

Brazil: Dilma's dilemma

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Looking back on the momentous gains chalked by Brazil's former President Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva, it is easy to fall into the habit of projecting forward based on past trends. Unfortunately, this is specious reasoning. Brazil's momentum could easily carry the country off the tracks. The hard and thankless task of moving Brazil forward is frustrating President Dilma Rousseff.

Rousseff's troubles span both the domestic and international arenas. At home, the fight against corruption has become a pointed political issue. Last month Agriculture Minister Wagner Rossi got sacked, the fourth cabinet minister to be replaced by Rousseff in 72 days. Below the level of cabinet chief, the trend is even more unsettling: nearly 100 officials from the agriculture, tourism, and defense ministries have been either fired or arrested on corruption-related charges under Rousseff's watch. Yet Rousseff's attempt to "clean up" is backfiring. Rather than appearing a

dogged reformer, President Rousseff's disapproval rate has doubled to 25% since her inauguration in January, and the overall approval rate for her government recently slipped below the all-important 50% threshold. Elder political voices are charging her with being naïve, incompetent, or both. While this is normal fare in democratic politics, given Rousseff's lack of previous political experience it erodes her authority more than other leaders in such positions.

On a practical level, it is making her coalition harder to manage.

In August the Party of the Republic left Rousseff's coalition. It's a relatively insignificant party whose most salient leader was the Transportation Minister that Rousseff fired. But murmurs are growing that if more officials are sent packing, the PMDB – the largest partner of Rousseff's Worker's Party – will break with the President. The PMDB is widely seen as a beneficiary of graft across Brazil. First, though, erstwhile allies retaliated by leaking reports of corruption among Rousseff's inner circle. José Dias, a political consultant in Brasília, likens Rousseff's actions to hitting a "wasp's nest". In an interview with Reuters, he goes on to say: "This corruption sweep is snowballing out of control, it's extremely dangerous. She's already lost her legislative agenda, and now she risks growing instability". With her allies howling,

on August 24th Rousseff reportedly pledged not to fire any more ministers. Even if she can hold her coalition together, Dilma's honeymoon is over, and the attempt to fossick corruption from government ranks is the reason. To fall from the frying pan into the coals, Brazil's economy is overheating. Inflation is at the outer band that the central bank has set for tolerable price rises, and the government could easily fall into a serious budget deficit should commodity prices fall. Curbing consumer credit, mitigating inflows of hot money, and diversifying Brazil's economy away from iron ore and soybeans will require a sustained commitment by Rousseff's team of truly skilled technocrats.

As domestic pressures mount, Brazil's foreign policy is losing thrust. Lula positioned Brazil as Latin America's superpower, a major financier of African development projects, and an arbiter of Iran's nuclear program. He also set the stage for expansion into a new frontier: Palestinian independence. In December 2010, one month before Dilma took office, Lula recognized the state of Palestine along Israel's pre-1967 borders, causing a snowball of such declarations across South America. Since then, Brazilian foreign policy has gotten mired in efforts to chastise Chinese and US monetary policies.

Presuming Brazil's economy does not come apart at the seams and Rousseff



is able to halt the slide in poll numbers, her reform-oriented agenda may still fall victim to Brazilian voters' inflated expectations. There aren't many parallels in Latin America (because democracy is still relatively new to the region), so perhaps an example from the United States is instructive. President George H. W. Bush (1989-1993) followed Ronald Reagan, a man who received credit for putting America's economy on track for an era of growth that carried it into the twenty-first century, not to mention winning the Cold War. There's a feat. Except Reagan is only partially responsible: the end of stagflation came because Paul Volcker, installed as Federal Reserve chairman by Jimmy Carter, broke the back of inflation by mercilessly jacking up interest rates. Carter paid the political price for Volcker's boldness; Reagan enjoyed the benefit. (On the fiscal front, Reagan's policy decisions produced mixed results, at best.) And the aura of Reagan winning the Cold War is a tad overblown. Sure, the Great Communicator told Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall, but the Soviet Union dissolved under President Bush's watch, and it is Bush – not Reagan – that deserves credit for beginning the re-incorporation of Germany, Eastern Europe, and Russia into the global economy.

Like Bush, Rousseff's presidency owes to a predecessor's tailcoats. And like Bush, Rousseff finds herself governing a country with a new mass of soft power; the major question that remains is how to parlay that soft power. Bush chose a meek route; Dilma should become a re-born apostle of Lula. She can ignite a regional free trade agreement, and become the world's sponsor of African development and sustainable energy production. Obviously, the latter two would build on initiatives started by Lula, but making progress on these fronts will prove an easier task than ambling through policy outlets like cracking down on corruption or cajoling monetary policies in Beijing and Washington.

Sunlight is said to be the best disinfectant. Attacking corruption is an enviable way for Rousseff to improve government services while distinguishing her government from that of her predecessor. Still, for political and pragmatic reasons President Rousseff might consider returning to Lula's shadow.

Equatorial Guinea fakes reforms to enter the CPLP

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Last year, Equatorial Guinea almost became a member of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP). The CPLP, an international organization created in 1996, includes the following countries at present: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Portugal, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor Leste. In its statutes, it purports to be an organization of Portuguese-speaking countries which aims to promote cooperation in all policy areas and the Portuguese language.

Despite being cash-poor, the CPLP is a transcontinental organization that has some potential. Brazil sees it as a stepping-stone for its international ambitions, namely in Africa. For Angola, an oil-rich regime with a dismal track record in terms of political liberties and civil rights, it constitutes a forum in which to gain some international credibility. In Portugal, the CPLP is part of a strategy of multiplying alliances (Atlantic, European, Portuguese-speaking) in order to gain some soft power. For the other members, the

CPLP is a source of information, and also of cooperation, namely in terms of educational training and other exchanges. As an organization, and especially with the growing ascendance of Brazil as an economic and democratic giant in the South, the CPLP has the potential to be an important promoter of best practices in all the Portuguese-speaking countries.

Back in 2010, Equatorial Guinea was not accepted as a member in the CPLP plenary meeting, held in Luanda. At the time, the CPLP members issued a statement laying out two fundamental reasons for refusing this petro-dictatorship membership to the club. Firstly, Equatorial Guinea is not a Portuguese-speaking country – it is a Spanish speaking country. Despite the fact that President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo had issued a decree which declared that Portuguese was henceforth to be the third official language a few days before the decision on entry to the CPLP was about to be made, this was deemed insufficient evidence. On the other hand, the regime also has one of the worst records in terms of human rights abuses in Africa.

