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All-in on Angola's future Constitution: The presidential election stake

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In late 2002, shortly after the end of 40 years of almost uninterrupted conflict, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) and the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) agreed on the need for a new Constitution based on a Presidential system. More accurately, the executive branch – from its position of political and economic hegemony – was only intending to codify in law what was already happening in practice. Crucially, the evolving debate from 2002 concentrated on one point: presidential elections. This became the focus of discussion due to an even more important question looming over Angola: the issue of the presidential succession. Who will replace President José Eduardo dos Santos, already in his late sixties, is a key question for the country's future, and

the new Constitution will determine who will guide that process.

Angola's legislative elections were held in September 2008, only the country's second democratic elections (the prior ones were in 1992), and the vote was rubber-stamped free and fair by the international community. Since then, José Eduardo dos Santos has been ruling with a thin veneer of legitimacy. Recently, when U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, visited Luanda, José Eduardo dos Santos stated that his legitimacy came from the victorious 81% of the vote the MPLA received in the 2008 legislative elections. The seeming incoherence of a president being legitimised by parliamentary elections was justified by José Eduardo dos Santos by the fact that he was heading his party's list for the parliament, despite his continued executive role. Furthermore, José Eduardo dos Santos had promised to hold presidential elections in September 2009, but later these were made conditional on the approval of the new Constitution and, later still, it was hinted by the MPLA that the presidential vote would be delayed until 2012 – thus coinciding with the next round of legislative elections.

Although a Constitutional Commission was created in the Parliament (35 out of the its 45 members are representatives of the MPLA), the timelines established were never respected. For instance, the 120-

day period for the presentation of proposals was extended for another 180 days earlier this year. The much-needed public discussion will be limited from 5 January to 20 February 2010, and will be forced to consider three contrasting proposals. The Constitution-making process was even further convoluted by the proposal of the *Nova Democracia* party that the President ought to be elected though in the National Assembly. A deepening trend of presidential interference then took over the constitutional process. When South Africa President Jacob Zuma visited Luanda in August 2009, José Eduardo dos Santos implied that a South African-style presidential election could be used in Angola, in what he called "atypical indirect election". However, his proposed model has few similarities to its South African counterpart. According to this plan, the list-head of the most voted party in the legislative elections would be immediately elected president. Initially even the MPLA was taken by surprise by this proposition, which it blamed on the *Nova Democracia*, but the party quickly adopted it to defend José Eduardo dos Santos, and sought to impose it in the Constitutional Commission.

What this model represents is an unequivocal affront to the separation of powers, further concentrating executive powers in the president and emptying the legislative elections, and



thus the Parliament itself, of their powers. Similarly, the president's legitimacy would be, at best, indirect and fragile, as it would be left to the party, not the citizens, to select the winning candidate (independent bids would be next to impossible).

The way José Eduardo dos Santos and the MPLA are dealing with the constitutional project is not new, considering the grip they have had on Angolan politics since independence. There is a significant difference from the previous decades though. A political opposition led by UNITA, albeit weakly, is confronting the president's project, and a new and vigorous civil society campaign is denouncing the hijacking of the constitution.

Nevertheless, it is improbable these movements will be enough to alter the plans for the implementation of the new electoral system, as José Eduardo dos Santos and the party still enjoy hegemonic power in the country, and what contestation exists is weak and easily contained. How long that control can be maintained, particularly after José Eduardo dos Santos' succession, remains to be seen.

Brazil and the Middle East: The new kid on the block?

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Shimon Peres' visit in November marked the first time an Israeli head of state had visited Brazil since Zal-

man Shazar in July 1966. The Peres-led delegation of military officials, government ministers and businessmen signed several agreements with the Brazilian government, including an Israeli-Mercosul free trade agreement ratified by Brazil's lower house of Congress. The delegation also signed pacts on extradition and tourism, as well as a U.S.\$350 million deal that involves supplying Brazil with 14 unmanned drones to monitor border areas against drug and arms smuggling.

The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas also went to Brazil last month to meet with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. After meeting with Abbas for two hours, Lula said the "expansion of West Bank settlements must be frozen", and added that Washington should no longer be the broker of the Middle East peace process. "As long as the U.S. is trying to negotiate peace, there won't be peace", said the Brazilian President, who suggested that the United Nations should take over talks.

Finally, Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also went to Brazil and met with Lula da Silva.

In the span of just 13 days, Peres, Abbas, and Ahmadinejad paid visits to the regional political and economic South American giant. The first visit had a particular economic target in its sights, while Abbas' visit meant nothing for Brazil but a political statement. On the other hand, Ahmadinejad's trip to Brazil might represent the outcome of a Brazilian intent to play a major role in the international political scene: the intermediary and/or peacemaker role in the Middle East. The Brazilian newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* was clear about this subject, concluding, in the lead, that "Brazil intends to mediate dialogue between Tehran and Washington".

Brazil might, in fact, plan to put itself forward as a diplomatic intermediary, triangulating between Israel, the Palestinians and Iran. This is, though, a huge responsibility, normally reserved for the heavy-

weights of the diplomatic world. However, this is likely the end goal of Lula da Silva: a quest of international importance for a country that is no longer a local playground of the U.S. Instead, Brazil now represents an important political and economic partner worldwide.

Brazil has made an impressive economic recovery in the face of worldwide financial turbulence, won a 2016 Olympics bid, and established itself as an energy giant through a major oil discovery. In November 2009, Brazil's state-controlled *Petrobras* said the offshore Tupi field is expected to hold 8 billion barrels of crude. On the other hand, Brazil's so-called pre-salt oil region might hold between 25 billion and 100 billion barrels of oil. That could represent the third or even the second biggest field in the world, giving Brazil even greater economic leverage in world politics.

The United Nations nuclear watchdog voted, on 27 November, to rebuke Iran for building a uranium enrichment plant in secret. The resolution was the first by the 35 nation board of the International Atomic Energy Agency against Iran in four years. Cuba, Malaysia and Venezuela voted "no" at the same time as Brazil, alongside with Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, South Africa and Turkey abstained.

