



ANGOLA Pre-Election Assessment Report

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**International Foundation for Election Systems
International Republican Institute
National Democratic Institute**

**(CONSORTIUM FOR ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESS
STRENGTHENING)**

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“SOVEREIGNTY SHALL BE VESTED IN THE PEOPLE THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE SHALL EXERCISE POLITICAL POWER THROUGH PERIODIC UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE TO CHOOSE THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, BY MEANS OF REFERENDUMS AND OTHER FORMS OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL LIFE. SPECIAL LAWS SHALL REGULATE THE PROCESS OF GENERAL ELECTIONS.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From August 4-20, 2001, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) conducted a joint pre-election assessment in Angola. The objective of the assessment was to:

1. Determine the prospects for holding general elections at such a time when the conditions that affect elections are conducive to a participatory and open process; and
2. Provide a set of baseline data from which to assess the readiness of Angola for elections and to make recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Angola (GRA), United States Government (USG), the United Nations organizations in Luanda, and other donors, in preparation for such elections, including a timeline by which key actions need to occur.

The assessment was conducted and written during a momentous period in Angola's history. The announcement by President Eduardo dos Santos in August 2001, that he will not run for re-election and the unexpected death of Jonas Savimbi in February 2002, represent a radical shift in the political landscape of the country. These factors, coupled with the recent cease-fire announcement by the GRA, may provide Angolans with the first real opportunity in decades for sustained peace and a new era of democracy.

This report summarizes the broad consultations with Angolans that took place during the team's visit and the debate and discussions surrounding the celebration of elections. As Angolans stressed repeatedly, peaceful elections in an atmosphere of trust and national reconciliation, with a shared and common vision of the country framed in the Constitution, can secure a more peaceful, better-governed, prosperous *and* democratic country.

The team developed a set of recommendations to serve as a basis for further discussion with Angolan political parties and civil society actors, as well as the international community. These recommendations are based on the belief expressed by most Angolans that elections are the best way to organize and implement changes - but the electoral process has to be part of a broader set of issues that lead to reconciliation if it is to be effective and inclusive, free and fair. While the Angolans will determine the appropriate timeframe for elections, the groundwork required to create a climate conducive to a free and fair electoral process can – and should – begin immediately.

The team's recommendations take into account all of the GRA's provisions as outlined in the March 13th peace proposal, particularly its commitment that "issues of peace and national reconciliation should be weighted within a legal and political framework that respects the Constitution, judicial order, the institutions of the state, and which accepts unequivocally the validity of the peace agreements and resolutions of the United Nations Security Council related to Angola." In addition, the team positively viewed the Government's expressed desire to work with society as a whole, namely the churches,

political parties, civic and socio-professional associations, for the “pacification of spirits, tolerance and mutual respect and the mobilization of resources and willingness for a quick resolution of problems affecting the country.”

The report outlines four basic benchmarks for Angolans and the international community to use in continuing to evaluate and encourage serious actions to move the reconciliation process and ultimately the election process forward:

1) **Restoration of Basic Freedoms:** Angola has made significant progress since 1992 with respect to the rights of citizens, including the freedom of association, assembly, expression and movement. But the journey is not complete. There is now a fundamental need to ensure the relocation of the large internally displaced population, and for increased tolerance and acceptance of political activity, travel, and speech, particularly outside Luanda

2) **Resolution of the Constitutional Question:** In order to adequately prepare for elections, Angola must determine whether elections will be held under the current Constitution, or the as yet unfinished, new Constitution. Progress on the drafting of a new Constitution or an agreement by the various parties to utilize the current Constitution is an important benchmark. To the extent that Angolans want constitutional change, the process should be completed with sufficient time to permit for legislative action in implementing those changes.

3) **Electoral Reform:** The Angolan electoral framework is comprised of three main laws: the Electoral Law (5/92); the Law on Political Parties (Law 2/97); and the Law of Political Party Finance (3/97). These key pieces of legislation and related issues mentioned in the report should be reviewed and reformed as soon as the constitutional issues are resolved. The current legislative session provides an opportunity for legislators to discuss many of the issues mentioned in this report in advance of any potential action.

4) **Setting a Date Certain for the Election:** The establishment of a set date is critical to the planning and organization of any election. The date should provide ample opportunity for (a) election administrators to prepare for all phases of elections, including demarcation of boundaries, registration and voting; (b) allow political parties to nominate candidates and campaign; and (c) allow all civil society to participate in voter education activities.

By keeping these key benchmarks in mind, Angolans, the USG and the international community may measure the progress of election preparation by monitoring developments in the areas listed below, and described in detail throughout the report. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather, is intended to provide a framework for essential elements for legitimate, democratic elections. These areas include:

- Relocation of Internally Displaced People
- Reauthorization and activation of the National Electoral Council (CNE)
- Financial Support for Elections
- National Identification System
- Voter Registration
- Political Parties
- Civil Society
- Media
- Election Observation and Monitoring
- Polling Stations/Voting Procedures

Government officials assured the team that it was a priority to conduct successful elections as soon as practicable and the recent pronouncements have committed to meeting many of the benchmarks cited above and discussed in further detail in this report. However, during the team's visit, no one within the GRA was ready to confirm plans for the improvement of the delivery of election services in Angola. To be consistent with the recommendations of this report, the GRA would likely need at least 18 months to organize elections according to the existing laws and regulations. With strong political will on the part of all parties and adequate funding, a shorter timeline may be possible.

The majority of donors in Angola informed the team that strengthening civil society to participate in elections would be a priority, while fewer resources would be available for strengthening political parties and electoral systems in a future election. Because effective participation by all parties is essential to ensure sustainable peace in Angola, the assessment team has set out recommendations for integrating donor activities in order to strengthen political parties and civil society to increase their capacity to effectively participate in the electoral process.

The international community and Angolan stakeholders stated their belief that elections in Angola are a worthwhile goal, and this encouraging belief should be stated early and often. The recent moves towards peace bring elections closer to reality. The international community can facilitate the consolidation of an inclusive democratic process as Angola emerges from a destructive civil war that has destroyed the social fabric, created a climate of violence, suspicion and intimidation, and the massive displacement of people. While future elections must overcome the negative experience of 1992, they are a unique opportunity to deepen the democratic process in Angola.

I. INTRODUCTION

From August 4-20, 2001, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), conducted a joint pre-election assessment in Angola. The purpose of the assessment was to:

- Determine the prospects for holding general elections at a time when the conditions that affect elections are conducive to a participatory and open process; and
- Provide a set of baseline data from which to assess the readiness of Angola for elections and to make recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Angola (GRA), United States Government (USG), the United Nations organizations in Luanda, and other donors, in preparation for such elections, including a timeline by which key actions need to occur.

The assessment team was composed of Horacio Boneo, an elections specialist and former Director of the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations; Laurie Cooper, IFES Senior Program Officer, Africa/Near East; David J. Kramer, former IRI Country Director for Angola; Joxean Fernandez, former NDI Country Director for Angola; and Isabel Emerson, current NDI Country Director for Angola. Every member of the team spoke Portuguese and had either lived in Angola for at least two years or was involved in an observer capacity during the 1992 elections.

While in Angola, the team met with representatives of the GRA, the President of the 1992 Electoral Commission, political leaders, leaders of civil society organizations (CSOs), representatives of the state and independent media, church leaders and other relevant officials. Team members also traveled to Huambo and Benguela provinces (*see Annex 1 for a complete list of those interviewed*). The team gratefully acknowledges the support of the Democracy and Governance team at USAID/Angola; Ambassador Joseph Sullivan; DCM Todd Greentree and the political section at the US Embassy in Luanda; as well as the numerous government officials, political party leaders, civil society organizations, church leaders, professionals and representatives of the donor community who took time to meet with the team during its stay in Angola.

