, Développement durable de la RDC, Opportunité, Futurisque.
Introduction

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the four corners of the African continent, "new geopolitical-strategic" trends and mutations are increasingly being created. This marks the path to a new era of globalization on the African continent. A strong dynamism ostensively driven by China's increasing engagement on the continent. The engagement that is increasingly strengthening Sino-African relations in general, and of China with individual African countries in particular. But China's engagement in Africa is not new. It's from the distant past1. Its famous concrete manifestation is expressed via the exploration made by Zheng He2. After a very long break in relations3, the Bandung conference served as a framework for its stirring4. But relationships that were more tinged with ideological connotation5, of struggle against imperialism, colonialism and all forms of Western hegemony6. Rather with the opening up policy and reform under Deng Xiaoping's authority in 19787, China's engagement in Africa was beginning to move away from ideological considerations to those related to trade. And just after the first Forum on Sino-African cooperation (FOCAC)8, China's engagement in Africa took a different path, one of ever-increasing growth9. And this engagement — through increasingly strengthened Sino-African relations and with the new changes in the international structure — presents itself both as an “opportunity” and a “futurisk” for Africa’s sustainable development in general and of various African countries in particular. And one of these African countries is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) — a major heavyweight in Africa, but at the foot of clay — known for its famous paradox of the resource curse10. It is certainly no exception. And the question here is to ask then: but why? Why can China's increasing engagement in Africa present itself as both “opportunity” and “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development in this new era of globalization?

Already, much has been written about China's increasing engagement in Africa. It has been the subject of studies by various scholars from all over the world that I would not have mentioned here. But what we can retain here is that these studies on the issue are marked by different interpretations according to the point of view of scholars, media as well as political leaders who address the issue. By ricochet, two opposing theses (optimistic and pessimistic) are created taking into account the opinions and arguments of each other. According to some scholars, media and many African politicians (optimists), China’s increasing engagement in Africa is a form of relief. An opportunity to have a new economic partner different from that Africa has experienced in their distant and immediate histories, with poor results known by all11. They believe that these new China-Africa engagements could also serve as a lesson for traditional African donors such as: World Bank and International

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2 Zheng He was a Muslim descendant of Yunnan. He was one of the greatest maritime explorers of his time. Between 1416 and 1423, Zheng made seven voyages, two of which reached East Africa (at the coasts of Somalia, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe and Kenya). Lan Taylor, The Forum on China-Africa cooperation, USA, New York, Routledge Global Institutions, 2011, p.2. Despite the might of his naval fleet, Zheng’s expeditions did not take advantage of the obvious asymmetry in power, seizing no slaves and leaving no colonizers. If he left a legacy, it was one of trade, stimulating a local market for Chinese silk and porcelain. Sarah Raine, China’s African challenges, London, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009, pp.13-14. This is expressed what I call “China’s past soft engagement in Africa”, which constitutes to date the fundamental vision of the Chinese presence in Africa unlike that of Western powers.

3 Lan Taylor, China’s New Role in Africa, Colorado (US), Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009, p.2. Following the adoption of a closed-door policy by the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), China-Africa became negligible.


5 Donna Zhang, "The political leadership of Mao Zedong", in Journal of contemporary educational Research, 2018, Volume 2; Issue 4, 2018, pp.28-33.


8 The first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was organized in 2000. And since then it has been held every three years alternately in China and Africa. The forum has been the most successful to date and has become the first most important forum for almost all African countries. Lan Taylor, The Forum on China-Africa cooperation, Op.cit.


http://www.ijmsbr.com
Monetary Fund, who’s economic or development aid policies are often seen as being based on paternalistic and moralizing discourse, tinged with masked imperialism. In contrast, some predominantly western scholars, medias and leaders (pessimists) argue that China’s increasing engagement in Africa is a form of neo-colonialism. For them, China only seek to meet its energy needs, its supply to other African’s raw materials in order to guarantee its economic growth and the sale of its products in African markets. They also believe that China's growing involvement in Africa risks undermining the continent's democratic process and worsening the continent's economic and financial situation. Unfortunately, these two theses focus more on general considerations and do not really go into specific analyses in depth, taking into account the different specificities of various African countries. Africa is one, but certain realities within it differ from one country to another. These realities are anthropological, geographical, geological, political, sociological... And the implications of China's increasing engagement in the continent may well differ from one country to another. It is therefore better to analyze case by case, from one country to another.

However, beyond these two theses pinned above, in the logic of a strategic approach, this paper proposes to explain and demonstrate successively some unspoken aspects of China's increasing engagement in Africa. It focuses specifically on the “opportunity-futurik scenarios” for DRC’s sustainable development in this new era of globalization. In this paper, “China's increasing engagement in Africa” expresses its growing cooperation and attachment with African countries through the hyper-revival of its activities — political-diplomatic in general and economic-financial in particular — throughout Africa. And “DRC’s sustainable development” is defined as DRC’s development that can meet the "well-being" of its current generations without compromising the ability of its future generations to meet theirs.

With the concept of “well-being”, this paper wants to make the concept of "sustainable development" more or less concrete. So that it can be aimed at a dynamic economy, full employment, high education level, health protection, easy access to food, decent housing, social and territorial cohesion, as well as environmental protection... This will implicitly make possible the measurement of our dependent variable — DRC’s sustainable development — via the dynamics of the following economic indicators: gross domestic product (GDP), per capita income, economic growth rate, industrial technology's development and trade volume.

Why Opportunity?

Here, “opportunity” is understood as a favorable circumstance. Four main points are sketched out here in succession, giving the reasons for this opportunity. The first explores the substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa. The second focuses on the increase in formal African exports. The third pinpoints the increase in demands and prices of raw materials. The fourth and last focuses on the industrialization and economic diversification.


In this paper, "substantial nature" implies the constitutive elements and/or the property that determine the essence of a social fact or phenomenon, and especially here that of China's engagement in Africa. This point first wants to briefly analyze and determine the substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa, and then explain and demonstrate the opportunity’s reason for DRC’s sustainable development.

Indeed, many scholars often use the concept of "soft power" as stigmatized by Joseph Nye in order to explain and determine the substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa. As we known, Joseph Nye Soft power’s concept is about getting what you want from others through acceptance of your culture, values and foreign policy, rather than coercion. A power that relies on the ability to persuade and attract others. It should be noted here that Joseph Nye soft power’s concept identifies three main sources, expressing its substantial constitution, namely: culture — because of the attractiveness it generates; foreign policy — because of the legitimacy it confers; political values — because of the respect it arouses both internally and externally. And also by distinguishing “soft power” to “hard power”— a material power of coercion essentially economic and military — Joseph Nye demonstrates that a country can only be powerful in the international arena by making a skillful combination of “hard” and “soft” powers in order to mobilize a power qualified then as “smart”.8

