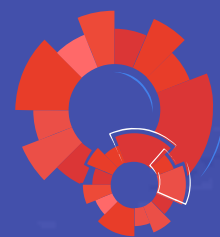


STRATEGIC NOTE

#MAKUTANO2025 - CONGO CONTRACTS : TIME TO MAKE A CHOICE



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IF WE DON'T, WHO WILL ?

This document was produced by **Innogen Consulting** on behalf of the Think Tank **Makutano**.

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INTRODUCTION

The centrality of the Democratic Republic of Congo in global geopolitical balances has almost always been an established fact, dictated by geography and geology. However, this strategic position imposes a new requirement: converting growing international attention into tangible economic dividends. This report does not aim to draw up a new inventory of national resources, but rather to document the transition from an economy of potential to a strategy of power.

Under the theme **“The Congo's contracts : Time to make a choice”** discussions at Makutano 2025 highlighted the imperative to break with the passive rentier model. The roadmap, supported by the government's vision and the Prime Minister's intervention, is based in particular on a threefold requirement for predictability, clarity, and consistency. It is no longer just a question of asserting sovereignty, but of building it through specific operational choices: Which partnerships should be prioritized? Which sectors should be accelerated? How can foreign investment be used as a lever for autonomy rather than dependence?

In this context, the talks highlighted: the need for stronger governance with a clear action plan despite a complex context marked by conflicts in the east; the transformation of the mining sector, previously dominated by the export of raw materials, into an integrated, high value-added industry; the still insufficient exploitation of the colossal hydrological energy potential, particularly through the Inga project, a key driver of sustainable development; and finally, the issue of connectivity and transport, which hinders competitiveness, particularly in the most isolated areas.

This report summarizes the main conclusions and guidelines that emerged from these discussions. It opens with an analysis of the government's vision

of governance, which places credibility, execution, and partnership with the private sector at the heart of a new approach to public policy. It continues with a detailed examination of sectoral roadmaps, outlining the reforms envisaged to transform mining wealth, mobilize energy potential, and open up the territory through efficient transport infrastructure. Finally, it explores how these different projects are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, giving shape to a resolutely integrated development approach, of which the Green Corridor project offers a tangible illustration.

Ultimately, the purpose of this document is to present, in a structured and accessible manner, the substance of the discussions and the resulting framework for action, to serve as a common reference for decision-makers and partners involved in the development of the DRC.

GOVERNANCE

A STRATEGIC READING OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE, FOREIGN POLICY,
AND STRUCTURAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF CONGO



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The state of governance in the face of complex realities

The Democratic Republic of Congo finds itself today, more than ever before, at a decisive turning point: a country that is scrutinized, anticipated, coveted, at the center of major geopolitical balances, but which must become more predictable, more transparent, and more consistent. The theme “The Congo's contracts: the moment of choice” fits perfectly with this pivotal moment, when it is no longer enough to assert potential; it must be converted into real, sustainable, and accelerated power.

This transformation raises a series of fundamental questions: Where are we really going? What are we going to accelerate? What are we going to stop? How can we transform immense potential into sustainable power? How can we establish economic clarity that reassures both investors and citizens? How can we make external partnerships true instruments of sovereignty, rather than factors of dependence?

The Prime Minister's speech, in the governance section, provides the political and operational response to this diagnosis. It is no longer just a matter of identifying weaknesses, but of clearly setting out the roadmap for a government operating in a complex context, marked by a war of aggression in the East and immense socio-economic expectations. This note aims to break down this vision into a coherent strategy, from the operational context to structural projects such as the Green Corridor, which embodies the new integrated approach to development promoted by the government.

Operational context

During their first eighteen months, the Suminwa I and II governments operated in a context that, on its own, could have paralyzed any reform efforts. The Prime Minister herself was keen to highlight this context in order to focus attention on the realities facing the executive branch.

The absolute security constraint

The aggression suffered by the DRC in the east of the country is not simply an adjustment variable in the government's equation, but rather a factor that is restructuring all budgetary and economic decisions. This reality imposes “very difficult, sometimes painful choices regarding the allocation of resources.” According to the head of government, the state must simultaneously finance the war effort to “ensure the defense and integrity of the territory,” bear the diplomatic costs of the peace process, and deal with the “humanitarian emergency to help thousands of displaced families.” This constant balancing act between guns and butter, between immediate security and long-term development, is the backdrop to all reforms.

The macroeconomic legacy

The second contextual challenge is psychological and economic. The Prime Minister forcefully reiterated a slogan that marked the presidential campaign and public opinion: “Dollar ekita.” Inheriting this situation, the current government has made the battle for the credibility of the CFA franc a central focus of its economic governance. This is nothing less than a battle for monetary sovereignty, a prerequisite for true economic independence.

Demographic and social pressure in the face of the imperative to employ young people

Finally, the government must deal with immense social pressure, driven by rapid population growth. With an estimated population of 120 million, 70% of whom are young people, the issue of employment is, in the words of the Prime Minister, “the most crucial.” She realistically points out that “the DRC employs approximately 1,200,000 people in the civil service” and that the state is at “saturation point.” This position acknowledges the fact that the welfare state as an employer is an illusion and that the future of millions of young Congolese depends on the government's ability to create an environment where the private sector, from large multinationals to small artisans, can thrive and hire. It is from this realistic observation that the philosophy of public-private partnership as the backbone of development stems.

Government vision

Faced with these challenges, the government's vision is based on strong ideas that break with past practices and chart a new course.

Mines as an accelerator, not as an end in themselves

The Prime Minister made a semantic shift by presenting mines as an “accelerator of our development” rather than the country's sole source of wealth. This crucial nuance means that strategic minerals (copper, cobalt, lithium, etc.) should no longer be simply exported to generate revenue, but should serve as a lever to trigger a broader industrial process. The aim is not to abruptly ban the export of raw materials, but to emphasize “a process that will add value to minerals.”

Diversification as a guarantee of sovereignty and stability

It is part of a broader vision of economic diversification. The head of government is categorical: “If we want to ensure the stability of our macroeconomic framework, we must be able to produce locally tomorrow what we import today.” She clearly identifies the cause-and-effect relationship between dependence on imports of basic necessities and the fragility of the trade balance and the Congolese franc. Diversification is, in turn, a question of economic sovereignty. It involves agriculture, as illustrated by the example of corn, where targeted actions have prevented a recurring crisis, and the development of processing industries. This diversification is accompanied by a geopolitical diversification of partnerships. The DRC has declared itself “open to continuing partnerships with Asia and China, while re-engaging in dialogue with the United States, Europe, and any other partner wishing to contribute to its development.” The head of government noted that the criterion is no longer the origin of the partner, but alignment with “the same vision, the same trajectory” focused on the well-being of the Congolese people.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) as a philosophy of public action

Perhaps the most significant paradigm shift in PPPs is the role given to the private sector. The Prime Minister stated unequivocally: “Jobs will be created by the private sector. But to do that, we need to work in partnership.” The role of the state is therefore being redefined: it must no longer act as an omnipresent economic operator, but rather as a regulator and facilitator. As a result, its mission is threefold: first, to implement reforms to create a “calm business climate”; second, to offer “a number of incentives” to enable businesses to operate properly; and third, “the obligation to put in place infrastructure” (roads, air transport, energy, etc.) which is the foundation of all economic activity. The PPP law is thus presented as the preferred tool for achieving this “win-win” collaboration.

