



Home Office

BUILDING A SAFE, JUST
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COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION KEY DOCUMENTS

1/2006

ANGOLA

FEBRUARY 2006

Home Office Science and Research Group
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION SERVICE

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ANNEXES

Annex A – List of source material

1. Introduction

- 1.01 This Country of Origin Information (COI) Key Documents has been produced by Research Development and Statistics (RDS), Home Office, for use by officials involved in the asylum / human rights determination process. The COI Key Documents identifies general background information about Angola from a variety of recognised sources. The material identified concentrates on the issues most commonly raised in asylum / human rights claims made in the United Kingdom and is not intended to be exhaustive. None of the documents identified contain any Home Office opinion or policy.
- 1.02 The COI Key Documents provides a signpost to the source material, most of which is readily available in the public domain. For Home Office users, the COI Key Documents provides direct electronic access to each source referred to in the document, via a link on the source numbers in the index and list of sources. For the benefit of external users, the relevant web link has also been included, together with the date that the link was accessed.
- 1.03 As noted above, the source documents identified concentrate mainly on key human rights issues. For background, some basic information about Angola, extracted from the Country Profile on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's website (<http://www.fco.gov.uk>) is also provided below.
- 1.04 This COI Key Documents and the accompanying source material are publicly disclosable. Where sources identified in the COI Key Documents are available in electronic form the relevant link has been included. The date that the relevant link was accessed in preparing the COI Key Documents is also included.
- 1.05 Any comments regarding this COI Bulletin or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to the Home Office as below.

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Website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/country_reports.html

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2. Basic Information on Angola

- 2.01 **Full Country Name:** The Republic of Angola
Area: Total area 1,246,700 sq. km
Population: 14 million (2003 est)
Capital City: Luanda 4 million (2003 est)
People: The main groups are Ovimbundu, Mbundu, Bakongo, Lunda-Tchokwe and Ngangela. There is also a small mestico community.
Languages: Portuguese (official) and local African languages.
Religion(s): Christianity, (of which largest Roman Catholic), indigenous African, and a tiny Moslem community.
Currency: 1 Kwanza (Kz) = 100 centimos
Major Political Parties: Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA); National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA); National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA)
Head of State: President Jose Eduardo DOS SANTOS (assumed office 1979)
Prime Minister: Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, 'Nando'.
Foreign Minister: Dr Joao Bernardo Miranda
Membership of International Groupings/Organisations: UN, Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC), Community of Portuguese speaking countries (CPLP), Organisation of Lusophone African countries (PALOP). [4a] (p1)

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GEOGRAPHY

- 2.02 Angola is located in Southern Africa. It is bordered on the west by the Atlantic Ocean and shares borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zambia and Namibia. The enclave of Cabinda in the north, bordered by DRC and Congo (Brazzaville) is also part of Angola. The climate is tropical and humid in the north and subtropical with lower rainfall in the south. Temperatures are generally lower in the central plateau than in the low-lying coastal regions.

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RECENT HISTORY

- 2.03 Angola was a Portuguese colony for 500 years. But until the 1920s, there was little investment and the Portuguese presence was confined to the coastal towns. There, a creole or mestico class evolved. The interior was exploited as a source of slaves. Even after the abolition of slavery, it was a source of contract labour. Angolans began to agitate for independence in the mid-1950s. Three nationalist groups were formed – the MPLA in 1956, the FNLA in 1958 and UNITA in 1966. In 1961, the armed struggle was launched. But, the principle of independence was not conceded until 1974, much later than most African countries. Portugal hastily arranged a conference with the three movements, all of whom had gained OAU recognition, to work out the transitional arrangements to independence. The agreement was set out in the Alvor Accord of January 1975. It provided for a transitional government to prepare a constitution and for elections to be held before independence day, set for 11 November 1975. But the agreement broke down as the movements fought each other for the control of the capital. The Portuguese settlers left en masse. Elections were never held.

