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**Governance in Angola
and the Upcoming
First Post-Civil War Elections**

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**Faculty of International Relations
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Governance in Angola and the Upcoming First Post-Civil War Elections

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Summary:

This essay shall attempt to analyse the current system of governance in Angola and the probability of its changing with the first post-war elections. The first chapter provides a brief theoretical overview of governance. It is by no means exhaustive, and is meant to simply demonstrate the complexity of the issue of governance. In the second chapter, the roots of today's governance in Angola are identified in the form of the existing political system and the system of public administration in the country. The chapter ends with a real-life example from the author's working experience in Angola. It is intended to clarify the consequences of current governance in the country. The last chapter is dedicated to the upcoming elections and their potential to change the current situation in the Angolan society.

Keywords: governance, public administration, elections

Governance v Angole a nadcházející první volby od konce občanské války

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Abstrakt:

Tato stat' si klade za cíl zanalyzovat současný systém vládnutí v Angole a pravděpodobnost jeho změny s blížícími se prvními svobodnými volbami po dlouhotrvající občanské válce. První kapitola poskytuje stručný teoretický základ systému vládnutí, který není vyčerpávající, ale jasně z něj vyplývá komplexnost tohoto problému. Druhá kapitola se snaží nalézt základy současného systému vládnutí v Angole jednak v existujícím politickém systému v zemi, jednak v systému veřejné správy. Tato část je ukončena vlastní autorovou pracovní zkušeností v Angole, která má demonstrovat praktické důsledky současného systému vládnutí. Poslední kapitola je pak věnována nadcházejícím volbám a jejich potenciálu změnit současnou situaci v Angole.

Klíčová slova: governance, veřejná správa, volby

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Introduction

Angola is one of the 49 countries in the world currently labelled as the least developed. It is probably the richest country in this group thanks to its vast reserves of oil (current production reaches 2,000,000 barrels per day), diamonds, and other minerals. The armed struggle for independence from Portugal began in 1961 and independence was finally won in 1975. However, mainly because of its mineral wealth, civil war broke out even before the official declaration of independence, and only ended in 2002. The prolonged conflict resulted in the dire economic and social situation which Angola is still experiencing. It can be demonstrated by the fact that Angola was 166th out of 177 countries assessed in UNDP's Human Development Report 2006 (UNDP 2006: 283-286). Extreme living conditions during the war also contributed to the creation of a society based on favouritism and nepotism. The purpose of this essay is to briefly describe the theoretical concept of good governance so as to explain the current political situation in Angola and its administrative system, and to evaluate possible developments in Angolan society after the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections. From the Czech point of view, Angola is also interesting because it became one of the priority countries for Czech official development assistance (ODA). According to the Czech Republic Development Cooperation (2006: 11), between 2006 and 2008, around 6% of Czech ODA (73 mil CZK) will be spent in Angola, and it is planned to raise this proportion substantially in the near future. The Czech embassy in the Angolan capital city Luanda has also recently started working on intensifying bilateral relations between the Czech Republic and Angola with the aim of boosting foreign trade between the two countries.

1. The Concept of Good Governance

The term "governance" became popular during the 1990s, but to date lacks a standardised definition. Governance can be simply seen as "the management of society by the people" (Albrow 2001: 6), or, as "the exercise of authority or control to manage a country's affairs" (Schneider 1999: 7), or as "a complex system of interactions among structures, traditions, functions (responsibilities) and processes (practices) characterized by the three values of accountability, transparency and participation" (Punyaratabandhu 2004: 1). The meaning of the term governance has been evolving since 1990, too. At first, governance was perceived as "the exercise of authority and control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development" (Schneider 1999: 7). International institutions such as the World Bank focused their attention on the improvement of the quality of public sector management, better provision of service, the rule of law, and the elimination of corruption. By the mid-1990s, the concept of governance was expanded by

international organizations (e.g. the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD/DAC) to include transparency, accountability, and participation. In 2000, the OECD/DAC stated that good governance requires a broad approach to partnership, going beyond governments and parliaments, to include civil society and the private sector. Also, the dimension of predictability was added to the concept of governance. New elements are likely to be added to the definition of good governance in the future, but the currently used concept of good governance is based on three main premises (Doornbos 2003: 8):

Good governance is enabled by mutually supportive and cooperative relationships between government, civil society, and the private sector.

Good governance is defined as the sum of: participation, transparency of decision-making, accountability, the rule of law, predictability, democratic practices, civil liberties, and access to information.