Over the years, Equatorial Guinea is the country that has been most insistent on joining the club. It is both one of the richest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and one of the most repressive dictatorships. President Obiang has been in power for the last 30 years. Recently, the country has been trying to gain some international credibility. At present, Equatorial Guinea's membership would send a strong signal to others that only economic criteria matter for the CPLP, whereas political and language requirements can be ignored at will. Despite vetoing its entrance in 2010, the CPLP encouraged Equatorial Guinea to make changes in order to be able to become a member of the CPLP in the medium term. In that context, in May this year a CPLP delegation went to visit the capital of Equatorial Guinea, Malabo, to check on the progress made since 2010.



Following the official visit, head of the delegation ambassador Luís Fonseca made a statement declaring himself very satisfied and indicating that everything is being done to allow Equatorial Guinea's entrance into the CPLP in 2012. It would indeed be excellent if the CPLP exerted a positive influence on Equatorial Guinea's dictatorial political regime. Unfortunately, the announced reforms are far from ensuring this.

Do more citizens of Equatorial Guinea speak Portuguese since last year? And have human rights abuses ceased? The answer is no, on both counts. Concerning the use of the Portuguese language, Executive Secretary of the CPLP Domingos Simões Pereira stated during the CPLP summit in Luanda last July: "there is the will for Equatorial Guinea to introduce Portuguese language as lectureships in universities, and the creation of a center for Portuguese language in Malabo". This seems hardly sufficient to consider a country Portuguese-speaking. As for the issue of political freedoms, ambassador Fonseca highlighted optimistically that a constitutional revision was being prepared to include "a limitation to the number of Presidential mandates, the creation of a Senate, a new legislative Chamber, and the creation of an Accounts Tribunal". Just as last year they tried to make Portuguese an official language by issuing a decree, this year the plan is to institute democracy via constitutional reform, while maintaining the human rights abuses, the lack of political pluralism, and repression intact. It is worth noting that the country's Constitution already safeguards human rights, but they are violated repeatedly.

Indeed, the optimism that the CPLP shows in relation to Equatorial Guinea contrasts sharply with international organizations' worries about the state of civic and political freedoms in the country. Freedom House has included the country in this year's "Worst of the Worst" list, which indicates the most repressive societies, and includes the likes of Burma, Eritrea, Libya, North

Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

In Equatorial Guinea there is no freedom of association, all protests are forbidden, arbitrary and illegal detentions are frequent, and there is no freedom of the press. Both in terms of the internal dynamics of the CPLP and its values, the entry of one of the most repressive dictatorships of Sub-Saharan Africa would signal a total lack of respect for political and language criteria to existing members and would undermine the organization's core values, while legitimizing a rogue state.



São Tomé and Príncipe: in the third attempt and after twenty years, a former autocrat returns to the presidency

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On August 7th, in the run-off for the presidential elections, seventy-five years old Manuel Pinto da Costa, the country's first post-independence President, defeated candidate for the ruling Independent Democratic Action (ADI) Evaristo Carvalho (sixty-nine years old), with 52.9% of the votes against 47.1%. Pinto da Costa has become one of several former African authoritarian rulers who, after departure from power, came back to the presidential palace several years later through the ballot box. Like Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Pinto da Costa returned to the presidency after a lean period of twenty years becoming his country's third democratically elected President, succeeding Miguel Trovoada (1991-2001) and Fradique de Menezes (2001-2011).

In mid-April outgoing President Menezes fixed the date for the election of his successor on July 17. After two consecutive terms in office, constitutionally he could not run for a third term. A few years ago, there was no doubt for many in São Tomé and Príncipe that the most suitable candidate for his succession was Francisco da Silva, the widely respected and popular president of the National Assembly (2006-2010). However, when he died of cancer after a three-year struggle in April 2010 the question about Menezes's succession was open again.

In the months preceding the elections, the National Electoral Commission (CEN) registered 13.842 new voters, increasing the total number of voters in the small country from 78.796 in the legislative elections of August 2010 to 92.638, of whom 8.598 were registered in the four constituencies abroad, Angola (3.536), Portugal (3.528), Gabon (1.389) and Equatorial Guinea (145). The CEN's US\$1 million budget for voter registration and the elections was co-financed by 40% by Japan, which made counterpart funds stemming from the sale of food aid available, and UNDP with US\$100.000. Portugal promised some US\$25.000 for equipment, printing

and transport of the ballot papers.¹ In addition, the Portuguese Electoral Administration sent two experts to provide the CEN with technical assistance during the electoral process.

Only three of the initial fourteen candidates were endorsed by political parties, while the others were all independent contenders. In early April, the major opposition party Liberation Movement of São Tomé and Príncipe/Social Democratic Party's (MLSTP/PSD) National Council nominated forty-five years old Aurélio Martins as the party's presidential candidate. Martins, a former journalist who made a fortune as a businessman in Angola, had been elected as the MLSTP/PSD's new party president with 73% of the votes on January 15th 2011. However, his nomination was fiercely contested by two other contenders for the party nomination: former Prime Minister and vice-president of the National Assembly Maria das Neves (fifty-two years old), and former Minister of Defense Elsa Pinto (forty-five years old), both claiming that the nomination process had been irregular. However, both women's criticisms were immediately rejected as ungrounded by the MLSTP/PSD's political commission. Consequently, Maria das Neves and Elsa Pinto both decided to run as independent candidates for the presidency.

During a meeting of the ADI's national council in early May, Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada, son of former president Miguel Trovoada, embarrassed his followers by suggesting that he was available to run for the presidency. His intentions were immediately rejected by his own party members, who did not accept that Trovoada would abandon the government only eight months after his election as Prime Minister. A week later, the ADI nominated Evaristo Carvalho, president

¹ Personal information from CEN president Vítor Correia (26 July 2011).



of the National Assembly and the party's vice-president, as presidential candidate. Known for his close ties with the Trovoada family, Carvalho did not initially have any intention of running for the presidency, but he quickly accepted Patrice Trovoada's choice. Still last year, in a television interview, Carvalho had declared that he felt too old to occupy senior political positions and only accepted becoming speaker of Parliament after having been pressured by his party.