In July 2009, Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman visited several Latin American countries, including Brazil. Speaking at a joint press conference with Lula da Silva, Lieberman stated that Brazil should use its influence to curb Iran's nuclear program. In a direct but nonetheless diplomatic manner, Lula da Silva responded by criticizing Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, stating that "Brazil would like all countries to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty" and would like to see the Middle East "free of nuclear weapons".

Lula da Silva has already made his mark on Latin American history, but the true test of his legacy will be the



lasting international power of the world's largest Lusophone country. Lula da Silva's steps in the Middle East might represent the beginning of the Brazilian way to a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and greater global influence.

Mozambique: Yet to accomplish the one and two-turnover tests

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On 28 October Mozambique held presidential, legislative and provincial elections. As expected by most observers, the ruling party had an astounding political victory. The presidential electoral results gave the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo) 75% of the votes cast, while the main opposition party, the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo), saw its electoral support decrease to 16,5%, the worst result ever. Frelimo's leader, Armando Guebuza, will have a second term in office as Mozambique's president and the party's parliamentary majority increased from 160 to 191 votes in a 250-member legislature. In contrast, Renamo's share decreased from 90 to 51 votes.

While these elections were a positive step towards strengthening Mozambique's democracy, they did

not yet bear the distinctive mark of democratic consolidation. Samuel P. Huntington, in his seminal work *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, presented the two-turnover test as the crucial milestone of democratization: "democracy may be viewed as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election". According to this criterion, Mozambique has not yet passed the test. Indeed, Frelimo has ruled the country since the end of the civil war in 1992 and has remained in power since the first multi-party elections were held in 1994.

Despite some minor irregularities, the electoral process occurred without significant violence and the final results were considered valid by most observers. However, Renamo did not accept the outcome, arguing that the process was fraudulent. The party says it has evidence of ballot box stuffing and other irregularities, such as the party's electoral delegates being expelled from voting stations. As of this writing, Renamo intends to boycott all political actions that result from these elections. Renamo is still led by Afonso Dhlakama, who has lost all elections since the peace accords of 1994. Nonetheless, and in spite of the rejection, no violent clashes are expected. As time has passed, the former guerrillas have incorporated an exclusively democratic approach to public life and, furthermore, Dhlakama has alleged the existence of fraud in all previous elections. Renamo's electoral results should help the party understand that it has to reinvent itself in order not to accumulate further defeats or even disappear.

In contrast to Renamo's political disaster, there were some signs of democratic vitality elsewhere. Daviz Mbepo Simango, the leader of the

Movimento Democrático de Moçambique (MDM), founded in March 2009, a party that resulted from dissidence within Renamo, obtained close to 9% of the presidential votes cast, despite being forbidden by the National Elections Commission from fielding candidates in nine out of thirteen parliamentary constituencies due to bureaucratic irregularities. MDM's political success may be the beginning of a party realignment in Mozambique. Indeed, it will be interesting to see how MDM develops and, in case of future electoral growth, how it will affect Renamo. Bearing in mind the results of MDM in the four parliamentary constituencies where it was accepted, it seems that Simango's prestige and charisma may go well beyond the city of Beira, where he is the mayor.

Armando Guebuza, who is under pressure to make his political success felt in the daily life of the average Mozambican, says that he is committed to fight corruption and attract more foreign investment. Indeed, under the new domestic balance of power, he will have a golden opportunity to match words with deeds, since the current situation allows him to govern practically without any interference from the opposition.

Mozambique's political players – and Frelimo in particular – have yet to confirm that they are, in Huntington's words, "sufficiently committed to democracy to surrender office and power after losing an election". Further, it remains to be seen if "both elites and publics are operating within the democratic system; when things go wrong, you change the rulers, not the regime". As it was pointed out by Huntington, the "two turnovers is a tough test of democracy". Thus, Timothy J. Power and Mark J. Gasiorowski emphasized that a "one-turn-over test" would be more feasible. Mozambique has not yet passed this test either. Thus, after 25 years of democracy, democratic consolidation continues to elude Mozambique.



Timor Leste: An amnesty is needed, once and for all

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Last August, the East Timorese national police captured Martenus Bere. The former *Laksaur* militia leader stands accused of crimes against humanity. Living in Indonesia, in West Timor, since 1999, Bere was arrested by the national police during a visit to Timor Leste and transported immediately to Becora prison as a pre-trial detainee. Under unclear circumstances, Bere was then released in August to the Indonesian authorities at their embassy in Díli. In September, the East Timorese Prime Minister, José Alexandre “Xanana” Gusmão, admitted for the first time that he was responsible for the decision. In October, after nearly two months in the Indonesian embassy in Díli, Bere was allowed to return to Indonesia.

These events have shown, ten years after the popular consultation, that justice and reconciliation in Timor Leste remains far from being accomplished. Surprised? In 2001, I wrote an article published by the journal *Civil Wars* about the processes of justice and reconciliation in Timor Leste. The title of the article was: “The East Timorese Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation: Chronicle of a Foretold Failure?” Already at the time it was clear that the path being taken probably would be a source of future problems and dim results.

The “Bere Affair” opens the door to several important observations. First of all, the substantive separation of powers remains a distant re-

ality. It exists symbolically on paper, but the executive branch in Timor Leste meddles quite often in judicial affairs. In 2006, Judge Ivo Rosa gave orders to arrest Alfredo Reinado, and the East Timorese President, José Ramos-Horta, told the contrary to the International Stabilisation Force. More recently, the same judge declared illegal some parts of the government’s budget. In retaliation, Rosa’s contract was not renewed by Gusmão later on.

The negative consequences are not difficult to grasp and understand: institutional consolidation becomes far more difficult to achieve, the example set gives all sorts of wrong signals to the citizens and, among many other issues, it creates further disincentives for foreign investment. In short, the disrespect of the separation of powers undermines internal and external trust.

Second, the events have shown that internal reconciliation is far from accomplished. As it was feared earlier on, the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CRTR) was an enormous waste of resources and time. Its substantive results are nowhere to be seen. In fact, since the popular consultation in 1999, Timor Leste has been struck by two major disruptions of public order, raising concerns within some circles about the viability of the territory as a sovereign state.