The pursuit of credibility through execution and transparency

Finally, the government's vision is driven by an obsessive quest for credibility. The Prime Minister insists that “it is not enough to sign agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); we must actually move on to execution and implementation.” This credibility is therefore built through “transparency, accountability, and performance.”

Strategic reform priorities

This vision is broken down into a coherent and detailed set of reforms and steering mechanisms.

Axis I. Macroeconomic sovereignty & stability

Action / Specific reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale	Progress report / Monitoring mechanism
Stabilization and appreciation of the Congolese franc (Fc)	Affirm monetary sovereignty, rebuild internal confidence, and prepare for gradual de-dollarization	The stabilization of the CDF is a marker of international credibility and a requirement for sovereignty. It primarily benefits the majority of the population who live with CDF, rather than the dollar.	Result achieved : Stabilization for one year, followed by appreciation against the dollar. Follow-up: Weekly monitoring by the Economic Situation Committee.
Rationalization of public spending and ex post control	Maintain budgetary discipline and macroeconomic stability despite spending due to security constraints (war).	This allows for faster execution of expenditures while maintaining safeguards against misappropriation. Ex post facto control by the IGF is preferred in order to streamline government action without sacrificing accountability.	Implementation : In progress. Mechanism : Systematic checks by the IGF and arbitration by the Economic Committee.

Axis II. Administrative efficiency & fight against corruption

Action / Specific reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale	Progress report / Monitoring mechanism
Full digitization and interconnection of financial authorities	Reduce direct contact, eliminate false declarations, and optimize revenue collection	Mechanism : Interconnection of data from the DGDA (Customs), OCC (Railways), and OGEFREM (Maritime Freight). Justification: Cross-checking data will enable automatic detection of inconsistencies and fraud (e.g., an investor with an exemption making a false declaration). This will reduce opportunities for corruption and improve transparency.	Implementation: Currently being rolled out. Objective: To cover the entire administrative chain.

Action / Specific reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale	Progress report / Monitoring mechanism
Generalization of standardized invoicing for VAT	Making VAT effective and combating fraud.	The government believes that it has not yet exhausted the potential of VAT. Standardized invoices, with parameterized cash registers, will enable much stricter control and traceability of transactions, making the system fairer and more profitable for the state.	Implementation: Starting December 1.

Axis III. Public-private partnerships & Access to financing

Action / Specific reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale	Progress report / Monitoring mechanism
Implementation of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Act	Mobilize private expertise and financing to bridge the infrastructure gap (roads, energy, etc.).	The state alone cannot finance the necessary infrastructure. PPPs are presented as a “win-win” partnership for structural projects. This makes it possible to connect the country, open up producers, and create an integrated market.	Implementation: The PPP Act is currently being implemented.
Domestic debt treatment (USD 4-5 billion)	Restore domestic credibility and revive the local economy by clearing debts owed to businesses.	Plan : Set up “special financial engineering.” Justification: The government distinguishes between legitimate debts (which will be repaid according to a clearly defined plan) and fraudulent cases that have been “fabricated” and will not be honored.	Implementation: Currently being analyzed and structured.
Dialogue with the banking sector on SME financing	Facilitate access to credit at reasonable rates for small and medium-sized enterprises.	Problem identified : The DRC's “risk criteria” prevent loans at attractive rates. Desired solution : Joint development of solutions with banks. Digitalization and mobile money are seen as levers for bringing the informal sector into the banking system and expanding access to credit.	Mechanism : Discussions are ongoing between the government, the Central Bank, and the banking sector.
Structured quarterly dialogue with the FEC	Solve concrete business problems and improve the business climate in real time.	Commitment: The Prime Minister has committed to meeting with the FEC on a quarterly basis for direct dialogue, beyond technical meetings with ministers. Justification: This allows policies to be adjusted based on feedback from the field and maintains a climate of trust.	Commitment made: Announced during Makutano.

Axis IV. Economic diversification & structural projects

Action / Specific reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale	Progress report / Monitoring mechanism
Integrated energy policy	Increase coverage from 20% to 60% by 2030.	<p>Multi-faceted strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency : Importing electricity from neighbors to make up for the immediate shortfall in mines and cities. Long term : Encouragement of national and international developers through the law on liberalization of the sector. Support for micro-dam and solar projects through ANSER. 	Implementation: Simultaneous actions on all fronts.

Conclusion

While all of the above elements describe the mechanics of the new governance, it is in the Green Corridor project that its philosophy and ambition culminate. This project represents the physical embodiment of the Suminwa government's vision.

As explained by Christian Kahasha, advisor to the Head of State, the Green Corridor, created in January 2025, is a “tool that addresses this concern for connecting the interior.” It goes beyond compartmentalized sectoral thinking to embrace a holistic approach: it “combines nature conservation, economic development, security, and stability.” In this respect, it is the prototype of a new way of designing public policy.

Furthermore, it is the embodiment of economic diversification. It does not rely on mining, but on agriculture and forestry, aiming to create “500,000 jobs” and “produce and transport 1 million tons of food between the east and west.” The first achievements are already tangible, with the gradual rehabilitation of the RN4 and RN26 roads and the production of the “first bag of wheat planted and transported to Lubero and currently being transported to Kinshasa.”

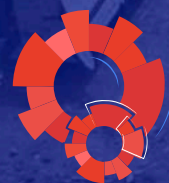
In addition, the Green Corridor “opens up the interior of the country.” By connecting the production basins in the east to the consumption centers in the west, it solves the problem of isolation and gives substance to the vision of a “connected DRC” that is dear to the executive duo. The pilot cocoa and oil palm plantations are designed as development hubs around which processing industries, logistics services, and entrepreneurial ecosystems will gravitate, all supported by public investment in roads.

Ultimately, the Green Corridor is a metaphor for the new social contract that the government is in the process of writing. It demonstrates that good governance is the most powerful means of unleashing the creative energies of the Congolese people, from east to west, north to south, to build a united, prosperous, and sovereign nation. Thus, the future of the DRC is not only at

stake in its subsoil, but also and above all on the surface of this land, which must be made fertile and connected once again, for the well-being of all.

