

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Angola Summary 26 April 2021

Luanda hosts the second International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) mini-summit to discuss the unstable political and military situation in the Central African Republic (CAR), with Angola and Rwanda forming a working party to support the CAR government. Isabel dos Santos hires Israeli private intelligence group Black Cube, United Kingdom (UK)-based public relations company Maltin Ltd, and London (UK)-based commercial litigation lawyer Michelle Duncan to defend her in London over the court case bought by UNITEL SA for approximately \$400m in unpaid outstanding loans made to dos Santos' Unitel International Holdings BV. Angola's prosecutor charges Carlos Sao Vicente, ex-head of Angola's largest group of insurance companies, Angola Agora e Amanha AAA, in what will be the largest and most complex case yet heard in the Tribunal Supremo (supreme court). Switzerland's Bundesgericht (federal court) partially lifts a freeze on \$900m belonging to AAA citing insufficient evidence for money laundering. The attorney general's office is examining potential illegality in a contract involving state-owned water company Empresa Pública de Águas (EPAL) EP and ESA-Engineering Services Angola SA, a company owned by General Manuel Vieira Dias Junior "Kopelipa", signed in February 2017, six months before former president José Eduardo dos Santos (1979-2017) left power. Angola's Covid-19 protection law, the Situation of Public Calamity decree, is extended for a further 30 days. Angola's vaccination rollout continues, with 395,500 nationals vaccinated against Covid-19 since 3 March.

Luanda hosts summit on Central African Republic security

Angola's capital, **Luanda**, played host on 20 April to this year's second mini-summit of the **International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)**. President **João Lourenço** (2017-present), acting chair of the ICGLR, convened the summit to discuss the highly unstable political and military situation in the **Central African Republic (CAR)**, following a coup in December.¹ President Lourenço said he believes the conditions are in place for the start of a new phase of "*pacification of the CAR*", in which the "*legitimate government*", led by President **Faustin-Archange Touadéra** (2016-present), will carry out the stipulations of the **Khartoum Accords** of February 2019.²

Conflict in the CAR increased dramatically in December before elections scheduled for 27 December. The elections took place amid a background of insecurity. Ten days before the election, six of the CAR's most powerful armed groups, which control two-thirds of the territory and the majority of which support former president **François Bozizé** (2003-2013), joined together to become the **Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC)**.³ CAR's **Constitutional Court** invalidated Bozizé's electoral candidacy on 3 December on the basis of an international warrant and **United Nations (UN)** sanctions against him for alleged assassinations, torture and other crimes.⁴ Touadéra won the presidential election on 27 December with 53.16% of the vote, compared to 21.69% for his main opponent, former prime minister **Anicet Georges Dologuélé**, but was ousted by renewed political

¹ Angop, 20 Apr 2020

² Angop, 20 Apr 2020

³ Angop, 19 Apr 2020

⁴ Al Jazeera, 3 Dec 2020

violence.⁵ In March, the six armed rebel groups of the CPC appointed Bozizé as coordinator of the rebellion against Touadera, leading to the convening of the second ICGLR summit in Luanda.⁶

In his address to the nation on 18 March, Touadera announced that a national dialogue would be held on the country's security crisis, although to date he has ruled out the idea of talks with armed groups united with the CPC.⁷ However, a top **Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)** has noted that *"everyone should be part of these conversations, including the rebels"*.⁸

As acting chair of the summit, Lourenço appealed to the rebel forces and the civil opposition in CAR to work with the agreed frameworks, and underlined the need for the rebel forces and the civil opposition to respond to Touadera's gesture of goodwill:

*"We are now before the possibility to define a framework in which to put in motion the mechanisms achieved with the armed opposition, which agreed to quit the war path and participate in the implementation of a serious process of disarmament, demobilisation, reinsertion and reintegration."*⁹

Angola and **Rwanda** have formed a work team, chaired by their respective ministers of foreign affairs, in collaboration with Central African authorities, while CAR *"should take action to implement the recommendations resulting from consultations with the country's armed groups"*.¹⁰ The mini-summit also mandated the acting presidents of ICGLR and **Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)**, João Lourenço and **Republic of Congo's** President **Denis Sassou N'Guesso** (1979-1992; 1997-present), respectively, to take steps with the **UN Security Council** to lift the arms embargo on the CAR. The heads of state and government called on the international community, in particular the UN, to join regional efforts to revitalise the Khartoum accords.¹¹

