

Angola Peace Monitor

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Angolan elections – full results

The MPLA has won a huge majority in Angola's parliament following legislative elections on 5 September, gaining 81.64 per cent of the vote. Its nearest rival, UNITA, received only 10.39 per cent. In third place was PRS with 3.17 per cent. The historic liberation movement, the FNLA, came fifth with only 1.11 per cent of the vote. The turnout was 87.36 per cent.

On 16 September the National Electoral Commission, CNE, announced that the MPLA would have 191 parliamentarians out of a total of 220 in the new National Assembly, a large increase on the 129 seats that it had following the 1992 elections.

The main loser is UNITA, which sees its 70 parliamentary seats reduced to just 16. The third largest party, PRS, gains two seats bringing its presence in the National Assembly to 8 in total. Only two other parties have any presence in the National Assembly – the FNLA with three seats and ND with two seats.

The national results are as follows:

MPLA	81.64%
UNITA	10.39%
PRS	3.17%
ND	1.20%
FNLA	1.11%
PDP-ANA	0.51%
PLD	0.33%
AD	0.29%
FpD	0.27%
PADEPA	0.27%
PAJOCA	0.24%
PRD	0.22%
PPE	0.19%
FOFAC	0.17%

The number of parliamentary seats was calculated in two stages using the D'Hondt system. Firstly, 130 places in the

National Assembly were allocated according to each political party's proportion of votes nationally. Secondly, each of the 18 provinces allocated 5 seats to parties proportional to their provincial result. This is to ensure that a political party that is strong in one province is able to have a presence at the National Assembly even if it does not have strong nationwide support. Thus, the PRS, which was particularly strong in Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul, gets more representatives than if only its national result was taken into consideration.

The parliamentarians will be sworn in to office in Luanda on 30 September.

The allocation of seats was challenged by the small party FdP, which received 0.27 per cent of the vote. It complained to the Constitutional Court on 18 September that the distribution should be as follows: MPLA 181, UNITA 23, PRS 8, FNLA 3, ND 2, PDP-ANA 1, PLD 1, and AD-Coalition 1.

The elections were the first parliamentary elections to be held in Angola since 1992, when the MPLA won 53 per cent of the vote. In that election UNITA gained 34 per cent of the vote (the result in the presidential elections was closer, with Jose Eduardo dos Santos receiving 49.57 per cent of the vote with Jonas Savimbi receiving 40.07 per cent). However, UNITA rejected the result and returned to war.

High turnout

There was a large turnout for the elections. 7,213,281 people voted out of a registered electorate of just over 8 million, which equates to a turnout of 87.36 per cent. By comparison, in Britain's last general election the turnout was 61.4 per cent of the electorate.

Provincial breakdown

One striking feature of the election results was the uniformity of the results throughout the provinces. Some commentators had expected the ruling MPLA to do badly in the capital, Luanda, and in provinces traditionally believed by some to be bastions of support for UNITA, such as Bie province. However, the results released by the CNE show that the MPLA gained over half the vote in all 18 provinces. In Bie province it received three quarters of the vote.

In Cabinda province, where a low intensity insurgency has been waged by the separatist movement FLEC, the MPLA gained 62 per cent of the vote. UNITA received its best result in this province, with 31 per cent of the vote. A call by separatists to boycott the vote went unheeded, with 87.87 per cent of the registered population voting. This is in fact slightly above the national average. Of the votes cast in Cabinda province, 91.02 per cent were valid, compared with a national average of 89.42.

The provincial breakdown is as follows (we are only publishing the first three parties, for the full list see www.cne.ao):