Last, but not least, the “Bere Affair” is a good illustration of how the past continues to threaten present and future political relations between Timor Leste and Indonesia. Here, too, the Commission of Truth and Friendship, set up between Díli and Jakarta in 2005, had few concrete results to show in its final report in 2008.

Striking a balance between justice and reconciliation is never an easy task. Timor Leste is no exception to the rule. By now, ten years after the popular consultation, it should be obvious to anyone that Timor Leste should move forward once and for all. Like it or not, justice will remain undone and reconciliation, if it oc-

curs, will take decades to accomplish. Meanwhile Timor Leste should put the past behind it. In the forthcoming independence anniversary, in May 2010, the Parliament should grant a general amnesty for crimes committed between 1975 and 1999. The alternative is to remain on the same path, digging up the past and ignoring the future.



AFRICOM: No place to call home?

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While the African continent continues to face its daily and enduring challenges of under-development, chronic poverty, endemic corruption and permanent warfare, regional spotlight temporarily changed focus when the Bush U.S. military policy review proposed the creation of the new Africa Military Command (AFRICOM), intending to better centralize and coordinate U.S. military operations in the continent. However, the fears of an increased military footprint on African soil and the geopolitical ramifications of “which soil” soon eclipsed any intended benefits to the continent.

On 6 February 2007, President George W. Bush announced to the world, that the United States would establish a new military command for Africa, as America’s sixth geographic unified combatant command. These commands were established during the Cold War, in order to better manage military force for possible armed confrontations with the Soviet Union and its allies; however, in previous decades, the Department of Defense paid little attention to the African region.

In fact, before 1983, sub-Saharan Africa was not included in any of the geographic commands, and even until 2007, the responsibility for the continent was divided between the United States European Command (EUCOM) based in Stuttgart, Germany, the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) based in Tampa, Florida and the United States Pacific Command (PACOM) based in Honolulu, Hawaii; while EUCOM comprised the majority of the continent (overseeing 42 African states alongside all of Europe and Israel), CENTCOM covered the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia and Sudan) leaving the islands of Comoros, Madagascar and Mauritius to PACOM.

This disjointed division of the continent, forced the subordination of African concerns to inevitably higher priorities in Europe and the Middle East, leading to an overstretching and ineffectively performance of the U.S. military responsibilities towards security and safety of U.S. interests in Africa; one crude example was the Darfur conflict, that still spreads across the border between Sudan (formerly part of CENTCOM) and Chad (formerly part of EUCOM).

In order to solve this military puzzle, AFRICOM was thus created, encompassing 52 African countries, with the exception of Egypt, which remained under the responsibility of CENTCOM; nevertheless, such sudden interest in the so-called “forgotten continent” was not unbiased.

Already in 2002, the Bush Administration’s National Security Strategy reflected a need for a more strategic approach towards the region, stating that “in Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States – preserving human dignity – and our strategic priority – combating global terror”; according to Congressional Research Service’s Lauren Ploch, to address these challenges, the document asserted that U.S. security strategy should focus on building indigenous security and intelligence capabilities through bilateral engagement and coalitions of the willing. The 2006 National Security Strategy, on the other hand, goes even farther, by “recognizing that our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies” and that “Africa holds growing geo-strategic importance and is a higher priority of this Administration”.

Such “geo-strategic importance” commonly comprises three primary factors: oil resources, terrorism and the growing Chinese influence in the continent.

As instability in the Middle East grows and international demand for energy rises, so does the focus on Africa’s abundant natural resources, particularly its oil reserves. In his 2006 State of the Union address, President Bush called for the United States to “replace more than 75% of U.S.’s oil imports from the Middle East by 2025” and in the following year, for the first time, African countries overcame Persian Gulf’s states on the U.S.’s energetic trade balance; even more, by 2015, Central Intelligence Agency estimates suggest Africa may supply as much as 25% of America’s oil necessities, further highlighting the importance of current and future U.S. energy security interests in Africa, especially concentrated in the Gulf of Guinea (where the potential for deep-water drilling is faced with high levels of crime and drug trafficking) and in the Niger



River area (where local instability affects U.S. fifth largest global supplier of oil, Nigeria).

But despite the increased American energetic needs, it is the People's Republic of China who holds the lead in the quest for the continent's economical preponderance and domain of its vast natural resources; with an average 9% growth, China has become the second-largest energy consumer in the world, obtaining 30% of its oil from African sources, especially Sudan, Angola and Congo Brazzaville. Furthermore, China is heavily investing in Africa's economies (with "no political strings" attached), considering it an emerging trading partner that offers a growing market for Chinese goods, as demonstrated by the currently 700 Chinese state companies that conduct business in the continent or the U.S.\$10 billion promised in the latest China-Africa Summit, at Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt.

As far as the war on terror goes (now branded "Overseas Contingency Operation"), Africa currently holds a key position in the U.S. security policy; if anything, the 1998 attacks by al-Qaeda on U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, as well as the 2002 attacks on an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, and an Israeli commercial airliner, only underscore the reality of the terrorist threat in Africa; of increased concern is also the existence of weak and/or failed states, that due to their inability or unwillingness to govern their territory, allow the surface of safe-heavens for terrorist organizations, like, for example, in Somalia.

Other official and public U.S. interests also include the containment of local armed conflicts and humanitarian crisis, retarding the spread of HIV/AIDS and the reduction of international crime based in Africa.

But whatever reasons behind it, AFRICOM operated under EUCOM during its first year and achieved full operational independence on 1 October 2008, with its current headquarters based at Kelley Barracks, on the outskirts of Stuttgart, Germany, under the command of U.S. Army General William "Kip" Ward; the official mission statement declares that AFRICOM, "in concert with other U.S.

government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy".

In fact, this allegedly innovative approach, taking such names as "Combatant Command Plus" or "Whole of

Government" policy, is supposed to allow AFRICOM a broader "soft power" mandate at building stable security environments, while incorporating a larger civilian component from other U.S. government agencies (Department of State, USAID, FBI, Department of Justice, DEA, among others) and addressing the numerous African challenges. This holistic view of security has, however, come under intense critics, especially in the U.S., with accusations of undeclared planned intentions of militarizing U.S. foreign policy in Africa, and in particular, the diplomatic efforts and development initiatives already on the ground; traditional rivalry between the different bureaucracies has also led to a shortage of expected civilian personnel to be assigned alongside the militaries in AFRICOM's chain of command.