MINING

HOW CAN CONGO'S MINING POTENTIAL BE TRANSFORMED INTO A REAL DRIVING FORCE FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION AND NATIONAL ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY?



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The mining sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo is at a turning point in its economic history. Despite its status as a geological giant (with the largest reserves of copper, cobalt, lithium, coltan, etc., minerals that are essential to the global energy transition), the country remains in a paradoxical situation: the massive export of raw materials (~90%) and the re-importation of added value. The objective of this #Makutano2025 session was to set the course for moving from potential to integrated mining power, synonymous with sovereignty and collective prosperity.

Table of fundamental challenges facing the Congolese mining sector

The panelists gave a candid assessment of the risks threatening the sovereignty and development of the Congolese mining sector..

1. Logistics and energy sovereignty still outward-looking

The DRC faces heavy dependence on its neighbors for exports and energy.

- Logistical dependence: Exports depend on Zambian corridors and South African ports, with the Lobito corridor (Angola) as the next option.
- Energy dependence: A significant portion of the electricity used in mines is imported from ZESCO (Zambia) and Angolan interconnections.
- Vulnerability: This dependence exposes the country to major geopolitical risks (tariff increases, prioritization of the neighboring market, revision of agreements) that directly threaten mining sovereignty.

2. A broken exploration engine

Most of the major mines currently in operation (Tenke, Kamao, Kibali, Deziwa, etc.) are based on geological deposits identified during the colonial era, making current production a “legacy.” The absence of any major new exploration programs exposes the country to “programmed decline,” as mineral wealth must be constantly renewed, financed, and discovered.

3. The crisis of confidence and governance

Social acceptance and perception among Congolese people are not favorable. A national survey conducted by Innogence Consulting in November 2024 reveals that 43% of Congolese people have a negative perception of the sector.

- Lack of local benefits: Congolese people see taxes and exports, but not yet prosperity and local transformation. Without social acceptance, the sector becomes a source of tension and mistrust.
- Weakness of nationals: Chinese companies dominate more than 70% of the sector, raising the question of the place of Congolese nationals (investors, geologists, junior companies, industrial champions) in their own sector. Sovereignty cannot exist if capital, expertise, and processing are in the hands of other actors.
- Governance deficit: Minister Louis Watum identifies corruption as the “ultimate cancer” that undermines the government's efforts and must be eradicated if the DRC is to become a “serious” country.

4. Social and industrial alerts

Two recent events illustrate the urgency of taking action.

- Mulondo tragedy (artisanal mining): The loss of more than thirty artisanal miners in Mulondo serves as a reminder of the collective responsibility to secure, formalize, and protect artisanal mining. More than two million Congolese (or even more than three million, according to Minister Watum) make their living from this sector, which is often controlled by foreigners through fraud.
- Chemaf case (Industrial): Chemaf's decision to halt copper production due to a lack of investor approval threatens more than 3,000 jobs and the DRC's credibility with global investors.

Strategic reform priorities: The action plan

Minister Louis Watum reaffirmed the government's commitment to implementing reforms.

Axis I. Strengthening state authority and governance

Action / Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Digitization and traceability	Reducing the impact of corruption and ensuring compliance of flows	Digitize the entire chain (collection, expenditure) and dematerialize the documentation bundle on traceability to combat international hypocrisy regarding the origin of minerals.
Fight against forced labor	Ensuring the eligibility of cobalt and other Congolese minerals on international markets	The government intends to maintain ongoing collaboration with international partners and ensure strict adherence to ESG standards.
Tax collection reform	Rationalize taxes and fees outside the one-stop shop	Put an end to the multiplicity of single points of contact (up to five for an export) and excessive levies that are outside the legal framework. The Minister of Finance himself has recognized the need for this rationalization.
Modeling and forecasting mining revenues	Ending “navigating by sight” and ensuring reliable transparency and predictability of revenues generated by the sector	An advanced reform is underway to model the sector's financial revenues so that the government can accurately predict what the sector actually generates. To achieve this, the state has selected 11 pilot mining projects for modeling based on feasibility studies, annual reports, and financial statements. This process has revealed a major weakness: the quality of the data submitted is often incorrect or incomplete. A huge amount of work is therefore required on the part of administrations and mining operators to ensure that data is submitted in real time and to put an end to creative accounting practices. Ultimately, this model will be made public to ensure complete transparency regarding the sector's financial projections.

Action / Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Tripartite responsibility agreement (Rights & obligations)	Establish a culture of accountability and performance by clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the government, operators, and local communities.	Strengthen the tripartite relationship between the State, mining operators, and civil society/local communities to ensure that each actor understands and respects its duties: the State must guarantee peace, security, fiscal stability, and strict enforcement of laws (including the fight against corruption) while providing the infrastructure necessary for industrial development; mining operators are required, in addition to injecting capital and technology, to conduct their business in a transparent manner, in strict compliance with national laws, and to ensure the effective transfer of knowledge; while civil society/local communities, as beneficiaries of the spin-offs, have a duty to demonstrate accountability for the use of funds and to take ownership of development projects.
Regulation and taxation of undeclared mining by-products	Ending export under-reporting and recovering an estimated \$10 billion in lost tax revenue per year.	The Center for Expertise, Evaluation, and Certification (CEEC) has uncovered fraud: mining operators only declare copper and cobalt, omitting by-products that are also exported. The tax revenue shortfall for the government is estimated at \$10 billion per year. The installation of the CEEC laboratory makes it possible to detect these undeclared minerals, such as osmium.
Clarification and regulation of the ferrous scrap market	End opportunism and regulatory uncertainty in the management of ferrous scrap and maximize the wealth generated by this segment for subcontractors.	There is a lack of clarity regarding regulation and a coordinated strategy for subcontracting the processing of ferrous scrap (metallic debris) from former mining sites. This lack of a legal framework fosters an opportunistic approach where information is not shared and site allocations are opaque. The government acknowledges this weakness and is committed to addressing it in order to generate more wealth from these currently under-managed assets.
Strengthening the local insurance obligation and coverage for artisanal miners	Enforce the legal obligation for mining companies to provide local insurance and establish appropriate social security coverage for artisanal miners.	The Ministry of Mines is preparing to meet with the Chamber of Mines to discuss mining companies that are violating the law by continuing to obtain insurance abroad. This initiative aims to strengthen economic sovereignty and ensure that insurance-related capital remains within the country. Furthermore, the government, through SAEMAPE (the National Agency for the Management of Mining and Mining Insurance), has expressed its openness to proposals from insurers regarding the implementation of insurance solutions for artisanal miners. This initiative is crucial for the social security of miners and the formalization of the sector.
Securing mining sites	Put an end to the invasion of mining concessions by military personnel, foreigners, and artisanal miners.	Coordinated actions between the Ministry of Mines; the Ministry of the Interior, Security, Decentralization and Customary Affairs, as well as the Ministry of National Defence and Veterans Affairs, will be validated for this purpose.