The summit appears to have achieved Touadera's agreement to include armed groups in the national dialogue, possibly in return for ICGLR backing for lifting the UN arms embargo. The political heavyweights in the ICGLR, Rwanda and Angola, are to work closely with the CAR government to implement the accords, which holds out some possibility that an end to the conflicts can be brokered. Since December 2020, intercommunal violence has led to the continuing internal displacement of 100,000 citizens, according to the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**.¹²

Isabel dos Santos hires legal, PR and intelligence teams to defend her in London

Isabel dos Santos has hired **Israeli** private intelligence group, **Black Cube (BC Strategy Ltd)**,¹³ **United Kingdom (UK)**-based public relations company **Maltin PR**,¹⁴ and lawyer **Michelle Duncan** who specialises in commercial litigation and is a partner in **London (UK)**-based **Joseph Hage Anderson LLP**,¹⁵ to defend her interests in London over the court case bought by Luanda-based mobile telecommunications company **UNITEL SA** for approximately \$400m in unpaid outstanding loans made to a dos Santos company, **Unitel International Holdings BV** (see *ARC Briefing Angola March 2021*).

Black Cube is a private corporate intelligence company based in London, **Tel Aviv (Israel)** and **Madrid (Spain)**. The company was founded in 2010 by former Israeli intelligence officers **Dan Zorella** and **Avi Yanus**, and its employees include former members of Israeli intelligence units. Black Cube provides intelligence, evidence, and advisory services in multi-jurisdictional legal and white-

⁵ Angop, 19 Apr 2020

⁶ Anadulo Agency, 23 Mar 2021

⁷ Anadulo Agency, 23 Mar 2021

⁸ Anadulo Agency, 23 Mar 2021

⁹ Angop, 20 Apr 2020

¹⁰ Angop, 20 Apr 2020

¹¹ Angop, 20 Apr 2020

¹² <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/central-african-republic-surge-violence-and-displacement-threatens-thousands>

¹³ Lusa, 1 Apr 2021

¹⁴ Pers Comms from ARC source, 30 Mar 2021

¹⁵ Jha.com, accessed 31 Mar 2021

collar crime cases. Its controversial record includes engagement by **Hollywood (United States)** mogul **Harvey Weinstein** to discredit allegations of sexual assault and rape against him, for which Black Cube later apologised,¹⁶ and **Beny Steinmetz**, the Israeli mining mogul convicted of fraud.¹⁷

Dos Santos hired the company to investigate the circumstances that led to the outcome in the France-based **International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)** arbitration between Unitel shareholders in late 2017. Dos Santos' lawyers said this was expanded, "to expose those responsible for the actions against dos Santos and their motivations". London-based commercial lawyer Michelle Duncan said:

"Black Cube was hired due to its experience in information gathering and analysis, specifically in supporting court cases and arbitrations of extraordinary complexity and international scope."

A further lawyer's statement read:

*"The Black Cube investigation revealed that the new administration is the source of the **Luanda Leaks**, having been the orchestrator and executor of the illegal access of Mrs Dos Santos' servers, as well as her associates and service providers, including law firms commissioned on her behalf."*

Black Cube cited as a source Angola and **Portugal**-based businessman **Mirco Martins**, stepson of the former president of Angolan state-owned oil company **Sonangol**, **Manuel Vicente**. Martins allegedly told Black Cube that:

*"The [Luanda Leaks] documents were delivered by the new Angolan administration to a Portuguese (**Rui Pinto**) through the intermediary of the then Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Manuel Augusto**...our Secret Service gave the information ... to MA (Manuel Augusto) ... [and] "the Secret Service gave it to [Pinto] to screw Isabel dos Santos."¹⁸*

Rui Pinto's lawyer has denied that Angolan secret services sources gave Pinto the Luanda Leaks files.¹⁹

The accusations are part of documents filed with the London court, to refute Unitel's charges against dos Santos' company. Black Cube says it provided full, unedited tape recordings to the court.²⁰ However, these recordings may be obtained by stealth, with Black Cube agents representing themselves as a different company, for example, to obtain secretly taped information from subjects, methods that are well known to be used in undercover investigations.²¹

London-based public relations company Maltin Ltd, which specialises in legal and litigation PR and reputation management, contacted a **South African** journalist who works for a major UK newspaper, asking her to write the story of the new evidence²² and show that Isabel dos Santos is the victim of persecution by President Lourenço.²³ The story has achieved wide traction, possibly due to promotion by PR agencies, but does not address the important points of Unitel's case; the amounts owed and that they are not depending on information from the Luanda Leaks but on loan documents and accounts. Instead, the Dos Santos team is trying to discredit the case ahead of the hearing.