Lessons learned from 1992

As Angolans contemplate a new political dispensation, including preparing for general elections for the first time in ten years, it is important to remember the principal lessons that emerged from the election experience of 1992. These lessons may be summarized as follows:

- Elections were not an end, in and of themselves, but rather an important part of an ongoing process of democratic development.

- The haste with which the elections were scheduled after Bicesse failed to consider the likelihood that the warring parties were not yet ready to accept the results, despite platitudes from both sides to the contrary.
- Although the international community rushed to recognize the electoral results in October 1992, it is widely accepted even among those in the MPLA, that many irregularities occurred during the electoral campaign, both in the areas controlled by UNITA and the Government.
- Both the Government and UNITA media outlets pursued a strategy of treating those with opposing political opinions as enemies of the state.
- Disarmament of the rebels as well as citizens, was not fully completed prior to the 1992 elections, allowing the opposition to take up arms once they decided not to accept the results of the election.

II. PROSPECTS FOR HOLDING ELECTIONS

The 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections in Angola ended inconclusively, as UNITA ultimately refused to accept the results. This refusal led to the resumption of the civil war, which continues to this day. Thus, the current context for general elections is characterized first and foremost by the ongoing civil war.

Senior GRA officials informed the assessment team that although state administration is not yet re-established throughout the country, the government-supported military has secured control in 85% of the national territory. They admitted, however, that control of 85% of the territory did not guarantee that civilians could travel freely from one town to another by road.

While the GRA announced a cease-fire on March 13, it is still too early to determine the pace of a potential peace process, particularly as it applies to the full demilitarization of UNITA's forces. However, there is no question that military activity and the fact that the majority of the population is armed (amply evident during the celebrations after Savimbi's death was announced) would affect the conduct of elections.

Given the highly volatile situation in Angola, this report reflects the consensus that exists for elections and lays out the fundamental conditions that Angolans have raised as necessary for holding free and fair elections. This report also notes that the GRA will be the first stakeholder to take the steps necessary to create the conditions for that process. It is apparent from the team's meetings that there is a series of discussions that have yet to take place among the Angolans about the practical implications of the return to the election process as a means of effecting political change.

Elections will almost certainly make dramatic changes to the political landscape of Angola, particularly since the two most prominent figures in politics over the past 25 years, President Dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, will not be the standard bearers for their respective parties. There are at least two competing factions claiming the leadership of UNITA and the MPLA is undergoing an interesting transition in leadership. The potential shake-up of power in both the MPLA and UNITA will provide the opportunity

for all parties to actively campaign for new leadership for the first time in Angola's post-colonial history.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the assessment team would like to re-emphasize that an electoral process constructed and implemented without political accommodation for those affected by the civil war could be a threat to the evolution of multi-party democracy in Angola. Although most Angolans agreed that elections are the best way to affect and implement political change, the timing, system and preparations for elections should be part of a broader discussion in order to ensure that they are truly inclusive, free and fair. Peaceful elections, in an atmosphere of trust and national reconciliation, with a shared vision of the country framed in the Constitution, will put Angola on the road to being a better-governed, prosperous and democratic nation.

III. THE FRAMEWORK FOR ELECTIONS

The organization of any electoral process is a complex interaction of competing interests represented by the agents of the state, political groupings, and the multitude of formal and informal relationships and intermediary organizations of civil society. While the ultimate success of the process depends on the ability of these forces to communicate with each other, it is ultimately the responsibility of the state to provide the overall framework within which these interactions take place and the resources with which to conduct them.

In the transition from a single-party authoritarian system to a multi-party democracy, these interactions often occur in an atmosphere of heightened suspicion and animosity. "The choices made by the State are thus applied so that they are effective, that is, oriented to the objective of a free and fair election; and in such a way as to take account of other obligations in the field of human rights."¹ Such transitions in developing nations carry the added burden of severe resource constraints that result in heavy reliance on international donors.

Given the legacy of authoritarianism in Angola, the GRA and electoral authorities bear the special responsibility of ensuring that the election process is not only administratively correct, but also free of the perception of partisanship. Confidence in an electoral system and the perception of fairness are just as important as the letter of the law. In the Angolan context, as is the case in other transitional situations when serious doubts are raised about the fairness of the process, additional safeguards – an added measure of transparency – must be introduced even if the electoral law and administrative provisions meet an otherwise acceptable standard.

¹ *Free and Fair Elections: International Law and Practice*, Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, Inter-parliamentary Union, 1994, p. 83-84.

IV. BASELINE ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whatever the ultimate election date, the prospects for an election that is both administratively sound and legitimate in the eyes of the Angolan people turn on several critical processes including, but not limited to: 1) the resolution of the ongoing civil war and the evolution of Angolan politics between now and the election; 2) resolution or partial resolution of the ongoing debate as to whether, how and to what extent Angola's political leaders will negotiate changes in the constitution; 3) the full establishment of basic freedoms – press, assembly, association, movement – throughout the country before elections are held; 4) the resolution of inter-party conflicts; 5) the transformation of the Electoral Commission of Angola into a truly independent body for administering elections that will be accepted as free and fair by the opposition parties; 6) the preparation and implementation of the logistical aspects of holding free and fair elections; and 7) the establishment of long-term monitoring mechanisms prior to the election, culminating in the observation of the proceedings on election day and the reporting of the vote.

While the Angolans will determine the appropriate timeframe for elections, the groundwork required to create a climate conducive to a free and fair electoral process can – and should – begin immediately. The following is an analysis of key issues with accompanying recommendations for consideration on the practical aspects of the process. The recommendations were guided by internationally accepted criteria for elections, as well as the Election Norms and Standards, developed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum (*see Annex 2*). As the circumstances in Angola may change considerably in the next several months, these recommendations may need to be revisited. The accompanying timeline should therefore serve as a roadmap for the GRA and the donors, especially with respect to logistical preparations, as this process unfolds.

Restoration of Basic Freedoms: Association, Assembly, Expression and Movement

Baseline: The continuation of the civil war has had a significant impact on freedom of movement in Angola, and may likely affect the freedom and fairness of a future electoral process, unless the cease-fire becomes a reality. Even if peace is achieved, freedom of movement will remain restricted because of destroyed infrastructure and the large number of live landmines that exist throughout the country – more than ten million according to some estimates.

Since 1992, there has been an explosion of non-governmental associations, particularly in Luanda, although recently the government suspended registration of new organizations. While few restrictions exist on the exercise of basic freedoms in the capital, most people interviewed pointed out the significant differences between Luanda and the rest of the country. The team noted that throughout most of rural Angola it is extremely difficult for individuals to express themselves and for parties to conduct political activities. For example, in provinces where the state administration is strongest, GRA administrators place additional constraints on citizens' freedom of movement – in some cases requiring

that people carry “*guias de marcha*” to travel, inquiring on the motives of visits at entry points and inspecting luggage.

In addition to constraints placed on citizens, political party members mentioned frequent and credible cases of harassment when visiting the provinces based solely on their affiliation with a political party. A similar bias exists in relation to the permanent presence of party officers in the countryside. The idea of having a provincial headquarters where a party flag is displayed, or taking party flags to public events, terrifies many opposition parties, as they may face potential harassment by government authorities.