- 2.04 On independence day, it was the MPLA who controlled the capital. They declared themselves the government and imposed a one-party constitution to be guided by Marxist-Leninism. The other movements retreated to their rural bases. The MPLA's victory was secured with military hardware from the Soviet Union and Cuban troops. The FNLA and UNITA had secured less help from their backers, the USA, apartheid South Africa and Mobutu's Zaire. Although the FNLA soon gave up the armed struggle, UNITA continued to fight a guerilla war which was to last until 2002. Throughout this long civil war, UNITA moved with impunity in the countryside while the MPLA controlled the towns.
- 2.05 Two attempts at brokering a peace failed. Both, the Bicesse Accords of May 1991 and the Lusaka Protocol of 1994, were monitored by small UN peace-keeping forces, UNAVEM I and II. The UN Security Council also imposed a series of sanctions on UNITA from 1993. These too failed to stop the fighting. The MPLA therefore decided at its Party Congress in December 1998 to pursue a final military offensive against UNITA. It asked the UN to leave. After 3 years of fighting, government forces succeeded, firstly by killing UNITA's leader in February 2002 and subsequently by coming to an agreement, the Luena Memorandum of Understanding of April 2002, with UNITA commanders to end the war. Isaias Samakuva was subsequently elected the new UNITA leader at the Party's 9th Congress in 2003.
- 2.06 Although peace has been achieved on the mainland, the problem of Cabinda remains to be resolved. A low level guerilla war has been conducted for over 30 years by rebel groups fighting for the independence of the Province. The Angolan government has used alternately negotiations and military force to no avail.

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RECENT EVENTS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2.07 Angola was a one-party state, under the MPLA, until 1991. Then, as part of the Bicesse peace settlement, multi-party politics were introduced. Power is centralised in the President, who appoints all key public office-bearers including the Governors of the 18 Provinces. A total of 126 parties have since registered, but the majority are moribund. Less than a dozen parties have any real organisation or support base. Angola held its first ever elections in September 1992, an event intended to end the 18-month transition between war and peace, as provided for in the Bicesse accords. But many of the key tasks of Bicesse had not been completed by that stage. Notably, UNITA had largely not disarmed nor demobilised, and the proposed new integrated Angolan Army had barely got off the ground.
- 2.08 In spite of an election declared by the UN to be 'generally free and fair', UNITA contested the results and took the country back to war. In the Presidential election, the MPLA's candidate, Eduardo dos Santos won 49.6 percent of the vote while UNITA's leader, Jonas Savimbi secured 40 percent. In the parliamentary elections, the MPLA won 129 of the 220 seats, UNITA 70, while 10 parties shared the remaining 21 seats. A government of national unity, GURN, was put in place some years later, in April 1997 as agreed by the Lusaka Protocol, and UNITA deputies finally took their seats in the National Assembly at the same time.

- 2.09 The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for September 2006, possibly with Presidential elections the following year. In preparation, a package of electoral laws was approved in April 2005 although a new constitution, already 6 years under debate, has not yet been finalised. It is possible that local government elections, the first ever, might take place in 2007 although no final decision has been taken.