The Democratic Convergence Party (PCD), the third largest party, nominated forty-six years old Delfim Neves, the party's vice-president and former Minister of Public Works, as presidential candidate. Delfim Neves, a successful businessman, had led Fradique de Menezes's election campaigns both in 2001 and 2006. During a meeting, the Democratic Movement Force of Change (MDFM), the party closest to President Menezes, decided to support Delfim Neves's candidature, but Menezes himself preferred not to publicly back his former campaign leader. Besides Maria das Neves and Elsa Pinto, another seven contenders presented themselves as independent candidates. The most prominent of all was Manuel Pinto da Costa, leader of the MLSTP from the party's foundation in 1972 to 1990, and the country's president during the socialist one-party state (1975-1990). In October 1990, when the MLSTP was transformed into a social-democratic party and renamed MLSTP/PSD, he resigned from the party leadership and announced his intention of running for President in the first democratic presidential elections of March 1991.

However, four months before the elections he withdrew his candidature when he realized that he had not the slightest chance against his challenger and erstwhile friend Miguel Trovoada. Finally, Trovoada, Prime Minister from 1975 to 1979 and imprisoned without charge or trial between 1979 and 1981 before he was allowed to leave for exile in Paris, was elected unopposed as President.

In 1996 and 2001 Pinto da Costa was his party's nominee for the presidential elections. In 1996 he lost by a narrow margin against incumbent Miguel Trovoada in the second round. In 2001, he was clearly defeated by Fradique de Menezes in the first round. In 1998, Pinto da Costa returned as chairman of the MLSTP/PSD, a position he maintained until 2005 when he retired from active politics. His adversaries have frequently criticized Pinto

da Costa, an economist trained in former East Germany, for his lack of initiative in creating businesses and jobs after he lost power in 1991. Given his age, this year's election, twenty years after his departure from the presidency, was his last chance to return to the highest office.

Pinto da Costa, who years ago admitted political responsibility for the mismanagement and economic collapse of his country during the repressive socialist one-party rule, claimed that he felt an obligation and duty to the people and could not watch passively as the country broke down. He promised to promote national reconciliation, guarantee political stability and fight corruption, in his opinion the major evils plaguing his country. Political stability is also an issue, because since 1991 the country has had sixteen different governments. Often, political instability was the result of conflicts between the Prime Minister and the President.

On June 2nd, a few days after having submitted his candidature, Pinto da Costa appeared in Lisbon to launch his campaign book *Terra*

Firme where he reveals his ideas on overcoming the archipelago's problems. The book was presented by former Portuguese President António Ramalho Eanes (1976-1986), who also authored the foreword where he praises the erstwhile dictator as "a competent, attentive politician guided by an ethic of the common good". Only four weeks later, the book was presented in São Tomé by former Prime Minister Carlos Graça (1994-1995). Despite his two electoral defeats, this time Pinto da Costa was considered a favorite. Unlike before, now he was not facing a strong charismatic rival and, equally

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important, the many failures during the democratic regime and the long time lag since his departure from the presidency had pushed the economic debacle and political oppression of his autocracy into the background. Many of the other independent contenders lacked the political profile and popularity and had no chance of obtaining a considerable number of votes, let alone of winning the elections. Sixty-one years old Gilberto Gil Umbelina, a musician who has spent half of his life in Portugal, had already participated in the legislative elections of August 2010.

His party, the Socialist Movement (MS), was founded just a few weeks before the polls and obtained only 238 votes (0.34%). Forty-nine years old Liberato Moniz, a Lisbon-based architect and founder of the small Universidade Lusíada in São Tomé (in 2006) had already announced his intention of running for the presidency many years ago. Unexpected, however, was the candidature of Jorge Coelho (53-years old), an economist who was chairman of the administrative board of the airport company ENASA from 2006 to 2009 and lived several years in the United States. In early June, following the announcement that he was running for the presidency, sixty-five years old Francisco Rita, a parliamentarian for the PCD, was dismissed as head of the provisional management commission of the port authority ENAPORT, after only eight months in office.

Another no-chance candidate was fifty-two years old economist Manuel Deus Lima, a former economic advisor to President Menezes, member of the MDFM and currently ambassador in Libreville. He was once detained for his involvement in illicit coining while he was an administrator at the Central Bank. In 2008 Deus Lima was elected as secretary-general of the MDFM, but Menezes dismissed him after only three months. Fifty-nine years old Carlos Espírito Santos 'Bené', also member of the MDFM and once a lecturer in African literature

at a private university in Lisbon, has also dreamed of becoming president for many years. A candidate who at least could claim to have played important roles in the country's recent political past was Filinto Costa Alegre (fifty-nine years old), a lawyer at the Central Bank. As a young student he was one of the leaders of the country's struggle for total independence in 1974/1975, and during the democratic transition in 1990 he was a co-founder of the *Grupo de Reflexão*, then the country's first opposition group that turned public. Costa Alegre claimed to want

to contribute to the country's third liberation, the economic, social and cultural liberation. His candidature was formally supported by José Cassandra, the president of the Regional Government of Príncipe (6.000 inhabitants) who published a letter calling for the electorate to vote for Costa Alegre.

On June 20th the Supreme Court of Justice conducted a sortition of the names of the candidates to determine the sequence of the thirteen candidates on the ballot paper. Two days later the Supreme Court went on to approve the candidature of fifty-nine years old Helder Barros, a former Minister of Education for the ADI and former staff member of the local UNDP office whose candidature had been initially rejected because it was submitted with a ten-minute delay. At the time the Portuguese had already produced 96.000 ballot papers with thirteen names. When the CEN asked them to print another edition with fourteen names, Portugal accepted reluctantly but demanded that the cost of the air transport of

the new ballot papers be covered by the CEN.

On June 29th, the number of candidates was again reduced to thirteen when Carlos Espírito Santo declared his withdrawal. Apparently, Espírito Santo was disappointed by his party and President Menezes who did not support his candidature, which had been announced many months before. The next day, the Constitutional Court further decreased the number of contenders to nine by excluding Rita, Umbelina, Moniz and Delfim Neves from the elections, because they had dual nationality, and had not withdrawn their second nationality by the time

The electoral observers from the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) considered the elections to be free and fair. However, the observers of the AU and the CPLP criticized the excessive practice of vote buying locally called *banho* when cash is given during the campaign and *boca de urna* when handed over at the polling station.

they had submitted their candidatures. Rita, Moniz and Delfim Neves filed an appeal against this decision. Neves claimed that he had cancelled his Portuguese nationality in time by presenting a declaration at the Portuguese embassy in São Tomé. At first he argued that it was not his responsibility to submit proof of the revocation of his Portuguese nationality, but then Neves rushed to the Central Registration Conservatory in Lisbon to obtain the documents, and on July 4th his local representative submitted the respective copies to the Constitutional Court.