Nevertheless, AFRICOM is gradually achieving its original goals, by managing to supervise the numerous existent activities by now in place, such as the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (established in 2002 to detect and disrupt terrorist activities in that part of Africa, with the help of the only U.S. military forward presence

in the continent, located in Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, holding approximately 2,000 military and civil personnel), the Trans Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (designed to improve counter-terrorism cooperation in Northern and Western Africa), as well as several Security Sector Reform (SSR) initiatives, regional peacekeeping assistance, military joint exercises and military equipment sales programs.

If critics expected a significant change in AFRICOM's agenda with the inauguration of President Barack Obama, soon their expectations were shattered; already as a presidential candidate Obama had declared that "there will be situations that require the United States to work with its partners in Africa to fight terrorism with lethal force... and having a unified command operating in Africa will facilitate this action".



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The headquarters problem and the Lusophone option

Whatever the risks or benefits that AFRICOM brings to the continent's big picture, one particular aspect developed particular controversy: the potential location of the future AFRICOM headquarters, somewhere in Africa.

Although prior to AFRICOM's establishment, EUCOM was the only geographic combatant command with headquarters located outside of the U.S., through the initial period of installation, the Department of Defense decided for the temporary allocation of AFRICOM in Stuttgart; however, the underlined idea in the long run, was to transfer the headquarters to a closer proximity of the intended African scenario, with clear logistical benefits in sight.

Such possibility, mainly viewed by Africans as a sign of future increased U.S. military footprint in the continent and introduction into local politics, was quickly met with skepticism and distrust by regional actors; South Africa was the most vocal, with its Defense Minister, Monsioux Lekota, publicly stating that "Africa should avoid the presence of foreign forces on her soil" and managing to gather further support from his Southern African Development Community (SADC) fellow members. Official opposition also came from Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Nigeria as well as a non-binding motion, passed by the members of

the Pan-African Parliament (the legislative organ of the African Union), urging member governments "not to accede to United States of America's Government request to host AFRICOM anywhere in the African continent", a position also later taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In fact, the only token of support, came from Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who not only offered her country's territory for potential headquarters, but also publicly and officially endorsed AFRICOM's potential to help "Africa develop a

stable environment in which civil society can flourish and the quality of life for Africans can be improved".

Amid this panoply of declarations, another institutionally regional actor maintained its silence, that being the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), despite some of its members being considered (in the media and academic circles) as potential locations for AFRICOM's permanent headquarters.

Among the Portuguese-speaking African countries, the one that stood out from the rest was undoubtedly São Tomé and Príncipe; this tiny archipelago sparked renowned Western interest after the finding of vast oil reserves and for its strategic position in the rich Gulf of Guinea. With stable democratic institutions (by comparison with the near region), for long São Tomé as been pointed as a possible location for a U.S. base; accordingly to media reports, such intentions lead back to 2002 and to plans intended to transform the island nation into the next "Diego Garcia" (the U.S. naval-air base in the Indic Ocean). However, such designs never took place which did not prevent an increase of military cooperation with the U.S., resulting in the participation on the African Partnership Station initiative, consisting in "joint exercises, port visits,

hands-on practical courses, professional training and community outreach with the coastal nations of Africa", that brought the USS Fort McHenry and the HSV Swift in early 2008 to São Tomé; naval bases access for supplies and transit routes were also granted to the U.S. military. Furthermore, in a 2008 USAF research report, recommending possible locations for AFRICOM's headquarters, São Tomé and Príncipe was ranked third in a list of 25 African potential hosts; its political stability, a stable relationship with the U.S. and the existence of an Article

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98 agreement (that protects American servicemen from prosecution by the International Criminal Court) were considered assets to be taken in account, even if only serving as a possible location for a Central Africa sub-headquarters.

On the other hand, as the number of African countries opposing the project of a U.S. military base in the continent rose, soon other options (that did not imply a permanent move to Africa) were taken in consideration; the Portuguese Lajes Air Base was included in such group. With an important part in XXth century history (from World War II maritime warfare, to the Berlin Airlift of 1948, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1991 Gulf War or the 2003 Iraq War), Lajes was always considered an important factor of U.S. resupply, refueling and deployment strategy, allowing the reduction of flight times between continents, thus being commonly branded as the “Atlantic’s carrier”.

As far as the AFRICOM’s headquarters goes, the 65th Lajes Air Base became a possibility, after the beginning of negotiations in 2007, between U.S. and Portuguese officials to renew the deal that allows the American military presence in the Azores; as Portuguese media report, the U.S. intended to enlarge the scope of the base’s objectives, in a way to allow the testing of the new F-22 and F-35 fifth-generation fighters in the neighboring waters, which would lead to a series of new investments in infrastructures on the ground. Meanwhile, as talks proceeded (but not yet finalized) AFRICOM was created and as African concern grew, so did the option of Lajes and, on a much smaller scale, Beja Air Base (located on the mainland); as one of the European countries with closest ties to Africa (especially due to its colonial history), Portugal has managed to maintain important military ties with the U.S., actively participating in several joint-exercises in the sub-continent while holding considerable political capital among African states in general, and Portuguese-speaking African countries in particular, which could prove useful for the SSR initiatives the U.S. intends to promote, beneath their command. Notwithstanding, in a bid for AFRICOM’s headquarters, Lajes would always have to “compete”

Notwithstanding, in a bid for AFRICOM’s headquarters, Lajes Air Base would always have to “compete” with U.S. bases in Spain and Italy, both identified as “critical intermediate nodes for logistics coming in and out of AFRICOM’s area of responsibility”, within lesser distance to Africa, than Azores.

with U.S. bases in Rota, Spain, and Sigonella, Italy, both identified as “critical intermediate nodes for logistics coming in and out of AFRICOM’s area of responsibility”, within lesser distance to Africa, than Azores.

