



Institute for Security Studies

# SITUATION REPORT

## ANGOLA'S SECOND POST- WAR ELECTIONS

The alchemy of change

The second post-war elections in Angola, in August 2012, have become a lens through which to observe the political changes this emerging African powerhouse will face in the coming years. President Jose Eduardo dos Santos was elected for the first time after 33 years in power, but the governing strategy of the preceding decades will have to be rethought. The ruling MPLA party continues to ignore the calls for reform that are emerging from the grassroots, civil society, the opposition and within its own ranks. These polls showed the Angolan regime that rhetoric would no longer suffice. Angolans today expect more from their government and no longer want to be ruled in the same way.

On 31 August 2012 Angolans once again experienced a form of procedural democracy by casting their votes in the country's second post-war elections. The contested outcome gave the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) 71 per cent of the vote (down from 82 per cent in 2008) and 175 seats in the 220-seat national assembly. The National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) obtained 18,6 per cent of the vote, doubling its representation in parliament to 32 seats. The Convergence for National Salvation – Electoral Coalition (CASA-CE) gained six per cent for a total of eight seats, while the Party for Social Renewal (PRS) and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) saw their seats in parliament reduced severely to three and two respectively. The poll had the undertone of a structured intervention by the MPLA, but occurred in the midst of a changed national context.

Angola stands at the crossroads of national change, but it is as yet unclear how the different social, political and regime forces can develop into a mass movement for political rejuvenation and reform. Importantly, the elections demonstrated that a) the opposition parties are no longer a residual political force and b) the MPLA is rapidly losing the democratic credentials it falsely acquired through the structured manipulation of the 2008 elections.<sup>1</sup>

The 2012 election was held in an opaque environment riddled with irregularities, missed deadlines, unresponsiveness by oversight institutions to the legitimate claims and grievances of the opposition, civil society and the youth, and a lack of concern over the rise in repression and control. The ironic aspect of this undemocratic election is that the government subjected itself to the risks of democratic uncertainty without gaining electoral legitimacy. Under a scenario of free and fair elections the MPLA would still have secured political domination, but would have avoided the resultant popular dissatisfaction. Over 9,7 million Angolans were registered to vote, but only 6,1 million actually did so.

A 2010 amendment to Angola's constitution provides for the candidate heading the winning party's list to be elected as the country's president. This provision made the polls very important to President Dos Santos, since this was his first opportunity to be elected formally after 33 years in power

to make him Africa's second-longest ruler after Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguesso. The constitutional amendment guarantees his position despite his reduced capacity to attract votes. Dos Santos has become a liability to the MPLA and only the party's strong national following and image neutralise his shortcomings, despite the fact that the party is at its weakest point yet.

The urge to secure a large victory once again led the ruling party to influence the electoral process. However, its misreading of the national mood will bring the country's leadership under great pressure and a process of political renewal within a controlled setting could be derailed by popular unrest. On the one side we have a highly securitised state that controls all organs and has infiltrated all sectors of society, and a party that is dissatisfied but as yet incapable of voicing its dissent and acting against the president. On the other side there is a rise in popular dissatisfaction and the breaking of the fear barrier within civil society and the opposition. What the latest elections may in fact have achieved is the acceleration of change in Angola and the transformation of the political system.

Elections in Angola have become an important thermometer for assessing the country's shifting dynamics. They highlight the strengths, weaknesses and fears of the political entities and provide an opportunity for political renewal through the debate that invariably follows. The 2012 elections were more revealing of Angola's development in the last ten years than they were a reflection of rivalry in a faulty democratic procedure. While the 2008 elections were an example of autocratic hegemony, the 2012 polls were a 'competitive autocratic'<sup>2</sup> race that the ruling party was no longer able to dominate fully.

Four years ago the ruling party managed a result that made it feel invincible. However, that reality has shifted significantly now and the leadership is insecure. It was always thought that change would have to come from within the MPLA, propelled by external challenges to reform at the risk of losing power. But following the intense debate the Dos Santos secession is generating in influential circles, this scenario may change. The system that has upheld the power of the president could weaken the party to a point where it is unable to plan adequately for a post-Dos Santos transition.

A dynasty in Angola will not bring stability and could result in dangerous internal wrangling within the MPLA. The evolution of the political order needs to be negotiated and should not arise solely from the opposition, as this could cause serious unrest in the country. As the regime struggles to renew its image and is held to account for delivering on its electoral campaign promises, intense debate will continue on the type of political system and state that is needed. But the ultimate arbitrator, the president, can still ensure a smooth transition by making fundamental changes if he seizes the opportunity to take a magnanimous position and steer the country to its inevitable political change.

## CHANGING POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

### Presidency and MPLA superstructures

With the 2010 constitutional amendment<sup>3</sup> and the de facto attempt to circumvent parliament's ability to check and audit the executive, Dos Santos consolidated his grip on all sectors of society, the economy and emerging political forces. The atypical constitution delayed democratic transformation by enforcing the president's control over the state and the division of power. The council of ministers, which was previously able to initiate legislation, is now an advisory body to the president. Functioning as a centralised Marxist control structure, the MPLA proceeded to advance into areas that until then had some ability to manoeuvre. The private press was systematically bought by companies controlled by elements of the regime and new media outlets were established to generate a sense of debate while actually serving the propaganda purposes of the MPLA.

