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# Angola Monitor

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The Angola Monitor covers the politics, economics, development, democracy and human rights of Angola. It is published quarterly by Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA).

This issue covers Angola's new constitution, the MPLA Congress and the African Cup of Nations. In economic news we look at the announcement of IMF support, Nigeria overtaking Angola in crude oil production and predictions of increased economic growth in 2010. We also look at Amnesty International's human rights recommendations to the Angolan Government and the latest aid and development news.

We welcome readers' responses to the Angola Monitor. Please send your comments to [campaigns@actsa.org](mailto:campaigns@actsa.org). For more news and information on Angola and southern Africa, visit the ACTSA website [www.actsa.org](http://www.actsa.org).

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## Political news

### Government adopt new constitution

The Angolan Government adopted a new constitution on 21<sup>st</sup> January. One of the most significant changes is that the direct ballot for the position of President will be replaced with the appointment of the leader of the party that wins the largest share of the vote in the parliamentary elections. Presidential elections were widely anticipated to be held in 2009 but were postponed.

The constitution was approved with 186 votes in favour, two abstentions and no votes against, out of a potential 220 votes in Parliament, exceeding the required two-thirds majority. UNITA, the main opposition party boycotted the vote.

Under the new constitution, the President will remain as head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces with the role of Prime Minister being replaced by Vice President. The President will be able to serve a maximum of two five year terms. This would potentially enable Eduardo dos Santos, who recently marked his 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as President, to serve until 2022. The new constitution also gives the President more responsibility for day to day affairs of state, previously the responsibility of the Prime Minister. According to the Government the new system will be more efficient, less costly and will bring them in line with other countries in the region.

The new constitution empowers the President to appoint judges to the Supreme and Constitutional Courts and the head of Court of Audits. According to the governing party, the MPLA, the new constitution will reduce corruption in a country classified as the 18<sup>th</sup> most corrupt in the world, according to watchdog Transparency International. Article 10 of the constitution separates the Church and state and recognises freedom of religion in the largely catholic country. Land concessions can only be granted by the state and are restricted to Angolan nationals or companies, ensuring that foreign investors establish an Angolan arm or have a local partner in order to access land.

It is claimed that freedom of the press will be protected under the new constitution. The Government currently have significant control over the media, running two television stations, radio and the only daily newspaper. Radio Ecclesia, the Catholic Church radio station is currently not permitted to broadcast throughout the country; only state radio is currently allowed to do this.

The Supreme Court has upheld the new constitution and the President has appointed a new Government, largely similar to the previous MPLA Government.

## **Angola hosts African Cup of Nations**

Football fans in Egypt were celebrating at the end of January as their team won the African Cup of Nations (CAN) in the final against Algeria held in Luanda.

The opening ceremony held in Luanda's November 11 National Stadium was attended by presidents from across the continent. It was commended by the US Embassy for "projecting a powerful and effective image of Angola's history and culture". However, the event, along with much of the competition was overshadowed by the attack on the national team of Togo as they travelled to the enclave of Cabinda. Angola has spent the last three years preparing for the competition which it hoped to use as a showcase for the country's socio-economic developments since the civil war ended in 2002.

## **Togo national team attacked in Cabinda**

The Togo national team was attacked on 8<sup>th</sup> January near the Congolese border prior to the African Cup of Nations. The bus driver, goal keeper coach and a media official were killed in the attack and two players were injured. The attack happened just after the team entered Cabinda, one of four venues being used to host the African Cup of Nations.

Following the attack, General Rodrigues Mingas, secretary of the separatist Front for the Liberation of Cabinda Enclave (FLEC), which seeks independence from Angola, said they would launch new assaults in Cabinda province during the African Cup of Nations.

"All measures were taken to ensure that the CAN matches are played in the best secure conditions in Cabinda," a senior official of Angola's Interior Ministry pledged. Togo withdrew from the competition shortly after the attack after a request from its own government.

Cabinda, a former Portuguese colony, is situated between DR Congo and the Republic of Congo and is rich in oil, natural gas and tropical hardwood. FLEC accuses the Angolan Government of taking Cabinda's resources whilst not addressing poverty in the region.

Following the attack a 1,000 strong crowd responded to a national Government request to march in support of the Togo national side. Jean-Baptiste Mawete, governor of Cabinda said "We are here to say no to terrorism and to show our solidarity with the young Togolese."

Human rights groups have accused the Government of using the attack as an excuse to round up critics. Amnesty International raised concerns after Francisco Luemba, a lawyer, Padre Raul Tati, a catholic priest, Pedro Fuca, a former police officer and Professor Belchoir Lanso Tati, a former member of banned human rights group Mpalabanda, were arrested. Mpalabanda, the only human rights organisation in Cabinda, was banned in 2006 on charges of inciting violence and hatred.

In December, Human Rights Watch highlighted the arrest of a journalist and the harassment of reporters from the limited independent media in Cabinda, calling for the Government to ensure freedom of the press, ahead of the Cup of Nations.