When the official election campaign started on July 2nd, only nine candidates were able to compete for the votes of the almost 93.000 registered voters. This time the ballot papers with the names of fourteen candidates remained unchanged. For the first time in the country's history, at the request by the CEN, the nine candidates signed a 24-point code of electoral conduct to guarantee peaceful and fair elections. On July 7th the Constitutional Court decided by a 2-3 vote to readmit Delfim Neves as a candidate. The following morning, when Neves returned from Lisbon, his supporters received him enthusiastically at the airport and then marched through the city revealing the sizeable support he enjoyed among the population.

Notwithstanding, this decision by the Constitutional Court was fiercely criticized by Attorney General Roberto Raposo and the head of the country's bar association Gabriel Costa, since Hilário Garrido, one of the three judges who voted in favor of Neves' readmission is a brother of the candidate's wife. Raposo declared that by law, Garrido should have declared his bias and withdrawn from the vote. Moreover, the proof of Neves's revocation had only been submitted after the established deadline.² Garrido's participation was also criticized because shortly before the voting,

President Menezes had dismissed him as member of the Constitutional Court. In the context of this controversy, it became known that president of the Constitutional Court Silvestre Leite – who voted against Neves' readmission – is the brother of Evaristo Carvalho's wife.

The excessive number of independent no-chance candidates provoked several comments. The country's electoral law, which allows every citizen above thirty-five years and without a second nationality to run for the presidency could not alone be blamed for the large number. In the four previous presidential elections, the total number of candidates was between one (1991) and five (1996 and 2001), while the number of independent contenders never surpassed three (2001). In 2006, only three contenders ran for the presidency – the incumbent Menezes, supported by MDFM and PCD, Patrice Trovoada, backed by ADI and MLSTP/PSD, and one largely unknown independent no-chance candidate. Local observers suspected that some candidates might view the elections as an opportunity to negotiate their support for the two candidates in the run-off in exchange for money.³ Besides, they pointed to a certain trivialization of the post of head of state in the last years, resulting in the idea that virtually any citizen was capable of occupying the country's highest political office.

During the official fifteen-day election campaign, all candidates piously promised to safeguard political stability and combat corruption and poverty in the archipelago. Delfim Neves was forced to delay the beginning of his campaign for a week. Prime Minister and ADI leader Patrice Trovoada actively supported Carvalho during the campaign. Trovoada claimed that only Carvalho could guarantee political stability and repeatedly recalled Pinto da Costa's autocratic rule

The election of Manuel Pinto da Costa was a defeat for Patrice Trovoada, who, as did his predecessors, must now cohabit with a President from another political party. However, since 2006 when the last constitutional amendments came into effect, the presidential power to dismiss the government has been considerably reduced. Once an all-powerful President, the newly elected Pinto da Costa will be more of a representative political figure.

2 "Aceitação pelo Tribunal Constitucional de candidatura de Delfim Neves continua na grande polémica judicial" (*O Parvo*, 13 July 2011).

3 "Eleições em São Tomé, um negócio para alguns dos candidatos – diz Óscar Baia" (*VOA News*, 7 July 2011).

during the one-party regime. In turn Pinto da Costa declared that political stability could not be achieved by concentrating all political power in one single party, the ADI. He claimed that the opposite was true, since the concentration of power in one party could provoke instability, because it would take away the President's constitutional function of arbiter.

Pinto da Costa won the elections with 21.457 votes (33.9%), while Carvalho was the second most voted candidate with 13.125 votes (20.1%). However, due to the three rival candidates from his party, Pinto da Costa's result was worse than in 1996 and in 2001 when he got 36.8% and 39.9% of the votes respectively. Delfim Neves and Maria das Neves proved that they enjoyed considerable popularity among the electorate. They obtained 13.7% and 13.4% of the ballots respectively. Maria das Neves won in Príncipe where she obtained 36.3% of the votes, although the president of the Regional Government had publicly supported another candidate. She blamed vote buying for not having achieved the second position. The other six candidates all received less than 5% of the votes.

Elsa Pinto obtained only 4.2% of the ballots, but still more than her party's official candidate, Aurélio Martins. He must be considered the greatest loser of these elections, since as official party candidate he received only 3.9% of the votes, the worst result of the four competitors from the MLSTP/PSD. Still, on voting day Martins declared that he believed he could win. Afterwards he asserted that he had been victim of sabotage by his rival candidates and announced his support for Pinto da Costa in the second ballot. He also stated that he would complete his term as party leader. However, in view of his electoral debacle his future as party chairman must be considered as rather uncertain. Costa Alegre, who obtained 3.8% of the votes also blamed the *banho* for his defeat and refused to throw his support behind any of the two remaining candidates in the run-off.

In contrast, Delfim Neves, a known adversary of Trovoada, immediately declared his and his party's support for

Pinto da Costa in the second round, since he considered Carvalho to be a follower of the Trovoada family and to lack a personal political project. He explained that his party was ready to support Pinto da Costa, although Carvalho belonged to the so-called parties of change (PCD, ADI, MDFM) and recalled that in a similar constellation, in 2006, as presidential candidate, Patrice Trovoada himself was supported by the MLSTP/PSD against the candidate of change, Fradique de Menezes. A few days later, Maria das Neves also announced that she would support Pinto da Costa, arguing his political program would better serve the country's development. She stressed that her political support was not conditioned by any kind of financial returns.

The elections were boycotted by the population in the localities of Capela and Milagrosa (Mé-Zochi district) in protest against the absence of drinking water. In Santa Catarina (Lemba district), the people protested against the lack of access to local radio, television and the cell phone coverage by blocking the road to stop the elections from going forward in all places beyond that point. On July 20th the elections were repeated in all the boycotting localities, more than 1.000 voters.

The electoral observers from the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) considered the elections to be free and fair. However, the observers of the AU and the CPLP criticized the excessive practice of vote buying locally called *banho* when cash is given during the campaign and *boca de urna* when handed over at the polling station. Voter turnout was 68.4%, considerably less than in 1996 (77.3%), about the same turnout as in 2001 (68.5%) and 2006 (67.4%), but higher than in 1991 (60.0%) when Miguel Trovoada was the only candidate.

