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# Angola Monitor

Issue 1/13

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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 delays to the national census and local elections, the announcement of the government's five year development plan and an investigation in Portugal of alleged money laundering by Angolans in political news. In economic news we cover the government saying it will meet its target on inflation, increased oil production in 2013 and Isabel dos Santos' growing business interests. In human rights news we look at the calls to reopen investigations into abuses in the diamond industry, the ongoing protests by war veterans and attacks on street vendors and journalists. This edition's aid and development news examines mine clearance operations in 2012 and the recent drought, floods and outbreak of cholera.

This issue is also available in Portuguese.

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

### National census and local elections postponed

The government has announced that the long awaited census will be postponed again. A 15 day pilot census, due to take place in 2012, has now been postponed until 2013, with the full census expected in 2014. The National Statistics Institute, who as recently as October 2012 blamed the delay on the lack of cartographic data and the 2012 elections.

Angola's last full census was held in 1970, before independence from Portugal. The lack of accurate data since then has posed major challenges for the government and its departments in planning how it can best direct resources to where they are most needed.

The latest delay in the census will further delay the country's first local and municipal elections. These were also anticipated to take place in 2013, but the minister for territorial administration, Bornito de Sousa, has indicated they are more likely to take place in 2015. Some analysts believe the delay could be intentional as voting patterns in the 2012 elections suggest that the ruling MPLA could lose several districts in Luanda.

### Development plan to focus on stability and growth

Newly appointed vice president, Manuel Vicente marked the 37th anniversary of Angola's independence by announcing that the national development plan for 2013-2017 would focus on stability, growth and employment. In a speech in Namibe, the vice president said that the forthcoming budget would prioritise health, education, housing and social assistance and promised greater financial transparency in these areas. He also announced projects in energy, water and transport. The 6.6 trillion Kwanza budget will be debated by Parliament on 15 January.

### Portugal launches money laundering investigation into top officials

The Portuguese government's Central Investigations for Criminal Action is examining the affairs of three of Angola's top officials as part of an investigation into alleged fraud and money laundering.

The three being investigated include vice president and former chief executive of Sonangol, Manuel Vicente, minister of state and head of intelligence, General Manuel Hélder Vieira Dias Júnior, known as 'Kopelipa' and former presidential communications boss Leopoldino Frago do Nascimento. Angola's

state owned daily newspaper Jornal de Angola, responded to the investigation with an editorial highly critical of Portugal's leaders and journalists who have criticised Angola.

### **Major housing development remains largely empty**

Opposition parties and civil society groups have described Nova Cidade de Kilamba (New City of Kilamba) as a 'ghost town' after only 4,000 of the 20,000 flats on the 54 sq km site have been sold, a year after the project's completion. The development, located 30 km outside Luanda, is aimed at the country's middle classes. Apartments are on the market at \$120,000-200,000, way beyond the reach of most Angolans.

Nova Cidade de Kilamba was built as an 'oil for infrastructure' project by the state owned China International Trust and Investments Corporation (CITIC). It is believed to have cost \$3.5 billion and was intended to go some way to meeting the 2008 election pledge to build one million new homes in four years.

Early in November President dos Santos visited the project and, according to state media, called for prices to be reduced. The minister for urbanisation and housing, José da Silva, disputed this saying the president had in fact called for a reduction in bureaucracy, not a reduction in prices. United Nations secretary general Ban Ki-moon and former Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva have also been taken on visits to the flagship project in the last 18 months.

UNITA spokesperson Alcides Sakala described the project as "A total political and social failure that has failed to respond to the needs of Angolans." He said the party intends to "To raise this in Parliament because there are other projects like Kilamba being built around Angola and we must not repeat these mistakes."

Despite the high level of domestic and international criticism of the scheme, Nova Cidade de Kilamba is unlikely to move the government away from its recent election pledge to build more housing. However, another similar scheme on this scale seems increasingly unlikely.