Good governance is subjective in concept. If donor-conceptualized standards of good governance were more fully elaborated and insisted upon, it would almost certainly imply an insistence that Western-derived standards of conduct be adopted in non-Western politico-cultural contexts.

Similar to the lack of consensus on the definition of good governance, there is also a lack of consensus among the main international donors on how to measure governance. Organizations such as the UNDP, the World Bank, the OECD, and the UN Statistical Commission all developed their own (and very different) sets of indicators for measuring good governance. In reality, measuring good governance often fails for two main reasons. Firstly, decisions regarding what to measure and which indicators to use are based on public administration and political frameworks. It leads to a situation where the same indicator may have contradictory interpretations, depending on which ideological support is utilized. Secondly, some regimes are reluctant to produce and disseminate governance indicators because they would reflect adversely on their alleged progress towards good governance. The complexity of this issue is further documented by Von Benda-Beckermann (1994: 63): "Not only do efforts to promote good governance often have the opposite effect, but what in one respect (for example, economic growth) is good governance, is clearly bad governance in other respects, such as labour conditions, democratic content of government and civil liberties". Good governance is often treated as having instrumental value, or as the means by which to achieve the desired target. As Punyaratabandhu puts it (2004: 5), governance analysis usually begins with the question: "Good governance for what?" and the response varies, depending on the nature of the "what": such as "governance for poverty reduction" or "governance for economic development/efficiency". Different sets of indicators are then used to measure governance, depending on the nature of the question.

2. The Issue of Governance in Angola

Today, there is a general consensus that good governance can be instrumental in achieving poverty reduction and improving living conditions in poor countries. Good governance is important both as a social goal, and for its role in supporting an equitable pattern of growth. The challenge, therefore, is to build capable governments that can guarantee peace and security, provide the enabling political and legal environment for development, and promote equitable distribution (Committee for Development Policy, 2004: 4). The aim of this chapter is to analyse the political and administrative systems of Angola and the way they affect the current form of governance in the country.

Political System of Angola

The history of today's political system in Angola dates back to colonial times, when the first political parties emerged: MPLA (Movimento Popular de Liberação de Angola, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) was founded in 1956; FNLA (Frente Nacional de Liberação de Angola, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola) was founded in 1962; UNITA (União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola, the National Union for Total Independence of Angola) was founded in 1966. The MPLA was supported by Soviet Union, the other two parties mainly by USA and South Africa. All of them were involved in the armed struggle against the Portuguese, but they never cooperated with each other. When military coup in 1974 ended the rule of Marcelo Caetano (Salazar's successor since 1968) in Portugal, the way towards independence for Portugal's colonies opened wide. MPLA, UNITA, and FNLA ceased military operations in Angola and agreed that the future government of independent Angola will consist of members of these three parties only. Independence was to be officially declared on November 11, 1975. Nevertheless, the FNLA declared war on the MPLA on August 1, 1975. Thanks to military assistance from the Soviet Union and Cuba, the MPLA was able to hold Luanda and on November 11 declared the independence of the Angolan Republic. On the same day, the FNLA and UNITA jointly declared the independent People's Republic of Angola with Huambo as its capital. For the next couple of decades MPLA was bound to the Socialist Bloc and was running the country under Marxist ideology, which together with the total lack of a skilled workforce and devastation by the war led to a quick collapse of the economic and social infrastructure in Angola. In 1991 it seemed the war was finally over with the negotiated peace agreement between the MPLA and UNITA (the FNLA had long ceased to exist). The first Angolan elections took place in September 1992 but the fighting resumed and finished only in 2002. All today's main political parties in Angola were founded, and at least until the end of civil war, existed as military groups. That has strong implications for the political environment in the country. Between 1975 and 1991 only one political party (the MPLA) officially existed in Angola. In 1991, the constitution was

changed to prepare for the upcoming elections and since then Angola is, officially, a multi-party democracy. However, most powers lie in the hands of the president, who is also the head of government (even though since 1991 Angola has the office of prime minister). Jose Eduardo dos Santos has been the president of Angola for almost 30 years, since September 1979. In 2002, the Government of National Reconciliation was created in Angola. It consists of 29 ministers, appointed by the president (Economist Intelligence Unit 2007: 4). It has a temporary mandate until the next democratic elections.

