

President appoints new government

Following September's huge election victory, in which the ruling MPLA gained over 81 per cent of the vote, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos has appointed a new expanded government. He has removed several senior government figures and expanded the cabinet from 29 to 35 ministers.

The elections also heralded the end of the Government of Unity and National Reconstruction (GURN). Under the provisions of the Lusaka Protocol – the peace agreement between the Angolan government and the rebel movement UNITA signed in November 1994 – UNITA was able to fill four ministerial and seven vice-ministerial posts. However, September's election marked the end of the provisions of the Lusaka Protocol and on 17 October the new parliament formally adopted a Bill abolishing the GURN.

As part of a separate agreement between the government and a section of the Cabindan separatist movement FLEC, President dos Santos has included António Bento Bembe as Minister Without Portfolio.

Almost half of the cabinet – 17 out of an expanded total of 35 cabinet ministers - are new to ministerial posts or have been out of government for several years.

The new Prime Minister is António Paulo Kassoma, who was previously Governor of Huambo Province. He replaces Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos "Nando", who on 30 September was elected by the Angolan parliament, the National Assembly, as its new Speaker (chairperson).

In what some commentators describe as a surprise move, Jose Pedro de Moraes has been removed from his post of Minister of Finance, to become president of the Luanda Stock Exchange. He was replaced by his former deputy, Eduardo Leopoldo Severim de Moraes.

The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Assuncao dos Santos, was previously head of the President's office for several years, before taking up ambassadorial posts in Spain, France and Portugal.

Jose Maria Botelho de Vasconcelos has been moved from being Minister of Energy and Water to the crucial post of Minister of Petroleum.

At the Ministry of Geology and Mining the UNITA representative Manuel Africano has been replaced by his former deputy, Makenda Ambroise. Whilst UNITA had formerly held the ministerial post, many considered that the MPLA maintained power in the ministry through Ambroise.

UNITA appointee Eduardo Jonatão Chingunji has been replaced as Minister for Hotels and Tourism by Pedro Mutinde, the former governor of Cunene Province.

UNITA's Joaquim Ekuma Muafumua has been removed from the position of Minister of Trade and replaced by his former deputy, Maria Idalina de Oliveira Valente.

The fourth UNITA cabinet minister, Anastácio Ruben Sicato, was replaced by his deputy José Viera Dias Van-Dúnen.

Manuel Nunes Júnior moves from his role as economist at the MPLA headquarters to the new post of Minister for the Economy.

Among others replaced is Andre Luis Brandao, who had come under criticism in his post as Minister for Transport.

The full list of ministers is:

Defence - Kundi Paihama

Interior - Roberto Leal Ramos Monteiro

Foreign Affairs - Assunção Afonso dos Anjos

Economy - Manuel Nunes Júnior

Territorial Administration - Virgílio Ferreira de Fontes Pereira

Public Administration, Employment and Social Security - António Domingos Pitra Costa Neto

Justice - Guilhermina Contreiras da Costa Prata

Finance - Eduardo Leopoldo Severin de Moraes

Planning - Ana Afonso Dias Lourenço

Commerce - Maria Idalina de Oliveira Valente

Hotel and Tourism - Pedro Mutindi

Agriculture - Afonso Pedro Canga

Fisheries - Salamão José Luete Chiribimbi

Industry - Joaquim Duarte da Costa David

Oil - José Maria Botelho de Vasconcelos

Geology and Mining - Makenda Ambroise

Environment - Maria de Fátima Monteiro Jardim

Science and Technology - Maria Cândida Teixeira

Urbanisation and Housing - Diakumpuna Sita José

Public Works - Francisco Higinio Lopes Carneiro

Transport - Augusto da Silva Tomás

Energy - Emanuela Afonso Viera Lopes

Telecommunication and Information Technology - José Carvalho da Rocha.

Health - José Viera Dias Van-Dúnen

Education - António Buriti da Silva Neto

Culture - Rosa Maria Martins da Cruz e Silva

Social Welfare - João Baptista Kussumua

Family and Women Promotion - Genoveva da Conceição Lino

Former Combatants and War Veterans - Pedro José Van-Dúnen

Youth and Sports - Gonçalves Manuel Muandumba

Social Communication - Manuel António Rabelais.

