

China and the International Politics of Insecurity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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This paper examines China's evolving security activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), its small but significant contributions to the peacekeeping mission MONUC, and its relations with other external actors in the DRC including the EU. Existing literature on China in the DRC tends to interpret Chinese involvement as either a potential threat to 'Western' interests or as an opportunity for Congolese national elites to develop new sources of patronage. Yet Chinese involvement in the DRC has a number of different target audiences, including the UN and EU, as well as national and local elites in Congo. Based on field-work in Beijing as well as in the southern and eastern parts of the DRC, the paper argues that existing analyses of Chinese activities in the Congo fail to capture the range of different motivations for the nature of Chinese involvement, nor the ways that this involvement has reshaped local politics and regional security dynamics in the DRC.