

# Chronology

## Early history

The Khoi and San live in Angola from 25,000 B.C. and the first sedentary populations settle by the Kongo river from 7000 B.C. Bantu populations arrive from around 800 A.D., with a greater influx between 1300 and 1500 A.D. when more centralized societies emerge.

## European settlements

The Portuguese anchor in the Kongo river in 1482-83 and initiate contacts with the Kongo kingdom. In 1491, Portuguese missionaries, soldiers and artisans are welcomed in the capital, M'banza Kongo.

The Kongo kingdom begins to disintegrate in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, weakened by the slave trade. The Portuguese increase contact with the Mbundu-speaking people to the south, notably the growing Ndongo kingdom, and found Luanda in 1575. They name the area Angola, from the Mbundu word for ruler, *ngola*.

In the face of increased resistance to attempts to conquer Mbundu lands in the early-mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Portuguese land further down the coast and found Benguela. The Dutch occupy Luanda between 1641-1648 and also ally with the Bakongo and Ndongo Queen Nzinga.

Portuguese settlers increasingly exploit African slave labour. With international abolition, Portugal formally abolishes the slave trade to the New World in 1836. But the effective abolition of slavery in the colonies only takes place in 1878 and is replaced with a system of forced labour.

## 1884-1885

The Berlin Conference draws Angola's northern borders with the Congo Free State and assigns the territory to the south, plus the Cabindan enclave, to Portugal. It takes until the 1920s for Portugal to 'pacify' the whole country and finalize its eastern and southern borders.

## 1912

Diamonds are discovered in Angola.

## 1950s

Several nationalist movements are formed in Angola in the late 1950s. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) is formed from smaller resistance movements in Luanda, although the precise date is disputed.

## 1961

A peasant protest against forced cotton cultivation in Malange in January is violently suppressed. Subsequent events – an attack on a Luanda prison in February

(which the MPLA later claim credit for), and an armed revolt in March in the north by the Union of the Peoples of Angola (UPA) – mark the beginnings of the armed struggle for independence.

## 1962

The UPA merges with the Angolan Democratic Party (PDA) to become the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) under the leadership of Holden Roberto, who quickly establishes a Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE).

## 1963

The Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) is formed.

## 1966

Jonas Savimbi, having left the FNLA and its government in exile, establishes the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

Oil is discovered in Cabinda.

## 1974

### April

In Portugal, units of the Portuguese armed forces seize power. General António de Spínola is appointed leader of the Movement of Armed Forces (MFA) regime.

### June

Portugal suspends military activities against Angolan nationalists.

### July

As Portugal acknowledges Angola's right to self-determination and all its consequences, a left-winger, Admiral Rosa Coutinho, is appointed as High Commissioner in Angola.

### September

Without Coutinho's knowledge, Spínola hosts a secret meeting in Cape Verde reportedly with President Mobutu of Zaire, Roberto, Savimbi and MPLA dissident Daniel Chipenda in an attempt to establish a provisional government that excludes Agostinho Neto's MPLA. Two weeks later Spínola resigns with the radicals in the ascendancy within the MFA.

## 1975

### January

Portugal invites the MPLA, UNITA and FNLA to participate in a transitional government, the details of which are worked out in the *Alvor Accords*, signed on 15 January.

The transitional government is inaugurated on 31 January. It includes a 'troika' presidency of the three independence movements, and ministerial posts divided between the movements and Portugal. The arrangement fails and fighting soon breaks about between the MPLA and FNLA.

### April-August

The FNLA is expelled from Luanda by the MPLA in July after heavy street battles, and UNITA becomes fully involved in the fighting in other parts of the country.

The first Cuban military advisors to the MPLA arrive. Zairian units enter northern Angola in support of the FNLA in August. South African Defence Force (SADF) troops occupy the Cunene region bordering Namibia.

### September

MPLA control in Luanda is secured when the last remaining UNITA officials leave for central Angolan towns with some 10,000 supporters.

### October

SADF troops fan out northwards from Cunene towards Luanda.

### November

On 11 November Portugal formally transfers sovereignty to all Angolans. The MPLA, in control of Luanda while conflict rages across the country, proclaims the People's Republic of Angola. The FNLA and UNITA set up their own government in Huambo, which quickly falls apart.

### December

By mid-December South African and UNITA forces are poised 180 miles south of Luanda.

The US Senate terminates covert assistance to anti-Communist forces in Angola. This is later extended by the 'Clark Amendment'.

