

India - Mozambique Relations

India and Mozambique enjoy close, friendly relations built upon traditional links dating back to the pre-colonial period. Traders and merchants from the Indian sub-continent came to Mozambique centuries back, even before Vasco da Gama set sail for Africa and India. These traditional links have grown from strength to strength over the years as a result of which India and Mozambique today find a lot of common ground to cooperate with each other for their mutual benefit. India consistently lent its support to Mozambique in the latter's freedom struggle. Mozambique achieved its independence in 1975 and diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in the same year. India was, in fact, among the first countries to open its Embassy in Mozambique immediately after independence. The Indian Ambassador was among those who witnessed the historic event of the Portuguese flag coming down and the new Mozambican flag going up in 1975. Mozambique opened its Mission in New Delhi in 2001.

Exchange of Visits: The leadership of the two countries has maintained a cordial and friendly relationship. There have been regular high-level exchanges and interactions in a number of fields. The first Mozambican President Samora Machel paid a state visit to India in April, 1982, which was reciprocated by a visit to Maputo by Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in August, 1982. President Joaquim Alberto Chissano visited India two times – in May 1988 and May 2003. President Armando Guebuza also paid a state visit to India in September-October 2010, while Prime Minister Aires Ali visited India in March 2011.

More recently, Ministerial visits from India have included : the visit of Minister of State for External Affairs, General (Dr.) V.K. Singh from 10-11 July, 2015 as Special Envoy of PM, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas (Independent charge), Shri Dharmendra Pradhan from 8-11 April, 2015, and Minister of State for External Affairs General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retd) from 14-16 January 2015 to attend the Inauguration Ceremony of President Mr. Filipe Nyusi on 15 January.

On the Mozambican side, Mozambican Foreign Minister Oldemiro Baloi visited India from 23-29 November 2014. Prior to that, Ms. Esperança Bias, Minister of Mineral Resources visited New Delhi from January 12 to 15, 2014 to attend Petrotech-2014, and Mr. Jose Pacheco, Minister of Agriculture and Mr. Armando Inroga, Minister of Industry & Trade who visited New Delhi from 9-11 March, 2014 to attend the 10th CII EXIM Bank Africa Conclave.

Development Assistance: India has been assisting Mozambique in various ways including through provision of Line of Credit (LOCs). India offered credit assistance of US\$500 million to Mozambique during the State visit of Mozambican President to India in 2010. Under this, approvals have been conveyed for all the projects proposed by the Government of Mozambique although some projects are still to take off for a variety of reasons. Prior to this, India had extended LOCs worth US\$140 million to Mozambique.

Exchange of important business delegations: During the past few years, regular business delegations from India have visited Mozambique to explore and participate in Mozambique's economic development activities. A large CII delegation accompanied MOS (PK) to Maputo in July, 2013, as well as Commerce & Industry Minister in September, 2013. Another CII-Andhra Pradesh delegation visited Maputo from 11-13 December, 2013. A 25-member Pharmaceutical delegation led by Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council visited Maputo from 9-12 March 2014. An Exim Bank delegation was in Maputo from 16-22 November 2014 for a country strategy mission.

A 9-member CII delegation accompanied Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of State for Petroleum and Gas from 8-11 April 2015. High-level delegations from Mozambique have also been regularly participating in the annual CII-EXIM Bank Africa Conclaves in March in New Delhi.

Training and scholarships for Mozambican nationals: India has been extending training to Mozambican government nominees each year in a wide range of disciplines under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. In 2015, India is providing 30 slots to Mozambique under this programme. Further, 34 scholarships for graduate, post-graduate (PG) and research studies in India are being awarded each year to qualified candidates from Mozambique under the Africa Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) and a few slots for PG studies under the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). In addition, under the decisions of the India-Africa Forum Summits, CV Raman Fellowships and short-term training programmes, limited only to a first-come-first-served criterion, are also on offer to Mozambique. In all these programmes, the Government of India covers the expenses of the nominees for their air ticket, visa, boarding & lodging, tuition fees and study material.

Indian projects/investments in Mozambique: As per data released by Bank of Mozambique, the approved investment by India cumulatively from 2004 to 2014 is only US\$128 million. However, this figure does not include investments in the extractive (mining) industries where Indian investments are significant. Some of the major Indian companies who have investments in Mozambique are ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), Oil India Ltd. (OIL), Bharat Petro Resources Ltd. (BPRL) in the gas industry; ICVL, Tata Steel, JSPL, JSW, Essar, Midwest Africa, in coal mining; Damodar Ferro in iron ore mining; Essar in port development; and Pure Diets, Rajarambapu Group and Asian Tea in agriculture.

Bilateral trade relations: According to DGCIS Kolkata figures, bilateral trade between India and Mozambique during 2014-15 was US\$ US\$2396.58 million with Indian exports at US\$2070.84 million registering an increase of 64.72% and Indian imports at US\$325.74 million registering an increase of 11.19% over 2013-14.

Indian Community: There are approximately 1,500 to 2,000 persons of Indian nationality and about 20,000 persons of Indian origin, holding Mozambican/Portuguese nationalities in Mozambique. A large number of these persons of Indian origin are engaged in the wholesale and retail trade and originally hail from Gujarat, Goa, Daman and Diu.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Maputo Website:

www.hicomind-maputo.org

Embassy of India, Maputo Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/High-Commission-of-India-Maputo/149303415166553?ref=hl>

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