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BASIC ECONOMIC FACTS

- 2.10 **GDP:** US\$ 17 billion (2005 projected)
GDP per head: US\$901 (2003)
Annual Growth: 11.7 percent (2005 estimate)
Inflation: 31 percent (2004)
Major Industries: Oil and diamonds
Major trading partners: Imports into Angola - Portugal, South Africa, USA, Brazil and France. Destination of exports - US, China, EU.
Exchange rate: US\$ 1 = 87.6 Kzs (May 2005) [1a] (p2)
- 2.11 The Angolan economy is highly dependent on oil, accounting for over half of GDP and 75 percent of government revenue (or some US\$4.5 billion in 2004) and 90 percent of export value. It is the second largest producer, after Nigeria, in sub-Saharan Africa. It is not a member of OPEC. The current production, all offshore, of 1m bpd is set to rise to 2m bpd by 2008 as investment in deep and ultra-deep blocks comes on stream. BP is a major player. A project to develop LNG facilities is a political priority and will have important environmental benefits. 85 percent of Angola's gas is currently flared.
- 2.12 Angola is now the fourth largest producer of rough diamonds in the world. Output declined during the war from smuggling, illegal digging and the absence of government control. This has since been reversed. Angola was the first to join the Kimberley Process in 2000, an attempt to outlaw 'conflict diamonds'. By 2003, output had reached 6 million carats, valued at some US\$ 788 million, This represented 95 percent of the country's non-oil exports and about 10 percent of non-oil GDP.
- 2.13 Angola is also endowed with large expanses of prime agricultural land but the proliferation of land mines during the war (recent estimates put the number laid at 4 million) has been one of the main reasons for the reduction in the area under cultivation to 3 percent. Once the bread basket of Angola, the Central Highlands has reverted to subsistence agriculture.
- 2.14 Decades of central planning, mismanagement, corruption, and the war have long distorted the economy. In 2000, Angola began tentative economic reforms. It has since made significant progress in achieving macro-economic stability and reducing inflation (from over 300 percent in 1999 to about 30 percent by the end of 2004.). Basically a dollar economy, the government intervenes heavily to support the Kwanza. Angola does not have a formal agreement with the IMF. It has increasingly turned to oil-backed or commercial loans to finance expenditure. China recently agreed an oil-backed US\$2 billion loan to be used largely for infrastructure projects. During President dos Santos's visit to Brazil in May 2005, a credit line of US\$ 580 million, also tied to oil, was negotiated. High oil prices and increased oil production have eliminated the longstanding deficit

and at least temporarily reduced the need for external assistance. The government nevertheless hopes that a Donors Conference can be arranged soon to raise further finance for post-war reconstruction. But many donors are reluctant to provide funds until transparency is assured.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

- 2.15 Angola's human rights situation has improved since the end of the civil war. Both the Angolan Armed Forces and UNITA guerrillas committed atrocities, largely against civilians, during that period. Apart from thousands of deaths, the population in the countryside was displaced by the fighting several times over. By 2001, some 4 million were displaced. Even in the cities, largely unaffected by the war, the security forces regularly used repression to keep any discontent, real or imagined, under control. In spite of peacetime improvements, there are still reports of extra-judicial killings and other human rights abuses.
- 2.16 A fledgling civil society and an independent press developed for the first time in the early 1990s when political space opened up following the Bicesse Peace Agreement. Their activities remain concentrated largely in the capital, Luanda. Access to justice is severely limited for most Angolans. Although political parties are allowed to operate, there are continued reports of intimidation and harassment of opposition supporters. Human rights abuses were reported during a major military offensive against rebels in Cabinda in late 2002–2003. The removal of illegal diamond diggers, largely Congolese, in 2004 is reported to have shown little concern for human rights.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

- 2.17 In spite of its oil wealth, Angola is poor. Its GDP per capita figure of over US\$ 900 is misleading. In 2004, it ranked 166 out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index. 95 percent of the population live in poverty (under US\$1 per day) or extreme poverty (less than 76 US cents per day). All the socio-economic indicators are among the worst in Africa. Nearly 60 percent of the population is illiterate while over 60 percent have no access to potable water. Since independence, military expenditure was high, often over 40 percent of the budget, and took precedence over social and development spending. At the end of the war, the scale of the humanitarian crisis became apparent as access to the countryside was opened up. Some 4 million were displaced, 500,000 UNITA combatants and their families had to be resettled, while neighbouring countries hosted over 350,000 refugees. Nearly 3 years after the war ended, the WFP (World Food Programme) reported at the end of 2004 that there was still a 47 percent food security deficit, and 1.1 million people still needed emergency food supplies.
- 2.18 The UK, through DFID, runs a small assistance programme in Angola, valued at some £9 million per annum for the period 2003 - 2006. The funds are channelled through international NGOs or UN agencies. Of this amount, some £2 million is dedicated to humanitarian needs, while the balance supports a wide range of pro-poor activities including the LUPP (Luanda Urban Poverty Project).

