

Ministers Paluku and Kalumba advance Industrialization, AGOA Readiness, and U.S.-DRC Partnership Through Manufacturing

LUBUMBASHI, CONGO-KINSHASA, July 7, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Democratic Republic of the Congo Advances Industrialization, AGOA Readiness, and U.S.-DRC Strategic Partnership Through New Manufacturing Investments in Lubumbashi

Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo – July 7, 2026 – The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has reaffirmed its commitment to industrial development, local transformation, poverty reduction, job creation, and regional economic integration through a high-level mission to Lubumbashi led by Julien Paluku Kahongya, Minister of Foreign Trade, and Justin Kalumba Mwana Ngongo, Acting Minister of Industry and Minister of Entrepreneurship and SME Development.

The two members of the Suminwa Government arrived in Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga Province, on Sunday, where they were welcomed by Coco Kanku, Provincial Minister of Gender, Family and Children, who is also serving as Acting Provincial Minister of Trade.

During their stay, the ministers inaugurated several industrial units and presided over groundbreaking ceremonies for new factories dedicated to producing underground electrical cables and square tubes. These projects support the Government's strategy to strengthen the national industrial base, promote local processing, reduce dependence on imports, and increase the competitiveness of Congolese enterprises.

The mission also includes consultations with economic operators on mechanisms to consolidate safeguard measures for the national industry against unfair competition affecting local manufacturers. Particular attention was given to combating dumping practices observed at the Kasumbalesa border post, the main commercial crossing between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia.



Ministers Paluku and Kalumba visit in Lubumbashi

By addressing unfair trade practices and protecting emerging industries, the Government seeks to create a more balanced business environment where Congolese companies can grow, invest, innovate, and compete fairly in national, regional, and international markets.

This industrial mission also contributes directly to the objectives of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). By expanding local manufacturing capacity and promoting value-added production, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is strengthening its ability to develop export-ready industries, diversify its economy, and increase access to the U.S. market under AGOA.

The visit further aligns with the U.S.-DRC Strategic Partnership, signed on December 4, 2025, which emphasizes critical minerals, infrastructure, local value addition, industrialization, and long-term economic growth. The U.S. Department of State notes that the partnership supports local value addition, industrialization, domestic beneficiation capacity, and the development of the Sakania-Lobito Corridor.

The Lubumbashi industrial projects are expected to generate direct and indirect employment in manufacturing, engineering, construction, transport, logistics, maintenance, and related services. They will also create new opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises, local suppliers, young entrepreneurs, and skilled workers. Through job creation and income generation, the projects support the Government's broader poverty reduction agenda.

The initiative also strengthens regional integration under the African Continental Free Trade Area and the Lobito Corridor. Increased production of industrial inputs in the DRC can reduce import dependence, improve cross-border trade with Zambia and other neighboring countries, and position the DRC as a strategic manufacturing and logistics hub linking Central and Southern Africa to global markets.

The Kasumbalesa border remains central to this regional vision. Recent discussions around the modernization and digitalization of the Kasumbalesa corridor have emphasized its role as the principal trade crossing between the DRC and Zambia and as a key route for regional commerce.

The Government emphasized that the fight against dumping is not intended to restrict legitimate trade, but to ensure fair competition, protect national production, preserve jobs, increase public revenue, and encourage responsible investment in Congolese industry.

Ultimately, the Lubumbashi mission reflects the Government's integrated approach to economic transformation: industrialization, trade facilitation, export promotion, private-sector development, poverty reduction, and regional integration. It confirms the Democratic Republic of the Congo's ambition to become a competitive industrial economy and a reliable strategic partner for the United States, Africa, and the international community.

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