While people belonging to opposition parties find it advantageous to maintain a low profile and limit their political activities, members of the MPLA are not afraid to be outspoken and obvious about their political affiliation. As a result, the distinction between party and state is somewhat unclear in the countryside and the team found it difficult in some interviews to distinguish between government and party roles. While the majority party may take pride in the efficient performance of government duties by elected officers in charge of the activity, the team noted that the conduct of basic government activities by theoretically impartial public servants are portrayed as an example of the benevolence of the MPLA. The clearest example of this phenomenon is the practice of MPLA officials taking credit for the distribution of food and erection of lodging in the camps for displaced persons, even when such services are clearly provided by the GRA with the assistance of foreign humanitarian organizations.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should take immediate steps to ensure that Angolan citizens have all the basic rights enshrined in the constitution, and that those rights are upheld and protected. The GRA should make legal changes where necessary to deepen the democratic process and guarantee and protect the basic freedoms of Angolans (i.e. legislation concerning the security of the State, freedom of association, etc.).
2. The GRA should apply the current legislation regarding registration of new associations justly and equally.
3. Donors should assist the GRA to evaluate the cost of rehabilitating basic infrastructure needed to conduct the electoral process (bridges, roads, de-mining, etc.) so that the majority of Angolans can effectively participate in the process.
4. Donors should provide assistance to civil society organizations to monitor the enforcement and protection of political freedoms and fundamental liberties.

Constitutional Reform Process

Baseline: The constitution of Angola, adopted in 1992 before the first multi-party elections, is incomplete and temporal. Most of the people interviewed expressed the need to normalize the country through the revision of the current constitution and the holding of new elections. The 1994 Lusaka Protocol and the National Assembly Law 18/96 called for the approval of a new constitution before elections are held. Still, many people

who support this strategy also question whether the current National Assembly has the capacity to engage in broad constitutional revision, as their mandate is now ten years old.

The Constitutional Commission set up in 1998 has quietly debated the issue of constitutional reform for the past four years, without resolution. The basic issue still unresolved concerns the distribution of power among the executive, legislative, local and regional levels. Opposition parties have proposed sweeping changes to Angola's current constitution and political system, which include political decentralization with the direct election of governors; reducing the power of the presidency; returning to a truly parliamentary system whereby the National Assembly names a Prime Minister; and the creation of a bi-cameral legislature. The decisions about provincial governors and local authorities may not require amendments to the Constitution, if provisions are established in the electoral law. Angolans could also decide to hold local elections before or at the same time as presidential and legislative elections.

Although the Constitution neither facilitates nor inhibits the election process (because election procedures are covered in the Electoral Law), many people argue that constitutional revision should be connected to the electoral process. The provisions for new elections must consider the current constitutional framework. Furthermore, constitutional discussions offer an opportunity to settle the differences between the parties at war. The constitutional discussion should therefore result in a framework for power-sharing, a real peace treaty among political parties as well as civil society actors. Under the aegis of a new Constitution, armed hostilities should be replaced by verbal debate between political adversaries. Given Angola's history and that of transitions in other conflict-affected countries, it is essential that questions of political power be resolved and consensus achieved before an election is scheduled.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA, elected leaders, and the Constitutional Commission should take immediate steps to ensure broad societal representation in the constitutional reform debate, and resolve all outstanding questions about distribution of power, *before* the election.
2. The GRA and political parties should ensure the representation of civil society in the constitutional reform process.
3. Donors should provide technical expertise in the drafting of a revised constitution.
4. Donors should provide technical and/or financial assistance to CSOs, political parties, and the media to ensure that they participate in the constitutional reform process; monitor the reform process; and provide civic education to Angolan citizens on the new constitutional revisions.
5. Donors and the international community should facilitate constitutional reform, as indicated above, and assist in ensuring that this process remains on track.

Electoral Reform

Baseline: The Angolan electoral framework is comprised of three main laws: the Electoral Law (5/92); the Law on Political Parties (Law 2/97); and the Law of Political Party Finance (3/97). Most Angolans believe that at a minimum, these laws should be

reviewed. Any revision of these three laws, however, is pending until a decision has been made on whether to go forward with constitutional revision or to proceed under the current constitution. The main body of this report identifies the particular concerns expressed about election policies and procedures, political party activities and political party finance. In addition, GRA and UNITA need to reach an agreement on whether and how to conclude the Lusaka Accord, taking the death of Jonas Savimbi into account.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA and elected leaders should take immediate steps to begin the process of revising electoral laws.
2. Donors should provide technical assistance to the National Assembly, political parties, CSOs and other interested entities on the review of these laws.
3. Donors should consider providing technical assistance to set up a commission of independent and reputed jurists that will review and adapt the current electoral legal framework.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Baseline: Internally displaced persons should have the right and the option to resettle in their homes of origin. This is a fundamental tenet of the post-conflict transition. At present, the UN suggests that there may be as many as 3,100,000 dislocated persons and the number of displaced people increased by 272,000 in the first six months of 2001. Despite strenuous efforts, only 78,000 have been resettled during that same period.²

The Angolan electoral law provides for universal suffrage, and this obviously extends to IDPs who meet the minimum eligibility requirements. However, Angolans with whom the team met were unclear whether IDPs would be resettled before elections. The uncertain status of IDPs is of particular concern to Angola's political parties, which are supported by regional and/or ethnic core constituencies, and many of their constituents are members of the displaced class in Angola.

Recommendations:

1. The UN should assist the GRA to develop a resettlement policy that respects international norms.
2. The GRA should review the system of representation in consideration of the large number of people who might not be able to return to their area of origin before elections are held, and the effect that this situation has both on the concept of representation and proportionality in Angola.

² Donors Round Table on CAP 2002 – August 2001

National Electoral Commission

Baseline: The 1992 Assembly of the People Act confers the responsibility for organizing, administering, and announcing the results of presidential and parliamentary elections on the National Electoral Council (CNE). At present, the CNE is not officially constituted, and therefore not currently functioning (its term expired after the 1992 elections), although the former president of the CNE represents Angola at international election administration meetings. The Angolans with whom the team met expressed numerous concerns about the composition and independence of the CNE, and related questions about the financial independence of the CNE (as it is housed under the Ministry of Territorial Administration).

The 1992 CNE was composed of members nominated by the President and ratified by the National Assembly. It was presided by a Judge of the Supreme Popular Court (selected by the Plenary of the Court), and included five specialists (appointed by the Head of State), the Minister of Territorial Administration, the General Director of Elections (appointed by the Head of State after consultation with political parties), one representative of the National Council on Social Communication, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, one representative for each registered political party, and one representative of each of the candidates for the President of the Republic. The Provincial Councils and the Municipal Electoral Bureaus were composed on a similar basis.³ The appointment of the members of the Electoral Census Brigades and the identification of polling stations were left to the Municipal Bureaus, although the political parties could provide input in both selection processes.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA and National Assembly should immediately review and redraft the electoral law to ensure that the CNE is independent, and that the appointment and nomination procedures are open and transparent.
2. The GRA and political parties should ensure that pluralism is guaranteed at the CNE from the national through the voter registration brigade and polling station levels.
3. The GRA should appropriate sufficient resources to the CNE in timely manner to ensure that all activities associated with the election process, including but not limited to infrastructure development, logistics, materials, human resources and accountability are implemented.
4. To assist in the preparation of new elections, the government should release the 1992 election report written by the CNE.

³ Provincial Councils were presided by a Judge of the Provincial Popular Tribunal, appointed by the President of the Supreme Popular Tribunal, five specialists appointed by the Governor of the Province, the Provincial Director of Elections, appointed by the Minister of Territorial Administration, one representative of each party competing at the elections and one representative of each candidate to the Presidency of the Republic. The Municipal Electoral Bureaus were presided by an appointee of the Governor, five specialists appointed by the Municipal Administrator, and one representative of each party competing at the elections and one representative of each candidate to the Presidency of the Republic. The difficulty of smaller parties and presidential candidates to appoint members at the Municipal level could result in a potential predominance of the provincial and municipal governments.