Immediately after the elections, rumors circulated that on the Friday preceding the elections the supporters of one of the candidates had withdrawn US\$2.5 million (40 billion Dobra) from two local banks to be used for vote buying. The online paper *Téla Nón* claimed that

Official Election results on July 17th

Pinto da Costa	Evaristo Carvalho	Delfim Neves	Maria das Neves	Elsa Pinto	Aurélio Martins	Filinto Costa Alegre	Helder Barros	Jorge Coelho	Manuel Deus Lima
33.88%	20.73%	13.66%	13.36%	4.24%	3.86%	3.79%	0.65%	0.63%	0.33%

the votes bought with this money had impacted the results significantly.⁴ Reportedly many voters even went to the campaign headquarters and residences of the candidates to ask for money. Costa Alegre reported that thousands of voters had asked him for 20.000 or 50.000 Dobra notes, but he had refused to pay. On July 22nd the fortnightly paper *O Parvo* published in its online edition a sequence of four photos showing Pinto da Costa taking bank notes from his wallet when a man approached his car apparently asking for money.⁵ A week later Carvalho confessed publicly to use vote buying, because unfortunately the electorate had gotten into the habit of receiving some support in exchange for casting their vote.⁶ For years, vote buying has become an integral part of the electoral process in this impoverished country, with voters asking for money and candidates paying for votes. Poor people have perceived that elections create opportunities to make some easy money from local politicians, who usually are little concerned about their constant struggle to make ends meet.

To avoid any suspicion of financial deals with other candidates, Pinto da Costa declared that any voluntary support by defeated contenders was welcome, but he would not negotiate support-involving payments. He asked the Attorney General to investigate the alleged withdrawal of billions of Dobras on the eve of the elections. Pinto da Costa again warned that a victory by Carvalho would result in a concentration of political power since the ADI would provide the heads of government and of state. In turn Patrice Trovada accused Pinto da Costa of not knowing the democratic system well quoting Portugal and Cape Verde were the same party controlled government and the presidency, but there was no absolute power. He asserted that in a semi-presidential system there was no danger of absolute power, particularly if the ruling party had no majority in Parliament, as is currently the case in the archipelago. The fact is, voters in São Tomé and Príncipe have refused twice to elect the ruling party's candidate as President. When Pinto da Costa lost the presidential elections in 1996 and 2001, the MLSTP/PSD was in government.

The campaign for the run-off formerly began on July 28th, after the announcement of the official results of the first round by the Supreme Court. Counting on massive support by Prime Minister Trovada, Carvalho hoped to win the votes of the 31.6% of the electorate who did not vote on July 17th. Besides, he tried to convince those who voted on Maria das Neves and Defim Neves not to vote for Pinto da Costa. His campaign strategy for the run-off was

again focused on recalling Pinto da Costa's dictatorship during the one-party rule. After independence in 1975 Carvalho himself was a member of the Political Bureau of the MLSTP, and from 1978 to 1980 he was Minister of Construction and Transport. However, in 1982 he abandoned the party in protest against Pinto da Costa's intentions to transform the MLSTP into a revolutionary vanguard party. Three years later, when the gradual political liberalization of the regime began, Carvalho became an independent deputy of the Popular National Assembly. In 1990, he was one of the founders of the *Grupo de Reflexão*, the opposition group which later in the year became the PCD, the party that won the first free elections in 1991. He was Minister of Defense in the PCD government of Noberto Costa Alegre (1992-1994) and Prime Minister in the transitional governments of 1994 and 2001, constituted by the Presidents Miguel Trovada and Menezes respectively after they had dissolved Parliament.

Finally Carvalho was again defeated by Pinto da Costa, albeit by a rather small margin. Voter turnout was 74%, more than in the first round, but less than in the 1996 run-off (78.7%), when Pinto da Costa was defeated by Miguel Trovada. The result was also a defeat for Patrice Trovada, who, as did his predecessors, must now cohabit with a President from another political party. However, since 2006 when the last constitutional amendments came into effect, the presidential power to dismiss the government has been considerably reduced. Once an all-powerful President, the newly elected Pinto da Costa will be more of a representative political figure. Immediately after his election, he repeated that he was ready to cooperate constructively with the government. It remains to be seen whether the MLSTP/PSD and PCD, which together hold the majority in Parliament, will support this position over the remaining three years of the current legislature.

4 "'Banho' de Boca de Urna terá tido impacto no resultado do escrutínio de Domingo" (*Téla Nón*, 18 June 2011).

5 "Flagrantes com rosto do candidato Pinto da Costa" (*O Parvo*, 22 July 2011).

6 "Evaristo Carvalho confirma "Banho de Boca de Urna" como eixo central da campanha da ADI na segunda volta" (*Téla Nón*, 1 August 2011).



Timeline of Events

Angola

1-2 August (Luanda):

Outgoing FAO Director-General, the Senegalese Jacques Diouf, was received by Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoty and President José Eduardo dos Santos, whom he thanked for Angola's support to FAO over his 18-year long mandate. The Brazilian José Graziano da Silva will replace Diouf on December 31st.

2 August (Luanda):

US Department of State Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs Carlos Pascual traveled to Angola. His visit aimed to hold a strategic talk on issues related to oil and gas production between the two countries.

2 August (Luanda):

South African ambassador to Angola Godfrey Ngwenya highlighted the role and influence of President José Eduardo dos Santos in Africa and stated "that relations between Angola and South Africa are now more excellent than ever".

2-7 August (Havana):

Defense Minister Cândido Pereira Van-Dúnem traveled to Cuba, where he met his local counterpart Julio Casas Regueiro, and President Raúl Castro. During this visit a technical cooperation agreement between the two armies was signed.

3 August (Luanda):

President José Eduardo dos Santos received the credentials of the new Chinese, Zambian and Nigerian ambassadors to Angola. The new Chinese plenipotentiary, Gao Kexiang, has previously held positions in Brazil and Guinea-Bissau.

4 August (Luanda):

The President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Joseph Kabila, paid a short four-hour working visit to Angola, where he was received by President José Eduardo dos Santos. Kabila – who came into power with support from the Angolan military – traveled

to Luanda at a time when relations between Angola and the DRC are under stress due to maritime border delimitation and immigration problems. No statement on the visit was made public.

8 August (Luanda):

President José Eduardo dos Santos congratulated São Tomé and Príncipe's President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa on his victory. He also seized the occasion to reiterate Angola's wish to strengthen bilateral relations.

10 August (Washington):

Outgoing Angolan ambassador to the US Josefina Pitra Diakité received a tribute from the US/Angola Chamber of Commerce and the oil companies Chevron and Exxon Mobil on the occasion of her departure. Diakité thanked Hillary Clinton's personal commitment to strengthening relations between the two countries. In the same tone, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of African Affairs Susan Page praised Diakité's role in bringing closer Angola and the US.