The most interesting structure created was the MPLA's specialist committees, which encroach on all sectors of society, especially the non-partisan spaces. As a mechanism for control and patronage, they permeate all professional areas with the exception of the church, the military and the police. Any professional wishing to advance his/her career has to do so via these committees. The network makes it very difficult for professionals to function outside the control of the regime and it also creates a sense that partisan loyalty is required for citizens to access service delivery and obtain other state benefits. This system automatically excludes entire sections of the population, in particular those opposing the regime.<sup>4</sup>

Changes were also made within the presidency itself. In early 2012, Manuel Vicente, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the national oil company Sonangol, was sworn in as the minister for economic coordination to oversee all areas of the executive relating to the financial running of the state. He also controlled the Fundo Petrolifero (the Oil Fund) and assisted Dos Santos on the economic commission. While this was initially seen as a move to reposition Vicente as the successor to the president, it may in fact have been a strategy to dilute his influence over Sonangol and the economy. But in this way Dos Santos managed to bypass the MPLA's political bureau and central committee, which are responsible for electing a consensual candidate to lead the country.

Vicente does not have the advantage of a military career and was never a strong party cadre, and he may struggle to retain his position if he is given the chance to take the presidency. The president's manoeuvres nevertheless show that he is securing his influence on Angolan politics. His subsequent appointment of Vicente as his vice-president, in October 2012, shows Dos Santos playing his Putin card and securing his protection from the

system and the party, since two individuals dependent on each other for power form a strong alliance. Relinquishing the presidency holds too many uncertainties for a ruler who has held absolute power for 33 years. But, given the level of distrust in his own circles, he seems to have started to make additional contingency plans by pushing his son, Jose Filomeno ('Zenu'), as an option for succession. Other changes in early 2012 included placing Carlos Feijó,

## The president's manoeuvrings show that he is securing his influence on Angolan politics.

the head of the presidency's Civil House, in a more or less parallel position to vice-president Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos ('Nandó') in a move aimed at removing any influence Nandó might still have within the party, the security apparatus, and the political system. The new CEO position in Sonangol was given to Francisco Lemos Maria, a respected administrator with a reputation for a rigid work ethic and integrity, although in his first months he squandered resources for his and his board's personal use.<sup>5</sup>

A new dynamic also began to emerge within the MPLA. Key figures like former secretary-general Marcolino Moco continue to criticise the president for holding on to power and positioning family members in key areas of the government. However, in a familiar move to dilute power, Dos Santos in early 2013 created a position at the politburo for Paulo Kassoma, a trusted ally and former prime minister, appointing him the coordinator for staff policy. As a result, the current secretary-general of the party, Dino Matross, who is also believed to oppose the president on many issues, has had several powers removed from him and may in the long run be replaced by Kassoma.

These appointments bring to the fore a very dangerous dynamic. The choices the president is making, including the nomination of a number of persons of the Ovimbundu ethnic group to senior positions, are creating divisions and inter-ethnic schisms that could result in a serious political backlash. There has always been deep discrimination against the Ovimbundu, who have been kept away from the centre of power in Luanda by the Mbundu and assimilated elites of the MPLA.

In another move to dilute power, a series of military promotions was made. Many officers, and even the president of the supreme court and the former head of the information services, Andre Oliveira Sango, were promoted to the position of general, which comes with a bountiful state retirement fund allegedly amounting to US\$10 million

each. This had a significant consequence within the ranks of demobilised soldiers who, for the first time ever, rose up against the government for not having received their subsidies (see below).

As the elections approached, the MPLA had to begin countering the negative image it had acquired nationally for failing to live up to its 2008 electoral promises. Despite the drafting of a 2009–2013 sustained development plan aimed at economic diversification, growth and poverty reduction, the country continued to face serious poverty levels and social inequalities. The MPLA's slogan for the elections, 'Angola continuing to grow and distributing better', reflected its sense that image renewal was necessary. The president travelled the country inaugurating unfinished developments and infrastructure projects, while international organisations were alerting to pockets of severe food insecurity nationwide.<sup>6</sup>

## Demonstrations: the youth and ex-combatants

As the Arab Spring gained momentum in North Africa, a small group of youths began making their voices heard in Luanda. In an unprecedented move, an insignificant gathering soon gained a momentum capable of destabilising the security apparatus and unnerving the regime. An anonymous call for public demonstrations on 7 March 2011 resulted in a disproportionate reaction from the government, which organised a 30 000-strong counter-protest at a cost of US\$20 million.<sup>7</sup> The significance of the Angolan protests lay in their breaking of the fear barrier.

The youth movement produced a manifesto demanding 1) the removal of the president, 2) equitable distribution of wealth, 3) justice and social equality, 4) direct presidential polls with the revision of Article 109, and 5) respect for Article 107, which determines an independent electoral commission. The events were a consequence of a decade in which the peace dividend had not been forthcoming for the vast majority of citizens, government corruption increased, large infrastructure projects were completed only during electoral campaigns, and economic sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing were not developed.

As the protests continued throughout 2011, the security apparatus applied repression that entailed mass arrests, summary trials, beatings, torture and kidnappings. Gradually the protests developed into a larger social movement, which was met with even greater force and included the deployment of Congolese militia led by the MPLA's youth mobiliser, Bento Kangamba.<sup>8</sup> The presidency placed two key figures, the president's security chief General Manuel Helder Vieira Dias ('Kopelipa') and military intelligence's General Jose Maria, within the regime's security apparatus to monitor the situation. Protests soon spread to the capitals of other provinces.