### **Conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

Angola has called for a non military solution to the conflict in eastern DRC. There has been speculation that the government of the DRC may ask for Angola's help, including military assistance and that in return Angola would require the DRC to drop its territorial claim to areas off the coast of Cabinda which are rich in oil and natural gas.

### **President Zuma to visit Angola**

South African President Jacob Zuma will visit Angola to meet with President dos Santos on 16 January 2013. The two heads of state will discuss economic development between the two countries and review various agreements between the two countries, according to the South African ambassador to Angola, Godfrey Nhlanhla Ngwenya. This is the fourth time Jacob Zuma has visited Angola as President and is seen as indicator that relationships between Angola and South Africa are strengthening.

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## **Economic news**

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### **Government will meet 10 per cent inflation target**

Central bank governor Jose de Lima Massano said at the end of December that the country would stay within the government inflation target for 2012. "We foresee that until the end of the year, the inflation rate will remain within the goal set by the government, which is 10 per cent." He said.

The government has put in place plans to increase foreign exchange reserves, keep the Kwanza stable and to reduce its reliance on the U.S dollar, earning them praise from the International Monetary Fund. The annual consumer inflation rate was 9.83 percent in November. Jose de Lima Massano said that cutting inflation would remain a priority for the central bank, in line with government plans to reduce the rate to nine per cent by the end of 2013.

### **Oil target unlikely to be met**

Oil minister José de Vasconcelos has said that Angola is unlikely to reach its production target of two million barrels per day (bpd) for 2013. He was speaking to reporters at the 162<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), in Vienna, on 12 December.

Angola's oil sector experienced a fall in output in 2011, but three new exploration projects, operated by Total, ExxonMobil and BP are expected to boost production to between 1.8 million to 1.85 million bpd, according to the minister.

Angola's oil production increased steadily towards the end of 2012 with production at 1.75 million bpd in September, 1.79 million bpd in October, but decreased to 1.7 million bpd in November.

He also said that he expected liquefied natural gas producer Angola LNG to commence exports in the first quarter of 2013, later than expected. "The new installation, we need to adjust some equipment and so on, but I think in the next quarter we will do the first cargo."

The Angola LNG plant, in Soyo, is owned by Sonangol, Chevron, Total, Eni and BP. While the venture was initially expected to focus on U.S. buyers, the increase in shale gas production in the country has resulted in a search for alternative buyers. Jose de Vasconcelos said "We have another market now - the Asian market, the European market is the alternative to the United States. We are working with them."

The increase in oil production and the launch of LNG production is expected to increase the country's GDP growth rate to 8.9 per cent in 2013.

### **Isabel dos Santos increases Portuguese investments**

Mobile phone companies Sonaecom and Zon have entered merger talks to create Portugal's second largest telecoms company, instigated by Angolan investor Isabel dos Santos, daughter of President dos Santos. The move, intended to enable the company to expand to other countries and reduce its reliance on Portugal's recession hit market, comes only months after Isabel dos Santos increased her stake in Zon to almost 30 per cent, in June 2012.

Mário Leite Silva, a Zon board member, who is leading negotiations on behalf of Ms dos Santos said "If the merger goes ahead it could lead to a deepening of the multinational strategy, extending it to other regions, which would allow the new company to be present, simultaneously, in complementary markets."

Zon already has a presence in Angola and Mozambique with a 30 per cent share in Zap, a pay TV business launched by Ms dos Santos in Angola three years ago. It is anticipated that the company will increase its operations in Angola where Ms dos Santos is also the largest shareholder in Angolan mobile phone company Unitel.

Isabel dos Santos has purchased a number of assets in Portugal in recent years, since the country went into recession. The investors' portfolio includes 19.5 per cent of Banco BPI, Portugal's third-largest listed bank and a board member and investor in Banco BIC Português, which recently acquired Banco Portugues de Negocios. Her Angolan assets include a chain of supermarkets, restaurants, casinos and stakes in utility firms.

Forbes valued Isabel dos Santos investments at \$500 million in November 2012, making her the 31<sup>st</sup> richest person on the continent.