São Vicente case goes to court in Luanda, while AAA assets are unfrozen...

The Angolan prosecutor has now moved against **Carlos Sao Vicente**, ex-head of Angola's largest group of insurance companies, **Angola Agora e Amanha (AAA)**, in what will be the largest and most complex case yet heard in Angola's **Tribunal Supremo** (supreme court).²⁴ The charges against Sao Vicente are tax fraud over a five-year period, over a sum of \$1.29 billion, embezzlement, and the crime

¹⁶ Wikipedia, accessed 31 Mar 2021

¹⁷ Financial Times 29 Mar 2021

¹⁸ Lusa, 1 Apr 2021

¹⁹ Financial Times 29 Mar 2021

²⁰ Black-cube.com, accessed 31 Mar 2021

²¹ Forbes 19 Jan 2018

²² Personal communication from journalist, 30 Mar 2021

²³ Lusa, 1 Apr 2021

²⁴ Jornal de Negocios, 26 Mar 2021

of money laundering on an ongoing basis, relating to a two-decade long monopoly on insurance and reinsurance from the Angolan state oil company, Sonangol. Allegedly, Sao Vicente set up a triangular scheme, with companies in Angola, London and **Bermuda**, which generated tax losses for the Angolan treasury.²⁵

The charges against Sao Vicente may be complicated by a Swiss decision a few days before the Angola court case was filed, when **Switzerland's Bundesgericht** (federal court) partially lifted a freeze on \$900m belonging to AAA. The Swiss federal court said there was insufficient evidence for the money laundering alleged by prosecutors, who, the court said:

*"...did not precisely determine, as it was their task to do, the predicate offences for money laundering necessary to justify the upholding of a seizure on the bank assets of the appellant. The appellant has given explanations for each of the (bank) activities deemed problematic by the public prosecutor."*²⁶

Although amounts held in AAA accounts have been unfrozen, Sao Vicente's personal accounts in Swiss banks remain frozen. The Swiss court did not specify how much money had been unfrozen.²⁷

This is the largest and most difficult case heard by Angolan courts to date. It will be a major test of the system's investigative and prosecutorial capacity. The Swiss decision will impact on how this case is perceived internationally, and perhaps on decisions about how to pursue the cases against Isabel dos Santos in Angola.

... and General Kopelipa's contracts with water company are under legal review

Angola's attorney general's office is in the process of examining potential illegality in a contract involving the state-owned water company, **Empresa Pública de Águas (EPAL) EP**, and **Engineering Services Angola SA (ESA)**, a company owned by General **Manuel Vieira Dias Junior "Kopelipa"**, signed in February 2017, six months before former president **José Eduardo dos Santos** (1979-2017) left power.²⁸ The contract was for building 195 houses for the housing project for the EPAL workers' cooperative, **Nascente das Aguas EP**, in the urban district of **Zango**, Luanda. EPAL was to pay \$15m to ESA represented by a frontman, **Paulo da Cruz Pinheiro da Silva**, for the houses. EPAL advanced the equivalent of \$2m.²⁹

Reportedly, both the attorney general's office and the **Inspecção Geral da Administração do Estado (IGAE)** (general inspectorate of state administration) received a fully documented complaint on the subject on 26 February 2020, but did not take up the issue until this year. ESA's contract did not go through ministerial channels, despite its high value, but instead was apparently approved by EPAL head **Leonídio Gustavo Ferreira de Ceita**, which was outside his competence.³⁰

In a further twist, ESA is claimed to have sold a 122-hectare plot of state-owned land for building the houses to EPAL's Nascente das Aguas EP for \$10m, obtained from the now defunct national reconstruction office, previously headed by General Kopelipa. The IGAE considers there to be a criminal matter in the management of the contract between EPAL and ESA:

*"The transfer of public assets [land] of the State to the company ESA and the sale by the company ESA of the infrastructural land to EPAL, after approval by the holder of the executive power, were listed in the IGAE formulation request to the PGR to effect criminal liability of the interveners."*³¹

The Attorney General's Office is considering whether legal proceedings are appropriate, or whether to proceed with the criminal case outlined by IGAE, which could prove disruptive to Angola's policy of

²⁵ Jornal de Negocios, 26 Mar 2021

²⁶ Reuters, 23 Mar 2021

²⁷ Reuters, 23 Mar 2021

²⁸ Club-k.net, 23 Apr 2021

²⁹ Club-k.net, 23 Apr 2021

³⁰ Club-k.net, 23 Apr 2021

³¹ Club-k.net, 23 Apr 2021

proceeding through asset recovery and civil law interventions wherever possible, and to any future co-operation by General Kopelipa.