Axis II. Promoting transformation and economic sovereignty

Action / Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Local transformation	Capturing more value (currently less than 7% according to Minister Watum) by shifting from raw exports to manufacturing.	Develop Special Economic Zones (SEZs), such as Musompo (1000 hectares), dedicated to the battery chain and offering infrastructural, fiscal, customs advantages and a one-stop shop (Musompo one-stop shop for all administrative matters).
Resumption of exploration	Discovering the next deposits and halting the sector's planned decline by capitalizing on the country's untapped potential, which remains more than 90% untouched, in order to stimulate a new wave of discoveries led by national geologists.	<p>The country's mineral potential is largely underestimated and unexplored: all that is currently being discussed and exploited represents less than 10% of the country's total endowment. The remaining 90% is as untouched as the day it was first discovered. This reality creates a strong call to action for Congolese geologists: This objective must be supported by funding Congolese geologists with seed capital to create junior exploration companies. We must value the expertise of the country's sons and daughters who know their geology best.</p> <p>To discover new world-class mines, the Ministry of Mines is in discussions with the Director General of CAMI (Mining Registry) to identify recovered permits that will be granted to Congolese companies organized into structures. These companies will receive pre-financing through seed capital to enable them to proceed with exploration. Regarding the XCALIBUR project (whose first phase is complete), a second phase is under review and should begin soon, covering a second area of the national territory. XCALIBUR's mission is to define geological formations for exploration.</p>
Access to capital for Congolese	Enabling Congolese people to become shareholders in major mining projects.	Shift the debate from subcontracting to venture capitalism. Congolese people have the technical and commercial maturity to become business owners.
Local Content Law	Strengthen the position of Congolese people in all areas of the sector and promote the emergence of national champions.	The government has drafted a Local Content Law, a key measure for economic sovereignty. This legislation has already been approved by the Law Commission and the government. After final revisions, the law will be submitted to Parliament for discussion and final approval. This legislation is designed to prioritize Congolese nationals in all areas and activities related to the mining sector, thus shifting the focus from simple subcontracting to genuine Congolese ownership of capital and expertise.

Action / Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Role of Gécamines (Heritage)	Enhancing the value of the mineral heritage of Gécamines and all parastatal companies	Despite financial difficulties, Gécamines, MIBA, Sokimo, and others remain excellent partners for investors thanks to their long-standing environmental expertise and upside brownfield potential. Discussions are underway regarding an IPO or opening up the capital of these joint ventures.
Launch of an integrated and structuring steel project in the Greater eastern region	To make steelmaking the keystone of national industrialization	<p>The government plans to announce an iron ore project in the Grand Orientale region, which contains approximately 20 billion tons of iron ore. This project, requiring over \$50 billion in funding (partners are ready), is the foundation of the DRC's industrial self-sufficiency :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrialization through steel: From simple nails to agricultural machinery, railways, and major infrastructure projects, everything starts with steel. The project will utilize local resources, such as reducing gas from Lake Kivu, transported via pipeline, to produce iron sponges and steel. • Logistical and economic integration: Massive steel production will finance and build a railway backbone linking the Grand Orientale to Banana, thus uniting the country and resolving the logistical deficit. • Energy development and SEZs: The project will be accompanied by the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and new hydroelectric power plants, such as Wanie Rukula (2000 MW), to support long-term industrialization.

Axis III: Securing and professionalizing artisanal mining

Action / Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Formalization and securing	Protecting the lives of miners and preparing a traceable and compliant supply chain.	Establishing viable Artisanal Mining Zones (AZEs) to remove miners from industrial concessions (Glencore, etc.). An initial series of 64 viable AZEs has been selected; the objective is to reach hundreds.
Supervision and retraining	To give viable options to young people, the majority of whom (15-35 years old) are in the sector by default.	Working with the Ministry of Vocational Training to offer a pathway for retraining towards other professions.
Combating fraud and maximizing profits for the state	To curb fraud and illegal exploitation that puts handicrafts in the hands of foreigners.	Establish mechanisms to ensure that artisanal production (reserved for Congolese citizens) truly benefits the Congolese people. The General Cobalt Company (EGC) is receiving increased funding and support to regulate the marketing of artisanal cobalt. To boost its activity and allow the country to benefit, the EGC has been granted a significant share of cobalt export quotas, amounting to 6.5% of the total export quotas for 2025.
Short supply chains and advocacy for direct access for cooperatives to international buyers	Maximize the income of artisanal miners by eliminating fraudulent intermediaries and securing community funding.	The government made a plea in Geneva (November 20, 2025) aimed at eliminating all intermediaries who keep cooperative incomes at "slave-like levels." The goal is to connect cooperatives directly with international end buyers (Tesla, Toshiba, Mitsubishi, etc.). This model will guarantee better payments to miners and will allow for the establishment of a social responsibility model where a portion of the money would go into a community fund. This fund would directly finance essential development projects (building housing, schools) for local communities.

Minister Louis Watum concluded by reiterating that the future of the Democratic Republic of Congo depends not only on its underground resources, but also on what it decides to do with them above ground. The goal is clear: to transform wealth into prosperity, minerals into industries, and potential into sovereignty.

The key actions are: to revive exploration, secure energy resources, safeguard strategic assets, protect artisanal mining, strengthen the investment framework, and above all, empower Congolese people in their own sector.

ENERGY

THE DRC HAS THE MEANS TO BECOME A REGIONAL ENERGY EXPORTER AND AN INDUSTRIAL ENGINE FOR AFRICA



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The discussion session “Still Connected to the Inga Dream... or Finally Connected to Reality?”, organized by the Makutano network and held in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Aimé Molendo, Minister of Water Resources and Electricity, came at a pivotal moment for the energy and water future of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The objective was to bring together public and private stakeholders to transform the country’s exceptional energy potential into a true engine of development and sovereignty.

With 44,000 MW of exploitable capacity in the Inga area alone, and a total of 100,000 MW nationwide, the DRC has the capacity to establish itself as a major player in the energy sector in Africa and the world. This potential represents not only an opportunity for tens of millions of households and hundreds of thousands of SMEs to access electricity, but also a means of making energy and water concrete drivers of economic and social progress, thus moving beyond the stage of mere political promises.

However, the session highlighted the main obstacles to achieving this vision. :

- An unincentivizing tax framework.
- Slow licensing procedures.
- The urgent need to strengthen project regulation and bankability.

These challenges significantly hinder the project lifecycle, potentially slowing them down by up to 60% from conception to implementation, and limit the real impact of the otherwise modern energy legislation enacted in 2014.