However, deducing the substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa in Joseph Nye soft power’s concept logic, will quickly come up against the limits of this concept. Because the constituent elements of China as a “soft power” in Africa will appear to be more extensive than those defined by Joseph Nye, who excludes the economic aspect for example. And also, "Chinese's soft power" in Africa cannot be correspond in this sense to a hegemonic aim of cultural influence in the same way as “American’s soft power”. It is therefore important to figure out how we can define it much more broadly. Thus, to this effect, in order to clarify the substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa, I have started from a comparative observation of the behaviors, decisions and actions of the major, medium and small powers in their contacts with the rest of the world. This just in order to conceptualize their different contacts (engagements) with the latter. To do this, I have always referred to Joseph Nye’s power typology. And I identify here five (5) facets of engagements that co-exist and explain the different relations shared by various global actors in the international arena. And their choice by the different global actors is dynamic, depends on the stakes of the moment. Let's pin them here: “hard” (“coercive engagement”, which can take on many shapes: political-diplomatic, economic, financial, military, technological, culture...), hence, the expression "hard engagement"; “soft” (“cooperative engagement”, which can also take on many shapes: political-diplomatic, economic, financial, military, technological, culture...), hence, the expression "soft engagement"; “smart” (combination of “hard” and “soft” engagements), hence, the expression "smart engagement"; "special hard" (“coercive engagement” with a very restrictive dose of cooperation), hence, the expression "special hard engagement" and "special soft" (“cooperative engagement” with a very limited dose of coercion), hence, the expression "special soft engagement". Thus, the choice by global actors of one or other facet to be applied in their contacts with the rest of the world in general and with Africa in particular, explicitly or implicitly determines the substantial nature of their engagements to the latter.

To this effect, China's engagement in Africa, for its part, more and more enters into the basket of "Soft engagement", because of its growing ideas for cooperation (political-diplomatic, economic-financial, culture, technology...) and hardly any of coercion in the region. And this engagement was intensified at the beginning of the twenty-first century and especially after the global economic and financial crisis of 2008, takes shape in a policy of mutually beneficial cooperation (“win-win”). That follow the logic of the megaproject of the Belt and Road Initiative and advocate the idea of peaceful development, tinged with the principles of peaceful

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Labeled South-South cooperation in developing countries and using more diffuse means than cultural, values or foreign policy in the strict sense; such as: foreign direct investment, trade, development aids... This what makes China today an essential trading partner, a major provider of foreign direct investment and financial loans to a growing number of African countries. By ricochet, this substantial nature of China's engagement in Africa awakens and opens up the cooperative paths and potentialities of African countries between themselves and with the rest of the world (see figures 4, 2). This nowadays is creating an excessive enthusiasm for ideas favorable to cooperation, passing through the various sub-regional organizations (see figure 1). Such is the case of the East African Community (EAC) — at the east African region — which in the past was dominated by insecurity and cacophony of all kinds. And nowadays is becoming one of the most dynamic sub-regional blocs on the continent both within and outside trade (see figure 1). That make up the region, revitalizing African intra-trade (see figure 2), and want transforming Africa to a powerful economic block with the principle of free trade as a springboard. This seeks to eliminate barriers to trade and investment, under the name of the African Continent Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), creating a wind of new dynamism on the continent.

Figure 1: Comparative Progress towards Economic Integration in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>DATE ESTABLISHED</th>
<th>FREE TRADE AGREEMENT</th>
<th>CUSTOMS UNION</th>
<th>SINGLE MARKET</th>
<th>MONETARY UNION</th>
<th>POLITICAL FEDERATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMU</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEN–SAD</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGAD</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 2: How China boosted Intra-African Trade (1992-2018)

Source: Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS).

24 They include: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Yuan Zhengqing and Song Xiaoqin, “The dissemination of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence”, The Journal of International Studies, n°05, 2015, pp.66-81.


And so, this new dynamism, which is increasingly being created, calls for peace (security) and stability throughout the continent to give way to intense and fruitful cooperation in the region. Even Rwanda, formerly in the deep cacophony and instability in the African great lakes’ region\(^{29}\), logically speaking, now wants peace in the region. This is in order to consolidate its new achievements and advances\(^{30}\) (see figure 3) with a view to its sustainable development.

**Figure 3: Evolution of Rwanda’s economic indicators**

![Graph showing economic indicators of Rwanda](image)

*Source: Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from World Bank’s reports.*

An opportunity for DRC, a potential victim of untimely instability, complex cacophony, wars and conflicts\(^{31}\) — counter-productive for its sustainable development\(^{32}\) — to turn its dirty page and block its main entrance door to its instability, to embrace peace and stability. The opportunity for the return of security and peace in its eastern part. This will lead to the improvement of its image both internal and external. With its assets and potential\(^{33}\), to be able to capitalize on this new wind driven by China's increasing engagement in Africa. And That will give way to huge investments, intense and effective cooperation favorable for its sustainable development in this new era of globalization.

### 2. Increase in Formal African Exports

In this paper, formal exports refer to the recorded sale with written accounting of raw materials on the international market. Indeed, trade plays an important role for the survival of African economies. Facing outward, these savings are more concentrated in the sale of raw materials\(^{34}\). But this sale is often hampered by the problem of black market.\(^{35}\) Unregistered exports, a shortfall in government revenue. While African economies sorely need these revenues for their sustainable development. Beyond the reason of poor governance, this black-market problem is often caused by the lack of strong competition on the international market. From the first colonial traces to the end of the twentieth century, African markets were ostensibly dominated by Westerners, the so-called "quasi-monopoly" of the continent's traditional partners. But with China's increasing engagement in Africa, from the beginning of the twenty-first century, competition is increasingly being created

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\(^{30}\) Mainly due to China's increasing engagement in Africa. As evidenced by the recent past visits of Chinese President Xi Jinping and the extremely wealthy Chinese Jack Ma, which of course promoted economic and financial cooperation.

\(^{31}\) Joseph Conrad, *Conflict minerals in the Congo: blood minerals and Africa’s under-reported first world war*, Louisa Carpenter Suffolk University, April 2, 2012, p.2.


in African markets. And this competition increasingly promotes transparency in the sale of African raw materials. Many buyers in fierce competition want minerals from the continent! This is what is increasingly driving Africa’s entry into international formal trade flows (see figure N°4).

Figure 4: How China boosted Sub-Saharan Africa’s Raw Materials exports (US$ billions)

As shown in the graph above, China's growing presence in Africa has largely contributed to the doping of Africa's formal exports with the rest of the world. Because China's increasing engagement in Africa has constituted a kind of weight that balances to the so-called “traditional African trading partners”. This has increasingly contributed to the creation of other market’s forms that presenting new opportunities for the significant entry of African exports to the formal market. A pronounced diversification of African countries' trading partners is the driving force behind the creation of this new market. And that explains in depth the continent's good growth performance since 2003. Mainly due to the rise in prices and demand of raw materials, as well as the decline of internal conflicts’ intensity in the continent.

However, like the cases of almost all African countries, DRC, extremely rich in soil and subsoil, is largely dependent on the exports of its raw materials on the international market. But unfortunately, informal exports of its minerals are at record high levels, reflecting a low rate of its formal production. In spite of improvement’s efforts observed since 2008 (see figure 5), which has also implicitly contributed to the improvement of its exports volume and its some economic (see figures 6, 7).