5. Once appointed, the CNE and political parties should establish a consultative commission to discuss issues such as voter education, registration issues, campaigning, beginning in the early stages and carried on throughout the election preparation process.⁴ The commission should ensure that political parties have opportunities for input in the election management process and that the media has opportunities to report on the process.
6. Donors should provide technical assistance in the professional development of the CNE, specifically in the areas of voter register development, political party regulations, and technical personnel training.
7. Donors should provide support to CSOs to monitor and report on the selection and operation of CNE activities, particularly with regard to the financial and political independence of the electoral body.

Financial Support for Elections

Baseline: The GRA was unable to provide the team with any detailed information regarding the budget or finance schedule for voter registration or other election preparations during its travel to Angola. However, local and international newspapers reported, and senior GRA officials confirmed, that Angola set aside US \$30 million for election preparations during the 2001 fiscal year.

Former election officials told the team that in addition to the general administrative cost of the election, a significant investment would be required for local transportation expenses, especially if the Electoral Commission faces no-go zones and mined areas in its identification of and deliveries to polling station sites. Moreover, an early start of education and training programs would require more funding and equipment than the efforts of the 1992 elections. One of the first steps to evaluate the financial cost of the elections is to estimate the number of voters, where they will vote, to what extent IDPs will be re-settled in their areas of origin and the basic investments needed to rehabilitate infrastructure and guarantee freedom of movement.

⁴ In Ghana, the Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC), convened by the political parties began to meet monthly approximately two years before the country's second multi-party elections. The Uganda Electoral Commission hosted weekly meetings between Commission members and political leaders' representatives for more than a year prior to the 1996 elections.

In evaluating costs for elections, it should be noted that the 1992 general elections in Angola were conducted at a cost of about US\$22 per voter. Cambodia's 1993 election cost approximately US\$45 per voter. More recently, the South African general elections of 1999, which featured a bar-coded voter ID and scanner system, a Geographical Information System (GIS) to map constituencies and voting areas, and locally-manufactured polling station equipment, averaged out at approximately US\$14 per voter. By contrast, smaller countries without the same infrastructure problems as Angola, such as Ghana or Uganda, average between US\$2-4 per voter.⁵

Recommendations:

The GRA should immediately assess the costs for conducting national and local elections and should appropriate sufficient funds to cover a) administration of elections, b) financing of political parties, and c) delivery of civic education services to all Angolans.

National Identification System

Baseline: There are many adult Angolans without basic identity documents, an acute problem for the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs). As a result of the civil war, many citizens' personal records were destroyed, and in the cases where the records might still exist, the cost of traveling to obtain them is prohibitive. In addition, the national archives do not appear to be in good order. Moreover, there appears to be some evidence that a number of Angolans have obtained fraudulent identity documents.

At present, the Ministry of Justice is in the process of issuing new, computer-based national identity cards. Those who currently have supporting documents are most likely to be able to obtain new cards, but even with documentation, there continue to be obstacles. The cost of the card, which was originally two kwanzas, has been recently raised to 50 kwanzas (US\$2). At the time of the CEPPS visit, the cards were only available in Luanda, although the Minister indicated that provincial-level offices would soon issue the cards. The cost of the card includes the materials (photo, fingerprint) that make-up the unique elements of the document.

The cards are currently issued at the rate of approximately 4,000 cards per day in Luanda, the city with the most infrastructure in Angola. At this current rate, it will take almost a year to issue a million cards in Luanda alone. Given the level of infrastructure outside Luanda, it is reasonable to assume that the number of cards issued per day will be considerably lower in other provinces, even with the establishment of provincial capital offices. This process could take a substantial amount of time without a commitment of significant resources by the GRA in the short term. The government, with the assistance of the United Nations, is currently engaged in an aggressive, free campaign to register

⁵ Sources: IFES Report on the 1999 Elections in South Africa, and Lopez-Pintor, Rafael, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance (March 1999).

those 17 and younger but has determined not to engage in a similar campaign for adults, as registration of adults may have “political” implications.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should immediately increase its efforts to complete registration of its citizens, and provide Angolans (as well as the CNE) with a reasonable estimate of the eligible voting public.
2. The GRA should consider lowering the price of ID cards, so that citizens will be encouraged to register. At present, the price of the card is simply out of reach for the vast majority of Angolans, who are under- or unemployed due to circumstances beyond their control.
3. The GRA should consider revising the procedures for registration taking into account the reality – millions of displaced and records destroyed – and adopt *temporary* procedures to facilitate registration.
4. The GRA should maximize the time it now has to increase the number of card production facilities and offices during the course of the dialogue on elections.
5. The UN system and the donor community should provide technical assistance to the GRA to study possible revisions to the registration procedures and to assist in registering citizens.
6. Donors should support CSOs to provide civic education to citizens to underscore the importance of national registration.

Voter Registration

Baseline: Angola’s last voter registry was compiled in preparation for the 1992 election. The GRA representatives responsible for voter registration all agreed that the 1992 voter register is now out-of-date, damaged and otherwise not worth updating. In addition, there are concerns that in 1992, not everyone who in theory should have been able to register was in fact registered. A new, reliable voter register is a priority in the preparation for elections. The electoral law confers the responsibility for developing voter registration procedures on the CNE.

The GRA has two options to consider in the implementation of a voter registration process: (1) voluntary ad-hoc voter registration, or (2) automatic voter registration. A voluntary voter registration process involves the creation of regulations for voter registration, establishment of voter registration centers, and encouragement of the eligible population to come to the centers to register to vote during a specific time period. An automatic voter registration process uses relevant information from an existing database (national ID, drivers’ license, etc) to generate a voter registration list. As both systems are currently non-existent, national IDs that can be used for voting would be cheaper and faster for the government, and less confusing (and labor-intensive) for eligible voters.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should immediately decide whether the voter register will be generated in a voluntary or automatic program. If the decision is to develop a voter register based

on a voluntary registration program, then the period of elections must allow sufficient time to establish registration stations and keep them open for an extended period. If the decision is to rely on the national ID card database, the GRA must ensure that every citizen has a new card before the data is extrapolated, to ensure that the largest possible number of eligible voters appear on the draft voter register.

2. The GRA should opt for a registration system that places the minimum burden of proof on citizens, given that many Angolans do not have written identity documents.
3. The GRA should consider allowing the national ID as sufficient documentation to be permitted to vote, given the expense involved in producing a separate card for voter registration, regardless of which voter registration system is ultimately chosen.
4. Whichever voter registration system is chosen, the CNE should provide ample opportunity for voters and political parties to review the draft register and make corrections, such that the final register is complete at least one month before the elections. The CNE should also be prepared to investigate and resolve complaints as they are raised.
5. The CNE should ensure that Angolans are informed about the purpose and the procedures for voter registration, particularly on voters' responsibility to verify their names on the register.
6. Donors should support technical assistance on voter registration, given the complexity of the voter registration operation, and the fact that a parallel effort of providing the population with high-quality identification is ongoing.
7. Donors should support CSOs to monitor the voter's registration process, and provide civic education programs addressing voter registration.

Political Parties

Baseline: Angola's political parties are in nascent stages, and have been hampered in their efforts to represent the interests of their citizens for three main reasons: the ongoing civil war; party fragmentation and factionalization; and the emergence of numerous small parties. In addition, parties have few resources, even though Angolan law provides for the registration and state financing of political parties. The assessment team was told that the law is inconsistently enforced and that the entity responsible for political party registration has not taken the initiative to resolve the problems of the Angolan political parties.