12 August (Luanda):

International and Regional Cooperation Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Raymond Tshibanda Mulongo met with Angolan Foreign Affairs minister George Chicoty as a follow-up to DRC President Joseph Kabila's own visit to Angola in the beginning of the month.

15 August (Luanda):

The Council of Ministers of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) met in Luanda to prepare the Community's Heads of State Summit.

16 August (Luanda):

Main opposition party UNITA walked out during the National Assembly debate session on the new electoral law, ahead of next year's general election. UNITA stated that the new law would entrench the government's control over the electoral process, sidelining the National Electoral Commission.

17-18 August (Luanda):

The first SADC Heads of State and of Government Summit under Angolan presidency. The political situations in Madagascar and Zimbabwe were also discussed although no major breakthroughs were announced. At the closing of the SADC Heads of State and of Government Summit, President José Eduardo dos Santos asked NATO to stop its raids on Libya and defended the political negotiations under the aegis of the AU. On the sidelines of the SADC meeting, Eduardo dos Santos received his Namibian counterpart Lucas Pohamba with whom he discussed bilateral relations.

24 August (Luanda):

President José Eduardo dos Santos congratulated the winner of Cape Verde's presidential elections, Jorge Carlos Fonseca, expressing the will to deepen relations between the two countries.

24 August (Luanda):

National Assembly Speaker, Paulo Kassoma, met the new Chinese ambassador to Angola, Gao Kexiang.

25 August (Luanda):

Angolan Foreign Affairs Minister, George Chicoty, informed that Angola would hand US\$5 million to fight the current humanitarian situation in Somalia.

30 August (Huambo):

President José Eduardo dos Santos reopened the train connection between Lobito and Huambo, which was shut down for 27 year due to the civil war. Huambo is the nodal point of the Benguela Railway, which connects the Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Atlantic Ocean.

Brazil

1 August (Brasília):

President Dilma Rousseff unveiled the "Bigger Brazil Plan", a new industrial policy aimed at cutting Brazil's trade deficit in manufactured



goods by about 40% by 2014. The country's industrial sector has been penalized by the Real's valorization and competition from cheap Chinese goods. The program intends to raise investment levels from today's 18.4% to 22% of GDP by 2014. A US\$16 billion tax relief will also be implemented in the industrial sector.

4 August (Brasília):

President Dilma Rousseff sacked Defense Minister Nelson Jobim. Jobim, who held the same post under former President Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva, declared in an interview that he did not vote for Dilma, that the new government was mishandling some situations and that Rousseff did not even know Brasília. Rousseff nominated Celso Amorim, a Foreign Relations Minister under Lula da Silva, as her new Defense Minister.

5 August (Brasília):

Former President Lula da Silva publicly defended Nelson Jobim, praising his intellectual capacity and statesmanship. Nonetheless, he did not question Rousseff's decision and added that Amorim was "extremely capable politically" and that he would bring "continuity to the extraordinary job that Minister Jobim was doing in Defense".

6 August (Brasília):

One of the first consequences of Jobim's departure was the reopening of the debate on Brazil's arms buying program. Jobim was a fierce defender of the need to acquire some 100 new fighter jets, of which 36 should be bought next year.

8-10 August (Brasília):

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper visited Brazil on the first stop of a 6-day Latin-American tour. President Dilma Rousseff received him, and they discussed bilateral relations and regional issues, although the strengthening of economic ties was paramount in this visit, backed by the signing of bilateral agreements as well as the formation of a Brazil-Canada CEO Forum.

8 August (Brasília):

During his inauguration speech, new Defense Minister Celso Amorim advocated the gradual exit of Brazilian troops from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

9 August (Brasília):

Deputy Tourism Minister Frederico Silva da Costa, alongside more than 30 tourism officials and business leaders, was arrested under the accusation of conspiring to divert public money.

12 August (Georgetown):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota met his counterpart from Guyana Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett to relaunch bilateral cooperation. As such, 60 additional tariff lines have been cleared to boost trade between the two countries and an agreement in the sport sector was signed.

18 August (Brasília):

President Dilma Rousseff was forced to replace Agriculture Minister Wagner Rossi – the fourth cabinet minister in three months – after news emerged that the federal police had started a investigation regarding corruption allegations in the Ministry.

22-23 August (Brasília):

Philippino Secretary of Foreign Affairs Albert Del Rosario met with Brazilian Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota to discuss the process of strengthening ties between Brazil and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as issues on the multilateral agenda, such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – Rio+20.

23-24 August (Brasília):

Benin's Foreign Minister Nassirou Bako-Arifari met with his Brazilian counterpart Antônio Patriota to review bilateral relations between the two countries.

24 August (Beijing):

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and his Brazilian counterpart Antonio Patriota had a phone conversation to exchange views on the Libyan situation and try to coordinate a common BRICS position on the matter. A day before, Patriota had declared his confidence that Libyan contracts with Brazilian companies signed during the Gaddafi years would be honored by a new government – even though Brazil has yet to recognize the rebel National Transitional Council as the legitimate representative of Libya

24 August (Buenos Aires):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota took part in a meeting of Ministers of External Relations of the Union of South American Nations

(UNASUR), with the establishment of additional mechanisms to strengthen democracy in the South American region high on the agenda.

24-25 August (Buenos Aires):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota led the Brazilian delegation to the 5th Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC). The reform of global governance mechanisms, the global economic crisis and sustainable development figured high on the agenda. Patriota also took the opportunity to meet with his Indonesian counterpart Marty Natalegawa on the sidelines of the meeting.

26 August (Brasília):

Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze met with his Brazilian counterpart Antônio Patriota. Agreements on visa exemption for common and diplomatic passports and on technical cooperation, as well as the establishment of a political consultation mechanism between the two countries, were high on the agenda.

26-27 August (Minas Gerais):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota and Environment Minister Izabella Teixeira co-chaired the VII Ministerial Meeting of coordination between the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) countries on ongoing UN negotiations regarding climate change.

29 August (Brasília):

President Dilma Rousseff signed a decree releasing R\$45 million in funds for the launching of the Astros Project 2020 – a surface to surface missile launch system – to equip the Brazilian army.

Cape Verde

2 August (Praia):

The Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) signed support programs worth US\$3 million in the fields of environment, housing and land planning, cultural heritage, civil aviation, and telecommunications with Cape Verdean authorities.