Despite these constraints, positive signs exist, indicating a new dynamic: the arrival of new players in energy production, transmission, and distribution, as well as the existence of progressive legislation. These advances lay the necessary foundations for the DRC to finally harness its hydropower potential as an engine of development and stability, particularly in the east of the country, where electricity is a key factor for security and socio-economic progress.

In conclusion, beyond simply reflecting on the obstacles, this session was a call to concrete action. The ambition is clear: to establish energy and water as tangible levers of sovereignty and prosperity, guaranteeing sustainable and inclusive development for future generations.

Overview of the energy and water sector in the DR of Congo

Unprecedented consultation framework

For the first time, key players in the energy sector (SNEL, ADPI, REGIDESO, ARE, ANSER, and UCM) met within a framework of collective and transparent consultation. The Minister emphasized that this approach fosters greater accountability and a shared understanding of the issues and responsibilities, marking a significant step in the sector's governance.

Progress in access to electricity and persistent challenges

The rate of electricity access has increased from 9% to 21.5% in five years, a remarkable improvement. However, fewer than one in five Congolese still have access to electricity, and the situation remains critical in rural areas, which represent 80% of the country. Nearly 78,000 villages still need to be electrified, illustrating the scale of the challenge.

Accelerating rural electrification and local initiatives

The government has launched a self-funded program, with 26 projects already completed in several provinces, which will provide electricity to approximately one million people by the end of the year. A presidential initiative also includes plans for the establishment of a local factory for solar panels, batteries, and meters, aiming to reduce costs, increase the number of solar power plants, and strengthen the country's technological independence.

Network reform and sanitation in Kinshasa

A major program to upgrade the electricity grid in Kinshasa is underway, aiming to eliminate "black spots" and provide power to nearly 400,000 households—or four million people—in the coming months. Reform of the national electricity company, SNEL, is considered essential, particularly to reduce technical and commercial losses and strengthen grid reliability. Developing high-voltage transmission infrastructure is also a priority to ensure system stability and support the expansion of local generation.

Energy deficit in the mining sector and future strategies

The mining sector, the engine of the national economy and generator of 65% of state revenue, faces an energy deficit of 2,000 MW. Ongoing projects are expected to recover 800 to 900 MW, but future growth in the sector could recreate a similar deficit by 2030. To address this, the government is planning a temporary electricity import and a sustainable strategy, including the construction of new transmission lines and power plants, in partnership with Congolese companies, to sustainably meet industrial and rural needs.

The fundamental challenges of the energy and water sector in the DRC

Despite its colossal energy potential, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) faces major challenges that hinder the transformation of energy and water into genuine drivers of development, growth, and national sovereignty. A clear understanding of these structural and operational obstacles is essential.

Access and coverage challenges

Fewer than one in five Congolese have access to electricity in urban areas, and this rate is even lower in rural areas, which comprise 80% of the country.

Electrifying 78,000 villages represents an immense socio-economic and territorial challenge. The national grid suffers from significant losses, particularly in urban and industrial areas. This inefficiency reduces the return on investment and compromises the reliability of service for households and businesses. Industry, especially the mining sector, requires 2,000 MW, but only 800 to 900 MW are currently available. Relying on electricity imports to fill this gap is only a temporary and costly solution.

Planning and financing challenges

The implementation of major infrastructure projects and rural electrification requires rigorous coordination, effective monitoring, and substantial funding. Administrative complexities and slow procedures significantly hinder implementation. Infrastructure development (power plants, transmission lines) demands significant public and private capital. The ability of projects to attract investors (bankability) remains a major obstacle to the sustainability of these initiatives.

Challenges of governance and autonomy

Reforms are imperative within state-owned enterprises like SNEL and ANSER to reduce losses, optimize distribution, and ensure transparency. Strong governance is key to translating investments into tangible results. The country is heavily dependent on imports for crucial equipment (solar panels, batteries, meters). The project to create a national factory is a step toward greater self-sufficiency, cost reduction, and increased large-scale production.

Key strategic issues

The optimal exploitation of the 100,000 MW of hydroelectric potential (Inga and other sites) remains the fundamental strategic challenge. Achieving this objective is crucial for energy to become a concrete driver of development, sovereignty, stability, and socio-economic growth across the entire territory.

Strategic reform priorities: The action plan

The Makutano 2025 session on energy identified several priority reform areas to transform energy and water challenges into concrete and sovereign development opportunities in the DRC, building on the commitments of Minister Aimé Molendo and public-private partnerships. These areas aim to triple electricity supply by 2030, implement sustainable pricing, and strengthen coordination.

Axis I: National mapping and accelerated energy mix

Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Finalization of the hydro-photovoltaic mapping integrated into the mining map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and classify the 500 to 600 exploitable hydroelectric and solar sites; Promote self-sufficient mining production with the injection of surpluses to communities, particularly the 78,000 villages to be electrified. 	The government will finance preliminary studies to establish a reliable technical foundation. Projects will be carried out by special purpose vehicles (SPVs) or public-private partnerships (PPPs), ensuring rapid implementation and financial security. This mapping will become the primary tool for bridging the 2,000 MW mining energy gap, a crucial issue given that it concerns a sector generating 65% of government revenue. This approach prioritizes short-term projects (150 MW, 120 MW) achievable within five to six years, avoiding excessive dependence on energy imports, which are often costly and unreliable.
Deployment of a balanced energy mix: Inga III, micro-dams, solar, thermal and controlled imports (< 20–30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revive the Grand Katende, Kakobola, and Tshopo 2 projects while preparing for phase 1 of Inga III (11,050 MW); Ensure energy continuity while awaiting Inga (8 to 9 years). 	Feasibility studies and urgent repairs are underway; the mixed approach covers immediate needs (households/industry) while awaiting Inga (8-9 years). Imports are limited to 20-30%.
Regulated self-production by mining industries + obligation to transfer surplus to communities	Reduce pressure on SNEL and accelerate rural electrification.	Already practiced in the sector (solar, thermal, hybrid), self-production is becoming a structured lever: miners inject their surpluses towards villages located in their areas of influence.

Axis II: Tariff reform & economic viability

Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Gradual liberalization of water pricing (6-month emergency plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebalance the tariffs (currently USD 0.25/m³ for an actual cost of USD 1.15/m³); Guarantee 24/7 water distribution, particularly in crisis-stricken cities like Mbuji-Mayi 	A note will be submitted to the Council of Ministers to revise the tariffs and finance maintenance, generators and operations.
Tax exemptions for energy inputs and performance contracts between the State and SNEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triple electricity production in five years; Reduce the public debt owed to SNEL (40% of uncollected revenues) 	More than 60 taxes currently penalize operators: their targeted reduction will improve the bankability of projects. Mwindi Fund solar kits will be rolled out more widely to improve decentralized access. Performance contracts will impose measurable results on SNEL and free up investment capacity despite losses in distribution.
Creation of a tariff balancing fund to prevent increases from penalizing households and SMEs	Temporarily cover the price gap during the reform	Inspired by ARE/UCM practices; already mentioned by landlords; essential to make the reform socially sustainable while financing the management companies.