## 1976

In January, after large-scale Soviet airlifts of materials to the MPLA, UNITA-SADF positions are under massive attack. By February, the MPLA has recaptured Huambo, Benguela, São Salvador (M'banza-Kongo, a FNLA stronghold) and the last FNLA outpost at San António do Zaire (Soyo). The OAU recognizes Angola as a member state.

South Africa withdraws most of its forces in March. The UN recognizes Angola as a full member in November.

## 1977

An MPLA faction led by Nito Alves attempts a coup in May which is bloodily put down, leading to greater centralization and control by the Neto government and political repression.

At the MPLA's first Congress in December, the party is renamed the MPLA-*Partido do Trabalho* (MPLA-Worker's Party), and formally adopts a Marxist-Leninist ideology.

## 1978

The SADF attacks Cassinga, Huíla, alleging the presence of a South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) training camp. Hundreds die in what becomes known as the 'Cassinga Massacre'.

## 1979

President Neto dies of cancer in September, and is succeeded by José Eduardo Dos Santos.

## 1981

South Africa invades southern Angola again in August, with the declared aim to pursue the insurgents of SWAPO, though most fighting is between the SADF and Angolan forces.

## 1982

Secret negotiations between South Africa and Angola are held in December in Cape Verde.

## 1984

In February Angola and South Africa sign an accord in Lusaka, providing for a ceasefire, South African withdrawal, and relocation of SWAPO away from the border region. Implementation takes over a year.

## 1987

South Africa openly admits its support for UNITA and engages Cuban and Soviet troops in direct confrontations. The Angolan government sends the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) into a full scale offensive against UNITA-SADF to recapture Mavinga and its airfield, but after initial progress is forced back to Cuito Cuanavale. South Africa is castigated by the United Nations Security Council in November. South African forces heavily bombard Cuito Cuanavale in December.

## 1988

Cuito Cuanavale comes close to falling in January, but the SADF and UNITA are driven back in March and relax the siege in May as negotiations are initiated in London between Angola, Cuba and South Africa.

The FAPLA and Cubans attack the Calueque dam that South Africa had held for years in June. South African forces withdraw across the border.

Following agreements signed in July and August, the *New York Accords* are signed in December; the *Brazzaville Protocol* of 13 December commits the Cuban, Angolan and South African governments to sign an agreement under the auspices of the UN on the withdrawal of Cuban troops. The signing ceremony of the *Tripartite Agreement* (plus the *Bilateral Agreement* between Angola and Cuba) takes place on 22 December.

The UN Security Council creates the United Nations Angolan Verification Mission (UNAVEM) to supervise the Cuban withdrawal.

## 1989

President Dos Santos and Savimbi sign a ceasefire in June in Gbadolite, Zaire hosted by President Mobutu. The agreement collapses amid differing interpretations of what was agreed.

## 1990

New rounds of talks between the government and UNITA take place in April, July, August and September in Lisbon. The MPLA drops Marxism-Leninism in October.

## 1991

### March

The Law on Associations (14/91) is introduced, allowing secular and church NGOs to be registered and operate independently of the MPLA.

### April

A 'non-stop session to peace' is announced by Portuguese mediators on 4 April.

### May

One-party rule is abolished by law on 11 May. The *Bicesse Accords* are signed in Portugal. The last Cuban troops leave and UNAVEM II is established.

### November

Various factions of FLEC meet in Lisbon and form an ill-fated Supreme Coordination Council of the FLEC.

## 1992

### August

The People's Republic of Angola is renamed the Republic of Angola.

### September

Although the requisite demobilization levels have not been achieved, the FAPLA and UNITA's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FALA) are formally combined into the new Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) on 27 September. The FALA Generals abandon it a week later.

Elections are held on 29-30 September and are deemed “generally free and fair” by international observers including the UN. With a 92 per cent turnout, the MPLA wins 54 per cent of votes for assembly seats, UNITA 34 per cent. Dos Santos wins 49.6 per cent of votes in the Presidential elections, Savimbi 40.7 per cent, requiring a second round to be scheduled.

### **October**

Savimbi claims the elections were characterized by fraud and irregularities. On 5 October UNITA withdraws from the FAA. On 7 October, speaking for the ‘Angolan Democratic Opposition’, UNITA warns it will reject any announcements regarding results before the end of investigations into the irregularities. On 16 October, the UN confirms that the elections were free and fair.

On 31 October, UNITA and MPLA army and militia units confront each other in street battles in Luanda, beginning the return to violence and the slide towards Angola’s ‘third war’. In the next few weeks, many people die in fighting between armed partisans in the cities. UNITA’s leadership in Luanda is virtually wiped out and many supporters killed. The government later describes this as the actions of angry civilians, rather than of demobilized soldiers, ‘ninjas’ (riot police set up by the government) or secret service agents.