Omunga, a national non-governmental organisation (NGO), began alerting about a wave of terror against protesters in the provinces and gathered testimonies of individuals who were kidnapped and tortured in what the police called 'corrective violence'. This exposure did little to curb the regime's heavy-handed response, although within the MPLA reaction arose that publicly criticised the manner in which the protests were being handled. The pro-Agostinho Neto group condemned the 'barbaric violence by unpatriotic and reactionary forces of the MPLA'.<sup>9</sup> Several MPLA members sent an open letter to the president calling for the end of the repression and condemning the violence.

Ongoing demonstrations in 2012 focusing on securing free and fair elections were joined by civil society members of all political inclinations and opposition party representatives. The movement later developed into a watchdog for election transparency. Its website,<sup>10</sup> operated by the Movement for Electoral Truth, detailed all reported irregularities in all 18 provinces and this developed into a significant exposé. It confirmed the pattern of fraud alleged by the opposition and provided the evidence in support of its legal appeals.

In another unexpected development, 3 000 demobilised soldiers of FALA, FAPLA and ELNA (the military wings of UNITA, the MPLA and the FNLA, respectively) marched to the Ministry of Defence on 7 June 2012 to demand their retirement subsidies. Mediation by officers of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) stopped them from reaching the presidential palace. The Chief of Staff, General Sachipengo Nunda, promised to resolve the situation quickly, but on 20 June the ex-soldiers marched again, and this time the response was heavy-handed. Several ex-combatants disappeared and a Human Rights Watch report claimed that 51 were arrested by the military police.

Because of the large number of ex-combatants, thought to be around 300 000, a lack of integration of communities and the millions of small arms in civil hands, the protest could potentially be very destabilising. Although payments began to be made, they were poorly coordinated and money was disbursed to non-combatants as well. It is estimated that full settlement could cost the state over US\$1 billion – funds that are not forthcoming.<sup>11</sup>

Other segments of the security apparatus also protested. In late May 2012, demobilised units of the Presidential Guard (UGP) marched for the same reason but were dealt with rapidly. Alvaro Kamunlingue and Isaias Kassule of the Movimento Revolucionario Unido disappeared and are believed to have been killed. The military has always been one of the most important pillars of the regime, but the UGP has been kept separate from the military by Dos Santos to ensure its allegiance and provide a buffer. Even though the unit has always been considered well paid, dissatisfaction has led it to take bold moves such as raising the UNITA flag in its barracks.<sup>12</sup>

## POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS

During the 2008 elections Angola had a fragmented opposition that was riddled with internal divisions, had weak national programmes, lacked strategic coordination and was generally unable to counter the well-orchestrated campaign of the MPLA. However, thereafter UNITA and CASA-CE managed to create a stronger and more effective opposition despite constant attempts by state forces to neutralise their efforts and destroy their capacity to reach out to their constituencies. While in 2008 each political party and coalition participating in the elections received US\$1.2 million in election aid, in the 2012 polls they received just US\$97 000.<sup>13</sup> This reduction occurred despite the number of participating parties having reduced from 14 in 2008 to nine in 2012. The MPLA is believed to have spent over US\$75 million on its campaign.<sup>14</sup>

Nine parties were cleared to participate in the elections on 7 July 2012. The successful candidates were the MPLA, the PRS, UNITA, the FNLA faction led by Lucas Ngondo, the CASA-CE coalition and five minor parties thought to have direct links to the MPLA. The constitutional court rejected 18 other applicants, including key parties such as the Bloco Democrático (BD) of Justino Pinto de Andrade and Filomeno Vieira Lopes, the Partido Popular of David Mendes and the PDP-ANA of Sidiyanga Mbimbi, on technical or procedural grounds. The move was clearly political, considering the popularity of these parties among the protesting youth. Their exclusion weakened the political debate and removed representation from different constituencies, but did funnel support to the other opposition parties.

Subsequently, constitutional court judge Onofre dos Santos raised the likelihood that many of the parties that did not compete in the polls would be dissolved, in line with the Political Parties Law that requires a party to run in two consecutive elections to avoid being disbanded. If deregistration does indeed come about, key constituencies of the Bakongo in the northern provinces who support the PDP-ANA and the FNLA-Kabangu faction will be left unrepresented. The threat is indicative of a tendency within government to make the opposition more malleable. By dissolving significant opposition parties over time, the opposition's seats in parliament will be reduced with each election.<sup>15</sup>

### Opposition parties

#### *National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA)*

Following its military defeat in 2002, UNITA was weakened by a split between Isaias Samakuva (elected as party leader in 2003), and leading generals and politicians. UNITA failed tactically in the first post-war elections but, despite the

evidence of irregularities, it did not disrupt the electoral process. This strategically important move was aimed at countering the idea that the party was a warmonger unable to compete in peaceful polls.