Figure 5: Evolution of the production volume of DRC’s main products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>Copper</th>
<th>Cobalt</th>
<th>Zinc</th>
<th>Diamond</th>
<th>Raw gold</th>
<th>Crude oil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tons</td>
<td>98585</td>
<td>15384</td>
<td>33784</td>
<td>28949</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>9099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>98585</td>
<td>15384</td>
<td>33784</td>
<td>28949</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>9099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>96391</td>
<td>17886</td>
<td>33809</td>
<td>2827</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>8816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>335066</td>
<td>42461</td>
<td>15465</td>
<td>20953</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>8365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>309181</td>
<td>56258</td>
<td>19636</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>9382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>497337</td>
<td>97693</td>
<td>9223</td>
<td>16963</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>8628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>499198</td>
<td>99475</td>
<td>14758</td>
<td>18598</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>8558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>649442</td>
<td>86433</td>
<td>10572</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4529</td>
<td>8545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>919588</td>
<td>76517</td>
<td>12114</td>
<td>17387</td>
<td>8429</td>
<td>8351</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1031859</td>
<td>72584</td>
<td>13418</td>
<td>15789</td>
<td>18978</td>
<td>8395</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1039007</td>
<td>83529</td>
<td>12602</td>
<td>12523</td>
<td>31791</td>
<td>8247</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1023687</td>
<td>68822</td>
<td>12587</td>
<td>30664</td>
<td>7235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table made by us on the basis of data from the Central Bank of Congo, Summary of Statistical Information, Kinshasa, January 2017.

38 This is mainly due to China’s increasing engagement Africa. This makes China as DRC’s leading trading partner.
Despite the improvements shown in the graphs above, much remains to be done. Just in a lapidary way, we can well see that the transport of its heavy minerals (cassiterite and coltan) is done by road (trucks) and airplane, to be transferred illegally to Rwanda. Where it's going to find its legality for becoming a made in Rwanda’s product. But a country that does not produce any. Moreover, there are other problems of illegal exports and sales of its minerals. In 2013, the United Nations group of experts estimated that 98% of DRC’s gold exports were illegal. This would amount to an amount ranging from US$383 million to US$409 million, a tax loss of US$7.7 million to US$8.2 million. Of the approximately 10,000 kg of gold extracted per year, only 180.76 kg of gold was officially exported.

As the Congolese’s government acknowledged in the first quarter 2014 activity report prepared by the chamber of mines, I quote: “Gold is the greatest challenge for conflict minerals, 80% of illicitly exported conflict minerals’ value is gold, which represents between US$500 million and 1.5 billion, and hundreds of thousands of artisanal miners”. The monitoring report on DRC’s economic

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and financial situation published in September 2015 by the World Bank contains a shocking passage, I quote: “International comparisons show that DRC is an atypical case, combining both high levels of rent and low revenue mobilization”. The World Bank wrote, I quote: “DRC is a special case compared to the rest of the world in combining one of the highest levels of rent in relation to GDP in the natural resources sector and one of the lowest levels of revenue”. Albert Yuma, head of GECAMINES, I quote: "Since the mining code was implemented in 2002, GECAMINES' various partners have exported more than US$48 billion and the state has received less than US$3 billion in net income - i.e. less the tax bonuses it has given...". For example: just in the year 2012 alone, DRC’s government missed around US$5 billion of its revenues in the natural resources sector.

And so, DRC should do much more to seize this opportunity offered by China's increasing engagement in Africa, to capitalize on it meticulously for its quasi-perfect entry into the formal market. With its necessary assets and potentialities, it will definitively be favorable for the increasing of its revenues — broadening its tax base and formal exports —beneficial for its sustainable development. Because this China's willingness to cooperate openly and officially for its raw materials’ supplies from Africa more and more creates another business environment in the continent. That is favorable for the entry of African countries into the formal market. As a result, African countries have a new partner from which they can rely to harmonize their exports. An opportunity that DRC has an interest in capitalizing on in its entirety by ensuring its quasi-perfect entry into the formal market. That will be beneficial for its reproductive economic growth and the revitalization of its economy — through increasing its formal production, trade capacities, formal revenues and exports — favorable for its sustainable development.

3. Increase in demands and prices of Raw Materials

Since China's accession to the World Trade Organization in December 2001, its exports of consumer goods and imports of raw materials have increased dramatically. This has led to a significant impact on the respective supply and demand for its products. On the world stage, the prices of consumer goods such as: clothing, toys and electronics, are falling relative to other consumer goods and services, while relative prices of commodities such as: oil and metals, are rising. China's emergence and its increasing engagement in Africa have had an even more dramatic effect on the global metals market than on the oil market (see figure 8). Already before the global recession of 2008, the increase in China's demand has ostensibly contributed to the surge in commodity prices (see figures 8). Oil prices peaked in mid-2008 at nearly US$150 and copper prices increased more than threefold over the period 2002-08. Between 2001 and 2006, metal prices almost tripled, with China accounting for more than half of the increase in international demand for key metals such as: aluminum; copper; nickel; cobalt; coltan; steel, etc. And this upward trend has continued well (see figures 8). Although its mining sector of respectable size, its production is not sufficient for its reproductive growth. This

45 Générale des Carrières et des Mines (GECAMINES) is DRC's commodity trading and mining company. It is a state-controlled corporation founded. GECAMINES is engaged in the exploration, research, exploitation and production of mineral deposits including copper and cobalt. It is one of the largest mining companies in Africa, and the biggest in DRC. And it sits on the world's greatest deposit of cobalt and has some of the world's largest deposits of copper.
strongly explains its excessive demand for raw materials around the world (see figures 9). That is one of the reasons of its increasing engagement on the African continent. And clearly contributes not only to the increase in the volume of world trade in general and of Africa in particular (see figures 9), but also to the rise of raw materials prices on the international market (see figures 8).

Figures 8: How China Raw Materials ‘Demands boosted Raw Materials' Prices

[Graphs showing trends in raw material demands and prices]

Source: Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS).


[Graphs showing trends in global and African raw material trade]

Source: Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS).
And moreover, this China's demand for raw materials’ supplies continues to increase these days with the emergence of the new global stakes turning around the energy and digital transition. Specially in the automotive sector where China dominates the production of electric vehicles to date. And with its project of made in China 2025, its demand for raw materials for this purpose is still on an upward trend. Once again, one of the reasons for its growing presence in Africa. This will once again ostensibly boost the prices of various raw materials related to these purposes on the international market. And more than that, China’s increasing engagement in Africa is increasingly raising a climate of competition in the African market for the beneficial sale of African raw materials. Western countries, known as traditional partners of the African continent, no longer have a monopoly or quasi-monopoly in the purchase of African raw materials. From now on, China has become one more buyer on the African market. Above all, it has become a sizeable and highly competitive buyer, boosting not only demand but also the prices of various raw materials on the African market. This is clearly explained by the famous law of supply and demand.

