

## Polity IV Country Report 2010: Angola

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Polity:</b></td> <td>-2</td> <td>-2</td> <td>0</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Democ:</b></td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Autoc:</b></td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Durable:</b></td> <td></td> <td>13</td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Tentative:</b></td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change			<b>Polity:</b>	-2	-2	0			<b>Democ:</b>	2	2	0			<b>Autoc:</b>	4	4	0			<b>Durable:</b>		13				<b>Tentative:</b>		No				<div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>Authority Trends, 1975-2010: Angola</b></p> </div>
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SCODE	<b>ANG</b>	CCODE	<b>540</b>	Date of Report	<b>1 June 2011</b>																																
<b>Polity IV Component Variables</b>																																					
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																																
2	1	4	3	3	4																																
<b>Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)</b>																																					
End Date		5 March 1991		Begin Date																																	
				15 April 1997																																	
<b>Polity Fragmentation: No</b>																																					
<b>Constitution</b>	2010																																				
<b>Executive(s)</b>	President Jose Eduardo dos Santos (MPLA); seized power in 1979, elected 29 September 1992, 49.5%; subsequent elections postponed indefinitely																																				
<b>Legislature</b>	Unicameral: National Assembly (220 seats; 130 proportionally elected, 90 proportionally elected in provincial districts; most recent elections, 5 and 6 September 2008) Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA): 191 National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA): 16 Other parties: 13																																				
<b>Judiciary</b>	Supreme Court																																				

### Narrative Description:<sup>1</sup>

#### **Executive Recruitment: Designation (3)**

President dos Santos, leader of the MPLA, has governed this country since ascending to power in 1979. After 17 years of one party rule, multiparty presidential elections were held in Angola in September 1992. After a first-round electoral defeat of Jonas Savimbi, leader of UNITA, second round balloting was postponed as the country disintegrated into civil war. In June 1999 the National Assembly voted to postpone new presidential elections indefinitely due to the renewal of conflict with Savimbi's UNITA

<sup>1</sup> The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

forces. In August 2001 President dos Santos announced that he would not run for office in the next presidential election.

With the 2002 ceasefire between government forces and UNITA rebels, the electoral process has been reinvigorated. However, in August 2004 UNITA walked out of the commission to organize new elections. While UNITA favored holding elections in late 2005, the ruling MPLA insisted on a plan to hold elections in September 2006. No agreement was reached, but in December 2006 a cross-party advisory committee announced that new presidential elections would be held sometime in 2009, with legislative elections taking place in mid-2008. While parliamentary polls were conducted in 2008, presidential elections were cancelled. As it stands currently, the only group in the country capable of organizing and winning an electoral contest is the ruling MPLA.

On 21 January 2010 the MPLA-dominated National Assembly passed a new constitution that was signed into law by President dos Santos on 5 February 2010. The constitution was passed with 186 votes in the 220 seats in parliament. The main opposition, UNITA, boycotted the vote, accusing the government of destroying democracy in the country. The new constitution, which replaces the interim Independence document formulated in 1975, abolishes presidential elections and adopts a system whereby the president of the country is elected by the majority party in the legislature. Given the dominance of the MPLA in the legislature, this change will allow President dos Santos to continue his rule for the foreseeable future. Under the new constitution, a president can only serve two five year terms; however, this stipulation does not take effect until 2012. Under the new constitution, then, dos Santos could remain in office until 2022. Additionally, the new constitution dictates that the post of prime minister be abolished in favor of a new vice president position. Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, a close associate of President dos Santos and prime minister from 2002 to 2008, was appointed to the new position of vice president.

**Executive Constraints: Slight to Moderate Limitations (3)**

Ruling power in Angola is concentrated in the hands of the President and his Council of Ministers. President dos Santos, through the liberal use of executive decrees and resolutions, dominates policy formulation and implementation in this country. Dos Santos was elected without opposition to the MPLA presidency in December 2003. Despite the concentration of power in the hands of dos Santos and party loyalists inside the MPLA, the large presence of opposition parties in the National Assembly has slowed down some executive initiatives and has increased the transparency of public policy through the conduct of vigorous debate within this legislative body. The judiciary provides only a limited check on executive action.

The greatest constraint on executive action comes from within the MPLA. Despite the formation of the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (GURN) in 1997, the MPLA continues to dominate the political agenda in Angola and the political system continues to function more like a one-party state than a multiparty democracy.

**Political Participation: Political Liberalization or Democratic Retrenchment: Persistent Overt Coercion (8)**

Angola's politics are largely a legacy of the struggle for independence and the subsequent efforts of international and regional powers to control the political arena in this country in the post-colonial era. Three revolutionary organizations were involved in Angola's fourteen-year war for independence from Portugal (1961-75): (1) the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), (2) the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and (3) the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). After gaining independence in 1975, Angola quickly collapsed into civil war as each of these groups sought to consolidate its own political power. With the help of Cuban forces the MPLA, led by Dr. Agostinho Neto, gained control over most of the country and established the People's Republic of Angola, with Luanda as its capital. While the MPLA government secured international recognition, the government faced continued war against FNLA and UNITA rebels. Throughout the 1980s South Africa, opposed to the communist regime in Luanda, backed UNITA rebels, led by Jonas Savimbi (the FNLA surrendered to MPLA forces in 1984). However, with the end of the Cold War and the gradual dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa, by the early 1990s the conflict in Angola began to wane.

