Guinea-Bissau: China ambassador calls for more bilateral ties, industrial park

By AFP

China's ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, Guo Ce, has called for greater cooperation between the two countries, particularly in building an industrial park in the African country.

According to a statement from China's embassy in Bissau, Guo Ce also called for greater bilateral cooperation in the areas of agriculture and trade, during a meeting in the capital with Guinea-Bissau's ambassador to China, Serifo Embaló.

Embaló is said to have praised the "successful" holding of the eighth ministerial meeting of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation, which ended on 30 November in Dakar, the capital of neighbouring Senegal.

A week before the event, on 22 November, Guinea-Bissau and China signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation, as part of China's 'Belt and Road' infrastructure initiative.

Embaló, who was appointed resident ambassador in Beijing in June 2020, is currently in Guinea-Bissau but is due to return to China later this month.

In an interview with Portugal's RDP-África radio service and Lusa on 28 December, the diplomat said that Chinese officials had expressed interest in direct investments or partnership agreements with Guinea-Bissau businesspeople in areas such as agriculture, tourism, trade, industry and fisheries.

Three days later, Guo Ce stressed that he had reminded Chinese ship owners fishing in African waters of the need to "strictly respect" the biological and marine rest period.

Guinea-Bissau's government has banned all fishing activity during January for the first time in 48 years, the secretary-general of its Ministry of Fisheries, Maurício Sanca, told Lusa in December.

Guo Ce's promise came during a donation of computer equipment to the Guinea-Bissau ministry. According to a statement from China's embassy, Sanca said that the equipment would help monitor the observance for the biological and marine rest period.

Fisheries resources in Africa are being exploited in an "opportunistic" way by European, Chinese and other fleets, which take advantage of the poor management of African waters to their own advantage, Ibrahima Cissé, the director of Greenpeace Africa's 2019 oceans campaign, has told Lusa.

According to estimates from a study from the Sea Around Us project, published in 2015, Chinese ships fished 2.3 million tonnes a year in West African waters but reported only 8% of its total catch (including discards) between 2000 and 2010.
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