An opportunity for DRC, a geological blessing, known for the different raw materials’ reserves that abound in its territory. It contains about 80% of world's reserves of columbite-tantalite (coltan, a combination of minerals used in mobile phones and computer circuits): around 60 to 70% of world's reserves of cobalt according to the United States Geological Survey, a raw material used in metallurgy, nuclear chemistry and battery manufacturing; 10% of world's copper reserves; 30% of global diamond reserves, including other minerals of all kinds such as: tin, nickel, zinc, germanium (used in advanced electronics), uranium, manganese, gold, silver, oil, gas... With the increase in demand and prices of various raw materials as pinned above, an opportunity that DRC should capitalize on! This will allow it to replenish the pockets of its public revenues, by selling its minerals at the right price, but also broadening its tax base and receipts, which will be of course favorable for its sustainable development.

4. Industrialization and Economic Diversification

By reading and re-reading the various works of the economic development thinkers, industrialization is identified by many as the ultimate path from an atrophied economy to a dynamic and modern one. Indeed, China's increasing engagement in Africa is ostensibly focus on trade, investment and financial sector. The Chinese’s foreign direct investment (FDI) is constantly diversifying and increasing on the African continent (see figure 10). While the oil and mining industries still dominate, financial services, construction and manufacturing now account for half of China's engagement to Africa. Chinese’s banks support large-scale infrastructure investments on the continent and more than 10,000 Chinese companies are currently operating in Africa. In recent years, Chinese’s investment has also focused on mergers-acquisitions and the relocation or development of manufacturing companies owned by Chinese interests on the continent. While investment in Africa has

http://www.ijmsbr.com
opened up new opportunities for Chinese firms, African countries are benefiting from it, thanks to the associated transfer of skills and technology\textsuperscript{62}.

\textbf{Figure 10: Evolution of China’s FDI in Africa (US$ Billions)}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure10.png}
\caption{Evolution of China’s FDI in Africa (US$ Billions)}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Source:} Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from China Africa Research Initiative.

Moreover, Chinese’s FDI has become an important source of job creation in Africa, with some companies having opened local subsidiaries, particularly in labor-intensive manufacturing industries\textsuperscript{63}. And one of the most interesting things is that in the face of increasing competition and costs in China, combined with an increasingly skilled Chinese workforce, more Chinese companies are expected to outsource labor-intensive manufacturing operations\textsuperscript{64}. African countries could attract these flows! And also, in the third summit of the Forum on Sino-African Cooperation, China highlighted a number of measures for the creation of special economic zones\textsuperscript{65} in Africa, which could significantly contribute to the industrial development and economic diversification of various African countries. The rules governing these zones are likely to vary from country to country, but most should create a more liberal environment both for Chinese’s investors and others. These rules included: tax breaks, duty exemptions, less stringent labor laws, low-cost land, miscellaneous services and massive infrastructure investments, especially in transport and power supply within these areas and in relation to ports and regional markets. Moreover, without forgetting here Chinese’s development aid, which is constantly increasing on the African continent (see figure 14).

An opportunity for DRC, suffering from a wobbly — mono-productive and extroverted economy\textsuperscript{66} — who’s its production is more focused on the extractive sector — to raise its level of industrialization and move towards the diversification of its economy. As figure below shows the evolution of its GDP structure, which the secondary sector remains weak and reflects the low level of country’s industrialization.


Figure 11: Evolution of DRC’s GDP structure from 2000-2016 (%)

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<td>Agriculture, forestry, livestock, hunting and fishing</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.4</td>
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<td>Extraction</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>17.8</td>
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<td>Manufacturing industries</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
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<td>Other manufacturing industries</td>
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<td>Buildings and public works</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>Trade</td>
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<td>10.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<td>Transport and telecommunications</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
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<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
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<td>10.3</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Administration Services</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes on products</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP at market prices</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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Source: Table made by us on the basis of data from Annual report 2016 of Central Bank of Congo, Kinshasa, 2017b.

DRC, with its assets and potentialities — ranging from its geostrategic position in the heart of Africa to its geological potential — having a total of 9 border countries and an area of 2,345,410 km² 67. That makes it the second largest country in Africa and the first in Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of territorial size. Its population is now estimated at more than 79 million inhabitants 68, which should make it one of the largest African markets. Extremely rich in soil and subsoil as already pinpointed above, but it has also a gigantic hydroelectric potential 69.

68 Liliane Langevin and all., Democratic Republic of Congo 2018 Conflict Risk Diagnostic, Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, pp.1-10.
69 Estimated at 100000 megawatts (MW), but less than 2600 MW is currently in operation. Democratic Republic of Congo Ministry of Hydraulic Resources and Electricity, “DRC expression of interest to participate in SREP”, in https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/meeting-documents/drc_eoi_0.pdf (accessed the 17th November 2019).
i.e., one third of the continent's potential. And above all, the second largest green lung on the planet, 60% of its surface area is covered with forests. It offers several investment assets in the agricultural sector from production to marketing, with more than 80 million hectares of arable land. And less than 10% of which is currently under cultivation. Its diverse climate, supported by a large hydrographic network, should allow it to practice a wide range of agricultural speculations. Its irrigation potential is estimated at 4 million hectares. But currently, this practice is still modest. Its grassland and savannah areas are likely to support a breeding of more or less 40 million head of large livestock. Located in its parts of the Atlantic Ocean, its fishing potential, is estimated at 707,000 tons of fish per year. With China's increasing engagement in Africa, above all with the new global stakes turning around the energy and digital transition, DRC has before it a great opportunity to capitalize on! An opportunity for it to become the first future destination of large-scale processing industries, practically in various societal fields. Situation that will allow it to benefit implicitly from technology transfer. That will lead to its effective industrialization — the transformation of its economy — and to the diversification of its exports. This of course will contribute to the reduction of its excessive dependence on the outside world. But more importantly, by recovering its food sovereignty, so much desired and essential for its sustainable development.

**Why Futurisk?**

Here, “futurisk” is understood as an undesirable future. China's increasing engagement in Africa is increasingly creating China-DRC mutual rapprochement. This rapprochement is mainly due to China's search for raw materials supply, and of DRC’s search for its raw materials sale and also to benefit from Chinese’s aids and investments. And This China-DRC mutual rapprochement’s logic, combined with two major variables — due to both endogenous and exogenous effects — presents itself in itself as a futurisk for DRC’s sustainable development. Endogenous effects: coming from “DRC’s political governance”, which through its evils, will undermine the state's ability to capitalize on the opportunity offered by China's increasing engagement in Africa, to minimize, contain, avoid and jump from afar to the futurisk — counter-productive — for its sustainable development. Exogenous effects: coming from the competition for the control and supply of DRC’s resources between “conservatives” and “progressives”, here represented respectively by United States and China. This competition is becoming more and more pronounced with the new global stakes turning around the energy and digital transition. In the sense that the accumulation of strategic and necessary resources revolving around these new global stakes is becoming more and more the priority of the various global players, including United States and China. DRC, because of its weaknesses, this “conservatives-progressives competition” risks of being counterproductive for its sustainable development. With these two major variables pinned above, DRC risks of being caught up by four (4) types of traps, futurisk for its sustainable development. These traps are not new! Already, DRC, throughout its political-administrative and economic-financial history,


34 In addition to this, there is the pursuit of the 'One China Policy', which consists of promoting the unity of China as a whole, including Taiwan. And to a certain extent, let's also add the search for an outlet.