UNITA successfully reconstituted itself as a political party and made a significant comeback, creating a genuinely consolidated front as it headed into the 2012 elections. Its strategy of forming a shadow government indicated that it was not only a party with a track record of governance (during the war it governed a parallel state in southern Angola), but was also fighting the elections on the basis of policy alternatives. In the shadow government Fernando Heitor (deputy minister of finance in the 1997 government of national unity – GURN) was the minister of finance, Alcides Sakala the foreign minister, Ruben Sicato the prime minister and former secretary-general Kamalata Numa held the elections portfolio.<sup>16</sup>

UNITA also reactivated its old intelligence and information service to try and prevent electoral fraud. BRINDE was headed up by Brigadier Tony Linhauka and Brigadier João Baptista Vindes, and over 300 members were trained as observers. The unit prevented an assassination attempt on Samakuva during the campaign in late August. In addition, UNITA nominated two dynamic individuals, Liberty Chiaka and Manuel Savihemba, as provincial secretaries in the key stronghold provinces of Huambo and Bie. At its party congress in December 2011, Samakuva was re-elected president and reconciliation was achieved between key party figures. Abel Chivukuvuku's subsequent departure from UNITA to form CASA-CE was viewed as an opportunity to increase cohesion within the party.

### *Convergence for National Salvation – Electoral Coalition (CASA-CE)*

Chivukuvuku's breakaway from UNITA in March 2012 to create his own broad coalition and propose a third way for Angola resulted in the formation of CASA-CE. It rapidly positioned itself as a bridging organisation between MPLA and UNITA constituencies and became a home for different political affiliations. Chivukuvuku prepared for this by sending trusted individuals to key provinces (Huambo, Benguela, Bie and the Lundas) to determine if his new party would gain popular support. Even so, it received a mixed reaction. Some viewed it as a government fabrication aimed at weakening UNITA, while others considered it a badly needed political alternative.

CASA-CE's first party congress was attended by over 690 members from all over the country. Agreements between the different parties that comprise the coalition, namely PADDA<sup>17</sup> led by Alexandre Sebastião, PLATAFORMA headed by Lindo Bernardo Tito who defected from the PRS, PALMA<sup>18</sup> led by Manuel Fernandes and several independents, were formalised. Chivukuvuku's main campaign promise was to bring to an end Dos Santos'

rule in a patriotic, legal and peaceful manner. His 'Angolan People's Manifesto' contains ten electoral principles ranging from the consolidation of peace and national reconciliation to the modernisation of the state through institutional reform and a new political system.

The leader of the Justice, Democracy and Development (JDD) movement, Felix Miranda, also joined CASA-CE, as did Moises Sotto Major, son of an historic MPLA figure, nationalist Virgilio Sotto Mayor. An upset defection from the MPLA was that of Admiral Mendes de Carvalho, deputy-defence minister and son of a family of strong nationalists and MPLA stalwarts. He became CASA-CE's vice-president.

### *Party for Social Renewal (PRS)*

This party also suffered from internal divisions. Formed in 1990, it participated in the 1992 elections in support of the MPLA's presidential bid. Led by Eduardo Kuangana and having as its key constituency the Chokwe population of the rich Lunda diamond region, the PRS was allegedly created by elements of the MPLA to weaken UNITA's influence in that area. Its first and last party congress was held in 1999. Although the party presented a proposal for a federalist constitution in 1998, it gained national appeal and managed to secure eight seats in the 2008 elections.

Subsequently it began taking a more independent position, though it lost credibility by voting with the MPLA on the electoral package in 2011.<sup>19</sup> It coordinated its actions with those of UNITA and CASA-CE to contest the 2012 election results. It will almost certainly have to reassess its position in national politics.

### *National Front for Liberation of Angola (FNLA)*

The FNLA initially represented the Bakongo ethnic group, but prior to the 2008 elections it split into two competing factions led by Ngola Kabangu, the successor of founder Holden Roberto, and Lucas Ngondo, a reform group allegedly financed by the MPLA. Kabangu accused the secretary-general of the MPLA, Dino Matross, of fostering the internal friction. Kabangu's faction participated in the 2008 elections, while Ngondo called for a boycott. In 2011, in clear contradiction of a 2008 constitutional court ruling permitting Kabangu's faction to participate in the polls (it won three seats), the court held that Ngondo was the leader of the FNLA. Kabangu's faction was not cleared to participate in the 2012 elections, even though it managed to collect 21 304 signatures, well in excess of the 15 000 required.

### *Other opposition parties*

Little is known of the other opposition parties, many of which are thought to be regime proxies, a strategy the MPLA developed in the 1992 elections. The electoral campaign strategies and the media interventions of the United Front for

Change in Angola (FUMA), the Council for Political Opposition (CPO), the Popular Party for Development (PAPOD) and the New Democracy (ND) made it clear that they were controlled by the MPLA. They did not articulate policy positions of their own and their campaigns on public television supported the MPLA's positions and record of governance.

## ELECTORAL PROCESS

The August 2012 elections were a procedural exercise in democracy aimed at imbuing the Dos Santos government with legitimacy. In reality it had none of the attributes of a credible election. The principles of equality, fairness, inclusion, freedom of choice, transparency and integrity were not present, while the independent body mandated to safeguard the process failed to do so, counter to Southern African Development Community (SADC) electoral protocols. By attempting to engineer the results the MPLA government confirmed its position as an authoritarian electoral regime. The ruling party also distorted the electoral race by using the vast resources of the state, its control over the media and its security apparatus.