Bengo

MPLA	84,969	90.24%
UNITA	4,109	4.01%
FNLA	2,608	2.76%

Benguela

MPLA	508,654	82.51%
UNITA	78,403	12.72%
ND	8,295	1.35%

Bie

MPLA	273,728	74.93 %
UNITA	76,651	18.25%
PRS	7,094	1.94%

Cabinda

MPLA	85,938	62.77%
UNITA	42,940	31.37%
PRS	2,262	1.65%

Cunene

MPLA	181,996	93.37%
UNITA	5,723	2.94%
ND	2,803	1.44%

Huambo

MPLA	426,226	82.05 %
UNITA	70,176	13.51%
PRS	7,448	1.43%

Huila

MPLA	587,231	90.00%
UNITA	30,209	4.63%
ND	13,695	2.10%

Kuando Kubango

MPLA	98,935	79.64%
UNITA	18,684	15.04%
PRS	1,991	1.60%

Kwanza Norte

MPLA	136,460	94.73%
UNITA	2,029	1.41%
ND	1,703	1.18 %

Kwanza Sul

MPLA	376,895	87.46%
UNITA	26,463	6.14%
ND	8,938	2.07%

Luanda

MPLA	1,448,096	78.79%
UNITA	258,474	14.6%
FNLA	28,339	1.54%

Lunda Norte

MPLA	171,912	65.34%
PRS	62,984	23.94%
UNITA	17,908	6.81%

Lunda Sul

MPLA	63,771	50.54%
PRS	52,666	41.74%
UNITA	4,887	3.87%

Malanje

MPLA	203,061	93.12%
UNITA	4,763	2.18%
PRS	3,296	1.51%

Moxico

MPLA	165,349	85.29%
PRS	10,846	5.59%
UNITA	10,590	5.45%

Namibe

MPLA	109,490	94.35%
UNITA	3,356	2.89%
ND	1,021	0.88%

Uige

MPLA	257,722	(89.21%)
UNITA	11,998	(4.15%)
FNLA	5,049	(1.75%)

Zaire

MPLA	85,795	67.49%
FNLA	20,985	16.51%
UNITA	13,009	10.23%

Huge logistical problems in Luanda

The systems put in place at great expense for voting day seemed to fall apart even before polling began with many voters, particularly in the capital, Luanda, unable to cast their vote.

According to the CNE 320 polling stations out of 2,584 in Luanda did not open on 5 September. The reason for the failure to open was because ballot papers and voter register lists were not delivered. Some of these voting stations were opened on 6 September (later reports state that the head of the CNE, Caetano de Sousa, reduced the figure for non-opening stations down to 48 that required to open on 6 September). Luanda's turnout was well below the national average, with 82.42 per cent of registered voters casting their ballot.

The European Union observer mission noted that many other polling stations were hit by delays and lack of materials. It reported that 16.3 per cent of observed polling stations opened over an hour late. A further 12 per cent of stations suspended voting at some point on Election Day, mainly due to insufficient ballot papers.

Problems were also caused by the panic decision by the CNE on 2 September to allow people to vote anywhere within their own municipality rather than at named polling stations as previously agreed. The CNE only received the voter register in an appropriate form from the government on 17 August, as opposed to the legal requirement that it receive the data by 26 July. The CNE then made huge efforts to distribute the voters list so that people could find out where their polling station was located. It used high-tech solutions such as enabling the electorate to access the voters roll via SMS, the internet, and staffed PDA's, along with machines in high volume public spaces.

However, on 2 September it concluded that the vote might come to a standstill if too many voters used the provision known as tendered ballots. A tendered ballot is a special mechanism allowing people who are not on the polling station's register to cast their vote. That vote is put in a special envelope, along with details of the voter, and put in the

ballot box. After voting is completed the eligibility of each tendered ballot is considered before adding to the count or discarding. The fear was that too many people would vote at undesignated polling stations and that the polling stations would soon run out of envelopes.

This late decision was not transmitted to all the voting stations, resulting in widespread confusion and the breakdown in the system. According to the European Union observers, most polling stations failed to keep details of these extra voters, with cases of voters lists being abandoned completely during the vote. However, the observers did note that voters were required to dip their finger in indelible ink as a safeguard against multiple voting.

During Election Day most participants accepted these failures as election officials doing their best under near impossible conditions rather than as part of a ploy by any political party to gain an advantage. Indeed, the European Union observers noted "no formal complaints were filed by any of the political party agents in any of the observed polling stations".

The CNE announced on 19 September that it was to set up a commission of inquiry into the problems faced in Luanda.