35 This also includes the supply of basic necessities at low cost and diplomatic support from China, especially at the level of the United Nations Security Council.

36 Because of their tendency to avoid changes or modifications to the existing global geopolitical balances (especially those that may lead to their absolute elimination from the interest’s game).

37 Because of their pushes for change or modification of the existing global geopolitical balances (these pushes take several forms, namely: ideological, institutional, financial ...).


has been able to fall into almost all of these traps in one way or another. First of all, it's the “resource’s trap”. Second, it's the “dependency’s trap”. Third, it's the “debt’s trap”. And finally, it's the “production-environmental degradation’s trap”.

1. DRC’s political governance

In this paper, “political governance” refers to the exercise of public authority in the management of economic, financial, political, administrative, social, cultural…affairs at all sectors and levels of state’s life. And so, the quality of this “political governance” enables a State to benefit from the opportunities offered and to minimize, avoid, contain and jump from afar at any risks, futurisks — counter-productive — for its sustainable development. This is how a state can ensure its harmonious survival. But let us insist here that this quality of political governance is not only about how state governs. Rather, it is also about achieving results. It would be a curious “good political governance” if it is considered good in practice according to established principles, but with poor results! For a state concerned with promoting its sustainable development, “good political governance” should therefore also be a governance that effectively leads to its development. And DRC, like any other state, is no exception to this requirement.

But unfortunately, DRC’s management is characterized by a “poor political governance” that puzzles its own citizens! Despite efforts to improve its governance, “DRC’s political governance” scores are among the lowest in Africa. On the Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2018 (IIAG), DRC ranks 47th out of 54 African countries, with an overall governance score of 32.1 out of 100. The Governance Indicators, published by the World Bank on the basis of six criteria (civic responsibility, political stability, government accountability, regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption), also rank DRC as one of the last in Africa in terms of governance’s quality. According to the 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International, DRC ranked 168th out of 180 countries. That indicates that corruption remains widespread in the country. Corruption in DRC is a complex interdependence! In addition to this corruption, misappropriation of public funds has become a survival strategy for most political leaders. This situation undoubtedly seems to be the main determinant of the difficulties that affected the normal functioning of its society, and transforms its opportunities into problems — counter-productive — for its sustainable development. As we can clearly see the correlation between its population’s impoverishment level and its political governance’s situation. Thus, showing the links between “poor political governance” and societal poverty. And this situation makes me think about "state's existential paradox" in DRC. A situation in which State is doing almost the opposite of what is expected of it in order to ensure the well-being of its population, and therefore for its sustainable development.

Its growing rapprochement with China, brought about by the latter’s increasing engagement in Africa, risks being counterproductive for its sustainable development. Because, already China, through its "soft engagement" in Africa, especially in accordance with the principle of "Non-interference in each other's affairs of countries, with an overall governance score of 32.1 out of 100. The Governance Indicators, published by the World Bank on the basis of six criteria (civic responsibility, political stability, government accountability, regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption), also rank DRC as one of the last in Africa in terms of governance’s quality. According to the 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International, DRC ranked 168th out of 180 countries. That indicates that corruption remains widespread in the country. Corruption in DRC is a complex interdependence! In addition to this corruption, misappropriation of public funds has become a survival strategy for most political leaders. This situation undoubtedly seems to be the main determinant of the difficulties that affected the normal functioning of its society, and transforms its opportunities into problems — counter-productive — for its sustainable development. As we can clearly see the correlation between its population’s impoverishment level and its political governance’s situation. Thus, showing the links between “poor political governance” and societal poverty. And this situation makes me think about "state's existential paradox" in DRC. A situation in which State is doing almost the opposite of what is expected of it in order to ensure the well-being of its population, and therefore for its sustainable development.

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82 From 2005-2015, DRC improved its governance. According to the 2015 World Governance Indicators (WGI), DRC scored 3.85 for government effectiveness (up from 2.93 in 2005); 6.25 for regulatory quality (up from 3.92 in 2005); 3.37 for the rule of law (down from 3.83 in 2005); and 3.81 for political stability and non-violence (up from 1.45 in 2005). DRC has slightly improved the principles of participation and accountability, from a WGI of 6.25 in 2005 to a WGI of 12.81 in 2015. According to the 2016 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, the same indicator has seen a cumulative increase of more than 12 points over the past decade - this double-digit gain is the highest the country has seen. In the fight against corruption, the country’s IGM improved from 4.39 in 2005 to 9.13 in 2015.
86 Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2019, p.3.
87 The famous judicial case of President Felix Tshisekedi’s Cabinet Director, Vital Kamerhe is a clear example.
88 There is a strong correlation between Transparency International's indicators and the Human Development Indexes. In this case, they each place DRC in the bottom ranks. DRC has not achieved any of its Millennium Development Goals. Until 2016, the country ranked 176th out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index.
other countries—a good and laudable principle—but combined with country’s political governance problem, risks once again turning into a nightmare for DRC’s sustainable development. This wouldn’t be new! China's engagement in Africa and its rapprochement with DRC are not the first or the only ones to be recorded in our modern history. In all previous engagements, those of western countries, political governance has always been the foundation. But also, in spite of its "homework policies", the various western powers’ engagements in Africa and their rapprochement with DRC have always resulted in a nightmare for DRC’s sustainable development. The country's poor governance is first of all blamed for this. Such was the case with the Belgian, American and French engagements from 1960 to the 2000s. They all ended up in fishtails. Is there a risk that this story will repeat itself over and over again? Despite the fact that China's engagement in Africa and its rapprochement with DRC are not always necessarily comparable with those of Western countries. But whatever the conditions and differentiations, the quality of political governance should always be the cornerstone for DRC’s sustainable development.

2. Conservatives-Progressives’ Competition on DRC’s Raw Materials

In this paper, competition is understood as the search by the global actors for the same thing in a given game or territory. This express here the rivalry’s idea between “conservatives” and “progressives” for the control and supply of both strategic and necessary resources that abound in DRC’s territory. A shadow of a geopolitical-strategic and economic war between "conservatives" and "progressives" is increasingly raising over the latter. DRC’s territory is not the only place where this competition is taking place. this conservatives-progressives’ competition is also taking place in different parts of the world considered necessary and strategic by both sides. Thus, especially because of the equation of the new global stakes—especially those turning around the energetic and digital transitions—and the ideas of potential shortages—the limits of the planet in terms of resources—and the strategies of certain countries that worries the various global actors. This in the sense of supply’s security, penetration and control of the various international markets, which increasingly creates the idea of “competitive globalization” rather than “cooperative globalization”.