In the run-up to the polls, tensions rose and violent clashes erupted throughout the country between opposition and MPLA representatives. The worst violence occurred in Huambo, Benguela and Luanda. Fanning the tension was a communiqué issued the day before the elections by the chief of police, Ambrosio de Lemos, in which he stated that the police would take all necessary measures to protect the government and the president.

The number of observer missions and the international media presence were greatly reduced compared to the 2008 elections. The European Union (EU) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), both of which had pointed out irregularities and suggested improvements after the previous elections, were not present, with the EU claiming the costs were too high. As a result, only three observer missions participated, namely SADC headed by the former Tanzanian Foreign Minister, Bernard Membe, the African Union (AU) led by the former president of Cape Verde, Pedro Pires, and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP).

The number of domestic observers was also down, with the Episcopalian Conference of Angola and São Tome (CEAST) managing to get the majority of observers accredited. Local journalists were assigned only to specific areas and polling stations. Reports emerged of the staff of various diplomatic missions in Angola being thwarted in their efforts to observe the polls. Of greatest concern was a list of rules given to diplomatic missions that included a ban on public statements being made about observations and access restrictions to specific areas. They were also prohibited from speaking to electoral officials. With the exception of CEAST, all the observer missions deployed declared the elections free, fair and transparent.

## Electoral legislation and opposition protests

After heated debate, a new electoral package was passed in parliament in December 2011. The aspect that generated the greatest resistance from opposition parties and civil society was the wording of Article 107, which provided for an independent body to organise and monitor the polls. The constitution of the National Electoral Commission (CNE), which was to comprise 17 members headed by a magistrate, was of critical importance to the opposition as the body could help to circumvent democratic procedure if allowed to act without accountability. Opposition strategy had the aim of decreasing the ability of senior election officials to collude in fraud by having a say in the magistrate appointed to head the body.

The opposition also wanted to avoid a situation where the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MAT) controlled the process and determined who would run the various polling stations in conjunction with the intelligence service (SINFO). Some irregular aspects were excluded from the law, but later manipulation by other means ultimately rendered the accountability mechanism useless in verifying the veracity of the polls.

The newly approved electoral law dismantled the government executive's Inter-ministerial Commission for the Electoral Process (CIPE) and passed all responsibility for conducting the electoral process to the CNE, including logistics, the location of polling stations, control over electoral registration lists, and the planning and monitoring of centres for scrutinising the process and the results. The fact that the Voter Registration Central Computer File (FICRE) was handed by MAT on behalf of the CNE caused the opposition great concern, and it demanded that assurances be given on vote counting and the accuracy of the voters' lists.

The MPLA accepted that the lists should be audited, but determined that this would be a function of the CNE, contrary to the opposition proposal that all parties were to have access to the computer database before and after the elections. In the event, a complete audit was never performed, even though Deloitte was hired to do this work. This company's findings confirmed that several areas were indeed opaque and lacked credibility.

One important matter on which the opposition got its way was the dismissal of the CNE's president, Susana Inglês. As a member of the MPLA Women's League she was not considered impartial, and because of her removal as a magistrate in 1994 she was also not deemed to be qualified. In addition, her nomination was considered procedurally incorrect. An injunction against her inauguration was applied for in the supreme court, which decided in the applicants' favour. This was a huge victory for the opposition. An attempt by the opposition to invalidate decisions taken by the CNE while Inglês presided

over the body, did, however, not succeed. When Andre Silva Neto took over the presidency of the CNE in June, UNITA finally swore its commissars to the CNE.

## Irregularities and opaque contracting procedures

In the run-up to the elections the opposition drew attention to numerous infringements of the electoral law that would compromise the integrity of the election process. Subsequent to the polls, both civil society groups and UNITA, the PRS and CASA-CE initiated several processes to expose irregularities, but none resulted in a conclusive decision. Their complaints concerned the management of contracts by companies involved in the process, the manipulation of electoral lists, lack of transparency and obstruction when it came to vetting the voting and counting processes by the opposition parties.

A major concern was the awarding of contracts to companies that had been found complicit in irregularities in the 2008 elections. INDRA, the Spanish company accused at that time of having contributed to electoral fraud by printing double the required number of ballots, was again hired to supply ballot papers, ballot boxes, electoral protocols for recording minutes on the conduct of the elections, and equipment for the scrutinising centres. Furthermore, General Kopelipa, head of the Military House of the Presidency, who supervised INDRA's operations in 2008, was again appointed to this role in 2012. Ballot supply is difficult to scrutinise as each polling station by law must receive 15 per cent more ballots than needed. Given that 13 million ballots were printed and only 6,1 million were used, a question arises about the remaining 6,5 million ballots.

Other companies contracted to provide logistical support, including the transportation of election materials, which is open to considerable abuse, were LTI and BECOM, both of which are owned by generals close to the President.

## Unaudited voter registration rolls

Another failing in terms of transparency and compliance was the lack of proper voter registration rolls and the fact that voting occurred without audited and accurate electoral rolls being available. FICRE should have been independently audited once it was transferred to the CNE, but Deloitte only conducted a review of the registry. By law the CNE should have registered voters, but the MPLA circumvented the constitution and electoral laws and allowed MAT, headed by MPLA Politburo member Bornito de Sousa, to undertake the job without public scrutiny.<sup>20</sup>

The preliminary findings of Deloitte were leaked and published by an Angolan newspaper.<sup>21</sup> According to this report, 6,5 million voters were registered without presenting identity cards. Of the nine million registered voters fewer than

three million could thus have their identities authenticated at polling stations. The Deloitte report also highlighted concerns about the operational elements of the data centre and the data systems, which were operated by subcontracted entities.

