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**A**frica-China relation continues to grow, including Zambia-China relation, an increase among Chinese emigrants and Zambian citizens in a global emerging. This policy brief outlines the nature and scope of the relation between Chinese emigrants and Zambian citizens, as well as the Zambian government's response to the relation, and offers recommendations and options for how the Zambian government could more effectively ameliorate the relation between the two.

Official Zambia-China relations remain warm and close, 55 years after their establishment in 1964. China's financial, technical, and labor contribution to the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA), which provided a lifeline for landlocked Zambia, enhanced China's reputation in Zambia. During the era of Cold War politics, liberation struggle, and anti-colonial agitation, Zambia-China relations were characterized by a close relationship. In contrast, today, the relationship has become ordinary. Zambia has become a major destination for Chinese emigrants in Zambia, indicating a trend. The reasons include: fear of economic domination and disempowerment of the hand of Chinese immigrants, media reporting, political opposition, and disempowerment of China and the Chinese.

An increase in economic domination and disempowerment of the hand of Chinese immigrants in Zambia, and the fact that aggregated unemployment (unemployed population labor force) in Zambia is alarmingly high, at more than 40 percent. Under the current situation, the unemployment rate is 56.1 percent (ILO, 2019).

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This is especially the case as the relationship of small and medium enterprises has historically been the economic mainstay of ordinary Zambians. The added competition has raised fears of Chinese economic domination on the forefront.



Government's response to the tension among Chinese immigrants and Zambian citizens are weakened by the Government's tendency to respond to the competition, rather than the real cause of the tension. Citizens' concern about the effect of Chinese employment and entrepreneurship on local level economic in Zambia. There is clear evidence that labor law has been, amended in some Chinese-run enterprises, even though the Zambian government seem helpless in doing them. A good example of this is the violence that happened between 2010 and 2012 at Collum Coal, a Chinese-owned mine in Sinatongo, eastern Zambia. In 2010, Chinese representatives told a Zambian worker's age discrepancy and safety concern about the mine. Disagreements over the same issue repeated itself in 2012 and a Chinese representative brutally killed a Zambian employee. Meanwhile, over the same period of time, the Ministry of Labor feigned ignorance of the ongoing and recurrent tension and left the problem of foreigners to explode.

While the government has arrested both Zambian and Chinese perpetrators of violence and labor abuses respectively, there has not been clear follow-up or prosecution in the case. In fact, progress reports on prosecution are not readily available, if at all, which makes it difficult for citizens to appreciate whether or not the problems are being addressed. Prosecution of perpetrators, on both sides, could reassure Zambians, but also Chinese who have often just distanced themselves from a lack of Zambian, while also bolstering the role of law.

## A. Zambia's Economic Dependence on China

The Government has also responded to the tension by focusing on a bilateral relationship between Zambia and China. Unfortunately, this narrative glosses over palpable tension at the bilateral level. Placatory remarks about the longevity and stability of Zambia-China relations are a reflection of which the emerging and increasing reality of bilateral tension in Zambia. The government has the responsibility of responding to this reality, in a manner that prevents tension from escalating. However, then, can the government and other policy makers better address growing bilateral tension?

### 1. Zambia's Economic Dependence on China

Zambia's economic dependence on China is a real concern and could be ameliorated if Zambia's Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry were to develop policies that connect Chinese national to large-scale household enterprises, while leaving

labor law, including paying employees a or above the minimum wage and entering a probationary period comparable to that in Zambia. The role of the labor union could play a pivotal role in monitoring these practices.

## 2.

**Some media reporting has eroded trust, alienation and hate crime such as xenophobia. Such reporting should be discouraged and perpetrators prosecuted. Zambia's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Service bears the responsibility of crafting a communication policy. For example, the aforementioned newspaper publication in China highlighted the dangers of fake media in China, much to the chagrin of Zambians. The Ministry should develop policies and guidelines for media to ensure their integrity, and media should provide more training to ensure the quality of reporting. To guard against a recession, civil society and international organizations such as the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), should be encouraged to enter the market as a reaction to the degeneration of the national center of media. MISA could also play a part in advocating professional and ethical media practices to its members.**

## 3.

**Political opportunities have diminished in China since the end of the aggressive and intimidating language, should be removed, discouraged and penalized. The Registrar of Societies under the Home Affairs should monitor the conduct of political players and prevent those who promote hate speech in order to gain political support. At the 2021 Zambian general election approach, there are already indications that anti-Chinese sentiment (indeed 5.1 (xenophobia) 10.1, ill-digged by 5.2 (national political)**

In its entirety, could not be held responsible for the harm done. In its broadening access to include Zambian citizens, the initiative might have the time and in order to learn about China and its world view. The benefits of this initiative could help Zambian citizens to have opportunities to live and work in China. Moreover, this initiative could help to develop Sino-Zambian relations, the Chinese, and their interests in Zambia.

For an in-depth analysis of Zambia-China relations at the international level, see the accompanying Africa Program Research Paper No. 24 by Emmanuel Matambo.

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1. Human Rights Watch, *You'll Be Fired if You Refuse: Labor Abuses in Zambia's Chinese State-owned Copper Mines*, November 4, 2011, <http://www.hrw.org/report/2011/11/04/youll-be-fired-if-you-refuse-labor-abuses-in-zambia-chinese-state-owned-copper-mine>.
  2. Abdur Rahman Alfa Shaban, *Zambia's state-owned media publishes article in Chinese*, *Africanews*, February 10, 2018, <http://www.africanews.com/2018/10/02/zambia-state-owned-media-publishes-article-in-chinese/>.

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