And the question here is to what extent is it futurisk for DRC’s sustainable development? Where would the risk be for DRC’s sustainable development? Where will it come from? Indeed, this competitive trend is often a source of tension, crisis and conflict in weak areas being at the heart of the stakes and actors' game. And DRC has already fallen victim to this on several occasions. The best-known case is that of the conflicts, crises and cacophonies that occurred in the 1990s and 2000s over the African great lakes’ region. Coltan, cassiterite and various minerals that are abundant in its territory were well targeted. This was the expression of competition and confrontation between Anglo-Saxons and Francophones, at that time represented respectively by United States and France. The issue at stake was the control of the African great lakes’ region. And it is in the latter where DRC is located, particularly its eastern part immeasurably rich in natural resources. Another best-known case is the Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Two blocs—West and East—have vied for the expansion of their influence—geopolitical and ideological—throughout the world. A competition that was cold in the centers, but rather hot in the peripheries. The various territories

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under the influence of this competition have been at the mercy of various negative consequences — counter-productive — for their sustainable development.\(^96\) And of course, DRC has not been spared these consequences. Beyond the internal causes, I think here to the famous assassination of Patrice Emery Lumumba, the first DRC’s prime minister, accused of being pro-Soviet. But I also think to the Katangese secession of July 11, 1960 and the autonomy of South Kasai of August 8, 1960... All these were only counter-productive for DRC’s sustainable development.

However, with the “conservatives-progressives competition” on its territory, DRC risks once again suffering harmful consequences — counter-productive — for its sustainable development. Since the end of the Cold War, the “conservatives” — here represented by United States — had almost absolute control over DRC’s territory. This implicitly means almost absolute control over DRC’s raw materials. The “progressives” — here represented by China — came to shake up the “conservatives” just at the beginning of the twenty-first century, after the first forum on China-Africa cooperation and the global economic and financial crisis of 2008. But of course, China-DRC relations date back to 1960s, just after DRC’s independence. Shaken by the cold war period, these relations were cut off on the basis of ideological considerations, only to be re-established in the 1970s.\(^97\) At that time, these relations did not worry the “conservatives” too much.

But it was only in 2000 — the year of the first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)\(^98\) when China started to establish its new partnership with various African countries. And then United States began to feel threatened by China's presence on the territory of one of the world's richest mining countries.\(^99\) An arm-wrestling trend that only began to take shape just when DRC’s government opted to strengthen China’s presence on its territory. This by signing a major contract with a group of Chinese’s public companies, which should reach over US$14 billion.\(^100\) But at the beginning of 2009, the IMF quickly tried to block this contract, arguing that DRC could not conclude a new arrangement with a preferential creditor while it still owes US$11.5 billion to Western creditors.\(^101\) This was the reason for the visit of IMF Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn, at that time, from 23\(^{rd}\) to 26\(^{th}\) May 2009 in DRC.\(^102\) Nevertheless, DRC’s government and Chinese investors have reaffirmed their determination to make this major investment. However, this contract has been re-evaluated. From now on, only US$3 billion is allocated to the mining sector and US$6 billion to infrastructure\(^103\). But it still remained China’s largest bilateral economic partnership and cooperation contract in Africa. In addition to this contract, it is better to add the signature of military partnership agreements between DRC’s government and China.\(^105\) While knowing that DRC holds the richest uranium deposit in the world, which the "conservatives"


\(^{97}\) China's ties with DRC date back to the 1960s and have grown steadily, with the exception of a slowdown during the period of decline of the Congolese state in the early 1990s. Discreet technical cooperation had already taken shape in the 1970s with a delivery of a series of works, including the construction of symbolic buildings in Kinshasa, such as the stadium and parliament. Relations have taken a new turn with the political transition from 2003 to 2006. Michel Lantumaye, « Le dragon et le léopard : un regard sur les relations sino-congolaises », in alternatives sud, vol. 18-2011, p.169. & David F. Shinn and Joshu Eisenman, China and Africa: A Century of engagement, Op.cit., pp.290-294.


\(^{100}\) On 17 September 2007, DRC government and a group of Chinese state-owned companies concluded a cooperation agreement between the two countries. The Chinese are committed to building 3500 km of roads, as many km of railways, road infrastructure, especially in Kinshasa, 31 hospitals with 150 beds and 145 health centers. All this for an estimated value of US$6.5 billion. This work will be carried out by Chinese companies (SINOHYDRO and CREC) and financed by EXIM Bank loans. The repayment of these loans is secured by the formation of a joint venture with Chinese majority ownership that will operate, produce and supply eight million tons of copper, two hundred thousand tons of cobalt and 372 tons of gold 9. Thus, the total would reach the sum of 9.2 billion. This work will be carried out by Chinese companies (SINOHYDRO, CREC).\(^{101}\)

\(^{101}\) This loan, which was intended to promote the operation of the mining sector, is expected to be complemented in early 2008 by an additional US$5 billion loan. Together, these loans have been securitized by giving China access to US$14 billion for copper and cobalt reserves. This aid was linked to an investment program consisting in entrusting SINOHYDRO and CREC) and financed by EXIM Bank loans. The repayment of these loans is secured by the formation of a joint venture with Chinese majority ownership that will operate, produce and supply eight million tons of copper, two hundred thousand tons of cobalt and 372 tons of gold 9. Thus, the total would reach the sum of 9.2 billion dollars, a sum equivalent to the principal of the total debt accumulated under the Second Republic. This loan, which was intended to promote the operation of the mining sector, is expected to be complemented in early 2008 by an additional US$5 billion loan. Together, these loans have been securitized by giving China access to US$14 billion for copper and cobalt reserves. This aid was linked to an investment program consisting in entrusting SINOHYDRO and CREC) and financed by EXIM Bank loans. The repayment of these loans is secured by the formation of a joint venture with Chinese majority ownership that will operate, produce and supply eight million tons of copper, two hundred thousand tons of cobalt and 372 tons of gold 9. Thus, the total would reach the sum of 9.2 billion dollars, a sum equivalent to the principal of the total debt accumulated under the Second Republic.

\(^{102}\) The loan related to the modernization of the mining production apparatus would be $3.2 billion. Thus, the total would reach the sum of 9.2 billion dollars, a sum equivalent to the principal of the total debt accumulated under the Second Republic. This loan, which was intended to promote the operation of the mining sector, is expected to be complemented in early 2008 by an additional US$5 billion loan. Together, these loans have been securitized by giving China access to US$14 billion for copper and cobalt reserves. This aid was linked to an investment program consisting in entrusting SINOHYDRO and CREC) and financed by EXIM Bank loans. The repayment of these loans is secured by the formation of a joint venture with Chinese majority ownership that will operate, produce and supply eight million tons of copper, two hundred thousand tons of cobalt and 372 tons of gold 9. Thus, the total would reach the sum of 9.2 billion dollars, a sum equivalent to the principal of the total debt accumulated under the Second Republic.