While the electoral registry was closed officially on 15 April, it reopened in early August under the pretext that over 1,5 million voters still needed to collect their voter cards. This undermined the rigid compliance regulations that protect the voter registration process in that the possibility was created for an additional 1,5 million people to vote illegally. As early as July the opposition began alerting the CNE to the fact that the electoral lists were incomplete and incorrect, even missing the names of key opposition figures, but no response was received.

## Parallel organs and fraud

A shadow CNE was established by the Military House and run by Brigadier General Rogerio Saraiva to observe the polling process. In 2008 this was done by infiltrating members of SINFO and others into the CNE. During the 2012 elections the infiltration of the counting centres by SINFO and elements of the Military House replicated the system used in 2008. However, an additional structure, a parallel counting centre, functioned to shadow the existing structures.<sup>22</sup>

The opposition claims that provincial results were fabricated within this parallel vote tabulation process. According to the parties, the results of each of the 18 provinces were pre-determined by the government in Luanda and the operational electoral protocols bearing the real results were never opened or disregarded. CASA-CE and UNITA have in their possession several operational electoral protocols that were never collected from the polling stations for counting.

## Accreditation and phantom polling stations

The CNE required 170 000 people to staff the 10 349 polling stations, including 16 000 presiding officers and 12 000 logistical supervisors. Although each party contesting the elections was supposed to have agents at all polling stations, only about 60 per cent of these were accredited and many of them were in fact agents infiltrated by SINFO and MPLA youths who posed as opposition members. A day before the polling began, the PRS complained to the CNE that only 3 000 of its 45 000 election agents had been accredited. Only 17 568 delegates of CASA-CE's 25 737 agents were accredited.<sup>23</sup> Forty per cent of UNITA's agents lacked accreditation and were therefore unable to monitor the vote.

Entire villages and communes were left off the electoral register, while in others polling stations never opened. Civil

activists and the opposition highlighted discrepancies in voter numbers to the CNE. In one village that had 200 voters, 922 voters were registered. According to UNITA, the border area of Luachimo, which only has foreign residents, had 1 704 registered voters. Evidence was presented that foreigners were voting in the provinces of Cabinda, Lunda Norte and Kuando Kubango. Later, when the results were announced, opposition scrutiny of the vote showed that in the province of Huambo 230 000 voters, of whom 179 503 were UNITA card-carrying members, had been excluded from the polls. The exclusion of voters was attributed to 'forced abstention' by the opposition (see below).

### Voter profiling and forced abstention

The tampering with electoral rolls and the removal of voter names so that members of particular demographic groups are excluded from participating in an election is a common election rigging practice.<sup>24</sup> The strategy used in the 2012 polls was to structure forced abstention. In previous polls the level of abstention was never higher than 13 per cent, yet 2012 saw this figure rise to 37 per cent. This means that if the average abstention rate was taken into account, 2 341 841 or 24 per cent of registered voters were disenfranchised. Forced abstention was achieved by causing such chaos in the voters' lists that people were unable to vote. The total of 3,6 million abstentions in 2012 almost equalled the number that voted for the MPLA.

Luanda represents about 25 per cent of the electorate and less than 30 per cent managed to vote there. Both in Luanda and in all other provinces, voters showing up at their polling stations were often turned away and sent to vote in another province. Given the distances, voting in a different municipality within the same province is difficult enough, but telling people to vote in entirely different provinces guarantees their inability to participate in the elections. The provincial secretariat of UNITA in Moxico province presented proof that 96 703 voters, representing 34 per cent of the total, were unable to vote. In the province of Huambo, UNITA claimed that 217 841 voters, almost 30 per cent of the total, were unable to cast their ballots. UNITA subsequently accused four Chinese nationals,<sup>25</sup> believed to be information technology experts employed by the security ministry in Beijing, with voter profiling aimed at disenfranchising millions of voters through ethnic and social stratification, manipulating electoral lists and tampering with poll results. The information was apparently leaked from within the presidency.

### Electoral protocols and results

Results were also tampered with during the counting and tabulation of votes. The opposition attempted to obtain greater insight by establishing its own parallel counting

system. However, this was difficult to do at polling stations where it did not have accredited delegates to supervise the electoral protocols. The transmission of results to the provincial centres and the processes at the national counting centre were also open to abuse. Ballot boxes were transported by logistics companies that had connections to the executive and the Military House, while the MPLA's parallel CNE structure had the opportunity to alter results electronically.

The opposition and civil society groups were able to prove that the electoral protocols were tampered with and that many protocols were abandoned at polling stations. The protocols bypassed the scrutiny of party electoral agents by being sent via municipal administration and provincial offices to the national level. CASA-CE claimed that its own parallel vote counting procedure showed that in Luanda 38 114 votes disappeared in the CNE's formal counting procedure. Its system indicated that in Luanda the party had secured 15,26 per cent of the vote, UNITA 25,87 per cent and the MPLA 51,5 per cent.