UNITA objection to Luanda poll

The near collapse of the voting system in Luanda led the main opposition party, UNITA, to denounce the poll and to call for the whole election to be retaken in the capital. Even before the closing of polls on 5 September UNITA rejected the decision to open polling stations on 6 September, complaining that problems that could not be sorted out over months would not be solved overnight.

After the second day of voting UNITA put a formal complaint into the CNE calling for the capital's vote to be rejected and retaken. The CNE rejected UNITA's appeal on the grounds that any complaint should be about particular voting stations, and should be lodged by party officials from that locality or from voters allocated to that station.

UNITA then escalated its complaint to the Constitutional Court, which on 17 September refused UNITA's application.

One of UNITA's main complaints was that the lack of electoral registers made multiple voting possible. However, the Constitutional Court found that the use of indelible ink was a satisfactory safeguard.

It also found that there had not been any complaints from observers or party observers about multiple voting and therefore there was no evidence on which to make a judgement against the legitimacy of the vote. The Court did, however, find that the CNE had failed to comply with articles 108 and 118 of the Electoral Law, but found that these were not enough to require a rerun of the poll.

Despite its reservations, UNITA accepted the overall poll result. However, UNITA President Isaias Samakuva did complain to SAfm Radio that "there are people who were forced to vote for a particular party".

Observers find election credible despite flaws

The elections were observed by several international and local organisations, which in general found that the result was fair and reflected the will of the people. However, there was a consensus that prior to polling day the MPLA had used its position of power to gain an unfair advantage through the state media.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) observer mission, composed of 80 observers, found that the elections were credible, peaceful and transparent. However, the head of the mission, John Kunene, noted that "the delays in the opening of the poll in some polling stations caused a lot of frustration for the voters. Some felt they might not be able to exercise their civil rights".

Similarly, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) mission, made up of 15 observers, found that the elections were "free, regular and transparent".

The Portuguese Speaking Countries Community (CPLP) mission, composed of 15 observers, declared that the elections were "transparent and free, and shall be construed as a sign that the country is beginning a new round in the

consolidation of peace and its democratic system". It noted that there were deficiencies, especially in Luanda, but the mission "saw with satisfaction that in the provinces the vote was carried out in moderation, calmness and awareness of citizenship". However, the mission noted that it is important that anomalies are properly addressed before the next elections in Angola.

Meanwhile, the Pan African Parliament sent a 26-member observer mission, which worked with the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). It found several shortcomings in the process. It noted that the composition of the CNE "tends to result in a skewed composition of the CNE giving more members aligned to the ruling party", and also found that the MPLA received more coverage from the public media. Furthermore, state funding for political parties was released late. The mission made several other complaints, on voter education, accreditation of observers, the problems of non-opening polling stations in Luanda, and the lack of voters rolls.

However, it balanced its criticisms with praise for the registration process, the high levels of political tolerance displayed by political parties, the equal allocation of airtime to political parties, and the transparent counting of votes. Overall, the mission leader, Dr Idriss Ndele Moussa, concluded that the elections were "generally free and fair".

The elections were also observed by a 108-member mission from the European Union. It had several misgivings about the process, leading it to the conclusion that the process fell "short of basic international standards". Many of its criticisms were similar to the other observer missions, particularly on the confusion caused by late decisions taken by the CNE. However, the EU mission found that these decisions were taken in an effort to ensure the fairness of the election process and overcome difficulties.

The EU mission put the problems on voting day in context. There were 12,400 polling centres subdivided into 50,000 polling stations. Over 270,000 polling staff were trained – which makes up three per cent of the entire voting population.

The mission found that the problems were partially due to the CNE making late decisions in order to enable people to vote more easily. But it also found that “the absence of a detailed calendar for election preparations meant that the correct quantities of materials were not sent out on time to polling stations and polling staff were accredited late”.

In summary, the EU mission found that “Angola consolidates its commitment to peace and takes a positive step towards strengthening democracy with a high voter turnout and a calm electoral process that revealed, however, organisational weaknesses, procedural inconsistencies on Election Day and an uneven playing field for contestants”.

However, it found that on Election Day observers considered that anomalies arose from a lack of understanding of these key provisions rather than from any deliberate attempt to manipulate the polls, adding that “only minor cases of electoral malpractice were reported”.