7 August (Praia):

Cape Verde held presidential elections. None of the candidates achieved the 50% threshold in this first round. The PAICV candidate, Manuel



Inocência Sousa, won 32% of the votes, against 37.3% by opposition-party MpD candidate Jorge Carlos Fonseca. Aristides Lima, a former PAICV member, contributed to the split in the governing party's vote by obtaining 27.4% of the votes.

19 August (Praia):

US African Command (AFRICOM) and Cape Verdean Armed Forces signed a cooperation protocol worth US\$200 thousand for the acquisition of coastguard patrol ships.

21 August (Praia):

Cape Verdeans went to the ballot for the runoff of the presidential elections. Initial results indicated that Jorge Carlos Fonseca, supported by the MPD, was leading with 54,3% while Manuel Inocência Sousa, the PAICV candidate, trailed behind with only 45%. Not waiting for final numbers, Sousa quickly acknowledged his defeat.

23 August (Praia):

According to the official final results, Jorge Carlos Fonseca became the next President of Cape Verde with 54.16%, totaling 97.643 votes. On the other hand, Manuel Inocência Sousa only gathered 45.84% and 82.634 votes. Abstention was lower in the second round, reaching 40.3%.

24 August (Praia):

According to a communiqué from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Cape Verdean Government reaffirmed its recognition of the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC), already made official back in June 26th.

26 August (New York):

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon praised the "peaceful and credible" presidential election in Cape Verde and congratulated the winner, Jorge Carlos Fonseca.

31 August (Praia):

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, José Luís Rocha, and Chinese ambassador to Cape Verde, Li Chunhua, signed two cooperation agreements that involve Chinese aid to the archipelago of over US\$1.7 million.

Guinea-Bissau

2 August (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá convened the Council of State. Amid popular protests against Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior, President Sanhá accepted the Attorney General's resignation. Amine Saad, who was named for the post by Sanhá in November 2009, justified his decision due to the public pressure he felt on the investigation (and lack of results) into the assassinations of Baciro Dabó and Hélder Proença in 2009.

5 August (Bissau):

Bissau's streets were the stage for yet another protest against Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior. Seventeen opposition parties organized the rally. The main reasons of the protest are the lack of results in the judicial investigations over the assassinations of Baciro Dabó, Hélder Proença, former President João Bernardo 'Nino' Vieira and former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Tagmé Na Waié.

9 August (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá publicly stated his support for Carlos Gomes Júnior and decided not to sack the Prime Minister. In a communiqué, Sanhá defended the need to guarantee the regular functioning of the institutions and for constant dialogue and moderation.

11 August (Bissau):

Economy and Planning Minister Helena Embaló declared that Guinea-Bissau's economy is set to grow 4.3% this year, mostly thanks to a good cashew nuts export campaign and infrastructure building.

17 August (Bissau):

18 Bissau-Guinean opposition parties – which form the denominated Guinean Democratic Opposition – maintained pressure on Carlos Gomes Júnior's Government, criticizing the longstanding lack of results in judicial investigations and calling for a new march on September 2nd.

19 August (Bissau):

The President's office issued a statement after a meeting with Armed Forces Chief of Staff António Indjai, confirming the Armed Forces' commitment to the Security Sector Reform.

26 August (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá signed a decree confirming a long awaited governmental reshuffle. Among others, Justice Minister Saliu Djalo Pires was announced as the new Foreign Minister. Likewise, Baciro Dja now holds the Defense Ministry.

30 August (Bissau):

In an inflammatory tone, PRS opposition party leader, Ibraima Sory Djaló, threatened to set the President's Residency on fire, because Sanhá failed to sack Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior.

30-31 August (Bissau):

At the invitation of Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior, South-African Vice-President, Kgalema Motlanthe, visited Guinea-Bissau. The two signed agreements on health cooperation and on mining industry. Motlanthe also declared South Africa's support to the ongoing Security Sector Reform.

Mozambique

1 August (Beira):

After being blocked for 28 years, the Beira port was reopened to large-draft vessels. The opportunity to receive large ships is paramount to the country's central region, in particular to the dispatch of coal from the Tete province, where large multinationals like Brazil's Rio Doce and Australia's Riversdale will begin to explore some of the world's largest coal deposits.

3 August (Maputo):

Japan's Sojitz Corporation will invest some US\$10 million in the construction of a wood-processing factory in Maputo. Investments in Mozambique's agro-industrial sector have surged in the last few years: for instance, Portugal's Portucel developed a eucalyptus plantation project in Tete province, whereas companies such as Galp and Sun Biofuels (which exported its first batch of 30 tons of jatropa oil to Europe) betted on the bio-fuels cultivation in the country.

4 August (Maputo):

Mozambique's natural resource potential continues to be untapped. US oil company Anadarko Petroleum stated it intends to invest



some US\$15 billion in producing liquid natural gas. Anadarko is present in the Rovuma basin, where Italy's ENI and Portugal's Galp also hold shares.

5 August (Maputo):

Mozambique's exports to China rose 6.1% in the first half of the current year, reaching US\$94.6 million in goods. China exported US\$320 million to Mozambique, a rise of 41% compared to the same period of last year.

5-7 August (Maputo):

President of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Judge Sang-hyun Song met Speaker of Parliament Verónica Macamo, Minister of Justice Maria Benvinda Levy and President of the Constitutional Council Hermenegildo Gamito. His visit was intended to encourage the ratification of the Rome Statute, which governs the ICC.

8 August (Maputo):

Outgoing Angolan ambassador to Mozambique João Garcia Bires gave his regards to President Armando Guebuza before leaving his post. Bires highlighted the excellent bilateral relations between the two nations and the need for a constant deepening of dialogue between them.

9-14 August (Beijing, Henan, Shenzhen):

President Armando Guebuza, accompanied by Foreign Affairs Minister Oldemiro Balói, paid an official visit to China. Chinese construction cooperation currently amounts to approximately US\$600 million and President Guebuza sought to increase that amount. Among the projects targeted for Chinese support were the Electronic Public Information System, estimated to cost US\$39.2 million, the distance learning project (US\$14.7 million), as well as the electronic governance program (US\$35 million). The Catembe Bridge and the Ponta do Ouro road, initially to be funded by Portugal, were probably also included in the Chinese financing scheme.