### Legal appeals by the opposition

A day after the final results were announced, UNITA, CASA-CE and the PRS began preparing the necessary evidence to contest the results. The first line of appeal was the CNE, which summarily dismissed it. The next level of recourse was the constitutional court, but it dismissed the case as well. However, a dissenting opinion by Judge Maria Imaculada Conceição Melo contained serious allegations about the impartiality of the court. In her opinion the court had not given serious consideration and credence to the failure of the CNE to meet important deadlines, and it had not considered the facts fully. She further maintained that since the executive vested the court with its powers and the president appointed all judges, the court it was in effect an organ of state.

The applicants undertook to take their case to international forums to have the polls rendered unconstitutional and illegitimate, but nothing has come of this so far.

## THE THIRD REPUBLIC: A NEW GOVERNMENT

### Formal and shadow institutions

On 26 September 2012 President Dos Santos was formally installed as head of state. The ceremony was a discreet affair, contrary to what would have been expected. The changes made to government, while reflecting minimal reform, further consolidated power within the presidency and diffused control by the executive. Five new ministries<sup>26</sup> were created, enlarging the country's mega-government

structure. A big government in Angola does not mean better administration but rather a larger pool of beneficiaries and the dispersal of power. The new executive has 37 ministries and two state ministries. All vice-ministers were replaced and there are now 51 secretaries of state, whose roles are yet to be defined. Although some of the vice-ministers' functions have been transferred, an administrative vacuum has emerged that is increasing ministerial inefficiency and allows bureaucratic fiefdoms to prosper.

The majority of ministers, as well as the governors of all but six provinces, have retained their posts. But an interesting change is that all 18 governors have acquired three deputy-governors to look after technical services and infrastructure, the economy, and the political sector and social policy portfolios, totalling 54 deputies. The president initially kept his economic team in place with Carlos Lopes retaining his position as Minister of Finance, Abraão Gourgel as Minister of the Economy and Jose Botelho de Vasconcelos as Minister for Petroleum, but in early May 2013 replaced the Finance and Construction Ministers. The role of State Minister for Economic Coordination, created to bring Manuel Vicente on board, has been abolished. Although Vicente, the new vice-president, was expected to retain all the powers that come with this post, he now seems to have been sidelined, his function limited to inaugurating schools.

The presidency also made changes to functional aspects. The organ of auxiliary support of the Presidency under director-general Aldemiro da Conceição has been extended, making this shadow government the de facto policy-making institution.<sup>27</sup> It comprises secretaries for regional and local affairs, judicial affairs, economic matters, social matters, diplomacy, institutional communication and the media. The Military House has been renamed the Security House and comprises 15 internal organs, including the UGP, the Presidential Security Unit (USP) and other more opaque institutions that run parallel security systems within the country. It continues to be headed by General Kopelipa.

An interesting change has occurred at the Civil House with Carlos Feijó being replaced by his former legal partner Edeltrudes Costa, who effectively ran the CNE during the elections while the mandate of Inglês was being contested. Costa in effect rehired INDRA and devised the strategy of having two different electoral protocols: one to be filled and signed by each polling station and the other an unsigned synthesis protocol. This was instrumental in altering the results. Another trusted insider of the president, Sebastião Martins, now heads the Intelligence and State Security Services (SINSE), while Angelo Veiga Tavares takes over his previous post as Interior Minister. Martins is expected to become the next head of the Security House.

One of the most interesting developments has been the creation of the US\$5 billion Angolan Sovereign Wealth Fund (FSDEA) to promote socio-economic development in Angola and in other sub-Saharan countries. The FSDEA

was initially managed by a three-member board headed by Armando Manuel, now the new Finance Minister and a close advisor to the president, assisted by the president's son, Jose Filomeno dos Santos, and Hugo Miguel Evora Gonçalves, the former pension fund head. The composition of the FSDEA board may at this juncture change and have the president's 36 year old son become the chairman. The reshuffling of Armando Manuel into the executive will also facilitate the blurring of the lines of economic transparency of the Ministry and the sovereign fund. FSDEA will have an independent advisory council consisting of the governor of the central bank, Jose de Lima Massano, and the ministers for finance, the economy and planning, although its operations and social charter are yet to be disclosed.

The creation of FSDEA will allow Sonangol to begin operating in a more transparent manner since it will shift the financial and operational opaqueness of the oil company to the new sovereign fund. It will also permit increased monitoring by international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which in 2009 and 2010 lent the Angolan government some US\$2,4 billion to help it to re-establish macroeconomic equilibrium. In essence the shadow government's financial arm will now become the sovereign fund.

The opposition, in particular CASA-CE, tried to have FSDEA declared unconstitutional on the basis of lack of parliamentary oversight, but the application was dismissed by the constitutional court. However, the creation of the fund and the fact that it is headed by a son of the president has brought into public view the nepotism that surrounds Dos Santos' administration.

## New parliament

Parliament is now headed by former vice-president Fernando Piedade Dias dos Santos ('Nandó'), a nomination that was well received by all parties. Although a demotion for him, the appointment will make it possible to institute some serious checks and balances on the executive. It will also help the MPLA to reaffirm its position vis-à-vis the presidency and provide the opposition the opportunity to win more political space. The opposition took its seats in parliament even though it was still appealing the electoral results. The chairmanships of the opposition's parliamentary groups were taken by Raul Danda for UNITA, Admiral Miao for CASA-CE and Benedito Daniel for the PRS.