Amnesty International called on the Government to ensure "that this deplorable incident is not used as an excuse to violate the rights of citizens in Cabinda through arbitrary arrests and detentions or any form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment." The organisation further called on the Angolan authorities to ensure that a thorough and impartial investigation into the circumstances surrounding the attacks is carried out in accordance with international human rights standards.

## **MPLA hold Congress**

The MPLA's sixth congress took place in Luanda between 7th and 10th December. The Congress saw the re-election of President dos Santos as head of the party in a secret ballot with 1,964 votes out of a possible 2,080. Following the vote the President said "It was a surprise for me to see that 99 percent of the delegates, through a secret vote, voted in this way...For me this vote means the MPLA and its delegates in the this congress want me to work harder and better in order to defend the rights of our party."

In his closing speech President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said the Government would put into effect its commitments made in the 2008 elections to increase the nations agricultural output as well as embark on a programme of increasing electricity and water output, building one million new homes and developing health and education provision.

He also raised the issue of constitutional reform including changes to the terms of office of ministers and strengthening the leading executive bodies of the MPLA and of Government. He noted that those in Government who had repeatedly been criticised by the public (presumably for allegations of corruption) would be investigated by the MPLA. Scrutiny and monitoring of office holders would also be introduced. Most controversial was the signal that the President and parliament would be elected through a single vote, effectively delaying the presidential election until 2012. President dos Santos has been criticised for repeatedly delaying the election.

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## **Economic news**

### **IMF support for Angola announced**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a 27 month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with Angola on 23 November, totalling 858.9 million SDR (Special Drawing Rights) approximately US\$1.4 billion. This ends a stand off lasting more than 10 years between the IMF and the Angolan Government, with the latter thought to be concerned about IMF "conditionality" and until now having the ability to raise finance for its budget from other sources.

The Angolan economy has suffered due to the sharp drop in oil prices (now rising again) and diamond prices (Angola is world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest diamond producer) and the global economic crisis which hit the country during a period of rapid expansion largely based on oil revenues. The subsequent large drop in oil revenues caused a sharp slowdown in the economy, weakening its fiscal and external positions, the depreciation of the exchange rate and a rise in inflation.

The key pillars of the program are: i) a determined fiscal effort that aims to reduce the non-oil primary fiscal deficit significantly in 2010 and that still provides adequate resources for social spending and vital infrastructure projects; ii) an orderly exchange rate adjustment backed by tight monetary policy to normalize conditions in the foreign exchange market; and iii) measures to safeguard the financial sector. The IMF believes that Angola has to restrain its public expenditure and the agreed programme should allow for an adequate level of social spending and infrastructure investment. The SBA allows for 30 per cent of total central government expenditures to be spent on social issues over the duration of the programme and support for government capital projects in 2010.

### **Nigeria overtakes Angola in crude oil production**

Angola became Africa's second largest oil producer in December as Nigeria's oil production increased from 1.941 million barrels per day to 1.984 million in December 2009. Angola's oil production slipped at the same time from 1.856 million barrels per day from 1.877 million. However, US oil company Chevron expects to increase its daily production of oil by 8.4 per cent from 535,000 barrels per day to 580,000.

Oil experts predict that Angola's oil exports will fall in March to 1.79 million barrels per day although it will remain above the quota of 1.52 million barrels set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Angola signed an oil deal with India on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January aimed at strengthening cooperation in the oil sector. The memorandum was signed between India's minister of oil and natural gas, Murli Deora and Angola's national oil company Sonangol. In 2009 Angola supplied about 43 million barrels of oil to India, accounting for about 6.5 per cent of Angola's total exports. Angola's oil minister, Jose Botelho de Vasconcelos, said the deals "established a way of deepening business co-operation" between the two countries.

### **Sonangol wins Iraq contract**

Sonangol, the Angolan state run oil company, has won a profitable but potentially dangerous oil deal in the Nineveh region of Iraq. Sonangol was one of a number of oil companies that were awarded deals in Iraq's second round of contracts, held in December.

It is estimated that the company will receive remuneration fees of between \$5 and \$6 a barrel, in the fields estimated to contain 1.7 billion barrels of oil. Sonangol is expected to invest \$2 billion in Qayara, and that several firms have shown an interest in forging joint exploration partnerships with it. Paulino Jeronimo, exploration manager at Sonangol said "There are at least five companies that have approached us and showed an interest to work with us to invest. We are still holding talks with them. The companies are European and American."

### **Further investment in Diamond mines**

Angola's diamond mining concession company Endiama and De Beers joint prospecting company Endeb has invested US\$107 million in diamond prospecting in Angola's Luanda Norte province in the north east of the country since 2005. The project has so far discovered 108 diamond fields and is planned to continue until 2013. Escom Mining has announced that it is planning to invest a further US\$750 million in diamond mining in Angola, by 2014, in addition to the US\$430 million invested since 2001. The company is currently involved in several initiatives in the country including exploration and prospecting and expect to produce diamonds in the near future.