Administrative System of Angola

The central government, with the president of the republic as its head, is the highest level of the public administration system in Angola. Angolan territory is divided into 18 provinces managed by provincial governments headed by provincial governors, who are appointed directly by the president of the republic. The provinces are further divided into 157 municipalities; each of them has its own municipal administration led by a municipal administrator, who is appointed by the governor of the respective province. Municipalities are by law further divided into 532 communities with communal administrations and communal administrators appointed by the municipal administrator. Angolan law provides for the further division of communities into townships in urban areas and settlements in rural areas. The administrative level of township/settlement is only theoretical and does not exist in reality, with a few exceptions in Luanda. More importantly, the whole system is pyramidal with the lower authorities answering first and foremost to their superior tiers. Notably, none of the officials of the local state organs are directly elected by popular suffrage. They are simply appointed by superior politicians.

The current shape of today's administrative system in Angola has its roots in the not so distant past. Until the Berlin Conference in 1885, and the start of the "Scramble for Africa", the Portuguese were not interested in ruling the Angolan interior, and instead, focused their attention on a few isolated military settlements. From those they made deals with local kingdoms to gain slaves and raw materials. The situation changed after the Berlin Conference and Portugal had to conquer the whole of Angolan territory in order not to lose it to the other superpowers. According to Motoška (1982: 25), the kingdom of Bié fell in 1881, Bailundo in 1882, and the last was Lunda only in 1920. Just before the Second World War the Portuguese defined most of today's administrative borders in Angola and built the administrative apparatus and infrastructure (most of which is still used today). Today's municipalities (called circumscriptions under the Portuguese) had no budget to be involved in the provision of public services. The main goals for their administrators (white) was to ensure that the indigenous population paid taxes to The central government and worked when the colonial authorities requested their labour, and to regulate the European-controlled extraction of natural resources. Today's

communities (then called administrative posts) in the few Angolan big cities were administered with the principal business of improving urban services but only for the white (and the assimilated) population. In this way, the colonial tax regime was set up to collect payments from every citizen, yet most people (black) were never provided with much in return as public services for the black population did not exist. Independence and the exodus of the Portuguese population in 1975 meant that the colonial administrative model was left for take-over. Given the low level of human capital in Angola at that time, it is hardly surprising that the newly independent state retained the old administrative system unchanged. It soon proved difficult for the MPLA government to rule the country with the intensifying civil war. Vast areas of the Angolan interior were never fully and permanently under the control of the central government until the end of the civil war in 2002. During the war years, public services remained pitifully insignificant, especially in rural areas. However, the historical tendency to extract taxes from the population continued with little in return for the average Angolan peasant. On top of the economic and security hardships, many peasants were under pressure to provide labour and soldiers to the state army, as well as to UNITA's army (Orre 2007: 6).

The independence years also brought a continuation of the authoritarian administrative practices of previous times; partly as a consequence of the one-party ideology of the MPLA, partly as a consequence of paranoia and the needs of war-time discipline. Initial promises to provide "popular control" over the local state administrations faded, and the state apparatus quickly centralised power. In 1991 significant changes were introduced into the Angolan constitution before the elections in 1992. One of the changes provided for the creation of locally elected local governments (autarquias). However, to date, not a single autarquia exists in Angola. A new law on territorial division, its hierarchy, and administrative order (Law 2/07) was adopted in January 2007, but changed very little, and the administrative system of Angola is still based on the colonial patterns. In the provinces, the governors remain the uncontested strong men of the president. Provincial governments (appointed, not elected) still retain the larger share of investment resources and continue to absorb the majority of people with higher education. Municipal administrators, appointed from above, continue their focus on controlling the rural population while being left without much resources or powers to become real centres for the provision of local services, or for socio-economic dynamism. Community administrators also suffer from the total absence of economic resources to take care of their communities and are left with the colonial-age control function of the state. In post-war Angola, securing local spending through the development of a solid local tax base could help build a relationship of accountability between state and citizens based on mutual rights and obligations. However, today it is not a priority of Angola's government, which relies on the sharing and central distribution of the tremendous revenues from the extraction of natural resources.

Another interesting point regarding the legal framework of the administrative system of Angola is that it completely ignores traditional authorities. As in other sub-Saharan countries, each township, village or settlement in pre-colonial Angola had its traditional leader (regeedor, soba, sekulo). Traditional leaders represented the highest level of authority in any given community and their decisions on any matter were final and respected by every member of that community. This traditional system of administration survived colonialism but was heavily disrupted by the civil war, when almost half the Angolan population moved either out of the country or within Angolan borders (mostly to the slums of Luanda). Nevertheless, even today, traditional leaders continue to have a very important role, especially in rural communities. Currently tens of thousands of traditional authorities are on the state's pay list for the services they provide. In some areas the state is completely dependent on their services as communicators, eyes and ears of the government in the villages, and as the authority the government itself lacks (Orre 2007: 9). The informality of such a practice ensures that the government can potentially switch on and off the traditional authorities as intermediaries and representatives of local populations according to its own needs. For example, it can bring them on board when they are subservient and kick them off again when they mobilise local opposition. The informality of popular representation through traditional authorities works against the institutionalisation of downward accountability in the local organs of the state.