However, and despite the numerous probable (and improbable) locations, any hope of a speedy transfer to a new headquarters was put on hold when Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, declared in November 2008 (and later, reaffirmed, under the Obama Administration), that AFRICOM would stay in Stuttgart at least, until 2012; as General Ward stated in March 2009, “for

the next five years, operational factors will be paramount, and we will benefit from the stability of staying in one location where we can polish our operational processes, cement relationships with our partners on and off the continent, and consolidate our gains”. Furthermore, increased reports signal a preference for a staff headquarters, rather than a troop headquarters (since the new command will not have any combat military personnel assets of its own other than those already deployed in Camp Lemonier) which only grants extended support for the permanency in Stuttgart’s base (which has so far, received U.S.\$140 million in renovations); even more, a potential dispersal of five small regional offices (distributed through Africa’s sub-regions or alongside African Union and ECOWAS headquarters, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Abuja, Nigeria, respectively) combined with the use of several “lily-pads”, (that allow the U.S. access to military bases, allegedly, in Botswana, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia) alongside the vast network of U.S. embassies in the region, is gradually seen as a preferred solution, instead of a full and long-lasting single location in Africa.

Nevertheless, and despite their official stances on new U.S. public and enduring presence in Africa, the controversy is not expected to completely fade away; whether it has a foothold on the continent or near it, U.S. African policy is expected to still face obstacles in its development and to overcome them, it should focus on regional peacekeeping assistance and military training programs rather than seeking a politically and publicly unsustainable permanent establishment in Africa.



Timeline of Events

Angola

3 November 2009 (Luanda):

Economic forecasts disclosed by Minister of Economy, Manuel Nunes, expected the country's economy to grow 1,3% in 2009, against an earlier projection of 6,2%. In 2010 a 8,2% growth rate is anticipated.

5 November 2009 (Luanda):

Three projects for Angola's new Constitution were presented by National Assembly speaker João Lourenço. A national debate is intended to build up a sense of democracy and ownership, but doubts emerged on how much would be incorporated in the final document.

5 November 2009 (Luanda):

British ambassador, Pat Philips, boasted United Kingdom as the second major investor in Angola, spending up to U.S.\$8 billion in the country. Phillips classified economic relations between the two countries as excellent.

8 November 2009 (Luanda):

Brazilian Minister of State for Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, Miguel Jorge, arrived in Luanda for a three-day trip accompanied by 90 Brazilian businessmen from such diverse areas as beverages and industrial equipments.

8 November 2009 (Luanda):

Ahead of the 4th ministerial meeting of the Sino-Africa Forum taking place on the 8th and 9th November in Egypt, Chinese ambassador to Angola, Zhang Bolun, stated that his country will continue to support Africa's development, and Angola's in particular, without any pre-established political conditionalities.

9 November 2009 (Luanda):

Ambassador Tete António was appointed Monday as the permanent representative of the African Union at the United Nations.

11 November 2009 (Kinshasa):

Angolan ambassador in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) downplayed recent border disagreements and refugees deportations between

the two countries. Emílio de Carvalho Guerra stated that once DRC becomes a peaceful country Angola will cease to have reasons to worry about bilateral relations.

11 November 2009 (Huambo):

Angola signaled its 34th independence anniversary in Huambo with a pledge by Prime Minister, Paulo Kassoma, to assist its estimated 54,000 returning citizens from DRC.

13 November 2009 (Luanda):

President José Eduardo dos Santos reinforced the maritime space commission, which has the task of delimitating the maritime border in the oil-producing north basin as well as the goal of extending the continental shelf. Among other dignitaries, the commission includes the Foreign Minister, Assunção dos Anjos, the Minister of Defense, Kundi Paihama, as well as Angolan Armed Forces Chief of Staff and the head of state-owned oil company Sonangol.

13 November 2009 (Luanda):

After placing in the international market a U.S.\$4 billion bond sale, Deputy Finance Minister, Cruz Neto, acknowledged that it will be difficult to sell the whole offer, while the government was seeking rating by an international bank. This bond sale was intended to cover the losses due to slumping oil prices in 2008 and 2009.

14 November 2009 (Luanda):

Prime Minister Paulo Kassoma met with U.S. State Department International Energy Programmes coordinator, David Goldwyn, and discussed issues related to renewable energies, oil and gas exploration.

16 November 2009 (Washington):

It was announced by the U.S. State Department that consultative meetings under the strategic partnership between the United States and Angola were inaugurated with two bilateral meetings covering security and energetic issues.

16-17 November 2009 (Rome):

Paulo Kassoma attended FAO's Summit on

Food Security. In a parallel meeting with the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Angola's Prime Minister secured a U.S.\$50 million grant for the next three years.

17 November 2009 (London):

New oil discoveries continue to be made in offshore Angola. *Petrobras* announced its second finding this month, now in cooperation with Sonangol Sinopec International Limited (a Sino-Angolan venture) and Sonangol P&P (an enterprise of the Sonangol universe). Furthermore, oil exports are expected to grow again in January, thus surpassing the OPEC quota programmed for Angola.

17 November 2009 (Berlin-Luanda):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Angola alongside with Guinea-Bissau in the 162th position, falling from its 2008 158th place. President José Eduardo dos Santos reacted by asking for a zero tolerance policy when managing public funds.

23 November 2009 (Washington):

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved an estimated U.S.\$1,4 billion loan to Angola to support the country's reaction to the international crisis, improve transparency standards and to back up some structural reforms to promote growth beyond the oil sector. This agreement also signals Luanda's intention to diversify its sources of financing away from China-backed oil-grants.

24 November 2009 (Luanda):

The National Assembly discussed the state budget for 2010 and the bills of the 2010/11 National Plan. The Prime Minister was present during the debate, where political and economic stability were set as priorities, based on the premises of "unity and national cohesion, consolidation of democracy and of its institutions", as well as improving living standards.

25-26 November 2009 (Luanda):

Norway's Foreign Minister, Jonas Gahr Store,



visited Luanda for the first time, having met his Angolan counterpart, Assunção dos Anjos, and President José Eduardo dos Santos, to discuss ongoing projects, such as an hydroelectric dam in Benguela as well as the setting up of a Norwegian-style sovereign wealth fund to manage oil revenues. Norway's oil company Statoil holds large explorations in Angola, pumping 200,000 barrels per day.

