

Zambia and China sign pact to build stadium

The Zambian government has signed a contract with the Chinese government for the construction of a 40,000-capacity stadium in Ndola, the capital of Copperbelt Province.

Construction of the ultra-modern stadium in the country's second largest city at an estimated cost of between \$60 million and \$70 million will begin soon.

Works and Supply Ministry Permanent Secretary Bizwayo Nkunika signed on behalf of the Zambian government while the head of a 13-member Chinese delegation, Zhang Zijun, signed on behalf of the Chinese government.

Works and Supply Minister Kapembwa Simbao, Youth, Sport and Child Development Minister Gabriel Namulambe, and Ministry of Sports Permanent Secretary Bob Samakai were present at the signing ceremony. Also present was Chinese Ambassador to Zambia Li Quiangmin.

Namulambe said the signing of the agreement marked a significant step in the construction of the stadium which is expected to be completed before 2010.

He said the government attached great importance to the project and would respond promptly to any concerns that the Chinese experts would raise in the execution of their duties.

Namulambe appealed to the Chinese government to ensure the construction of the stadium is finished before the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

Zhang said the Chinese government was in a hurry to get the project off the ground as soon as possible.

He added that his team had every reason to complete the project to the satisfaction of both the Zambian and Chinese governments.

South African visit to China

This comes as a high-level South African delegation visits China this week. This team is made up of members from a range of government departments, led by the Department of Trade and Industry and including the departments of Minerals and Energy; Agriculture; Science and Technology; and Mintek, a South African mineral research organisation, as well as the Development Bank of South Africa and the Department Foreign Affairs.

The 10-day trip to China will enable the team to study the Chinese economy, with an eye on consolidating a "win-win"

formula for both nations in terms of synergies between China's development needs and what South Africa is able to supply, currently and potentially.

The central objective of the team's visit to China is to ascertain the variety of ways in which this "win-win" formula for mutual growth and economic development can be taken forward.

The team will be reporting to Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who will be visiting China from 24 - 25 September as head of the South Africa-China bi-national commission.

Reports from this advanced task force will enable the development of concrete programmes between September and December this year, so that the Cabinet will be able to decide on several of these programmes.

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