As is common in developing democracies where government finances the formation of political parties (in Angola, this stopped being the case since the law was revised in 1997), there has been a proliferation of political parties since 1992. There are more than 130 new political parties with an undetermined number of organizing committees. These registrations are dubious at best and few parties seem likely to meet the current legal standards established by the National Assembly in law 2/97.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should review the legal framework regarding political parties, and resolve the problems created by lack of enforcement of political party registration and finance laws, at least one year before the elections are held.

2. The GRA should discuss the basic principles established in the political parties law to clarify the role of the Supreme Court in political party disputes.
3. As the election legislation is reviewed, the GRA should specifically address Article 4.2.e of constitution, which could be used to consider a political party that defends a federal form of State as illegal.
4. Donors should support capacity building activities with political parties, including political party poll agent training.
5. Donors should consider supporting political parties during the campaign, within provisions of current law.

Civil Society

Baseline: The emergence of politically active civil society organizations is one of the largely unheralded events of the last several years in Angola. While the level of civil society development and influence should not be overstated, the mere existence of the organizations and the number of members is a dramatic change from 1992. Well-known political party activists, including some from the MPLA are now participating in civil society, which strengthens their credibility as critics. The close relationships between these organizations and the leaders of the small independent media has ensured broader coverage for civil society initiatives in Luanda, while the increased willingness of the Catholic and Protestant churches to engage in civic and political dialogue further enhances civil society's credibility. Of particular note is the creation of the Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace (COEIPA), a multi-denominational civic organization that speaks with a unified voice on behalf of the churches. The churches did not play an organized role in 1992 because of the serious limitations placed on their activities during the Marxist period. COEIPA, and other strands of civil society, are a potentially positive force for accelerating the overall process of democratization as well as a source of strength for each other.

As in other transitional democracies, CSOs and other civil society actors in Angola are sometimes perceived by the GRA as being anti-government and linked to and/or supportive of the opposition. This has resulted in heightened scrutiny of such organizations by the GRA. The team found signs that the GRA wants to increase government control over CSOs, particularly relating to civic education programs held in the provinces. There also appears to be a dramatic slowdown in the GRA's processing of new registration applications, as noted earlier in this report.

In addition, a disproportionate majority of the politically active CSOs are based in Luanda, where they operate more freely and contribute to the national political debate. However, many of the Luanda CSOs do not have an extended presence outside the capital. Rural districts, most of which lack access to any media other than the state-controlled radio, and which are beyond the reach of many CSOs, are key political battlegrounds in the elections. Only CSOs with a strong presence in the countryside, such as the various church and religious groups, are likely to have much impact in these settings. There is currently little, if any, civic education programming in progress with respect to elections.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should ensure that CSOs are protected under law and encouraged by the government to participate in the electoral process.
2. Donors should provide timely (at least one year before the election) support to CSOs on the election monitoring process. This support should assist the CSOs to both report on and evaluate all of the aspects of the election process, including the constitutional reform debate, election law review, national identity card distribution, and voter registration. Beyond this, CSOs should be supported in election day monitoring and other techniques such as parallel vote tabulation and quick-count procedures.
3. Donors should support the civic education efforts of CSOs, and take steps to ensure that such activities go beyond the basic information of where to register and how to cast a ballot. The GRA should consider giving free space on state owned media outlets (radio and TV) for civic education programs.
4. CSOs should ensure that their internal composition, as well as their activities, reflect the issues faced by Angola's historically disadvantaged populations, including women, minorities, disabled and displaced persons.

State-Controlled and Independent Media

Baseline: The political liberalization of the early 1990's is clearly evident in regard to the media. Compared to a decade ago, Angola has made great strides in press freedom. Still, the Angolan public has little if any access to information that is not provided through the Angolan government, and such information as is available does not reach the population outside Luanda.

Radio continues to be the primary source of news for most Angolans. The government-controlled Radio Nacional (RN) is the only nationwide station. The Jornal de Angola, the GRA controlled daily newspaper, is the only newspaper delivered outside Luanda. GRA controlled Popular Angolan Television (TPA) is telecast only in Luanda and provincial capitals.

Radio Ecclesia, owned and operated by the Catholic Church, a few independent newspapers distributed in Luanda, and three independent provincial radio stations (where, however, the MPLA controls a significant percentage of the shares) are the only independent news sources in Angola. All independent media struggle to gain significant advertising revenue. Efforts by the Catholic Church to make Radio Ecclesia into a nationwide FM network (they currently broadcast in short wave nationwide twice per day) have encountered resistance from the Ministry of Social Communication, the agency charged with issuing broadcast licenses. The Vice Minister of Social Communication indicated that licenses would be issued in the next couple of years, without linking the licensing process to the possibility of elections in the eighteen months after the team's visit.

The electoral law regulates political parties' access to state media during the 30 days allowed for campaigns. If parliamentary and presidential elections are held simultaneously, political party shows on the presidential election and parliamentary elections are broadcast on alternate days. In 1992, airtime was divided equally between participants. Paragraph 9 of article 79 of the electoral law specifically forbids the use of open airtime for party broadcasts, and article 87 forbids parties to purchase advertisements.

Outside the campaign period, political advertising by opposition parties is explicitly forbidden. Law 9/92 regulating broadcasting forbids broadcasting activities of political parties, unions, and professional or trade organizations. Activities of nonpartisan political associations are also banned from broadcast. Further, the law prohibits the funding of media by any of the above-mentioned institutions, which could be interpreted as the prohibition of paid advertising by any of these institutions.⁶

During the 1992 elections, Angolan law called for the government media to maintain a fair balance in allocation of time to different political views, and to provide free airtime to registered parties during the campaign. According to the people with whom the assessment team met, this law did not result in balanced coverage. State organs maintained a clear bias in favor of the ruling party and President dos Santos. When provisional election results came in, the government media was quick to announce victory by the ruling party – an editorial decision that may have contributed to the catastrophic events that ultimately derailed the election process.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should immediately review all laws controlling the media, with particular attention to the provisions of media access by opposition parties as well as nonpartisan organizations.
2. The GRA should ensure that all media-related laws provide protection in three specific areas: rights to regulated airtime, political parties' right to fair and balanced news coverage, and transparency of all aspects of the election process, particularly the announcement of election results.
3. The GRA, political parties and CSO's should ensure that issues of media access are addressed as part of the overall election planning process and that all terms are agreed well before the campaign begins.
4. The GRA, political parties and CSO's should support the creation of a National Advisory Board on the Media, headed by an independent and respected Angolan personality, with executive functions to oversee these developments.
5. Donors should provide technical assistance to media organizations to develop capacity to report fairly on the election process.

⁶ This interpretation is supported by an interview with an officer of Radio Angola, who could not imagine the possibility of paid advertising for anything resembling a political activity. The example used was a statement by a political party opposing a specific public policy like the privatization of an important public enterprise.

6. Donors should provide technical and financial support to CSOs to monitor Angolan media, and encourage partnerships among the public and private media to foster an atmosphere of healing and reconciliation.
7. Media organs should accept responsibility for contributing to the peace process by modifying their language from themes of war and confrontation toward peace and national reconciliation. National radio and television should clearly and repeatedly describe the procedure for announcing election results, so that those persons who do not understand this strategy will be able to listen to the results announcements and obtain a clearer view of the counting process.