27 November 2009 (Luanda):

It has been brought to public a scandal involving the flight of several billions of U.S. dollars from State funds to the exterior, led by former members of the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of Angola. These operations were conducted by forging signatures of prominent elements, thus enabling the illicit transfers. The investigations led by the Attorney General are seen as an answer to the IMF's insistence on transparency and President José Eduardo dos Santos' discourse to crack down corruption.

30 November 2009 (Luanda):

The 18th African-Caribbean-Pacific/European Union parliamentary assembly started in Luanda with an address by President José Eduardo dos Santos and with Prime Minister Paulo Kassoma also present in the ceremony. Over 400 delegates were present to discuss themes of good governance, debt cancellation and climate change. Commissioner Louis Michel represented the European Union.

Brazil

4 November 2009 (London):

President Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva arrived in Britain, for a two-day visit, where he held a meeting with British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, concerning climate change negotiations, the G20's role in global financial reform and Olympic cooperation. Lula da Silva was accompanied by his chief of staff, Dilma Rousseff, and Finance Minister, Guido Mantega.

4 November 2009 (New York):

Ambassador to the United Nations, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, called on Israel to "establish full, independent credible investigations" into Israeli war crimes during the Gaza conflict which is

backed by the UN fact-finding Goldstone mission report.

4 November 2009 (Montego Bay):

Foreign Minister Celso Amorim participated in the Ministerial Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development (CALC), and in the 28th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Rio Group, that were held simultaneously in Jamaica.

9 November 2009 (Rio de Janeiro):

Argentinean Foreign Minister, Jorge Taiana, met his Brazilian counterpart, Celso Amorim, in order to define the bilateral agenda for presidents Cristina Kirchner and Lula da Silva meeting on November 18.

9 November 2009 (Beijing):

Social Communication Minister, Franklin Martins, met with Liu Yunshan, head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee. During their meeting were discussed mechanisms to advance bilateral cooperation in areas such as trade, culture, education, technology and media.

10 November 2009 (Brasília):

Israeli President, Shimon Peres, met Brazilian Defense Minister, Nelson Jobim, and discussed a bilateral cooperation agreement in the defense area and pledged to fight terrorism.

11 November 2009 (Brasília):

President Lula da Silva defended Brazil's friendly relations with Iran, after a meeting with Israeli President Shimon Peres.

11 November 2009 (Brasília):

Brazilian Senate agreed to postpone a full house vote on the admission of Venezuela to Mercosur given the "strained climate" generated by Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez who alerted his people of a "possible" war with Colombia.

14 November 2009 (Paris):

President Lula da Silva met with his French counterpart Nicolas Sarkozy. The proposals for the 15th U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP 15) to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December, were the main theme discussed.

16 November 2009 (Rome):

President Lula da Silva accepted an award for

his efforts to combat hunger on the sidelines of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization summit.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Brazil in the 75th position, rising from its 2008 80th place.

18 November 2009 (Brasília):

After a working meeting, President Lula da Silva and Argentinean President, Cristina Kirchner, issued a joint statement declaring that they would not recognize the results of the elections to be organized by the post-coup de facto government in Honduras; trade conflicts between the two countries were also addressed.

18 November 2009 (Brasília):

Brazil's Supreme Court ruled, in two separate 5-4 votes, that there was no legal reason to block Italian fugitive Cesare Battisti's extradition, and that President Lula da Silva has the final say over the matter.

19 November 2009 (Salvador):

President Lula da Silva met with Palestinian Authority's Acting President, Mahmoud Abbas, who is seeking support for an unilateral declaration of an independent Palestinian state, while Brazil seeks an increased role in peace talks for the Middle East.

23 November 2009 (Brasília):

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad met his Brazilian counterpart, Lula da Silva, and signed cooperation agreements in biotechnology, energy, trade and agriculture.

26 November 2009 (Manaus):

President Lula da Silva invited his counterparts of the countries straddling the Amazon basin for a summit aiming basic consensus about the negotiations in Copenhagen, with emphasis on themes such as reducing emissions, adaptation, finance and technology; besides Lula da Silva, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and French Guyana leader, Jean-Pierre Laflaquière, were the only other leaders to come to Manaus.

27 November 2009 (Quito):

Foreign Minister Celso Amorim attended a UNASUR meeting, where growing bilateral



spats in the region, including tensions between Peru and Chile, and between Venezuela and Colombia, were addressed.

27 November 2009 (Vienna):

Ambassador António Guerreiro, Brazil's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), abstained in the IAEA Board of Governors' vote to censure Iran over the construction of the Fordo enrichment plant, saying that a new round of sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program would be pointless.

29 November 2009 (Lisbon):

President Lula da Silva attended the XIXth Ibero-American Summit, focused on ways to encourage the development of science and technology to better tackle the financial crisis and climate change.

30 November 2009 (Geneva):

Foreign Minister Celso Amorim attended a ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization, intended to re-launch the round of negotiations to further liberate trade between Mercosur, India and Austral Africa.

Cape Verde

5 November 2009 (Praia):

Prime Minister José Maria Neves called on "friendly countries", in particular Portugal, Spain and Cuba, to send emergency aid, including hospital equipment and staff, to treat the increasing numbers of infected with the outbreak of dengue fever that has spread through the archipelago.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Cape Verde in the 46th position, rising from its 2008 47th place.

19 November 2009 (New Delhi):

Foreign Minister José Brito arrived at India, where he held meetings with business and industry leaders as well as with India's Minister of External Affairs, S. M. Krishna, and Minister of State for External Affairs, Shashi Tharoor.

Guinea-Bissau

3 November 2009 (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá appointed Amine Michel Saad as the country's new Attorney General. One of his main tasks will be to investigate the murders of former President João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira and former Army Chief of Staff Tagme Na Waié.

5 November 2009 (New York):

The new U.N. Secretary-General's report on the situation in Guinea-Bissau was presented to the Security Council, focusing on the need for a rigorous judicial investigation on the President and Army Chief of Staff assassinations.

