

UAE, Democratic Republic of Congo strengthen economic ties with Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

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In the presence of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Excellency Félix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the two countries formalised their economic partnership today through the signing of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed affirmed that the agreement marks a significant milestone in the economic relationship between the two nations and reflects the UAE's consistent approach to building effective development partnerships that drive economic growth and prosperity for all, while also expanding opportunities for future generations.

His Highness expressed his hope that the agreement would mark a major step forward in economic cooperation between the UAE and DRC by boosting trade and investment flows, stimulating mutual growth, and supporting their shared development goals.

The CEPA was signed during a ceremony at Qasr Al Shati in Abu Dhabi by His Excellency Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Foreign Trade, and His Excellency Julien Paluku Kahongya, Minister for International Trade of the DRC. The agreement will reduce tariffs and eliminate trade barriers, significantly enhancing investment flows and creating opportunities for private sector collaboration across key sectors including mining, agriculture, and clean energy.

The DRC's GDP stands at approximately USD 70.75 billion, making it one of Africa's top ten economies. With its position as a world-leading producer of cobalt and a major source of essential minerals for the electric vehicle and energy transition sectors, the DRC offers a strategic entry point for expanding trade across Central and Eastern Africa.

UAE-DRC non-oil trade reached USD 2.9 billion in the first nine months of 2025, marking a 16.1% increase year-on-year. As bilateral trade continues to grow, the CEPA is poised to strengthen economic cooperation, facilitate cross-border investments, and empower small and medium-sized enterprises in both countries. The UAE is committed to leveraging its global trade hub status to foster deeper ties with the DRC, promoting shared prosperity and sustainable development.

This agreement is another valuable addition to the UAE's ambitious foreign trade agenda, which aims to boost non-oil foreign trade to USD 1.1 trillion by 2031. The CEPA programme, with over 30 agreements concluded and 14 in force, highlights the UAE's dedication to fostering open and rules-based global trade that will drive economic growth and diversification.

His Highness the President and His Excellency Félix Tshisekedi also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on investment cooperation in the mining

sector, as well as an MoU between the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy and the Congolese Diplomatic Academy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and the Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The MoUs were signed on behalf of the UAE by His Excellency Sheikh Shakhboot bin Nahyan Al Nahyan, Minister of State, and on behalf of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by His Excellency Louis Kabamba, Minister of Mines, and Her Excellency Noëlla Ayeganagato Nakwipone, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. The two sides also announced cooperation in the field of maritime transport.

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