\(^{103}\) Nevertheless, DRC’s government and Chinese investors have reaffirmed their determination to make this major investment. However, this contract has been re-evaluated. From now on, only US$3 billion is allocated to the mining sector and US$6 billion to infrastructure. But it still remained China’s largest bilateral economic partnership and cooperation contract in Africa. In addition to this contract, it is better to add the signature of military partnership agreements between DRC’s government and China.\(^105\) While knowing that DRC holds the richest uranium deposit in the world, which the "conservatives"
control a long time ago. It was in the south-east of DRC at Shinkolobwe that the Americans imported at least 2,000 tons of uranium via Belgium, which have made possible the fabrication of the first atomic bombs — the "Manhattan project".\(^{106}\)

Moreover, this conservatives-progressives competition is already making pronounced inroads with the new global stakes turning around the energy transition — electric cars, wind turbines, solar panels… and digital — smartphones, computers, tablets, robotics\(^{107}\)… The world wants to switch to a new dependency — that of rare and strategic metals — namely\(^{108}\): Antimony, Beryllium, Cobalt, Coltan, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Indium, Indium, Magnesium, Niobium, Platinoids, Silicon, Rare Earths, Tungsten… Raw materials that are becoming more and more indispensable for the realization of a green economy and an ecological society in perspective. A priority objective pursued by several global players to date, including United States and China. And the minerals that DRC possesses, especially its cobalt, are once again at the heart of this competition. As Caspar Rawleshine points out, I quote: "There will be no Electric Vehicles (EV) industry without DRC’s cobalt. Without DRC, this ramp-up in EVs won’t happen"\(^{109}\). The most important thing is that China already controls the most important commercial transactions of this mineral. That is the US$2.65 billion it paid for the Tenke Fungurume’s mines in the Southeastern part of DRC\(^{110}\). As a result, China receives 96% (or 99% according to Bloomberg) of its cobalt in DRC\(^{111}\). Potentially, it’s going to make it as the world leader in electric batteries (electric vehicle), thanks to its control of 62% of the world cobalt market\(^{112}\). And this does not please United States! The latter are desperate to reverse this trend. The last elections of November 30, 2018 better illustrate this conservatives-progressives struggle on DRC’s territory. As well as the political divisions after these elections illustrate once again this competition. The "conservatives" have clearly shown their support for the opposition platforms, in particular: Lamuka and Cap pour le Changement (CACH). And the progressives did support the ruling platform: Front Commun pour le Congo (FCC). Even after the elections, this cleavage still continues, despite the fact that the “progressives” are trying to play a quasi-neutral game for the moment. Because their platform of support (FCC) lost the presidential election, but instead retains a parliamentary majority.

Thus, the combination of these two variables pinpointed above — due to endogenous and exogenous effects — reveals four types of traps, futurisk for DRC’s sustainable development.

1. Resource’s Trap?

The "resource’s trap”—"resource’s curse"\(^{113}\); according to the writings of several scholars\(^{114}\)— refers to a situation in which a country has an immeasurable natural resource sector both strategic and necessary, oriented towards exports, which should generate substantial public revenues, but paradoxically, breeds economic stagnation, political instability and societal poverty. An inverse relationship between development and the abundance of natural resources gives itself to this. Signing of contracts, sale of minerals in large quantities and at the right price, but which do not really contribute to the country’s sustainable development! It reflects the fact that some countries with both strategic and necessary natural resource endowment tend to grow more slowly

\(^{106}\) Comment le Congo sauva les USA", in http://www.lessofonline.net/articles/comment-le-congo-sauva-les-usa (accessed the 8 th March 2019).


\(^{113}\) Natural Resource Governance Institute, “The Resource Curse the Political and Economic Challenges of Natural Resource Wealth”, March 2015.

than expected in relation to the abundance of their natural resources and in many cases than natural resource-poor’s countries (see figures 3,7). This situation often catches up the failed, weak states, especially those without good governance, of course rich in natural resources. Such is the risk that is once again being projected for DRC with China’s increasing engagement in Africa. As several scholars think, Pierre Jacquemot, in his article published in Herodotus magazine in 2009, citing the statement of the Standing Committee of DRC’s Bishops (2008), note, I quote: "It is obvious that the natural resources of the Congo feed the covetousness of certain powers and are no stranger to the violence imposed on its population."\(^{115}\) And again, in the International Forum for Truth and Justice in Great Lakes Africa, which brought together personalities such as the Nobel Peace Prize winner (1980) Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, former US Congressman Cynthia A McKinney, President of the S'Olivar Juan Carrero Saralegui Foundation, and the Federation of Solidarity Committees for Black Africa. Following the activities of this forum, in his famous press conference in the Spanish Senate in 2008, the president of the Juan Carrero Forum states, I quote: "The rebels of the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), of the Tutsi general Laurent Nkunda, are the gendarmes of much more powerful groups; they act on behalf of those who oppose China's penetration anywhere in the Congo ..."\(^{116}\). With the quality of its “political governance”, as pinned above, and also combined with the “conservatives-progressives competition”, DRC risks once again falling into this trap.

2. Dependency’s Trap

This trap appears when the survival of any one state is excessively tied to another. It catches states that do not know how to diversify its partners and their production. By dint of being largely dependent on a single partner and a single source of wealth production, state becomes vulnerable afterwards! In time or not, it seems to be a potential victim of all the shocks, jolts and whims of state it depends on. Once again, the State that gets drunk on the superfluous revenues from the sale of its minerals, without thinking about the diversification of its production and its partners, nor about its future survival, is often caught in this trap. Such is the risk that DRC runs once again with China’s increasing engagement Africa. Living largely in the exploration and exploitation of its raw materials, DRC’s economic life is increasingly dominated by the mining sector. The latter is not yet focused on transformation, focusing more on the primary sector than the secondary one. This is fundamentally at the root of the country's mono-productive, wobbly and extroverted economy. Thus, more than 90% of DRC's exports are raw materials (minerals and oil). And more than half of its raw material exports are directed to China (see figure 12). DRC's mining sector remains increasingly dominated by the Chinese presence. Better still, only 20% of its imports come from China (see figure 13).

**Figure 12: China and the world: Raw materials imports from DRC in US$ thousand (1992-2018)**

![Graph](http://www.ijmsbr.com)

**Source:** Graphics designed by us based on our research data coming from World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS).


By ricochet, DRC’s economy remains ostensibly dependent both on the raw materials’ cycle evolution and on Chinese’s demand. This is not bad at all, but rather a risk for DRC to fall at any time into this dependency’s Trap.

3. Debt’s Trap

This occurs when the GDP growth of a given state is too low to repay its public debt. It is clear that the latter is one of the useful means for economic growth and the recovery of a state, but it should be used with care, and in accordance with certain rationality’s rules, within the financial orthodoxy. Some states abandon all rationality in the use of public debt in order to fall into this trap! This situation often catches up the States that fall into the wrong direction and use of debt. The most recent famous case is that of Sri Lanka with the Hambantota port's issue. With China, there is no need for a “homework policy” to be able to benefit from a debt! Which is a good thing. But it also risks turning the other side of the coin, especially for a country suffering from a political governance’s problem. Sri Lanka is a clear example of this. Even DRC, in the course of its history, has already fallen into this trap. Above all, expression of the worst debt burden left by Mobutu’s regime. Debts mainly from Western countries amounted to about $13 billion in 1998. Unimaginable, isn't it? With governance’s evils that Mobutu’s regime was gnawing away at, this is the way it should be! However, China’s increasing engagement in Africa is also reflected in development assistance. The latter is highly attractive African countries. Of course, they do, because they really need it to some extent. From 2000 to 2017, Chinese’s government, banks and contractors extended US$143 billion in loans to African’s governments and their state-owned enterprises. In the FOCAC held in Johannesburg in 2015, saw China pledge US$60 billion to Africa in the form of loans, export credits and grants (see figures 14). The US$60 billion pledged in 2015 was a crowd-pleaser (see figures 14), tripling the previous pledge of US$20 billion at FOCAC 2012. Moreover, during the FOCAC held in Beijing from 3rd to 4th September 2018, Chinese president Xi Jinping announced a further US$60 billion (see figures 14). This in total gives a sum of US$120 billion in order to promote economic growth in African countries.