5 November 2009 (New York):

UNODC chief, António Maria Costa, alerted U.N. Security Council that Guinea-Bissau and West Africa, which have both witnessed a fall in drug trafficking, may now become a drug production hub, benefiting from the lack of rule-of-law.

11 November 2009 (Bissau):

Guinea-Bissau will receive €3,8 million to foster economic revival in the country. The grant will be collected among member states of ECOWAS and West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

11 November 2009 (Bissau):

The Portuguese Institute for Development Support (IPAD) earmarked over €5 million to support the education sector in Guinea-Bissau between 2009 and 2012.

14-17 November 2009 (Istanbul):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá was present in a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, where Guinea-Bissau was invited by its counterparts to serve as a mediator in the Guinea-Conakry crisis. The President also declared that his country is finally enjoying political stability – a moment that ought to be exploited by the international community to reinforce cooperation.

15 November 2009 (Bissau):

Angolan ambassador, Brito Sozinho, stated that his country is ready to support efforts to stabilize the political and economic life of Guinea-Bissau, basing future endeavors in credit assistance, business ties and in the security and defense areas.

16 November 2009 (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá chaired a Council of Ministers and expressed the importance of good governance measures by the government for the future development of the country. In a press statement it was affirmed that Guinea-Bissau has the human and material resources to improve its situation, as well as the imperative to reach a negotiated settlement for the border dispute with Senegal.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Guinea-Bissau in the 162th position, falling from its 2008 158th place.

19 November 2009 (Tripoli):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá was received by Mouammar Kadhafi, Libyan President and chair of the African Union, having discussed issues related to the reform of the pan-African organization from a Commission into an Authority.

19 November 2009 (Brussels):

The Council of the European Union decided to extend its current Security Sector Reform mission in Guinea-Bissau for six months, until 31 May 2010, in order to complete its current mandate.

19 November 2009 (Bissau):

A 13-day mission of the IMF met Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior, as well as other government and private sector officials, in order to assess the body's assistance scheme to the country. The mission acknowledged the positive fiscal reforms implemented and concluded that, despite a difficult international economic atmosphere, a real GDP growth at just below 3% will be achieved in 2009, and is likely to grow to 3,5% in 2010. The involvement of the IMF is likely to continue in further years.

21 November 2009 (Bissau):

Rumors of political instability were unleashed as an internal military intelligence document was made public. This document signals potential splits inside the ruling PAIGC party along two lines – those who support the Prime Minister and those who support the President. Attorney General Amine Saad said that he would investigate the leak.

24 November 2009 (Bissau):

Oil prospection in nine offshore blocks conti-



nues in Guinea-Bissau. Saudi Arabia's Sheik Mohamed al-Amoudi, owner of the Svenska company, met Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior and discussed the prospects and common interests in the possible findings.

24-25 November 2009 (Bissau):

The Portuguese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, João Gomes Cravinho, met the President, the Prime Minister, the Parliament Speaker and several ministers in order to review several programs of development support between the two countries and to report on the peace consolidation process.

30 November 2009 (Bissau):

An European Union assessment team arrived in Bissau to discuss with Bissau-Guinean authorities the implementation and next steps of the EU's Security Sector Reform in the country. The results of this mission will be presented in January in Brussels to inform and advice the member-states on the future of the mission.

Mozambique

2 November 2009 (Maputo):

Education Minister Aires Ali and Dutch Ambassador Frans Bijvoet signed an agreement valid for three years under which a Dutch grant of €14 million will be used to strengthen reforms under way in Mozambican higher education.

4 November 2009 (Maputo):

Renamo produced the first hard evidence of its allegations of ballot box stuffing during the general elections in October.

4 November 2009 (Maputo):

Mozambique's National Elections Commission (CNE) has begun inspecting hundreds of thousands of votes declared invalid at the polling stations during last general election.

5 November 2009 (Maputo):

South African Development Community (SADC) held a summit in Mozambique hoping to prevent the collapse of Zimbabwe's unity government, threatened by the most severe political standoff since it was formed in February. President Armando Guebuza, who chaired the tri-

ka, said that Zimbabwe's political parties must not allow the inclusive government to collapse for the good of the country.

11 November 2009 (Maputo):

President Armando Guebuza was reelected with more than 75% of the votes. His party, Frelimo, gained sufficient parliamentary seats to perform Constitutional reforms.

11 November 2009 (Maputo):

Afonso Dhlakama, the historical leader of Renamo, has demanded that the Electoral Observatory, the main grouping of domestic election observers, should be outlawed. For Dhlakama, the preliminary report made by the Observatory is a onslaught against democracy in Mozambique because, among other things, does not mention several incidents that took place during the elections.

14 November 2009 (Maputo):

Mozambique established a judicial partnership with Angola, aiming to train the later justice employees.

16 November 2009 (Figueira da Foz):

Prime Minister Luisa Diogo said Mozambicans will pay the real price for fuel when the current fuel subsidy terminates. Diogo was attending Global China Business Meeting held in Lisbon.

16 November 2009 (Maputo):

Amnesty International criticized Mozambique for ill investigations and failing to prosecute police officers responsible for unlawful deaths.

16 November 2009 (Maputo):

Energy projects and a Trans-African rail link may allow Mozambique to emerge from the current crisis. Paulo Zucula, Maputo's Minister for Transport and Communications, said recently that the Cairo-Cape Town railway project, which resulted from the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), envisages that one strategic hub will be the port of Nacala in Mozambique's northern province of Nampula.

17 November 2009 (Maputo):

Renamo accused Frelimo of stuffing ballot boxes and expelling opposition monitors from polling stations to help it win the country's October elections. Renamo calls for new elections.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, cove-

ring 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Mozambique in the 130th position, falling from its 2008 126th place.

18 November 2009 (Maputo):

European Union's observers reported numerous irregularities during Mozambique's elections.

20 November 2009 (Maputo):

Italy is going to invest €7,5 million in training Mozambique's health personnel. The agreement signed by Oldemiro Baloi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and by Carlo Lo Cascio, Italy's ambassador, will focus on the regions of Sofala and Maputo.