Minister without portfolio - António Bento Bembe

Minister without portfolio - Francisca de Fátima do Espírito Santo de Carvalho Almeida

Secretary of State for Rural Development - Maria Filomena de Fátima Lobão Telo Delgado.

Secretary of State for Higher Education - Adão Gaspar Pereira do Nascimento.

Secretary of State for Water - Luís Felipe da Silva

Deputy Minister appointed

On 24 October President dos Santos swore into office the following deputy ministers:

Defence - Cândido dos Santos Van-Dúnen, Agostinho Nelumba and Gaspar Rufino dos Santos

Interior - Sebastião António Martins, Ângelo Tavares, Eduardo Ferreira Martins and José Bamoquina Zau

Foreign Affairs - George Chicoty

Economy - Job Graça

Territorial Administration - Edeltrudes Gaspar da Costa and Graciano Domingos

Public Administration - Sebastião Lukinda
Justice - João Alves Monteiro and Ana Meireles de Vanconcelos

Planning - Carlos Lopes and Pedro Luis da Fonseca

Finance - Valentina Filipe and Emanuel Neto

Commerce - Gomes Cardoso

Hotels and Tourism - Paulino Baptista

Agriculture - Zacarias Sambeni, André Moda and José Amaro Tati

Fisheries - Vitória de Barros Neto and Guido da Silva Cristóvão

Industry - Abraão Gourgel and Kiala Gabriel

Oil - Aníbal da Silva

Geology and Mining - José Remédios
Inocêncio and Lourenço Baptista

Environment - Luis Mota Liz and Sianga Abilio

Science and Technology - Orlando da Mata

Urbanisation and Housing - Jose ferreira and
Joaquim silvestre

Public Works - José André and Manuela
Bezerra

Transport - Carlas de sousa and José
Kuvinga

Energy - João Borges

*Telecommunication and Information
Technology* - Ana Agostinho Guimarães,
Pedro Teta and Aristides Safeca

Health - Evelize Frestas and Carlos Maseca

Education - Pinda Simão, Narciso Benedito
and Ana Paula Fernando

Culture - Cornélio Caley and Luís Kandjimbo

Social Welfare - Mateus Ângelo and Maria Sá
Magalhães

Family and Women Promotion - Ana
Sacramento Neto

Ex-combatants and War Veterans - Clemente
Cunjunca

Youth and Sports - Albino da Conceição and
Yaba Alberto

Social Communication - Manuel Miguel de
Carvalho

Governors appointed

President dos Santos on 24 October also
swore into office the following provincial
governors:

Mawete Baptista (Uige)
Eusébio de Brito (Kuangdo Kubango)
António Didalelwa (Cunene)
Isaac dos Anjos (Huila)
Cândida Celeste (Bie)
Cândida Narciso (Lunda Sul)
Armando da Cruz Neto (Benguela)
Boaventura Cardoso (Malanje)
Albino Malungo (Huambo)

Gender gap reduced in parliament

On 30 September members of the National
Assembly were sworn into office at a
ceremony in Luanda. Out of the 220 seats, the
MPLA now holds 191, with UNITA being
represented by 16 parliamentarians. The third
largest party, PRS, has 8 seats, whilst the
FNLA has three seats and ND two seats.

The number of women elected to parliament
has risen from 29 to 81, which represents over
36 per cent of the total. In 1997 the SADC
Heads of State signed the "Declaration on
Gender and Development" which committed
them to ensure "the equal representation of
women and men in the decision-making of
member states and SADC structures at all
levels, and the achievement of at least 30
percent target of women in political and
decision making structures by year 2005". The
only other countries to reach this minimum
target are Tanzania, Mozambique and South
Africa.

The MPLA has 77 women parliamentarians,
whilst UNITA has four. The new deputy
speaker of the National Assembly is Joana
Lina Ramos Baptista, along with João
Lourenço, Ernesto Mulato (vice president of
UNITA) and Benedito Muxiri.