## Human rights news

### **Traditional leaders call for diamond mining investigation**

A delegation of four traditional leaders, representing over 100 chiefs delivered a petition to the office of attorney general, João Maria Moreira de Sousa in Luanda on 9 January, calling for the reopening of the preliminary investigation into human rights violations in diamond areas.

The chiefs' petition said "For years we have been terrified by the succession of deaths, the torture of our children and the ever-deepening poverty in our communities, as a result of diamond mining."

The delegation, representing traditional chiefs from Cuango and Xá-Muteba municipalities in the diamond rich Lunda-Norte province, called on the attorney general to reopen the preliminary investigation, which was archived by his office in June 2012, into allegations of over 500 torture cases and 100 assassinations by the armed forces.

Journalist Rafael Marques made a criminal complaint in November 2011, accusing nine generals of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) of endorsing torture and killings committed by soldiers and guards from their private security company Teleservice. The generals include the minister of state and head of intelligence, General Manuel Hélder Vieira Dias Júnior. The allegations were highlighted by Rafael Marques in his book *Blood Diamonds: Corruption and Torture in Angola*. The same month the generals lodged a libel and defamation case against Mr Marques in Portugal, where the book was published. Rafael Marques appeared in court in Lisbon on 12 November to answer defamation and slander charges

The traditional chiefs' petition denounced a key witness in the initial investigation saying he "introduced himself as the King of the Kassanje Lowlands, and the highest traditional authority in the Lundas. He is not a king, and he lied on behalf of the legitimate chiefs. We came forth to denounce him."

Diamond mining operations in Lunda provinces are believed to produce over a billion dollars worth of gems annually.

### **Veterans' protests continue**

War veterans have pledged to continue their protests against the non payment of pensions. Police broke up demonstrations of up to 200 in Luanda, between 2-9 January, using police dogs and mounted police. Analysts expect the protests to continue in the coming months, with youth groups and oppositions likely to support the veterans. The minister of former combatants and veterans, Kundi Paihama, used his New Year message, ahead of budget deliberations, to emphasise the need for new homes and entrepreneurial projects for former combatants.

### **Semanário Angolense newspaper withdrawn**

Attempts by journalists to print a critical speech by UNITA president Isaiás Samakuva were halted when the newspaper *Semanário Angolense* ended up on a bonfire. According to journalists from the paper, the newspaper's owners Media Investe, run by senior members of the State Security and Information Services (SINSE), withdrew the paper on 27 October, after it had gone to the printing press and ordered that copies were burned.

The paper had published most of Isaiás Samakuva's speech on the state of the nation over three pages, in which he criticised President dos Santos for not fulfilling his constitutional requirement to address the inaugural session of Parliament.

According to the Union of Angolan Journalists (SJA) a number of weeklies including *Semanário Angolense*, *A Capital* and *O Novo Jornal* were bought by 'faceless companies' over two years ago and have practiced strict censorship on their publications since then for political reasons.

### **Journalists and street vendors subjected to harassment**

Voice of America journalist Coque Mukuta was arrested on 4 January whilst he was interviewing women street vendors about how they had been beaten by police officers whilst working in Viana, Luanda. Coque Mukuta said "I personally saw, while doing my work, six police officers severely lashing women street vendors with electric wires with the plastic insulation removed...They [six police officers] came straight at me, hauled me off into their vehicle, confiscated my equipment, and slapped me several times, and told me I would be thrown in jail." The journalist was detained for five hours and released after he sent a text message to the commander-general of the National Police. Coque Mukuta faced repeated threats and harassment by unidentified individuals last year after he co-authored "The Troubled Ways of Demonstration in Angola," which describes how security forces violently disrupted anti government demonstrations and harassed activists.

António Capalandanda, another Voice of America journalist, has also been subjected to intimidation and harassment for his work on human rights. On 5 December António Capalandanda was approached by a man who said he was an agent of the security services and threatened with his life. Two days later the journalist was assaulted by two men on a motorbike who stole his camera, voice recorder and notepads. In January António Capalandanda was again subjected to hacking of his email account and surveillance by unidentified men.