Axis III: Governance and Institutional Coordination

Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Creation of a multi-sectoral Delivery Unit under decree of the Prime Minister's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce licensing delays, which represent 40 to 60% of total project time; Ensure the rapid commissioning of delayed infrastructure, such as Tshiboka (10 MW). 	This unit will coordinate the ministries, provinces, SNEL (National Electricity Company), the Water Authority, ARE (Regional Water Authority), ARSP (Regional Agency for Public Health), FPI (Public Investment Fund), and UCM (Union of Municipalities of Cameroon). It will eliminate duplication, secure concessions, and monitor the implementation of priority projects. After Makutano, quarterly review committees will ensure continuity.
Institutionalization of governors as “energy champions” and popularization of the roles of regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strong local leadership to accelerate projects; Ensure transparency in import and distribution contracts. 	Aligned with the Local Development Program for the 145 territories, this reform corrects past governance failures. It strengthens legal certainty, a key element for attracting investors. Disseminating the framework of the Regional Economic Agency (ARE) will clarify contractual obligations, particularly regarding imports (e.g., with Angola).
Standardizing provincial concessions to eliminate jurisdictional conflicts	Restoring trust between provinces, landlords and operators	Many projects fail because of overlaps or conflicting decisions; legal harmonization is essential (example cited: duplicate concessions, blocked projects).

Axis IV: Immediate projects and water-energy autonomy

Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Resumption of urgent projects: Tshiboka, solar stations and provincial infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore 24/7 water and electricity services to cities experiencing shortages; • Complete the 26 provincial projects aiming to benefit 1 million people by the end of 2025 	Tshiboka, already 90% complete, will be resumed with the support of the FPI and a new team. Germany is financing a 15 MW solar park in Mbuji-Mayi starting in January, essential for stabilizing the water supply. Of the 75 non-mining projects pending, priority will be given to existing infrastructure, such as the 500 km of installed pipelines that are currently inoperable due to a lack of power.
Massive sanitation of the Kinshasa network + replication in the provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect 20,000 households in Kinsenso and 400,000 households in Kinshasa (4 million people) in 6 to 7 months; • Produce solar equipment locally (up to 5 power plants for the price of one). 	The SNEL sanitation program aims to eradicate the “black pockets” of the capital, and will be duplicated in the provinces after validation.
Construction of a national factory for solar panels, batteries and meters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the cost of imported equipment by 70%; • Produce 5 power plants for the price of one. 	Following the presidential directive of November 16, 2025, a national factory will be launched to reduce import costs and accelerate project execution. Local manufacturing = industrialization + job creation + faster project execution.

Axis V: Bankability, PPP and skills development

Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details & rationale
Guarantee mechanisms and co-investment for major energy projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure industrial PPAs at less than 4 cents/kWh, competitive for mining; Mitigate off-taker risks related to SNEL's solvency 	Enhanced coordination between energy, mining, and finance will facilitate the structuring of public-private partnerships (PPPs) for Inga III and Sikoka (6,000 MW). Special economic zones (Kinshasa–Atlantic) will attract investors, making the 500–600 identified hydro-solar sites operational. Financial guarantees from development banks (AfDB, AFC, IFC) will strengthen bankability.
Massive strengthening of national technical skills (ING, INTP, specialized schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support energy and water projects over a 20-25 year period; Make the Water Authority fully operational and strengthen the Regulatory Authority 	Partnerships will be established to train technicians (INTPs), engineers, and network specialists. Scholarships for women, hydraulic laboratories, and maintenance schools will support the scaling up of projects. This strategy ensures the sustainability of infrastructure and reduces reliance on foreign expertise.
Standardizing and securing PPAs to attract independent investors	Industrialize PPPs and multiply private investments	Current PPAs lack coherence and create reluctance among IPPs; standardization is expected by donors (AfDB, UCM). Direct reference to the difficulties of SNEL (risky off-taker).

Conclusion: Energy and water, pillars of the sovereignty of the DRC

The conclusion of this session establishes one certainty: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has moved beyond a purely technical understanding of energy and water, elevating them to fundamental drivers of its development and national sovereignty. The significant progress of the last five years, exemplified by the doubling of the electricity access rate (from 9% to 21.5%), confirms that the country is embarking on a concrete and measurable energy and water transformation, moving beyond the distant ambition of the Inga project alone.

While the discussions highlighted persistent structural challenges (deficit, outdated infrastructure, fragmented governance, and the interdependence of water and electricity), these obstacles are no longer seen as impediments. They are now considered strategic opportunities to strengthen decision-making autonomy, control of national resources, and the State's capacity to meet the socio-economic needs of its population. Optimized network management, the adoption of realistic pricing, the encouragement of local production of solar equipment, and the revival of major projects are the key initiatives that are gradually consolidating the country's energy and water independence.

This consensus translates into a clear convergence of vision among all major stakeholders (SNEL, ANSER, ADPI, REGIDESO, ARE, UCM, and partners): ensuring universal access to water and electricity is the foundation of economic development, industrialization, territorial equity, and social stability. The strategy has moved from theory to action, as evidenced by the development of the national energy mix, the electrification program for 78,000 villages, the rehabilitation of the Kinshasa grid, and the deployment of urban solar projects.

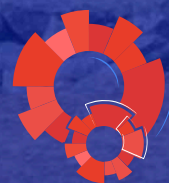
The DRC is thus embarking on a new path: one that involves converting its immense hydroelectric and energy potential into a genuine economic powerhouse. The primary ambition is no longer to focus solely on the Inga

Dam dream, but to ensure sustainable access for every Congolese citizen to safe drinking water and reliable, affordable energy that generates prosperity. By anchoring this momentum, the Nation lays the foundations for strengthened sovereignty and inclusive sustainable development.

In conclusion, energy and water are no longer mere priorities, but the structuring pillars of a sovereign, resolutely modern, and forward-looking DRC.

TRANSPORTATION

CONNECTING TERRITORIES, FACILITATING ACCESS TO TRANSPORT
AND STIMULATING THE COUNTRY'S POTENTIAL



MAKUTANO
IF WE DON'T, WHO WILL ?

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Logistics corridors, drivers of development

As **Vincent Tshiongo** stated in his introduction, the main objective of this exchange is to:

- Transform logistical challenges into major development opportunities.
- Effectively connecting the provinces and reducing transport costs are essential actions for restoring and strengthening our national competitiveness.