Governance in Angola Today

To assess the system of governance in Angola from external sources is practically impossible. There are organizations that compare different countries according to different governance-related criteria but Angola does not participate in any of those studies. For example, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) runs a project that compares governance in 28 African countries but Angola is not one of them. In its last report, UNECA was only able to state that Angola is well below half the South African Development Community (SADC) target of having at least 30% female parliament members (2005: 18); that Angola is among world's worst 12 countries regarding corruption (2005: 25); and that enforcing a business contract takes, on average, 1011 days in Angola (2005: 28), longer than anywhere else in the world. However, none of these data were new, as they were previously published by institutions like the World Bank or Transparency International. This example shows the lack of commitment from the side of the Angolan government to make publicly available any data on governance. For the independent observer it appears that there must be a good reason for this.

Governance in Angola has to cope with some major negative influences, including the recent Portuguese legacy of an inefficient administrative system,

even more recent legacy of prolonged civil war, and the resource curse. Most Angolans are only too happy to blame anything on the war. Without detracting from the war's serious consequences, the resource curse seems to have had an even greater impact on the forming of the current managerial style of the Angolan elites. Corruption, nepotism and a total lack of transparency and public accountability start at the very top, but spread throughout the entire Angolan society. In fact, what makes day to day life difficult for the majority of the Angolan population is that ordinary police officers demand bribes for no reason at all, ambulance drivers who refuse to drive a patient to hospital if they are not paid first, or local electricity distributors charging a flat monthly fee regardless of real consumption (which is often 0 because electricity is still scarce in some areas). All these nuisances stem from the practices of the country's leaders, which have always been subject to international organizations' criticism. In the first few years of the new millennium, when the country was in total disarray and the price of oil reached about one sixth of today's level, the Angolan government sought help from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These organizations were allowed to assess the country's economics, politics, and social system and to make recommendations for the government's consideration. For example, the World Bank carried out a Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability Review at the beginning of 2004; the IMF produced an Oil Diagnostic Study in the same year. Typically, the government would acknowledge its shortcomings, agree on their resolutions, and then do nothing. The international institutions could not enforce any real changes because Angola gradually managed to increase its oil production output and the world price of crude oil also went up from about \$20 per barrel at the beginning of 2002 to over \$50 per barrel two years later. At the same time, China entered into negotiations with Angola and quickly provided the first oil-backed loan of \$2 billion in 2003 (so far, an additional \$1 billion was provided in 2004 and another \$2 billion in 2005). It is a well known fact that the Chinese money is not tied to any conditions on human rights or local governance, which makes it welcome in 49 African countries (as of April 2008). In the case of Angola, the arrival of the Chinese effectively disabled any meaningful pressure by the West on the Angolan government to implement good governance practices.

This has implications for post-civil war economic normalization. The few half-heartedly implemented reforms meant that most internal affairs in Angola continue to be run on a secretive basis. In particular, the non-transparent management of the oil and diamond sectors, which provide around 95% of government's income, contribute substantially towards the rent-seeking of Angolan leaders. The country is being rebuilt but there are no open tenders for individual reconstruction projects. As a consequence, the money is used inefficiently, reconstruction projects have extremely high profit margins and construction companies compete for them behind closed doors. The Angolan government is under the impression that the money supply from oil is

unlimited, also because in recent years the country was only able to execute about 80% of its total planned state expenditures.