10 August (Beijing):

Chinese President Hu Jintao, as well as Premier Wen Jiabao, received President Armando Guebuza, to whom they stated that China will continue to increase assistance to Mozambique. President Hu Jintao identified mutual political trust, pragmatic cooperation,

people-to-people exchanges and cooperation between international organizations as key areas to expand relations. Both countries signed more than ten cooperation agreements in the financial, economic, technical and social areas.

10 August (Namaacha):

Japan plans to finance the construction of a terminal at the port of Maputo to receive cooking gas and will include a gas pipeline as well as a gas bottle-filling center, estimated at between US\$65 and US\$75 million.

12 August (Rio de Janeiro):

Brazil's Petrobrás announced that it will build an ethanol factory in Mozambique, the production of which will be destined for internal consumption.

16-18 August (Luanda):

President Armando Guebuza, alongside Foreign Minister Oldemiro Balói, attended SADC Heads of State and of Government Summit.

Portugal

2 August (Lisbon):

The Portuguese Foreign Ministry released a statement condemning "the violent repression of Syrian security forces on civilians over the past few days, particularly in the city of Hama" and urging "the Syrian authorities to cease the use of violence on civilians".

3 August (Lisbon):

Former Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation João Gomes Cravinho was appointed by Catherine Ashton as head of the EU delegation in New Delhi. Portuguese officials also head the EU delegations in the US, Brazil and Gabon.

3 August (Lisbon):

Israeli Vice-Foreign Minister Daniel Ayalon met with Portuguese Deputy Secretary of State and for European Affairs, Miguel Morais Leitão. Bilateral relations and the upcoming UN General Assembly were high on the agenda.

9 August (Lisbon):

In a press release, the Portuguese government welcomed "the noteworthy manner in which the 2011 presidential elections in São Tomé

and Príncipe took place" which "allowed for the free expression of universal suffrage by the population of São Tomé and Príncipe in accordance with international standards and criteria".

9 August (Lisbon):

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas met with his Serbian counterpart Vuk Jeremic, to address issues on the international agenda as well as of common bilateral interest.

16 August (Lisbon):

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas met with São Tomé and Príncipe's President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa.

17 August (Algarve):

São Tomé and Príncipe's President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa met with his Portuguese counterpart Aníbal Cavaco Silva and Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, inviting both to attend his upcoming inauguration on September 3rd.

18 August (Lisbon):

In a press release, the Portuguese Government stated that it followed "with interest the proposals of the Franco-German summit" that recently took place with the aim of reinforcing the EU's economic governance.

22 August (Lisbon):

The Portuguese government released a public statement underlining its conviction that "the latest developments in Libya bring the Libyan people decisively closer to the culmination of their struggle for freedom and democracy" and reaffirming "once again its support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of Libya".

22 August (Lisbon):

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas met with a delegation of Libyan businessmen and representatives of civil society who aim to quickly reestablish good ties between Portugal and Libya in a post-Gaddafi aftermath.

31 August (Madrid):

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho met with his Spanish counterpart José Luis Zapatero to discuss the current economic crisis as well as issues of common bilateral interest. Coelho also took the opportunity to meet with King Juan Carlos I and opposition leader Mariano Rajoy.



São Tomé and Príncipe

7 August (São Tomé):

São Tomé and Príncipe held the second round of the Presidential elections. Manuel Pinto da Costa won with 52.88% of the votes. Evaristo Carvalho obtained only 47% of the votes.

8 August (São Tomé):

President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa declared that he intended to change the way politics are done in São Tomé and Príncipe. When asked if his coming into power would signal the dismissal of current Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada, Pinto da Costa simply said that it was the President's mission to guarantee the correct functioning of the institutions and defend the nation's best interests.

13-20 August (Lisbon):

President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa traveled to Portugal for a private visit. He was granted courtesy audiences by President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, and Foreign Affairs Minister Paulo Portas.

24 August (Luanda):

President-elect Manuel Pinto da Costa met with Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos to address a special invitation to attend his swearing-in ceremony scheduled for September 3rd.

Timor Leste

3 August (Díli):

Confrontations among martial arts groups were registered in Comoro. Luís Carrilho, UNPOL Commissioner, stated that patrolling can only be effective with the cooperation of the community.

11 August (Díli):

Japanese ambassador to Timor Leste Iwao Kitahara announced that Japan would donate more than US\$1.6 million to support next year's presidential and parliamentary elections in the country.

14 August (Tashilin):

A policeman was killed and some 70 houses were destroyed in the village of Tashilin. The Timorese police attributed these incidents to fighting between rival groups of youngsters.

20 August (Díli):

President José Ramos-Horta presided over the ceremony that marked the official disbandment of 236 men and women from the pro-independence armed unit Falintil – including Prime Minister José Alexandre 'Xanana Gusmão' and President of Fretilin Francisco 'Lu Olo' Guterres among others – who had fought against Indonesian occupation of the country for more than two decades.

21 August (Díli):

Indonesian Defense Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro and Prime Minister of Timor Leste Xanana Gusmão signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that foresees bilateral dialogue and consultation on strategic and security issues, information exchange on defense issues, improved cooperation between the armed forces of both countries and cooperation on logistics support. The countries will set up the Timor Leste-Indonesia Defense Joint Committee which aims to coordinate and monitor various activities carried out under the MoU based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

21-22 August (Díli):

Former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, paid a visit to Timor Leste, where he met with President José Ramos-Horta and Prime-Minister Xanana Gusmão.

22 August (Díli):

After a meeting with the new chairman of Australian oil company Woodside Peter Coleman, Timor Leste's Deputy Prime Minister José Luís Guterres reaffirmed his country's demand that the natural gas from the Sunrise field in the Timor Sea be processed in the country.

23 August (Díli):

The Parliament of Timor Leste approved the first changes to the country's Oil Fund Law to allow greater flexibility and return on investments.

25 August (Díli):

While attending the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) conference in Timor Leste, World Bank Managing Director Sri Mulyani Indrawati made sure to meet with Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão to congratulate his government for improving transparency and accountability in the management of its natural resources.

26 August (Díli):

Chinese ambassador to Timor Leste Fu Yuanhong formally handed over a military compound with 100 houses to the Timorese Armed Forces as part of China's support for the country. For the remaining of 2011, China also expects to finish Timor's Ministry of Defense building and a number of armed forces barracks, as well as continuing to provide medical support.

30 August (Nadi):

Foreign Minister Zacarias Albano da Costa headed the Timorese delegation to the II Engaging with the Pacific meeting, which the aim of highlighting the challenge of the Pacific Small Islands development.



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