## **1993**

### **January**

UNITA begins full offensives in areas outside the capital.

On 22 January dozens of people are killed in riots against Zairians and Angolan returnees from the Congos in Luanda.

MPLA and UNITA officials meet in Addis Ababa under UN auspices to try and revive the peace process. The discussions are inconclusive.

### **March**

Huambo falls to UNITA following a 55-day siege.

### **April**

The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) is established.

UN Special Representative Margaret Anstee conducts negotiations in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire.

### **May**

The US grants the MPLA government full diplomatic recognition.

The Abidjan talks stumble over the issue of whether UN peacekeepers would arrive before or after a ceasefire. The UN refuses to approve Anstee’s request for a

symbolic force of 1,000 peacekeepers in order to break the deadlock. The talks collapse.

### **June**

The UN condemns UNITA for continuing the war. Alioune Blondin Beye succeeds Anstee as the Secretary General’s Special Representative.

### **September**

The Security Council imposes an oil and arms embargo against UNITA. At this stage, UNITA controls about 70 per cent of Angola’s territory.

### **October**

On 6 October UNITA issues a 7-point communiqué reaffirming the validity of the *Bicesse Accords* and its acceptance of the 1992 elections. At proximity talks in Lusaka, MPLA and UNITA officials agree to resume negotiations on 15 November.

### **December**

In Lusaka, the negotiating teams fail to agree on the numbers of troops from each side to be included in the integrated armed forces. A government bombing raid on the outskirts of Kuito leads UNITA to accuse the government of trying to assassinate Savimbi.

## **1994**

### **February**

The government bombs Huambo, and UNITA responds by shelling Malanje.

### **March-May**

Negotiators and observers at Lusaka focus on government positions to be offered to UNITA without reaching agreement. To break the deadlock, the Troika mediation team makes a revised proposal on 17 March, which the government eventually adopts on 28 May with some minor changes.

### **June-August**

UNITA responds to the 28 May proposals by demanding that Huambo be added to their list of provincial governorships. Under threat of UN sanctions, UNITA renounces this claim in August, but the government objects to UNITA’s continued insistence on approving the selection of governor for Huambo, and attacks the town on 31 August.

### **September**

In a new letter, UNITA accepts the 28 May proposals without reservations.

### **October**

Despite escalating military confrontations, the *Lusaka Protocol* is initialled on 31 October.

## November

The government captures Huambo, UNITA's headquarters, on 10 November, an action condemned by the Security Council and US government.

On 14 November, a UNITA military team discusses a nationwide truce with the government, which comes into effect two days later.

Amidst continued reports of government military advances, and five days later than planned, the *Lusaka Protocol* is signed on 20 November. Savimbi does not attend, and Eugénio Manuvakola signs on behalf of UNITA.

## 1995

### February

UNAVEM III is established.

### May

President Dos Santos meets Savimbi in Lusaka for talks hosted by Zambia.

### August

A second meeting between Dos Santos and Savimbi is held in Franceville, Gabon hosted by President Omar Bongo. It temporarily reduces the tensions that had arisen since January regarding violations of the ceasefire and the slow deployment of peacekeeping troops.

### November

The quartering of UNITA soldiers officially commences on 20 November.

### December

UNITA suspends the quartering process after the FAA occupies localities around Soyo.

## 1996

### February

By the end of the month UNITA has quartered around 16,500 troops. The pace slows further after this, and UNITA blames a lack of progress by the government in arranging an amnesty

### March

A fourth meeting between Dos Santos and Savimbi is held in Libreville, Gabon. They agree to complete the quartering process by June. Savimbi is offered the post of Vice President.

### May

A new Amnesty Law is approved on 8 May, following on from amnesty laws from July 1991 and December 1994.

## June

UNITA has quartered 52,000 troops by the end of June deadline, short of its 62,500 declared total strength.

### August

At an extraordinary session of its Congress, UNITA declines the offer of the post of Vice President for Savimbi, despite a seemingly positive response earlier in the year.

### September-November

The Joint Commission's 20 September deadline for the completion of military tasks is not met. In the on-going debate over Savimbi's special status, UNITA proposes he should be given the status of 'Leader of the Opposition', and made number two in the protocol ranking. The government rejects the proposal.

### December

The UNITA Generals are incorporated into the FAA.

## 1997

### February-March

Angola sends two battalions into Zaire in support of Laurent Kabila's insurgency.