Illustrative Example of Angolan Governance

The area of the make up of the state's annual budget has been criticized by the international community, which keeps calling for increased transparency, monitoring and effectiveness of the Angolan budgetary process. Possible solutions were suggested too, for example in the form of the implementation of budgetary systems which are successfully used by other, similar, countries. Such solutions already exist in other places and would be relatively cheap to implement in view of the potential gains in the form of increased control over, and efficiency of, public expenses. However, 6 years after the civil war such a solution is still being "discussed" by the Angolan government. The annual state budget of Angola is compiled from the annual budgets of the individual provinces. Each provincial government has to send its budget proposal to the central government in Luanda by September, every year. The provincial budget is simply a compilation of the budget proposals of individual provincial ministries. The provincial ministries prepare their budgets based on the activities they have planned for the following year. Most ministries cooperate on specific projects with UN agencies, international and local NGOs, and other partners. If any partner asks a provincial ministry to participate in the financing of any project, the project proposal, including its budget, must be submitted usually by the end of June. The ministerial officer sometimes asks the potential project partner to increase the budget without any apparent reason. If this is not done, the project is rejected straight away. Judging by the number of provincial governments' members driving luxury cars in the Angolan interior, not many partners refuse to cooperate. Compiled provincial budgets are eventually sent to the central government in Luanda, which usually cuts the proposed budgets.

The revised budget is then sent back to the province; provincial ministries learn about their approved budgets for the next year and adjust their plans accordingly. Money usually starts arriving on the provincial governments' bank accounts in February. Even at this stage different problems may arise. All the money goes from central government, the ministry of planning, to the provincial ministries of planning. Every provincial ministry of planning is supposed to further distribute financial resources to all other provincial ministries as per approved state budget. But if the provincial ministry of planning does not want to distribute the money, the other provincial ministries have no power to enforce their rights. That is exactly what happened in the province of Huambo in 2007. The school-feeding programme in primary schools was to be paid for by Angolan government for the first time in 2007. The ministry of education of Huambo province, in cooperation with the UN's World Food Programme, prepared a project proposal and budget totalling about 380 million Kwanza (\$5 million). The central government cut the budget to 310

million Kwanza (\$4.1 million), which duly arrived on the bank account of the provincial ministry of planning of Huambo province in February 2007. February is the beginning of school year in Angola, but the provincial ministry of education did not receive school-feeding money in February or March; in fact the money was never made available to the ministry of education. School-feeding is one of the effective ways of improving living standards in the long run. It encourages parents to sacrifice half a day of the child's labour (helping in the fields, taking care of siblings, bringing water and firewood); and to send their children to school. Officially, the project is a high priority of the Angolan government. Nevertheless, \$4.1 million for school-feeding in Huambo province in 2007 was most likely put to "alternative use" by the provincial ministry of planning. The director of the provincial ministry of education, Angelina Bilingu, refused to put up with the situation and kept on trying to get the approved budget, even with the help of central ministry of education. It turned out that the minister of education, a member of the central government of Angola, could do absolutely nothing to help. The only one who could settle the matter was the governor of the province. The governor is not elected, rather, directly appointed by the president of Angola. The governor's main worry, therefore, is to continue to have good relations with the president, because only the president can dismiss the governor. As a consequence, the majority of governors spend most of their time in the capital, Luanda, not caring much about the affairs of their province¹. The only tangible result in the case of school-feeding in Huambo during 2007 was that the director of the provincial ministry of education was seen as unnecessarily nosy and was actually fired in September 2007. Because there is no effective public expenditure control system in place in Angola, nobody can find out where the \$4.1 million ended up.

3. Elections 2008 and 2009: Hope for a Change?

The last (and so far only) parliamentary and presidential elections in Angola took place in 1992. The then governing MPLA won 129 out of 220 parliamentary seats, the main opposition party UNITA won 70 seats, and the remaining 21 seats were divided among 10 small parties. The MPLA's leader, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, won the presidential elections with 49.6% of votes; UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi received 40.7%. The elections were declared free and fair by the UN but Savimbi refused to accept political defeat and resumed fighting until his death in 2002. Since the end of civil war, new elections were officially planned and subsequently postponed on various occasions. The postponement of elections was usually explained by the lack of infrastructure in the country that made it impossible to reach and register large numbers of voters living in remote rural areas. The lack of infrastructure was, in fact, to a

¹ Municipal administrators have adopted similar practices. They spend the majority of their time in their residences in the provincial capitals waiting to meet the governor who is the one that appoints them and the only one who can dismiss them.