There have been reports that EU observers in Cabinda raised concerns about non transparent voting there.

The European Union mission is due to publish its final findings in October, but the head of the mission, Luisa Morgantini, has repeatedly refused to declare the results free and fair.

Human Rights Watch expresses doubts

On 15 Sept the non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch reported that Angola’s elections were marred by irregularities. The irregularities raised by the US based organisation include those raised by the election monitoring teams. Human Rights Watch identifies as key problems the “obstruction” by the CNE of “accreditation for national electoral observers, its failure to respond to media bias in favour of the ruling party, and severe delays by the Angolan government in providing funds to opposition parties”.

Human Rights Watch found that these key issues “suggests the polls did not meet the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections in key areas”.

It alleges that there was official obstruction of the accreditation of observers from the Civil Society Electoral Platform, which had trained 2,640 observers but only received 1,300 accreditations. In Luanda, only 28 observers from the Electoral Platform were given accreditation despite 370 requests.

The report compares the delay in the distribution of state funding – which should have been released up to 90 days before the election but were not released until a month before the elections – with the misuse of state resources, and details examples of government sponsored events being used to promote the MPLA.

The report also highlighted examples that it states shows that the MPLA used its “grip on the state media” to receive a disproportionate amount of airtime devoted to its campaign during news bulletins.

Human Rights Watch had previously documented what it termed a “climate of intimidation” in the months before the election campaign began. However, it conceded that during the campaign, “police efforts to offer improved security to opposition parties and the presence of international observers helped to reduce the number of violent incidents”.

Small parties face closure

The election also marks the end of a period in which creating a political party was for some a cash cow. At the beginning of the electoral process there were 108 registered political parties, each of which was given several government grants ranging from \$75,000 to \$200,000.

The creation of the Constitutional Court, established in June, will see many close as it analyses the 7500 signatures required to register a party. Last year 19 parties were deregistered after the Supreme Court found that many of the signatures were fraudulent.

Most political parties failed to get enough signatures to stand in this year’s elections and face deregistration. Similarly, those that did take part but received less than 0.5 per cent of the vote will face closure.

This will leave the country with six registered parties, although the door will be

open for the others to re-register should they manage to gain enough valid signatures.

UNITA sued for defamation

On 16 September the Development Bank of Angola, BDA, filed papers with the Attorney General's Office, to begin the process of launching a criminal lawsuit against UNITA on the grounds of defamation.

The case arises from allegations made by UNITA that the BDA had given the ruling MPLA \$43 million.

Government under fire for ban on NGO

The Angolan government has come under widespread criticism for its decision to try and close the human rights organisation, the Association for Justice, Peace and Democracy (AJPD).

On 4 September the Constitutional Court began proceedings against AJPD, which had until 19 September to present a case against its closure.

AJPD is a partner of the British non-governmental organisation Christian Aid, which claims "in recent years the government has conducted a consistent campaign of harassment and intimidation against human rights activists and organisations".

Christian Aid suggests that the problems for AJPD stems from a government decision in 2007 that only NGOs which provided a "social impact" would be permitted to work in Angola. The Director of the government's Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UTCAH), Pedro Walipi Kalenga, stated in 2007 that four organisations were using human rights as a cover for

breaking the law and threatened to close them. The four were AJPD, SOS Habitat, Associacao Maos Livres and the Open Society Institute.

The action against AJPD follows the decision earlier this year to close down the Angolan office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

According to Rosario Advirta of Christian Aid, "AJPD is doing important civic and human rights defence work. AJPD and its work is in full compliance with the Angolan constitution and the law regulating all associations. There are no grounds for AJPD to be banned. This new development against a human rights organisation is worrying, and may signal a further closing down of civic space. We hope this is not a consequence of the election results".

The human rights organisation Amnesty International called on the Angolan government to "stop harassing and intimidating human rights activists, and closing down human rights organisations in the country".

It accuses the government of infringing "the guarantees of freedom of association, assembly and expression contained in Angolan national law and international human rights treaties and standards", and urges the authorities to "respect, promote and protect the work of these human rights organizations and the human rights defenders and activists working in them".

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