In March the Joint Commission approves a text giving Savimbi the title of 'President of the Major Opposition Party' with certain privileges in public acts and state protocol ceremonies. The government had rejected Savimbi's previous suggestion of: "Principal Advisor to the President" with special responsibilities for rural development and national reconciliation.

### April

The Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (GURN) is launched with four ministries held by UNITA, but Savimbi does not attend.

### June

Amidst increasing tensions, the UN Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA), headed by Alioune Blondin Beye, is established with 1,500 troops.

### August

The UN Security Council bans UNITA officials from international travel, orders the closure of UNITA offices in foreign countries, and prevents flights to or from UNITA controlled areas.

### September-October

Angolan troops cross the Cabindan border with the Republic of Congo to assist General Sassou-Nguesso against President Lissouba, alleging the latter's involvement with UNITA.

## November

The government takes control of UNITA towns in the diamond-rich Lundas.

## 1998

### January-February

The parties agree a timetable for remaining tasks necessary for the implementation of the *Lusaka Protocol*, but it expires with some tasks still outstanding. The deadline for completing the peace process by 28 February is not met.

### March

UNITA becomes a legal political party and formally demobilizes, but is widely believed to have retained its elite fighting units and 20,000 troops.

### June

Beye dies in plane crash in Côte d'Ivoire on 28 June.

### July

President Dos Santos says that UNITA's armed attacks in the last two months are obliging the government to "adopt adequate measures to confront what is an undeclared state of war".

### August

Issa Diallo replaces the late Beye as Special Representative to Angola.

Angolan troops re-engage in fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo (ex-Zaire) in support of President Kabila.

UNITA ceases cooperation with the Troika of observer nations because of their alleged bias. The government claims this means the end of the Lusaka process and suspends the four UNITA ministers from the GURN. By the end of the month UNITA has seized back a third of the area ceded to government control under the *Lusaka Protocol*.

### September

The government announces it will deal only with the newly-formed UNITA-Renovada, a breakaway faction of UNITA. The FNLA also splits into two factions, one led by Lucas Ngonda, and the other by founder Holden Roberto.

## November

A new UNITA faction emerges, led by Abel Chivukuvuku, rejecting both UNITA-Renovada and the armed struggle waged by Savimbi.

## December

At the MPLA's fourth congress, the government announces a return to full military strategy: 'peace through war', calling for the end of the Lusaka process and the withdrawal of MONUA.

## 1999

### January

The second of two UN aircraft is shot down over UNITA territory, leaving no survivors.

Despite being specified in the Constitution, the post of Prime Minister is abolished, having been vacant since June 1996. Dos Santos becomes both head of state and head of government.

### February

The UN withdraws its remaining peacekeeping forces on the grounds that there is no peace to keep.

### May

The UN Security Council sets up expert panels to look at how UNITA is breaking UN sanctions, and how the international community can tighten the sanctions.

### July

A Manifesto for Peace in Angola calls for an immediate ceasefire, dialogue between the belligerents and opening of humanitarian corridors. It is signed by hundreds of well-known Angolans from all walks of life and then circulated for endorsement by the population.

### August

As UNITA reportedly steps up its attacks on towns and villages, Savimbi gives radio interviews calling for fresh negotiations, but insisting that "Lusaka is dead, completely dead".

### September

The FAA launches a counter offensive, pushing out from Malanje, Kuito and Huambo.

### October-December

The UN authorizes an office in Angola in October (although no head is appointed until July 2000).

The FAA captures many towns in the UNITA heartland of the Central Highlands, including Bailundo and Andulo.

## 2000

### March

A UN sanctions report exposes the individuals and countries that helped UNITA build up its arsenal through diamond trading and other means.

## April

The Security Council sets up a mechanism for monitoring and enforcing sanctions against UNITA, and paves the way for additional sanctions and action against states that flout them.

The Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace in Angola (COIEPA) is formed.

## July

The *Congreso Pro Pace* (Congress for Peace) held under the auspices of the Catholic Church, calls for an immediate ceasefire.

## September-October

The FAA continues its successes, capturing Cazombo in Moxico. A UN report estimates that the number of IDPs has risen to 2.7 million since January 1998.

## December

The final report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions is released, recommending the continuation of sanctions.

## 2001

### April

In an addendum to its December report, the UN Monitoring Mechanism on Sanctions submits a report claiming that although UNITA is still actively conducting guerrilla warfare, the UN's monitoring of sanctions has been effective against UNITA's supply lines.

### June

The government establishes a Commission for Peace and National Reconciliation comprising 24 parliamentarians.

The FAA reports taking several towns, and repulses a major UNITA attack on Uige.

### August

UNITA attacks a train on 10 August in Cuanza Norte, reportedly killing over 440 people.