Meanwhile, UNITA has chosen Alda Juliana
Paulo Sachiambo to lead its parliamentary
group. She replaces Alcides Sakala who failed
to get elected to the National Assembly.

In August 2008 most SADC countries signed
up to the Protocol on Gender and
Development that commits them to achieving
fifty per cent women representation by at all
levels of government by 2015.

UNITA leadership isolated in National Assembly

The poor electoral result for the main
opposition party, UNITA, has left it with only
16 deputies in parliament. Thus its
parliamentary group has more leaders than
followers.

UNITA President Isaias Samakuva and
Deputy President Ernesto Mulato are joined
by Abilio Kamalata "Numa", Silvestre Gabriel
Samy, Lukamba Paulo "Gato", Demóstenes
Amós Chilingutilla, Carlos de Oliveira
Fontoura, José Manuel Chiwale, Almerindo
Jaka Jamba, Miraldina Olga Marcos Jamba,
Mártires Correia Victor, Clarisse Matilde
Munga Kaputu, Regina Eduardo Txipoia, Alda

Juliana Paulo Sachiambo, Manuel Savihemba and Raul Manuel Danda.

Missing from this list are several founders of UNITA, including Miguel Maria Nzau Puna who is now represents the MPLA in parliament, and Jorge Valentim who campaigned actively for the MPLA.

EU final report on election delayed

The European Union Observer Mission to Angola has not yet published its final report on the elections.

Several international bodies had sent teams to observe the election process, but none were as critical as the 108-member mission from the European Union. It had several misgivings about the process, leading it to the interim conclusion that the process fell "short of basic international standards".

Meanwhile, Angola has sent a team of three to Zambia as part of a SADC observer mission to watch Zambia's presidential election, which was triggered following the death of President Levy Mwanawasa.

Angola to cut production as oil prices fall

Angola has announced that it is to cut oil production by 99,000 barrels a day as part of OPEC's decision to cut production by 1.5 million barrels to counter the recent fall in oil prices. Oil, which had reached a high of almost \$150 a barrel, has fallen drastically in recent months, reaching about \$67 by the end of October. This is close to the government's 2009 budget assumption of \$55 a barrel.

Despite the huge fall in oil prices, Angola's 2009 budget is 43 per cent up on this year, with the social sector increasing its budget by over a third. Included in the government's plans is the building of over a million new houses by 2012, partially funded through a loan from the China Development Bank.

There will also be funds made available over the next five years to kickstart agriculture. This is to reverse the country's current need to import more than half its food. It is planned that international investment by companies

such as Lonrho and Chiquita will lead to the country become a major food exporter.

Angola has a theoretical output of around 2 million barrels per day, but technical problems have reduced this to around 1.7 million barrels per day. OPEC's decision to reduce overall production will cut production from the current OPEC ceiling of 28.808 million barrels per day.

Vehicle assembly factory to open

On 23 October President Jose Eduardo dos Santos visited a vehicle assembly plant in Viana, which will put together 33,000 vehicles per year. The plant will handle buses and lorries imported from Japan.

The President's visit was part of a working trip to the Special Economic Zone in Viana, which will provide jobs for 3,000 people.

45,000 weapons handed over to government

The new Prime Minister, Paulo Kassoma, on 27 October chaired a meeting of the National Disarmament Commission to assess the success of the campaign to collect illegally held firearms.

The inter-ministerial meeting included the Ministers of Home Affairs, Justice, Finance, Social Welfare, Family and Women Promotion, Education, Youth and Sports, and the Deputy Ministers of Territorial Administration, Public Works, Foreign Affairs, and Social Communication. Also present were senior staff from the army and police.

The meeting heard that over 45,000 weapons have been collected by the police, with more being collected by the army.

In 2007 only 8,479 weapons were collected, but at the beginning of 2008 the government launched a campaign to step up the process. This was carried out in three phases: sensitising the population to the need to disarm; the voluntary handing over of illicit weapons; and the final phase which will be the coercive removal of illegal weapons by the police.

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