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Large sums of money to be able to revive African economies, but at the same time present a risk for the latter to fall into the debt’s trap. Almost all African countries need these funds to boost their economies. But their "political governance" is problematic, hence the risk. The good news is that as of today, DRC is not yet in excessive debt to China. It was less than a billion US$ in 2017. Once in excessive debt, with its political governance’s problem, DRC risks falling into this debt trap once again.

4. Production-Environmental Degradation’s Trap

This trap can be observed through the impacts of productive activities on the environment. The main impacts associated with these productive activities are manifested in various environmental and social problems affecting forests, water resources, biodiversity and protected areas, agriculture and land use, pollution and climate change, followed by the consequences on human survival and health. These are catching up the countries that engage in industrial or artisanal productive activities that neglect environmental issues. And this is not new! Our globe in general is already suffering from this trap. The various international conferences on the environment demonstrate this better. In particular, the cases of this trap are legion throughout the world. The famous illustrations are those of situations found in cities in India and China itself. The high pollution that is constant in the cities of Ghaziabad, Hotan, Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, etc.\footnote{ConsoGlobe, Pollution atmosphérique : les villes les plus polluées du monde, in https://www.consollobe.com/pollution-atmospherique-villes-les-polluees-cg (accessed the 29th April 2020).}

However, with China's increasing engagement in Africa, DRC’s exports are steadily increasing (see figure 12). Implicitly, its productive activities are increasing. Productive activities that are concentrated in the mining, oil and forestry sectors. Although it has enormous natural potential including significant water resources, forests, fauna, flora and vast expanses of fertile land\footnote{République Démocratique du Congo, SOFRECO, Rapport final sur l’Evaluation Stratégique Environnementale et Sociale Sectorielle, Contrat Esess Promines n°04 – 006 / 2012, Mars 2014, p.68.}. But with its political governance’s problems, the environmental and social impacts of these industrial and artisanal production activities are likely to be worrying. It is already inheriting a disastrous environmental liability due to the past years of its productive activities without regard to environmental protection\footnote{Ibid.}. There is a risk for it to fall into this trap — to aggravate its current environmental situation — counter-productive — for its sustainable development.

Conclusion

Why is China's increasing engagement in Africa presented itself as both “opportunity” and “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development in this new era of globalization? Such has been the central question of the debate and discussion of this paper. The latter aimed to contribute to the existing literature on the subject and to
be one of the sources of DRC’s interpellation and awakening. This in order for it to be able to seize the “opportunity” offered by China's increasing engagement in Africa, and to minimize, contain, avoid and jump from afar to the “futurisk” — counter-productive — for its sustainable development.

The results we have obtained after debate and discussion throughout this paper clearly show that: “China's increasing engagement in Africa”, defined by the hyper-revival of its political-diplomatic and economic-financial activities on the African continent, is increasingly: creating a “China-Africa complex interdependence”\(^{123}\); reducing western influence and control on the African continent; creating an arm-wrestling match between "conservatives" and "progressives" for the supply and control of both strategic and necessary resources that abound in the different parts of Africa; creating China-DRC’s rapprochement; and with DRC's potential, assets and problems — a “geo-anthro-geological blessing” but at the foot of the clay — presenting itself as both “opportunity” and “futurisk” for DRC’s sustainable development.

— An “opportunity” because of its substantial nature in Africa — a "soft engagement", its pressure to increase formal African exports, demands and prices of raw materials, and its push towards industrialization and economic diversification of African countries.

— A “futurisk” because of the combined effects of two major variables — endogenous and exogenous — respectively “DRC’s political governance” and “conservatives-progressives competition” for the control and supply of DRC’s raw materials. The combined effects of these two variables project four types of traps, futurisk for DRC’S sustainable development, namely: “resource’s trap”, “dependency’s trap”, “deb’t’s trap” and “production-environmental degradation's Trap”.

And over here, the question is how about a desirable future for DRC? I believe that this will depend on the effectiveness of its internal balance vis-à-vis the rest of the world, before it thinks about its external balance. This should pass through the establishment at the heart of its management a “good political governance”. And the practical essence of which should follows the definition of the model "C. DPW. P. H. E. R. T. E. E.", i.e.: C as consciousness — political leaders and citizens must be aware on the country's situation in order to better decide for its best fate; DPW as Developmentist Political Will — the will to put at the heart of their decisions and actions the idea of sustainable development as the country's only priority; P as Participation — privileged bottom-up logic in the construction of the public policies; H as Humanity — given the sacredness of the human person, standards should be developed and applied for him protection and not to harm and insecure him; E as Equity — justice should be placed above all else in order to equalize all individuals without exception before the law; R as Responsibility — everyone without exception should be accountable for its decisions and actions.; T as Transparency — clarity and visibility in the management of public affairs without giving rise to corrupt practices…; E as Effectiveness — the achievement of established objectives; E as Efficiency — the rational use of state’s resources, without waste and unnecessary heaviness.

And beyond the establishment of this political governance’s model pinned above, in a strategic vision, I recommend to DRC:

✓ To restore state’s authority throughout its national territory with a view to restoring peace and security throughout the country, while supervising the informal sector, and the establishment of a modern and attractive tax and customs system by modernizing its current system;
✓ To set up a permanent structure for monitoring the impacts of productive activities on the environment and to think rationally about an ecological tax;
✓ To create specialized economic zones in order to attract more investment to its territory, which is favorable for its industrialization process and implicitly to its economy diversification;

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\(^{123}\) Complex Interdependence is a theory which stresses the complex ways in which as a result of growing ties, the transnational actors become mutually dependent, vulnerable to each other’s actions and sensitive to each other’s needs”. Waheeda RANA, “Theory of Complex Interdependence: A Comparative Analysis of Realist and Neoliberal Thoughts”, in International Journal of Business and Social Science, Vol.6, n°2, February 2015, pp.290-297.

\(^{124}\) Model designed by us on the basis of our research and analysis.
To integrate the East African community into the logic of boosting its external balance, through the dynamism of this community to date, which will lead to the strengthening of cooperation in the African great lakes region that will reduce the risks of its destabilization, which always pass through its Eastern part due to the concentration of both strategic and necessary resources that abound in the region;

To activate a "developmental diplomacy” with its various partners and in different organizations both universal and interregional, as well as regional and sub-regional, in the sense of diversifying its partners and ensuring its harmonious survival.

It is here that we want to put an end to this paper. But of course, we do not pretend to have addressed all the essential points of this study. This paper did not go into great depth on certain economic demonstrations following other bases of quantitative analysis. I strongly believe that further studies are welcome and necessary to address the issues that I have left fallow. These issues include those related to the in-depth analysis of the Sino-Congolese contract, the continuous evaluation of this contract, the debt overb

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