Information extracted from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile: Angola, last updated on 4 May 2005

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019501109024> **Date accessed 11 January 2005**

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3. Index to key source documents

(Click source number to access document directly)

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| | |
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| <p>KEY FACTS AND GEOGRAPHY</p> | <p>[1b] Europa World Online, Location, Climate, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital (accessed on 5 December 2005)</p> <p>[1b] Europa World Online, Country Statistics (accessed on 5 December 2005)</p> <p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices – 2004: Angola, 28 February 2005</p> <p>[2c] United States Department of State (USDOS), Background Note: Angola, last updated January 2006</p> <p>[4a] Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Country Profile: Angola (last updated on 4 May 2005)</p> <p>[7a] British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Country Profile: Angola, last updated on 3 November 2005</p> <p>[8c] IRIN news, Angola: Oil Rich But Dirt Poor, (via all Africa), 10 January 2006</p> <p>[10a] Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), The World Factbook : Angola (last updated on 1 November 2005)</p> <p>[17a] Angola Country Profile, UNDP (accessed on 3 February 2005)</p> <p>[24a] The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Africa Fact Files: Angola (accessed on 11 January 2006)</p> <p>[25b] The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Country Profile 2005: Angola</p> |
| <p>MAP</p> | <p>[19a] United Nations Cartographic Section, Map on Angola, January 2004</p> |
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| | <p>[25b] The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Country Profile 2005: Angola</p> <p>[26a] Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005: Angola (last updated on 11 August 2005)</p> |
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| <p>HUMAN RIGHTS – SPECIFIC ISSUES:</p> <p>(IN ADDITION TO GENERAL REPORTS ABOVE, INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IS PROVIDED IN THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW)</p> | |
| CABINDA | <p>[5a] Human Rights Watch (HRW), World Report 2006: Angola</p> <p>[5b] Human Rights Watch (HRW), War and Peace in Cabinda, December 2004</p> <p>[6a] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Refugees from Angola's Cabinda enclave cautious about returning, 7 March 2005</p> <p>[8b] IRIN news, First repatriation to troubled Cabinda enclave in two years, 3 August 2005</p> <p>[9a] Refugees International (RI), Forgotten People: Displaced Persons in Cabinda Province, Angola, 26 May 2005</p> <p>[9b] Refugees International (RI), Country Information: Angola (accessed on 12 January 2006)</p> |

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| PRISON CONDITIONS | <p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices – 2004: Angola, 28 February 2005</p> <p>[26a] Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005: Angola (last updated on 11 August 2005)</p> |
| POLITICAL ACTIVISTS | <p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices – 2004: Angola, 28 February 2005</p> <p>[11a] Amnesty International (AI) report 2005: Angola, covering events from January to December 2004</p> <p>[26a] Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005: Angola (last updated on 11 August 2005)</p> |

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 - a Regional Surveys of the World: Africa: South of the Sahara 2005 (34th Edition), Angola, p. 41 – 70
 - b Europa World Online: Angola <http://www.europaworld.com/entry/ao> Date accessed 5 December 2005
- 2 **United States Department of State (USDOS)** <http://www.state.gov>
 - a Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2004, 28 February 2005 <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27928.htm> Date accessed 29 March 2005
 - b International Religious Freedom Report 2005, 8 November 2005 <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51445.htm> Date accessed 12 January 2006
 - c Background Note: Angola, last updated January 2006 <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/6619.htm> Date accessed 11 January 2006
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- 4 **Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), UK**
 - a Country Profile: Angola, last updated 4 May 2005 <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019501109024> Date accessed 1 December 2005
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