large extent caused by bad governance. In any case, registration of voters was carried out during 2007 and now it seems inevitable that parliamentary elections really take place in September 2008 and presidential elections in 2009. Will they bring change? Change is what an ever increasing number of Angolans is calling for. The joy of peace was gradually overcome by daily worries and people in Angola eventually started to publicly complain about the lack of infrastructure and the lax attitude of the government to fixing the problems of the ordinary people. Some people even compare today's effective one-party rule in Angola with Salazar's Portugal, the country against which Angola fought for independence. The growing discontent is partly the reason why elections will only take place six and a half years after the civil war ended. It was enough time for the current rulers to enjoy their powers in the post-war environment but also to finish some reconstruction projects, so that people can see more and more real improvements (such as repaired roads, schools, and hospitals) that could not be seen even in 2006. Each finished reconstruction project is widely publicized and presented as the doing of the MPLA. The government also continues to learn from its former ally Russia, where opposition was still widely suppressed during the last parliamentary and presidential elections. Even then, the results of parliamentary elections in Angola are not absolutely predictable. The MPLA's goal is not only to win, but also to further increase their majority in parliament. It is likely that the MPLA will achieve its target but there appears to be a certain nervousness among its leaders. They realise that the opposition, UNITA, despite lacking a charismatic leader, has strong support amongst the biggest tribe in Angolan territory, the Ovimbundu (almost 40% of population). An additional 4 million people (a quarter of the Angolan population) is estimated to live in appalling conditions in the slums of Luanda. If they were to vote with the Ovimbundu, even the defeat of MPLA is possible.

One consequence of this apprehension inside the MPLA is that the current president of the country decided to split the parliamentary and presidential elections. Clearly he is not prepared to risk his presidency. The MPLA has not yet announced that dos Santos will be its presidential candidate. But the supreme court of Angola decided in 2006 that dos Santos has never been *de iure* elected president of Angola because in 1992 he did not win more than 50% of votes in the first round of presidential elections and the second round never happened because UNITA restarted the fighting. Therefore, dos Santos can be still elected for two 5-year periods. Nevertheless, the attention now is focused on the upcoming parliamentary elections. The recent examples of the developments in Zimbabwe and, especially, the turmoil and mass riots following the elections in Kenya strengthen the apprehension in Angola. It cannot be completely ruled out that similar situations will arise in Angola in September 2008. However, it is the view of the overwhelming majority of international institutions and observers that the elections will run smoothly; the MPLA will win a majority in parliament without having to cheat, and there will be no major violence associated with the elections. For example, the National Democratic

Institute, an American NGO increasing the capacity of local monitors before the elections, is, as of April 2008, active only in 4 of the 18 Angolan provinces due to lack of funding from the U.S. government. It reflects the opinion of U.S. international policy analysts that the opposition in Angola is too weak to cause any serious trouble for the current government. The American view is in accord with the European view on this matter. It is almost certain that the elections bring either no change, or, make the position of the MPLA even stronger. The following presidential elections will then be also easily won by the MPLA. For at least 5 more years the country will have the same president and the same government. Given the growing world demand for oil it is unlikely that crude oil prices fall sharply in the near future. The same people will be leading Angola in the continuing situation of high oil revenue. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that governance will improve dramatically in the country. Current persistent problems such as the general contempt for the rule of law, lack of modern legislation and courts and the impossibility of appeal against any official decision, will probably continue to impede the development of the Angolan economy as well as the modern civil society.

Conclusion

It is difficult to deal quickly with the legacy of the past. Today's democratic countries with good governance were developing for decades or even centuries to attain their present standards. It seems impossible to force a quick change from (arguably) bad governance to good governance from the outside. Such a change is likely to be gradual rather than rapid and enforced from within the country rather than from abroad. The necessary prerequisite for such a potential change is the development of a diversified national economy. Given the Angolan reality, with three quarters of population living off subsistence agriculture and only a small proportion of Angolans officially employed, it is not surprising that the overwhelming majority of the population is focused on other issues than governance. Having said that, there are some positive factors in today's Angola. First, despite all the shortcomings of its national economic policy, the country's economy is just beginning to diversify from oil and diamonds. The journey ahead is still long but it seems inevitable now that eventually more Angolans will be employed in more productive sectors and will be able to shift their attention from issues of pure survival to others, for example governance in their country. Second, the external pressure on the Angolan authorities to improve their practises does play a positive role. Even if the authorities were not to yield an inch under the pressure, it helps ordinary Angolans realize that the system in place has many deficiencies and some of them have already started calling for change. Nevertheless, ever increasing oil revenue (with world oil prices reaching \$120 per barrel in April 2008) and the Chinese demand for raw materials mean that in the short term no significant changes in governance can be expected in Angola. Upcoming elections are likely

to give 5 more years of rule to the current political elites of the country. The people of Angola can only hope that these elections will take place without violence and that the ruling party changes its behaviour during the next 5 years. It is absolutely certain that, in the long term, the governance in Angola will improve. The only question is: when exactly can such a change be expected? Unfortunately for most Angolans, the answer is: not very soon and definitely not after the upcoming elections.

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