Election Monitoring/Observation

Baseline: No preparations are underway for either domestic or international monitoring/observation of Angolan elections. However, given the history of Angola's elections, many citizens are skeptical that the next election process will be carried out completely and in accordance with the law. It is critical that Angolan citizens play a role in monitoring their elections. Monitors, both domestic and international hold government and others accountable, and their reports may serve as a basis for political activists and politicians to demand action to correct problems, enforce laws, and provide for redress of grievances.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA should immediately review the electoral law as it pertains to domestic and international monitoring and observation activities, specifically facilitating evaluation of the Angolan election process against international and regional norms.
2. The donor community should support CSOs and political parties to participate in long-term monitoring and election-day monitoring.
3. All monitoring activities should include a schedule for regular reporting to bring key information to the public. Key components of the overall monitoring effort could include:
 - Constitutional and legal framework of the election process;
 - Implementation of cease-fire agreement
 - Party nomination processes;
 - The registration period;
 - Political violence, human rights, and security, especially in areas outside Luanda and in displaced persons camps;
 - General campaign monitoring;
 - Media monitoring/content analysis;
 - Election day monitoring, including the conduct of a parallel vote tabulation, post-election monitoring of the results compilation and reporting; and
 - Post-election monitoring of petitions and court rulings.
4. Donors should provide technical assistance to CSOs in the specialized monitoring activities, and encourage coordination among them.
5. Donors should support limited, ongoing international monitoring of the election process. These should be linked to the activities of domestic monitors to reinforce

both efforts, provide greater exposure internationally, and add credibility and political weight in an Angolan context. For example, international observation could include a series of small international assessment missions, possibly including high-level participants, at critical junctures, designed to reinforce the work and recommendations of domestic monitors.

Polling Stations/Voting Procedures

Baseline: The electoral law establishes the ballot design, voting and counting procedure, and other essential elements of the election day process. The assessment team was not able to meet with any officials who would be involved in the review of these procedures, as the CNE is not currently functioning. Nevertheless, the team offers the following for consideration as the dialogue gets closer to the election planning stage.

Recommendations:

1. The GRA and CNE should review the potential financial, logistical and security implications of conducting the election over a two-day period, as was done in 1992.
2. The CNE should take steps to ensure that no voter has to travel more than five kilometers to reach his or her polling station. The CNE should ensure that voters using mobile stations are aware of the schedule in their areas.
3. The CNE should ensure that returning officers and presiding officers are briefed on polling station layouts for voters with special needs. Polling stations should be designed to accommodate disabled voters.
4. The CNE should ensure that procedures for counting ballots at the polling station should be maintained in keeping with the principles of transparency and openness elaborated in the minimum conditions. Certified copies of the results should be provided to political parties and national observers.
5. Donors should provide technical assistance to the CNE in all of the areas listed above.

Coordinated International Support

Baseline: Because the GRA has yet to make critical decisions about the timing and prospects for general elections, the donors with whom the team met have not developed or articulated strategies for coordination of activities. Nevertheless, many lessons have been learned in the past decade about how to provide effective support for the electoral process in countries in the midst of democratic transitions. This requires that the donors: (a) coordinate their positions and support for the next elections; (b) consider hiring consultants knowledgeable about the electoral process in Angola as donor group advisors; and (c) determine early on what strategy they are most likely to support with respect to the international observation of the elections.

Recommendations:

Donors should begin to coordinate efforts as soon as the GRA indicates its intentions for a peace plan and for elections. The international community and the GRA should define its role and participation in the peace and election process.

General Recommendations for Donors

The next six months should provide a clear indication about whether large-scale donor support to the GRA is justified. Most of the indicators have to do with the timing of election reforms and election-related events, including the likely date of the election itself and the schedule for voter registration, actual voter registration, and other related activities. If the proposed constitutional and election reforms are passed in the near future, they will need to be scrutinized to ensure that the Electoral Commission has the legal authority it requires to implement the reforms, and to assess their technical and financial implications. In the meantime, the assessment team recommends that the donors publicly and continuously announce their interest in the elections and the desirability of election reform.⁷

In addition, a number of political parties and others suggested to the assessment team that donors explore the possibility of preparing, or translating existing papers on comparative subjects such as the composition of electoral authorities, financing of political parties, approaches to registration, and so on.

Donor nations have the ability to reinforce positive steps in the preparation process and to discourage regression through public comment. The donor community also has the ability to encourage governmental policies that strengthen rather than weaken the prospects for free and fair elections, through its participation in the financial aspects of the election preparation process.

V. SAMPLE ELECTION PREPARATION TIMELINE

- A. 12 to 24 months before elections
 - 1. Determine what kind of elections will be held
 - 2. Delimit Constituencies
 - 3. Draft CNE regulations
 - 4. Nominate CNE members
 - 5. Approve Electoral Law
 - 6. Consolidate laws to ensure consistency among laws governing elections at national through local levels

- B. 12 months before elections
 - 1. Survey of voter register – predict number of eligible voters
 - 2. Publish Election Calendar/timeframe for election date
 - 3. Independent, chartered accounting firm on board
 - 4. Hire full CNE Staff/office space/supplies
 - 5. Adopt budget allocations

⁷ Donor expression of interest in election reform does not require donor commitment to the broader issue of constitutional reform though the latter may ultimately include the former.

6. Draft budget to cover elements/materials including but not limited to:
 - a. Staff time for overall and discrete election activities, such as training, staffing the registration update/card issuance, voter education processes
 - b. Creation of a voter register, whether via issuance of “universal” ID cards for all, or an additional special voter registration receipt – plus funds/time to amend and exhibit a final version before the elections
 - c. Election forms – carbonless but in duplicate
 - d. Ballots – design, size, envelopes, etc.
 - e. Ballot boxes – assuming that nothing is left over from 1992
 - f. Voting booths – these can be manufactured locally
 - g. Polling station supplies (including wire “in-box” trays for ballot bundles)
 - h. Signs/Tents for Assembleia de Registro/Voto
 - i. Media/Civic Education Blanket Coverage
 - j. Enforcement of election/campaign rules and regulations
 - k. Tabulation system/centers
- C. 90 days to 11 months before election
1. Open registration period – centers open 30 days, announced at least two months in advance – population encouraged to register; advance publicity for election date
 2. Review/input of results by CNE at provincial and national level, create provisional register (30 days)
 3. Register exhibited, parties and voters encouraged to confirm they are listed properly
 4. Review results, input data changes, produce final register 90 days before the election by national and provincial CNEs – make available at cost or reduced cost to political parties
 5. Issue voter registration cards
 6. Distribute materials to registration centers
 7. Train staff
 8. Kick-off voter registration education campaign
 9. Accredited domestic and international monitors/observers
 10. Order/receipt of voter registration supplies
 11. Identify voter registration stations
 12. Survey potential sites for registration/polling stations – accessibility, stationary vs. mobile – in conjunction with national ID cards? How many trips can/should Angolans make for registration and voting?
- D. 30 to 90 days before election
1. Order ballot materials
 2. Nomination Day
 3. Kick-off (or new phase of) voter education campaign

- E. Final 30 days before election eve
 - 1. Deadline for all eligible people to be registered
 - 2. Distribution of non-sensitive materials to polling stations
 - 3. Final day of campaign
 - 4. Pollworker training

- F. Election Day(s)
 - 1. Actual voting
 - 2. Preliminary results transmission at polling station, provincial and national levels

- G. Post Election day(s) – up to 6 months following
 - 1. Certification and Release of complete results (72 hours after the national count is complete)
 - 2. Adjudication of election disputes
 - 3. Accounting/Expense Reconciliation/Audit of financial statements
 - 4. Production of Final Report (25 days after the certification of final results)

VI. CONCLUSION

After decades of a brutal civil war that has fractured Angolan society, elections will pose a critical challenge for the people of Angola. Government efforts to ensure a transparent and participatory process will be required so that all Angolans have confidence in elections and the ultimate outcome of a vote. The scope of the challenge faced by Angolans requires the political commitment of the GRA, the mobilization of talents and resources of Angolan society, and the support and encouragement of the international community.