He asserts that, as the world's leading producer of cobalt and a leader in copper, the Congolese mining giant suffers from a unique logistical handicap: the landlocked nature of the Copper Belt (2,000-3,000 km from ports), structurally limiting our competitiveness compared to rival mines located less than 200 km away (Chile or Peru).

The Lobito rail corridor represents a major logistical breakthrough: 1,800 km of continuous rail through a single country (Angola), offering the fastest and most economical route for our mineral exports.

The objective is human development and territorial cohesion. Transportation is simply the means to achieve this: it reduces costs, facilitates trade, and makes essential services accessible, thus creating an environment conducive to investment and poverty reduction. With the projects, solutions, and donors already committed, this forum must transform these intentions into concrete results.

The Minister of Transport's speech highlights several constraints and challenges encountered in implementing the vision for infrastructure and mobility development in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Transport and infrastructure in the DRC

Obstacles to the mobility revolution in the DRC

The ambitious national mobility plan, implemented by the Ministry of Transport under the leadership of the Head of State, aims to radically transform the infrastructure of the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, despite the announced progress and the large-scale projects launched in the air, road, maritime, and rail sectors, the Minister of Transport has clearly identified a series of structural and operational constraints that are hindering this development momentum.

These challenges, ranging from the lack of funding that stalled the relaunch of Congo Airways, to the scourge of road incivility exacerbated by a shortage of law enforcement, and including river safety issues due to unsafe boats and the illegal occupation of road infrastructure, require urgent action. These complex constraints underscore that the success of the mobility plan depends not only on construction and rehabilitation, but also on governance, discipline, and adherence to standards throughout the country. Below is a detailed analysis of the various problems raised by the Minister of Transport, categorized by sector :

Air transport

The aviation sector, although a priority, faces difficulties in ensuring its full recovery and efficiency.

- Congo Airways' financial difficulties: The main obstacle to the relaunch of Congo Airways is the CNSS's (National Social Security Fund) failure to fulfill its promise to provide the necessary bank guarantee to secure financing from a local bank (UBA). This has stalled the airline's launch.
- Slow negotiations with China: Discussions regarding the establishment of flights between Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, and Guangzhou with China are being hampered by the Chinese civil aviation sector, which is not progressing as quickly as the DRC would like.

- Cost of the aviation sector: The Minister mentions that air transport is a very expensive sector.
- Lack of infrastructure for night flights: Currently, the majority of domestic airports (excluding international ones) are not equipped with runway lighting, which prevents night flights and landings, thus limiting the sector's operational capacity. The Minister announces that this problem will be resolved with the arrival of 350 km of runway lighting cable.

Road transport

The major constraints in road transport concern traffic management and the preservation of infrastructure.

- Lack of traffic police: This is the main problem identified by the Minister, particularly in large cities like Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. This shortage makes it difficult to enforce traffic rules and manage daily traffic congestion.
- Driver indiscipline and selfishness: The lack of civic responsibility among road users, characterized by disregard for right-of-way rules and the desire for everyone to go first, creates blockages and worsens traffic jams.
- Illegal occupation of secondary roads: Individuals set up kiosks and markets on the road (examples: Bokassa, Kasa-Vubu, Limete), including on newly paved roads. This occupation negates the initial purpose of these roads, which was to relieve congestion on the main boulevards.
- Road deterioration due to potholes: The presence of potholes on some roads requires rapid repairs, but the arrival of rain causes delays in these works.

Maritime and river transport

The maritime and river sector faces problems of insecurity, compliance with standards and maintenance of waterways :

- Unsafety and non-compliance with standards for wooden boats: Wooden boats (whaling boats), often poorly constructed with unsuitable wood and generally uninsured, are a major source of problems. Owners and transporters :
 - They fail to comply with the requirement to wear life jackets.
 - They exceed the permitted capacity/weight.
 - They are reckless and navigate unsafely at night, resulting in numerous deaths.
- The problem of cargo barges and stowaways: The Minister denounces the practice of placing passengers (often undeclared) on cargo barges. These people frequently fall and lose their lives without being reported. The government aims to clearly separate freight transport from passenger transport.
- Past legal issues (Banana port): The major Banana port project has been blocked since 2017 due to legal issues related to contracts with DP World, delaying its implementation.
- Lack of funding for the port of Maluku: The DRC is waiting for the finances to release the quota to allow the company in charge of starting work on the port of Maluku.
- Erosion and landslides: Recurring problems of erosion and landslides have caused a disruption of rail traffic between Matadi and Kinshasa (which uses the port of Kinshasa).

Rail transport

Although the Minister insists on the need to develop this sector, specific constraints are mentioned:

- Erosion on the Kinshasa-N'djili line: The first rains have caused erosion on the railway between the Central Station and N'djili Airport, requiring repairs to restore the connection.
- Land speculation around the Lobito corridor: For this strategic project, the Minister had to intervene with the Minister of Land Affairs to cancel all land transfers along the corridor. This speculation problem threatened the overall development plan for the economic infrastructure planned around the railway.

Harmonization of mobility ecosystems

Axis I: Aviation: Modernization and connectivity

Specific Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details and rationale	Progress status / Monitoring mechanism
Air Congo: Fleet and network development	Connecting the 26 provinces, transporting people and freight, making Kinshasa an international hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership: 51% for the DRC and 49% with Ethiopian Airlines. Two Boeing 737s already in service (80-100% load factor). Three additional aircraft (two ATR 72s) expected in January 2025 to serve domestic routes (Kisangani, Kinshasa). Acquisition of a Boeing 787 Dreamliner for intercontinental routes (Brussels, Paris, Dubai). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed (Air Congo launch on November 25, 2024). Ongoing (Orders, negotiations on regional frequencies).
Improvement of airport security and infrastructure	Achieve gold certification (the highest level of security) for N'Djili. Allow night flights throughout the country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction/rehabilitation of 5 major airports (Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi, Bunia, N'Djili, Luano). N'Djili: 45,000 m² terminal (accommodating A380s). Lighting system for all airports (order of 350 km of cable) for night operations. 	Fast forward: Kananga/Bunia (end of March 2025), Mbuji-Mayi (April 2025), Luano (December 2026), N'Djili (December 2027).
Opening up to international competition	To make Kinshasa an international hub for freight and passengers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiation and authorization of new companies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Tanzania (4-5 frequencies/week) Emirates (Kinshasa-Dubai flights planned for March-April 2025), Qatar Airways (flights started). Negotiations with China and for links with the United States. 	Ongoing (frequency negotiations and regulations).