On the opposition benches new members have started contributing to the dynamism of the debate. UNITA has Liberty Chiaka, Manuel Savihemba and Mihaela Webba. The latter comes from a traditional MPLA family and her shift to UNITA is said to have caused some distress within the MPLA. CASA-CE has Abel Chivukuvuku, Admiral Andre Mendes de Carvalho ('Miau') and Lindo Bernardo Tito, formerly the chair of the PRS parliamentary group.

A recent debate on the 2013 budget highlighted several discrepancies that allow the president to redirect funds from the US\$69 billion budget to other initiatives.<sup>27</sup>

## Forthcoming local elections

Local elections scheduled to be held in 2015 but yet to be confirmed, are very important in Angola as they permit the opposition to concentrate on regional and grassroots levels. The elections could also further the process of economic development and diversification into key employment-generating industries such as agriculture and manufacturing. But the elections will be difficult for the government. They will take a lot more work, funding and state organisation to rig. They will also reveal the deficient administration in the provinces, something the government has tried to mask with infrastructure projects. This may be the reason why four people now do the job of each governor.

The date for the local elections continues to be pushed forward, perhaps to make it possible to amend the 2010 constitution, which may only be altered every five years. In the meantime, the MPLA has already attempted to introduce unacceptable changes with regard to 'special urns', 'anticipated vote', 'voting without electoral lists', etc. Despite opposition resistance, the constitutional amendments would pass because of the MPLA's parliamentary majority.

## CONCLUSION

It is possible that the process of electoral autocracy will change the face of Angolan politics within a context of renewed expectations after ten years of peace and the exposure of vulnerabilities. Although the MPLA was very successful in reinventing itself post-2002 and building its support base to four million party members (up from 60 000 in 1994) in a population of 19,6 million, it is being severely tested. How will it proceed when it has reached the limits of its liberal threshold? Will it continue with repression or will it introduce political reform? The 2008 elections demonstrated the power and popularity of the MPLA, but the 2012 elections exposed its weaknesses.

Sooner or later Angola will reach the stage where only a negotiated revolution will be possible. This will come about when the rulers can no longer govern and the ruled will no longer accept being governed in the same manner. The catalyst will probably be an alignment of several factors: the economic inability to sustain the wide patronage network, continued popular pressure and demonstrations, greater autonomy within MPLA groups, and the growing strength of the opposition, civil society and the media.

Whatever changes occur, however, it will be imperative that the political parties remain strong. For the purpose of stability and democratic change it will not suffice for any

one opposition party to take power as this would leave important segments of the population unrepresented. Angola is a very divided and unintegrated country and for this reason strong political parties are a necessity.

It seems that despite all its attempts to control the elections and the reaction, the regime misread the popular mood and underestimated how divided and regionalised the country still is. This introduces yet another dynamic: by mismanaging the last election the government stole from the population, not the opposition, a distinction that will eventually have difficult consequences. While the institutional, economic and security nucleus was created for the survival of the MPLA, the regime has ultimately failed to understand the people it governs and the fabric of Angolan society.

In this country in transformation the moment needs to be seized by responsible political entities to ensure an uninterrupted path to stability, growth and peace, while the MPLA and the president will have to face the realities of wealth disparity, economic marginalisation, rampant corruption, an undiversified economy and political disenfranchisement. When a government does not understand the people it rules, and has never had to account for its actions, then the gap is eventually filled by those who rise against entrenched power.

Angola's new phase of competitive electoral autocracy has brought together an interplay of reforming democratic forces, the survivalist regime, the citizenry and elements of the security apparatus. But the government and president still have the opportunity to start preparing the country for a leadership change. Investment in key areas such as health, education, agriculture and housing to promote sustainable development and address poverty would neutralise the growing dissatisfaction. Allowing local elections to be held in a transparent and fair manner, which would change the leadership in many provinces, would result in greater accountability and focused development.

The government has shown that when it wants to embark on a national process of reconstruction it can mobilise the funds and administrative input to achieve this. It now needs to move beyond the veneer of development, democracy and reconciliation to a serious engagement on all fronts to maintain Angola as a stable and prosperous country.

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## NOTES

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- 19 The electoral package includes the Law on Electoral Observation, the National Electoral Commission Law, the Political Parties Law, etc.
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- 24 See Daniel Calingaert, Election rigging and how to fight it, *Journal of Democracy* 7(3) (July 2006).
- 25 The Chinese IT experts, Jinming Zhang, Jun Li, Liansheng Li and Yiding Li, were allegedly brought to Luanda at the request of Dos Santos to prepare the results for the polls.
- 26 The Ministry of Territorial Administration was split into the Ministry of Planning and Territorial Development headed by Job Graça and the Ministry of Territorial Administration headed by Bornito de Sousa. The other new ministries include Fisheries headed by Victoria Barros Neto, Urbanism and Housing headed by Jose Antonio da Comeição e Silva, Higher Education led by Adão do Nascimento, and Parliamentary Affairs led by Rosa Luis de Sousa Micolo.
- 27 For further information see Paula Roque, *Angola: Parallel Governments, Oil and Neopatrimonial System Reproduction*, July 2011, Situation Report, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Pretoria.

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