The great majority of the people that the team interviewed agreed with the need for political change in Angola and viewed elections as the natural way to organize political change in a democratic manner. But most of these people also expressed serious doubts about the conditions in which elections can take place if they are organized too quickly. Few Angolans, including members of the GRA and the MPLA, believe that those conditions will be in place for the second half of 2002. The achievement of a lasting and meaningful peace is most important to Angolans, and a timely and well prepared election is required to ensure this goal.

There exist a host of political and legal issues that must be resolved before elections can be held in Angola. The participation by all Angolans in the debate and discussion of these issues will be essential. Recent pronouncements by the GRA regarding peace, constitutional and electoral reform are encouraging signs, but immediate actions are necessary to encourage the citizenry that a peaceful, better-governed, prosperous and democratic country is possible.

The GRA has the ability and the time to commit its resources to addressing many of the issues raised in this report, even if the election date has not been set. By the same token,

the focus of the international community needs to be on those activities not dependent upon the immediate resolution of the above questions. These include close monitoring and training on the process of constitutional reform, the assistance in the process in preparation of legislative initiatives, continued strengthening of civil society and the independent media, and civic education to prepare Angolans for the eventual elections. Without being perceived as driving the various reform efforts, the international community can provide guidance to the GRA in terms of meeting its stated goals.

The assessment team hopes that its extensive consultations with a great variety of Angolan actors coupled with the substantive aspects of this report will contribute to strengthen the debate about elections. Although the team was asked to focus on the technical aspects of electoral preparations, there is little question that such a discussion is fundamentally political in its nature. The team hopes that this report can clarify the relationship between elections and the most important priority for the Angolan people – the achievement of lasting peace in the country.

LIST OF MEETINGS

LUANDA

August 4 to 20

05 August

Ambassador Joseph Sullivan, US Embassy
Bob Hellyer, Yinka Oynlola and Elias Isaac from USAID

06 August

Minister Faustino Muteka, Minister of Territorial Administration
Musande Jeichande, UN Special Rep in Angola
Caetano de Sousa, President, Electoral Commission

07 August

Eugénio Manuvakola, UNITA Renovada
Minister Jorge Valentim
Roberto de Almeida, President of National Assembly
Ambassador Julio Herraz, Embassy of Spain
Ngola Kabango, Secretary General, National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA)
Eduardo Kwangana and Lindo Bernardo Tito, Social Renovation Party (PRS)
Anália Vitória Pereira, President and MP for Democratic Liberal Party (PLD)

08 August

Norberto dos Santos, President and members of the Peace Commission, National Assembly
NCC, ADRA, CAD, OADEC, ADPCI, HORIZONTE, Justiça, Paz e Democracia – Angolan NGOs
Angolense, Agora, MIACOOOP -- Independent media
João Lourenço, President of the Constitutional Commission and SG of Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
Reginaldo Silva, Journalist

09 August

Amplio Movimento de Cidadãos, Angolan Association
António Vieira, Associação dos Seminiaristas

Zeleko Nascimento and André, Institute for the Rights of Military Veterans of the War of Liberation

Francisco Vaz Pato and João Macedo, Embassy of Portugal

10 August

Stan Nkwain, Acting Resident Representative, UNDP Angola

Paulo Tchililica, Minister of Justice

Padre Jaka, Director, Radio Ecclesia

Bornito de Sousa, Vice President of the Constitutional Commission

Justino Pinto de Andrade, Professor, Catholic University

11 August

Citizens from Cazenga

Ambassador Joseph Sullivan

Bob Hellyer and Yinak Oynlola from USAID

13 August

José Leitão, Chief of the Civil House, Presidency

Manuel Augustsuto, Vice Minister of Social Communication

Cândida Celeste, Minister of Women and Family Issues

Fernando da Pideade Dias dos Santos “Nandó”, Minister of the Interior

Rui Ferreira, Law Professor, Universidade Agostinho Neto

14 August

AD, FpD, PAJOCA, PDP-ANA,
Political Parties in Parliament

José Luís Mendonça, Director of Programs, Rádio Nacional de Angola

Nick Van der Veyer, Representative of the International Organization for Migration

Lucas Ngonda, FNLA

Abel Chivukuvuku, Jaka Jamba, Daniel José Domingos, Feliciano José, UNITA
MPs

Women’s Political Forum

Bishop Zacarias Kamwenho, Head of the Conferencia Eclesiástica de São Tomé e
Angola

Brigadeiro Camoura, Association of ex-Military

15 August

All registered parties not in Nationals Assembly (single meeting)

Rafael Marques, Open Society

Friedrich Ebert Foundation/ Search for Common Ground/World Learning/MCID
Dr. Velhas, National Director of Registries
Julio Bessa, Minister of Finance
Mulheres, Paz e Desenvolvimento (Angolan NGO)

16 August

European Union
Ntony Nzinga, COIEPA
Lisa Grande, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA)

17 August

Jorge Chicote, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

18 August

Mussande Jeichande, Representative of the SG and United Nations Agencies in
Angola

19 August

USAID meeting
PNDA
Paulino Pinto João and André Milton Kilandamoko, Civil Opposition Parties (POC)

20 August

David Kramer
Press Conference

HUAMBO

August 15 to 16

15 August

Mr. Arnaldo Kapusso, Vice Governor of Huambo
Ernesto Estevão Pedro, Delegation of Justice
Dom Viti, Bishop of Huambo
Pastor Domingos Catacha, Igreja Evangélica de Angola (IECA)
Internally Displace People Camp, Kasseque III
Students and Professors, Law and Economic Schools of Huambo
ADRA, Grupo de Apoio à Criança, Liga de Direitos Humanos, Centro de Apoio aos
Deslocados, Conveção Patista de Angola, AD,
Angolan NGOs

Borges, Secretary of Information and Mobilization
Sanjala, Chief of the Secretariat
Jolobola, Chief of the Socio-Economic and Local Power Department
João Baptista, Municipal Administrator and Political Advisor to the Governor
Mrs. Wimbo, Provincial Secretary for OMA
Somakesseje, Secretary for Administration and Finance
MPLA

Avelino Carlos Ngonga, Provincial Secretary of the Party of Social Renovation

16 August

Sobas (traditional leaders), IDP camp Kasseque III
Judge José Chingongo, Head of the 1992 Huambo Electoral Commission
Mr. Tiuka, Provincial Secretary of UNI TA

BENGUELA

August 16 to 17

Governor Domingos Rangel
MPLA First Secretary
Joaquim Frederico de Almeida (Quinito), Director of Elections Commission of 1992
Provincial Judge
Attorney General for Benguela and Attorney Assistant for Lobito
Bishop Óscar Braga
Chipenda Belo, IECA
Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations and Unions
Fernando Pacheco, Director of ADRA
Mississippi Consortium for International Development (MCID)

UNIVERSAL STANDARDS FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

I. International Standards

The interest of the international community in the development of democracy and the realization of free and fair elections (recognized as a basic human right in the 1948 UN Declaration on Human Rights) has resulted in the evolution of basic criteria for such elections, like those set forth in the Document of the Copenhagen Conference on the Human Dimension of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), Copenhagen, 1990. The extensive experience of the international community in the observation and the evaluation of electoral processes have also resulted in giving importance to the consolidation of those criteria. Some of these criteria are especially relevant in the case of Angola, and are highlighted below:

- An appropriate legal and constitutional framework for elections. This would include: an agreed system of representation, which respects the basic principles established in international human rights instruments; an electoral law on which there is sufficient consensus; and adequate and timely mechanisms for the submission of complaints and for the solution of party and electoral conflicts;
- An appropriate administrative and financial framework for the conduct of elections, including: the existence in the country of people with the adequate kind of experience for the conduct of elections, and/or the time and the resources to provide the selected electoral personnel with adequate recruitment and retention; adequate resources for the procurement of the required materials and for payment of electoral personnel; and the existence of security conditions and freedom of movement throughout the country for electoral personnel and materials;
- Freedom of Movement. Every citizen, with the exception of those in prison, is free to travel within the country and within the provinces without fear of unreasonable arrest, physical harassment or intimidation on the basis of his or her political beliefs. Groups that wish to engage in educational or political campaign activities are protected by the same premise;
- Freedom of Association/Assembly. Every citizen is free to join (and not join) a political party of his or her choice without fear of coercion or intimidation from other political parties, or from the government. Political parties, civil society organizations may pursue normal channels of recruitment/income generation, regular meetings and activities, whether or not an election campaign is in progress, without interference by the government. Gatherings held on private property are not subject to permission granted by the government or police. Should a political party or group desire to use public space for an activity, the government facilitates the use of that space by developing a schedule for activities based on the groups that express interest (rather than the government allocating space and time at its own discretion);
- Freedom of Expression. Every citizen has the right to express his or her personal (political) beliefs, either alone or as part of a group that supports his or her beliefs, without fear of coercion, intimidation, arrest/detention, or physical harassment. This

protection extends to the tools used as a means of public expression, such as newspapers, television and radio broadcasts, posters, or any item that displays a personal/political belief, whether or not an election campaign is in progress;

- Voter Registration. Every person who is eligible to register as a voter (depending on the citizenship, residency and age requirements given by the Electoral Law) has the freedom and opportunity to register as a voter, without fear of intimidation, coercion, or physical harassment. Every person who is eligible to register and has duly fulfilled the requirements for registration has a right to verify that his or her name appears on a register, and to take steps to be included if he or she was left off the register. Political parties are free to encourage eligible citizens to register to vote, to review the draft voter register, and to request changes to the register according to the established procedures;
- Right to Vote. Every registered voter is free to cast a ballot in any election for which he or she is qualified to vote, without fear of intimidation, coercion or physical harassment;
- Secret Ballot. During the election, each voter has the right to cast a ballot in favor of his or her choice without revealing how he or she has voted. Privacy must be protected inside the polling station;
- Counting and Results Tabulation. The Electoral Law defines a period for the counting and transmission of election results. Every citizen has a right to know the results of the election within the period defined by the Electoral Law;
- Transparency, Monitoring and Observation. Individuals or groups wishing to monitor the election process, including the campaign and other preparatory activities, may be accredited to do so subject to a consensual code of conduct between the government and the individuals or groups involved. The code of conduct typically defines the role and function of monitors/observers, distinguishes between party observers and local/international observers, and provides them with the ability to travel freely to observe, discuss, etc. without interfering in the process. The election process is understood to include the initial activities such as approval of election law and regulations, implementation of activities such as voter registration and list publication, the political campaigns, and election day procedures, such as polling station setup, voting, vote counting, tabulation, transmission and certification of election results. Monitors/observers may, and are encouraged to, produce reports of their findings and conclusions, according to the code of conduct;
- Challenges to election results. Every citizen or group is free to challenge the results of an election, according to the procedures set out in the Electoral Law. The responsible authority to hear the challenges is established in the law, as is the appeals process; and
- Reasonably balanced field, implying at least: adequate conditions for party participation, including public funding of parties and campaigns and/or access to legitimate sources of funding; a clear separation between the State and political parties; in particular, political parties should not be merged or confused with the State; mechanisms in place to ensure that State resources are not used by parties; impartial functioning of State media; and adequate access of opposition to media.

II. Regional Standards

At the regional level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum developed and publicized a series of recommendations for elections in March 2001, based on the Forum's observations of the 1999-2000 elections in Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Although this document has yet to be ratified by the plenary, it represents the contributions of each of the member states, and figures prominently in discussions on elections in the region. As a member of SADC, Angola's election process will be measured locally, regionally and nationally against these recommendations. In addition to addressing several of the above subjects, the SADC-PF recommendations include:

Election Dates

- SADC Governments should ensure that the dates for general election are fixed by provisions in their Constitutions or electoral laws.
- The Parliament of each SADC State should be involved in the alteration of fixing of election dates.

Electoral Commissions

- In the interest of promoting and entrenching pluralism, multi-party democracy and the integrity of the electoral process, the complete independence and impartiality of the Electoral Commission in dealing with all political parties should be reaffirmed in the constitution.
- The commissioners should be selected by a panel of judges set up by the Chief Justice or the equivalent, on the basis of the individual's caliber, stature, public respect, competence, impartiality and their knowledge of elections and political development processes. The selection of commissioners should be done in consultation with all political parties and other interested stakeholders. The selected commissioners are to be approved by Parliament.
- To further enhance the independence and impartiality of the Electoral Commission it should have its own budget directly voted for by Parliament and not get its allocation from a Ministry or a Government Department.
- The Electoral Law should empower the Electoral Commission to recruit and dismiss its own support staff on the basis of professionalism and competence rather than getting seconded staff from Ministries and Departments. Such staff have no loyalty to the Electoral Commission.
- Security to tenure of electoral commissioners should be entrenched in the constitutions of the SADC countries.
- The Electoral Commission should be legally empowered to ensure that proper election expenses returns are submitted on time, to inspect party accounts, and for parties to have properly audited and verified accounts.
- The Electoral Commission should prepare and make available a time-table of the electoral process, including the acquisition of electoral materials, packaging and distribution to polling centers. The time-table, including all stages of electoral events should, by law, be made accessible to all stakeholders.

Voter Registration

- Provisions should be made to ensure that prospective voters are provided with a form of national identity card in good time for registration.

Political Parties

- During nomination and selection of candidates, all political parties contesting elections must ensure adequate gender balance in compliance with the SADC Blantyre Declaration on Gender Development (11/97) which calls on them to commit themselves to a minimum of 30 per cent women party candidates by the year 2005.
- Where a policy decision is taken to financially support political parties with taxpayers' money, an agreed upon formula must be used and adhered to in allocating funds to the contesting parties. A commonly used formula is according to the number of seats each party holds in Parliament.
- Governments should take cognizance of the fact that the involvement of political parties in the electoral process fosters the transparency of the system and generates public confidence in the system. Opposition parties should therefore also be given equal opportunity and agreed upon time and space on the state owned media to put their announcements and broadcasts and advertisements. This is a true test of the Government's commitment to pluralism and multi party democracy and a democratic political process.

Vote Counting, Tabulation and Announcement of Results

- The counting of votes should be done at the polling station where the candidates and/or their election agents are present. Such candidates and agents should be allowed to remain with the boxes from closure of polling station to counting of votes.
- There should be immediate release of official election results on completion of counting, signed by returning officers and confirmed by party agents.
- Verification and reconciliation of ballots should be done before counting begins and this should be done in the presence of candidates and all their agents.
- In the event of a long lapse of time between the completion of voting and the commencement of the counting, the ballot boxes should be sealed and opened in the presence of all polling agents.

The Election Environment

- Provision should be made for people with disability to participate fully in the electoral process.
- SADC member states should perpetually outlaw any measures such as political violence, kidnapping, murder, threats and sanctions including denial of development opportunities in opposition controlled areas that prevent eligible individuals to register to vote and to vote in secrecy.
- Governments should refrain from taking decisions and actions that thwart the development of a strong private media. There should be a domestic information law that reaffirms the existence of private media.

- The culture of accepting election results should be cultivated and encouraged, especially when election observers have certified the results as free and fair.
- Political parties contesting elections must accept defeat after fair contests.