Axis II: Roads: Fluidity and regulations

Specific Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details and rationale	Progress status / Monitoring mechanism
Combating traffic congestion in Kinshasa/Lubumbashi	Reduce traffic congestion in the two main cities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order for "smart" sensor-based traffic lights for 60 intersections (expected in 3 months). Installation of signs. Deployment of the army (14th Military Region) to support traffic management due to police shortages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation begins (traffic lights activated, army intervention). Difficult work (problems with indiscipline and road obstructions).
Creation of a Kinshasa-N'Djili expressway	To allow uninterrupted access to the international airport.	Construction of a widened road, including tunnels and flyovers (bridges, including one of one km in Tshangu) between the Triomphal Boulevard and N'Djili Airport.	Approved by the Council of Ministers. Work is scheduled to begin in January 2025.
Making driving licenses more reliable	To ensure the international recognition of the Congolese driving licence.	The driving licence has become an internationally recognised title (equivalence requested from partner countries) and serves as proof of identity (used by banks).	Completed (recognized and reliable title).

Axis III: Maritime/River: Safety and Infrastructure

Specific Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details and rationale	Progress status / Monitoring mechanism
Securing river transport and banning wooden whaleboats	Protecting populations by ensuring safe navigation conditions on the Congo River.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of sheet metal barges (capacity 250-280 passengers) by RVF and ONATRA. The first four are expected by the end of this month/next month. Budget increase to produce more barges and eventually ban wooden whaleboats. 	Soon to be operational (first boats to be launched imminently).
River dredging and marking	Ensuring the navigability of rivers and streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of dredges (one already made available to the RVF, two others ordered for Kinshasa and Kalemie). Regular buoyage work. 	In progress (dredger delivery).
Modernization of Atlantic and inland ports	Increase the capacity and speed of container processing (import/export).	<p>Matadi:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concessions granted to MCTC (MSC), DP World (berth 9), and Abu Dhabi Ports (berth 0). ONATRA has rebuilt four berths. <p>Banana Port:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution of legal issues: work underway by DP World, which should be operational in two years (initial capacity: 600,000 to 800,000 containers). New dry ports at Kasumbalesa, Kalamba Mbuji, and Dilolo; and a major port at Kalemie (contract signed with a Chinese company). 	Major progress (Banana port under construction, Matadi being modernized). Blockage (Maluku project awaiting the DRC's financial contribution).

Axis IV: Rail: Regional Economic Integration

Specific Action/Reform	Specific objective	Details and rationale	Progress status / Monitoring mechanism
Relaunch of the Northern, Central and Lobito Corridors	To connect the provinces with each other and integrate the DRC into regional economic circuits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobito Corridor: (DRC-Angola-Zambia). Objective: Mining transport (5 days from Tenke-Kolwezi to Lobito). Financing confirmed (€700 million from the European Investment Bank, \$1 billion from the DFC in the United States, \$500 million from the World Bank). Central Corridor: (DRC-Burundi-Tanzania). Rehabilitation of Kisangani-Ubundu. Northern Corridor: (Zongo-Gemena-Bumba, extension to Mumbéré/Uganda). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing (Lobito feasibility studies completed, funding confirmed, tenders launched for the northern and central corridors). Work has begun on the Kinshasa-Matadi railway.
Rehabilitation of urban lines in Kinshasa	Ease road traffic.	Rehabilitation of the central station-N'Djili line (3 km remaining to be completed) and of the central station-Kintambo/Kinsuka section.	In progress (work in progress by ONATRA).

Towards a concerted transformation of the transport sector in the DRC

The discussion highlighted the DRC's strategic commitment, championed by the Deputy Prime Minister, to leveraging infrastructure, particularly the Lobito corridor and the internal railway, as a catalyst for profound economic transformation. This transformation aims to add value to local products and boost GDP. This ambition is based on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model and is accompanied by a strong call for sovereign financing, urging local banks and insurance companies to take risks to tap into the potential for domestic financing (estimated at \$700 million for insurance companies) and reduce external dependence.

However, financial actors and operators highlighted the major challenges: the imperative need for clarity and documentation (feasibility studies for Metrokin) to make projects "bankable", the need for guarantees for the sustainability of investments, and the resolution of regulatory and operational

obstacles (ONATRA monopoly, long transport delays between Matadi and Kinshasa).

In response, the State is undertaking courageous reforms:

- Combating monopolies, strengthening technical controls linked to mandatory insurance, and logistics projects (dry ports, rail network expansion)
- To secure the sector and ensure local content. The success of this transformation depends on the government's ability to quickly implement these reforms and generate the necessary trust for concerted action between the state, operators, and financiers.



CONCLUSION

The discussions at the Makutano 2025 forum gave rise to a clear-sighted yet demanding vision for the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Democratic Republic of Congo can only transform its potential into sustainable prosperity by acting simultaneously on several interdependent levers, the coordination of which has become the new rule of governance. The diagnosis is unequivocal: the wealth of its subsoil and its energy potential will only translate into shared prosperity if they are supported by credible governance and connected by efficient infrastructure.

Thus, transforming national potential into sustainable economic power will require synchronized action on four interdependent levers, the coordination of which constitutes the new rule of governance. The overhaul of governance appears to be the foundation of this approach. It involves strengthening macro-budgetary discipline, digitally modernizing the administration, improving the business climate, and establishing a state more focused on service and results-oriented control. This renewed governance is the necessary condition for carrying out ambitious sectoral reforms.

In the mining sector, the imperative is now to shift from a predatory economy to one of integrated transformation and value creation. This requires a proactive industrial policy focused on developing local value chains, formalizing and securing artisanal mining, and strategically leveraging the state's mining assets. For energy, the priority is to realize the nation's potential through a pragmatic and diversified approach, combining the revitalization of major infrastructure projects, the accelerated development of decentralized renewable energy, and the establishment of an incentive-based regulatory and tariff framework for private investors.

The transport and connectivity component must be treated as a strategic lever for opening up isolated areas and fostering economic integration. Emphasis must be placed on developing efficient logistics corridors, rehabilitating and interconnecting national transport networks, and modernizing port and logistics platforms. The success of this integrated approach hinges on the ability to mobilize substantial funding, primarily through well-structured public-private partnerships, and to establish effective coordination among the various institutional stakeholders involved..

Ultimately, the Makutano 2025 discussions validated a comprehensive and coherent roadmap. The diagnostic and strategic design phase is now complete. The challenge facing the Congolese state, the private sector, and all stakeholders is implementation. This transition to action will require sustained political will, collective discipline in execution, and rigorous monitoring of commitments made.

APPENDICES

Links to the #Makutano2025 Talks

1. **Governance** : [Link](#)
2. **Mining** : [Link](#)
3. **Energy** : [Link](#)
4. **Transportation** : [Link](#)

Makutano Network

27, Avenue Comité urbain

Kinshasa / Gombe

+243 82 57 26 552