In May 1991 an international-brokered peace accord was signed and multiparty elections were held in September 1992. In the face of an apparent first-round electoral defeat to President dos Santos (who succeeded Neto after his death in 1979), Savimbi disputed the results of the poll that had been deemed to be substantially "free" by international observers. In an effort to avoid the return to civil war, President dos Santos agreed to annul the first-round results and hold new elections. Savimbi rejected this compromise

and mobilized his forces into military action against the MPLA-dominated government. By early 1993 UNITA forces were in control of over two-thirds of the country's territory. However, by 1994 the military tide had turned as government troops captured the UNITA stronghold of Huambo. The military success of dos Santo's forces compelled UNITA to agree to a cease-fire and the establishment of an interim power-sharing government until the second round of the 1992 elections could be scheduled. The second round of elections never took place.

The Lusaka Protocol, signed in November 1994, attempted to bring peace to Angola through UN-monitored reconciliation. Compliance with the Protocol was weak and political tensions remained high between MPLA and UNITA supporters. However, in April 1997 the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (GURN) was established (consisting of members of the MPLA, UNITA and ten other parties) and the National Assembly was reconvened. Seventy UNITA deputies, elected in 1992, took their seats in this legislative body. Despite the establishment of the GURN and the reinstatement of the National Assembly, the MPLA continued to dominate policy formulation and implementation in Angola. In the eyes of the MPLA-dominated Government, the establishment of the GURN would be used as a political tool to enforce the agreements spelled out in the Lusaka Protocol (including the demilitarization of UNITA forces) and further consolidate their power. Savimbi, however, refused to go along with this plan. Unwilling to either participate in the GURN or comply with the demands for demilitarization and territorial incorporation, Government pressure on UNITA intensified. In August 1998 the Government suspended participation by UNITA members in both the National Assembly and the GURN, citing the repeated failures of UNITA to comply with obligations agreed to under the Lusaka agreement. UNITA parliamentarians, led by faction leaders Abel Chivukuvuku and Eugenio Manuvakola, were reinstated in October 1999, but only after they restated their commitment to the peace process and broke all ties with Savimbi. By establishing a deep rift within the UNITA organization, the MPLA was now free to carry out a two-track strategy of peace with "UNITA" and war with Savimbi.

Faced with an increased challenge from both within his party and from the MPLA-dominated government, by the end of 1998 Savimbi was once again engaged in full-scale civil war. By early 1999 Savimbi loyalists were in control of large tracts of territory in the country. However, a massive military offensive by the Angolan armed forces in late 1999 severely weakened the military capacity of UNITA. Savimbi's forces retreated to the central plateau of the country and reorganized themselves into an effective guerrilla organization. In an effort to quash this guerrilla threat, the government resorted to the systematic suppression of human rights throughout much of the country. In February 2002 Savimbi was killed by Angolan Government troops.

With the death of Savimbi and the subsequent signing of a government-UNITA ceasefire in April 2002, the prospects for peace in Angola improved substantially. While there have been many ceasefires in this country over the past decade, the agreement of 2002 had lasting institutional ramifications. While the government still regards UNITA as a factional challenger that needs to be constrained, it appears that it has now chosen to constrain them through less overtly repressive mechanisms than in the past. In the wake of the 2002 ceasefire, over 85% of UNITA troops have been demobilized, the government has accepted UNITA as a legitimate political party and some 5,000 former rebels have been integrated into the armed forces of the country. While significant problems remained, not the least which was a massive refugee problem caused by the ceasefire, the political atmosphere in Angola during 2002 significantly improved. In August 2002 UNITA decided to scrap its armed wing, proclaiming that the war had ended. Despite these promising trends, UNITA has accused the government of dragging its feet on announcing a date for the country's first post-war general elections and has raised concerns over increased incidents of intimidation of its members allegedly belonging to MPLA militia groups. Failed negotiations over election dates in 2004 and 2005 increased tensions further, and the government's announcement of the 2008-09 dates was met with great hostility by opposition groups. Contributing further to the chaotic nature of the opposition in Angola, there are currently over 100 active political parties in the country (however, only 10 parties and 4 coalitions fulfilled the legal requirements to participate in the 2008 ballot). Although UNITA has become the main opposition party since its reintegration in conventional politics, it currently lacks the resources, leverage, and leadership to challenge the entrenched power of the MPLA elite. In December 2004 UNITA demanded the formation of an independent electoral commission to oversee the upcoming elections; however, the National Elections Commission rejected UNITA's appeal regarding irregularities in September 2008 legislative elections citing "lack of proof." The 2008 legislative elections were the first elections held since 1992. The ruling MPLA maintained its dominance with nearly 90% of the seats in the

National Assembly; the main opposition UNITA party gained only 16 seats. The EU observer mission refused to endorse the election.

While tensions with UNITA have eased since the 2002 peace, the ongoing struggle in oil-rich exclave province of Cabinda remains a nagging problem for the establishment of political stability in the country. Cabinda is a vital province for Angola, accounting for most of the country's oil production. Since 1975, when Angolan troops under the MPLA invaded Cabinda, then a nominally independent country, over 30,000 have been killed in political violence. In 2002 Cabinda separatists cautiously welcomed overtures by the government to ease the conflict in the region, but these overtures were unsuccessful and in 2004 the two main separatist groups within Cabinda united. In July 2006, however, negotiations between the MPLA and Antonio Bento Bembe, representing several of Cabinda's factions, produced a ceasefire agreement in exchange for an unspecified level of autonomy for the region. Given the economic importance of oil to the viability of the central government, control of the province remains a top priority for the regime and concessions remain limited.

In recent years tensions between the Angolan government and the large Congolese migrant community have escalated. In 2009 18,000 Congolese nationals were expelled from Angola (and 39,000 Angolan nationals from the DRC). These expulsions have often been violent and have led to accusations of serious human rights violations. Before 2009, there have been six major waves of expulsions, in which over 140,000 Congolese have been deported from Angola. Angola's alluvial diamond fields have been the primary draw of Congolese migrants over the years.