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## **Aid and development news**

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### **Mass landmine clearance in 2012 frees up land for farming**

Over 30,000 explosive devices were destroyed in Malanje, Cunene, Huambo and Bié provinces in 2012, including landmines, grenades, anti personnel and anti tank mines. The operations have cleared huge areas of land which were previously unusable for agriculture. According to the National Institute of Demining (INAD), further demining work took place in Kwanza Norte and Huila provinces, but official figures are not yet available for the scale of the work.

Angola remains heavily contaminated with landmines and other explosive devices from the 1975-2002 war. It has 3,293 suspected hazardous areas according to the 2007 Landmine Impact Survey.

### **Aid agency responds to drought**

Food insecurity is affecting over 1.8 million people in Angola according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The federation launched an emergency appeal in mid November for \$1.7 million to support the Angolan Red Cross to assist 12,000 households in Luanda, Kwanza Sul, Huambo and Bié. The Federation estimates that over 500,000 children are suffering from acute malnutrition, 20 per cent of whom are suffering from severe malnutrition.

The emergency response includes the distribution of food, agricultural inputs, drinking water and mosquito nets as well as information, education and sanitation promotion.

Angola has a limited presence of international humanitarian organisations after a number, including the World Food Programme, withdrew from the country in 2006, following the signing of the 2002 peace agreement.

Drought is affecting 10 of the country's 18 provinces, including Bengo, Kwanza Sul, Benguela, Huila, Namibe, Cunene, Moxico, Bié, Huambo and Zaire due to the severe decrease in rainfall in the 2011-

2012 farming season. Whilst the northern and coastal regions were worst affected by the rainfall shortages, the provinces of Huambo, Huila and Bié, which produce over half the country's cereal output, were also badly affected. This has resulted in an average decrease in agricultural production of approximately 30 per cent.

### **Heavy rains follow drought**

Heavy rains hit many parts of the country in mid November leading to flooding. Over 400 hectares of crops were destroyed, affecting 1,500 people in Cela district, Kwanza Sul Province, when the Cussoi River flooded.

In mid November state media agency Angop reported that six people had died and hundreds of homes were damaged by the rains. In Luanda two main roads were closed by landslides and a four year old child died when a wall collapsed. A mother and child died in Benguela, while three others died in the south of the country. In December four people died and 338 homes were destroyed in floods in Chitembo, Bié Province. Three schools and five churches also collapsed in the rains.

### **Cholera outbreak hits Cahama**

194 cases of cholera were identified between 20 December and 4 January in Cahama region, with 35 cases discovered on 3-4 January, according to Cahama Municipal Hospital. Outbreaks of cholera have hit the country on a number of occasions in the recent past, particularly during the rainy seasons. In 2007 there were 18,390 cases of cholera in Angola, and in 2012 approximately 200 people died of the disease.

### **Road deaths increase**

The government has expressed concern at the increase in road traffic accidents in the first ten months of 2012. Interior minister, Ângelo de Barros Veiga Tavares, speaking at an event to mark World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, announced there had been 14,226 accidents from January to October, which caused 3,693 deaths and 13,760 injuries. According to police a further 46 people died and 219 others were injured in 230 road accidents in Angola during Christmas and the New Year. Police blame the accidents on poor road or vehicle conditions, speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol and disrespect for traffic rules.

### **Stampede at New Year gathering kills 16**

A New Year's Eve vigil at the Cidadela Desportiva Stadium in Luanda ended in tragedy when 16 people, including four children, died in a stampede. Another 120 people were also injured. Tens of thousands had gathered for the event, organised by the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (IURD), an evangelical Church founded in Brazil.

Ferner Batalha, IURD's deputy bishop for Angola, said "Our expectation was to have 70,000 people, but that was surpassed by far." Paulo de Almeida, the second commander general of the national police, said that security measures were in place but attendance was far higher than estimates. He said that approximately 150,000 people tried to attend the event, but the stadium only has capacity for 50,000.

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