23 November 2009 (Maputo):

President Armando Guebuza hosted the 41st General Assembly of the African Airlines Association. Guebuza urged the African air companies to work together in order to overcome the international economic crisis.

24 November 2009 (Maputo):

The European Union presented Mozambique as the country with most success in implementing the first phase of energy projects supported by European funds.

Portugal

2 November 2009 (Lisbon):

President Aníbal Cavaco Silva received South Korea's former Prime Minister, Han Seung-soo, now a special envoy from the South Korean government.

3 November 2009 (Lisbon):

After Czech President Vaclav Klaus signed the Lisbon Treaty, Portuguese Prime Minister José Socrates said the ratification rewarded all the effort and commitment made by the Portuguese government and diplomacy.

9 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Portugal hosted the 5th Global China Business Meeting. The event was sponsored and supported by Portugal's AICEP (external trade agency).

**9 November 2009 (Lisbon):**

Prime Minister José Sócrates, a guest of honor at ceremonies marking the fall of the Berlin Wall, said this should be also the moment to do justice to the European project. President Cavaco Silva congratulated his German counterpart, saying the event should serve as a reconfirmation of the ideals that led to the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

17 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Prime Minister José Sócrates sent a letter to his Timor Leste counterpart expressing his wish to visit the country, something he was not able to do in his past term.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Portugal in the 35th position, falling from its 2008 32th place.

19 November 2009 (Washington):

Minister of Foreign Affairs Luís Amado participated in an American forum of the European Union Institute for Security Studies entitled "Responding to the Obama agenda".

21 November 2009 (Abu Dhabi):

Minister of Foreign Affairs Luís Amado visited the United Arab Emirates. In a meeting with his homologue, Abdullah bin Zayed al Nahyan, Amado signed a memorandum of understanding in order to establish diplomatic representations between the two countries.

24 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Portuguese and Chinese representatives gathered in a Forum held to discuss cooperation and development issues. Chinese ambassador to Portugal, Gao Kexiang, said his country was very interested in deepening relations with Portuguese speaking countries.

27 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Minister of Foreign Affairs Luís Amado said that the European Union should solve its internal power problems if it wanted to have a global role. In a conference held at Lusíada University, Amado considered that Europe has an important role to play in shaping the world.

29 November 2009 (Estoril):

The annual Ibero-American Summit of heads of state and government took place in Portugal. Minister of Foreign Affairs Luís Amado

said he saw the international gathering as an opportunity to strengthen the ties within this community, adding that the summit had an ambitious agenda. Amado hoped the European model in which Portugal and Spain are integrated could serve as an example to increase Latin America's diplomatic multilateralism.

29 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Portuguese Prime Minister José Sócrates said that the Lisbon Treaty will benefit Latin America. According to Sócrates, the Treaty of Lisbon gave more power and flexibility to the European Union, which meant a better role in integrating other regions in the world economy.

30 November 2009 (Lisbon):

Latin American leaders were divided over Honduras electoral crisis. As they worked to achieve a common position about the issue at the Ibero-American Summit, Colombia, Peru and Costa Rica endorsed the recent vote, but faced opposition from Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela.

São Tomé and Príncipe

6 November 2009 (Luanda):

Prime Minister Rafael Branco visited Angola and met his counterpart Paulo Kassoma, as well as the Sonangol leadership. Branco signed a cooperation agreement aiming to establish a national oil company in São Tomé until the end of this year.

11 November 2009 (Bamako):

President Fradique de Menezes travelled to Mali to attend the 13th African Oil, Gas and Minerals Trade and Finance Conference and Exhibition, organized by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

12 November 2009 (São Tomé):

Arlécio Costa, the leader of São Tomé and Príncipe's main opposition party, the Christian Democratic Front, was sentenced to five years in prison for possessing illegal weapons and due to "acts amounting to rebellion", following a month-long trial.

16 November 2009 (São Tomé):

Government, Parliament and Electoral National Commission reached an agreement to hold legislative elections on 4 March 2010.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking São Tomé and Príncipe in the 111th position, rising from its 2008 121th place.

18 November 2009 (São Tomé):

São Tomé and Príncipe and Angola's mixed commissions signed several cooperation agreements for the 2009/11 period, including opening up a credit line, professional training and construction of two hundred social houses.

Timor Leste

3 November 2009 (Díli):

It became known that a few days earlier, Maternus Bere, former leader of the Aitarak militia, who has been staying at Indonesian embassy in Díli, was allowed to return to Indonesia.

3 November 2009 (Dhaka):

A unit of 150 Bangladeshi police officers joined U.N.'s peacekeeping mission in Timor Leste.

5 November 2009 (Díli):

President José Ramos-Horta said he will seek compensation if Timor Leste's waters or shores are polluted by oil from a leaking oil rig. According to Ramos-Horta, the responsibility of this environmental disaster lays on Australia and the Thai company that owns the platform. The West Atlas Rig spewed gas and oil into the Timor Sea for 10 weeks, producing a massive ocean slick before the spill was brought to a halt.

7 November 2009 (Jakarta):

The Indonesian Military has increased security in an area disputed by Timor Leste and Indonesia until common ground is found.

12 November 2009 (Díli):

Thousands honored the victims of the massacre of pro-independence demonstrators by Indone-



sian troops at Santa Cruz in downtown Díli on 12 November 1991. Despite no official record of the number of deaths, witnesses' testimonies suggest that hundreds of people were killed.

14 November 2009 (Díli):

The United Arab Emirates and Timor Leste issued a joint statement declaring the establishment of diplomatic ties.

17 November 2009 (Berlin):

The 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, covering 180 countries, was released by Transparency International, ranking Timor Leste in the 146th position, falling from its 2008 145th place.

24 November 2009 (Díli):

The Asian Development Bank approved U.S.\$46 million to develop Timor Leste's road

network, hoping the new infrastructures will decrease poverty and facilitate business opportunities.

28 November 2009 (Díli):

President Ramos-Horta urged Spain and Morocco to allow Aminatou Haidar, a refugee deported from Western Sahara and currently on a hunger strike, to return to the territory.

Reading List

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