### September

The Catholic Church and the Open Society Foundation-Angola launch a campaign for a negotiated peace. It aims to stage a mock referendum on peace.

### December

Government troops embark on an offensive against UNITA. Civil society groups again demand an immediate ceasefire. The UN Under Secretary for

African Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, announces that the government is ready to allow the UN to resume its role as mediator, and to get UNITA back to the negotiating table.

## 2002

### February

Savimbi is killed by government forces in Moxico on 22 February. UNITA Vice President António Dembo dies three days later, allegedly from illness.

### March

The government makes a unilateral declaration of a truce on 13 March and reveals a peace plan promising to allow UNITA to reorganize and integrate into national political life, proposing an amnesty, and offering to work in consultation with churches and civil society.

Commanders of the FAA and UNITA meet on 15 March in Cassamba, Moxico for a pre-negotiation meeting. They agree to continue negotiations in Luena, where an agreement is reached on 30 March.

### April

Following two weeks of negotiations, the *Luena Memorandum of Understanding* is formally signed on 4 April in Luanda by the two Chiefs of Staff, by the UN's Ibrahim Gambari and by the Ambassadors of the Troika of observer countries.

### May

UNITA's military commander says 85 per cent of his troops are gathered at demobilization camps, but there are concerns over food shortages.

### August

UNITA officially scraps its armed wing.

The UN authorizes a new six-month Mission in Angola (UNMA).

The Open Society-Angola conference on 'The Agenda for Peace and Reconciliation in Angola' calls for more civil society participation.

### October

The FAA launches a "final" counter-insurgency campaign in Cabinda, reportedly using newly-incorporated UNITA soldiers. By the end of the month it has destroyed Kungo-Shonzo, the main base of one of the FLEC factions, FLEC-FAC. President Dos Santos suggests autonomy for Cabinda will be part of a peaceful solution.

## November

The Joint Commission that oversaw implementation of the agreement is formally dissolved with remaining issues to be dealt with bilaterally between the government and UNITA.

The various UNITA factions agree to join together under a single authority, the Political Commission, as UNITA-Renovada agrees to dissolve itself.

## December

Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos “Nandó” is sworn in as Prime Minister as the position is reinstated.

The UN Security Council lifts the remaining sanctions on UNITA.

## 2003

### January

UNITA Political Affairs Secretary Abílio Camalata “Numa” asks the people to pardon UNITA for the errors committed and the deaths that occurred during the war, insisting the armed struggle was propelled by a “political project” and “wasn’t one person’s personal adventure”.

FLEC-FAC leaders reportedly meet government officials in Paris in exploratory talks.

### February

Information Minister Hendrick Vaal Neto accuses the Catholic broadcaster *Rádio Ecclésia* of serving as a “vehicle of offences, defamation and false propaganda against Angolan individuals and institutions”.

UNMA’s mandate is not renewed by the Security Council.

Aníbal Lopes Rocha, Governor of Cabinda, announces that the government is preparing a plan to resolve the Cabinda conflict by peaceful means. The plan does not materialize.

### April

A FLEC-FAC representative says that although independence is a “desirable solution” to the ongoing conflict, they remain open to negotiation over the future status of the province.

### May

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees begins repatriating 150,000 Angolan refugees mainly from Zambia and the DRC.

## June

UNITA hold their ninth Congress, electing their former representative in Paris, Isaías Samakuva as their new leader.

## August

UNITA complains that its offices in Huambo have come under attack by youths in MPLA t-shirts. Other offices had allegedly been looted.

## October

18 former FLEC-FAC officers, most recently surrendered, join the FAA.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) reports that the Gathering Areas have all been closed.

## 2004

### January

The Angolan government announces that elections are likely to take place in 2006 to allow for the adoption of a new constitution and electoral law, and for there to be a national census and registration. UNITA and the opposition parties criticize the repeated delay.

The Technical Commission of the National Assembly’s Constitutional Commission presents its draft of the new Angolan Constitution, proposing a semi-presidential system with greater devolution of power.

### March

Sporadic street protests against abuses of power and lack of socio-economic progress take place in a number of towns – some violently repressed by riot police.

Open Society-Angola and around 30 other civic organizations and political parties launch a Campaign for a Democratic Angola, pressing the government to speed up the democratization process and set a date for elections.

A new civic association called *Mpabalanga* is launched in Cabinda, advocating renewed dialogue as well as respect for Cabindan identity and development.

### April

The two FNLA factions reunite.

### June

UNITA cautiously welcomes the President’s announcement that the Council of the Republic, a consultative body, would begin discussions on possible dates for elections.