Angola is expected to adopt a new mining code in 2010 according to Minister of Geology and Mining Mankenda Ambroise. The Government have been drafting a new code since 2006 and will replace current mining legislation, which was adopted in 1992.

### **Economic growth of 8.7 per cent expected in 2010**

A Reuters poll of 10 economists has predicted that Angola will see its economy grow by 8.7 per cent in 2010, slowing to 8.1 per cent in 2011. The estimates, which are largely based on the stabilisation of oil prices at a high level, are a massive increase from estimates of 1.3 per cent in 2009.

The economists also estimated that inflation rates were expected to remain high at 13 per cent before easing to 12.2 per cent. This was partly due to the low value of the Kwanza and structural difficulties effecting trade such as port congestion. Angola's Economy Minister Manuel Nunes Junior had estimated in November that the economy would grow by 8.2 per cent in 2010. His prediction was due to an expansion of 15 per cent in the non oil sector with a growth of 1.1 per cent in the oil sector.

The predicted growth of the economy is reflected in Angola's 2010 budget which increases spending by 19 per cent. The budget is based on an increase in oil process from \$37 per barrel predicted in the 2009 budget to \$58 predicted for 2010. Social expenditure on health and education is the highest area of spending in the budget accounting for 28.1 per cent of expenditure.

## Human rights news

### **Amnesty International makes human rights recommendations to Government**

Angola was due to be reviewed by the Working Groups of the UN Human Rights Council under its Universal Periodic Review mechanism on 12 February 2010. Angola, like most African countries is a party to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights. Angola is also a member of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

Amnesty International has made recommendations to the Government of Angola as part of the review process. It has also called on those governments participating in the review, especially those in southern Africa, to engage in a meaningful dialogue and make concrete, meaningful and measurable recommendations. A number of the recommendations are given below:

#### *Ratification of human rights treaties*

- To incorporate the provisions of international human rights standards into domestic law, including provisions on the right to adequate housing and on the prohibition of torture;
- To reform all laws and regulations in the country, particularly those related to forced evictions and policing, including by bringing them into line with international human rights laws and standards;
- To ratify all outstanding human rights treaties, including the UN Convention against Torture and its optional protocol, the second optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity and implement them in national law.

#### *Forced evictions*

- To stop all forced evictions and to place a moratorium on mass evictions until a comprehensive human rights-based housing policy and a legal framework providing effective remedies are in place;
- To provide immediate assistance, including adequate housing, to those who have been forcibly evicted and who remain homeless, and to adequately compensate all victims of forced evictions;
- To ensure that all people who may be affected by evictions are accorded the legal protections to which they are entitled under international standards, including adequate notice, consultation, due process and assurance of adequate alternative housing;
- To extend, as a matter of urgency, an invitation to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to housing to visit Angola, to enable her to assist with the development of legislation and policies that comply with international human rights law and standards.

#### *Human rights defenders*

- To respect and protect the work of human rights defenders and other members of civil society by ensuring that they are free to carry out their human rights activities without interference, in accordance with international human rights standards and in line with Angola's voluntary pledges made in the context of its election to the UN Human Rights Council;
- To ensure any action taken to regulate human rights organizations is not politically motivated, but based strictly on legal provisions consistent with international human rights standards.

#### *Freedom of expression and association*

- To ensure that no one is arrested for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- To respect, protect and promote the right to freedom of expression of journalists, in particular with regard to the well-established international human rights principle that public officials should tolerate more, rather than less, criticism than private individuals;
- To amend or repeal laws providing punishment for alleged defamation of the head of state or other public officials.

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## Aid and development news

### **135,000 Homes to be built in Benguela by the end of 2012**

Benguela's Provincial Directorate of Urbanism and Housing has announced plans to build 135,000 homes by the end of 2012. Its director, Zacarias Kamuenho, estimated that the phased project would benefit 810,000 families, with the first houses ready for occupation by the end of 2010. The project would see housing and infrastructure built over 900 hectares through cooperatives, public and private initiatives and self construction.

### **Agricultural production increased**

Angola saw a dramatic increase in its production of staple cereals, including maize in 2008/2009. Output during the period grew by 42 per cent to 1.052 billion tonnes, according to Agriculture Minister Afonso Pedro Canga. The production of timber and root vegetables had also increased. Canga said that despite higher production "domestic production of those products does not yet meet the country's needs."

### **Diarrhoea killed 107 in Kwanza Sul Province**

107 people have died as a result of diarrhoea in Angola's coastal Kwanza Sul province in 2009, due to poor sanitary conditions and a lack of clean drinking water. According to Henrique Silvestre, the head of the provincial health department, a total of 25,795 cases of diarrhoea were recorded in the province in 2009.

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*The articles in the Angola Monitor do not necessarily represent any agreed position of ACTSA itself.*