Covid-19 update

Angola's **Covid-19** protection laws, the **Situation of Public Calamity** decree, was extended by presidential decree for a further 30 days on 11 April, until 10 May. These decrees have now been in force since 25 May 2020, with Luanda remaining in a cordon sanitaire.³² Mandatory Covid-19 testing for international and internal travel, restrictions on public gatherings, transport and restaurants, and mandatory facemasks in public places all continue.³³ Bans on direct flights from Portugal, **Brazil** and South Africa remain in place.³⁴

Angola's vaccination roll-out continues, with 395,500 nationals vaccinated against Covid-19 since 3 March.³⁵ in a first phase that includes health professionals, teachers from all levels of education, people over 65, defence and security ministry staff. Those at risk from underlying disease, over 18 years of age with sickle-cell disease, chronic renal failure, or who are pregnant or obese also fall into the priority groups.³⁶

In the week ending 26 April, Angola reported only 101 new cases, the majority in Luanda, and four deaths, also in Luanda.³⁷ US-based **Johns Hopkins University** reports a total case-load of 25,942 people and 587 deaths in Angola's population of 30 million, since the beginning of the pandemic.³⁸ Angola processes at least 1,000 Covid-19 tests a day.³⁹

Planner

2019-2022 **(Angola) Programa de Privatizações (PROPRIV)** (privatisation programme) to manage government divestment of 195 companies;

2020-2025 **(Angola) World Bank** to provide funding to increase economic diversification for a five-year period;

Jan 2020-Dec 2021 **Rome (Italy)** Angola serves on **World Food Program (WFP)** Executive Committee;

2021 **Luanda (Angola) Jose Filomeno dos Santos** and other defendants appeal sentences in the "*case of \$500 million*", to be heard in the **Supreme Court**;

2021 **(Angola)** Six offshore oil blocks and free areas of oil blocks 31 and 32 will be offered for tenders;

2021 **(Angola)** First local and municipal elections are in the planning stages but implementation is delayed by **Covid-19** and an election date will be set, probably for 2022;

Q2 2021 **Cabinda (Angola)** Lifua A oil platform scheduled for completion to support offshore **Takula-Bloc-0** field Cabinda; Lifua B and C phases will follow;

Q2 2021 **London (United Kingdom)** Hearing of **Melbourne Investments v SODIAM** takes place at **London Court of Arbitration**, despite death of shareholder and manager **Sindika Dokolo**;

May 2021 **(Netherlands) Amsterdam** court of appeal to hear **Angola's** case to seize **Exem Energy**,

³² Angop, 11 Apr 2021

³³ Garda, 10 Feb 2021

³⁴ Angop, 17 Mar 2021

³⁵ Angop, 3 Mar 2021

³⁶ Angop, 19 Apr 2021

³⁷ Angop, 27 Apr 2021

³⁸ Johns Hopkins COVID-19 dashboard, accessed 28 Apr 2021

³⁹ Angop, 27 Apr 2021

allegedly owned by **Sindika Dokolo**, late husband of **Isabel dos Santos**, and holder of an indirect \$500m stake in **Portuguese** oil company **Galp Energia**;

Jun 2021 (**Angola**) Government hopes to conclude consultations on the review of the Constitution;

9 Jun 2021 (**Angola**) Tenders close for oil blocks CON1, CON5 and CON6, of the **Terrestrial Basin of the Lower Congo**, and blocks KON5, KON6, KON8, KON9, KON17 and KON20, of the **Terrestrial Basin of Kwanza**;

July 2021 (**Angola**) **Luanda/Soyo/Cabinda** ferry for passengers and cargo begins operations;

Dec 2021 **Talatona, Luanda (Angola) Huawei Technology Park** to be completed

2022 (**Angola**) National elections;

2022 (**Angola**) Angola to host 10th **African, Caribbean and Pacific Group** summit;

2022 (**Angola**) End date for **Banco Poupança e Crédito's** recovery plan;

2022 **Luanda (Angola)** Luanda's **Novo Aeroporto Internacional de Luanda (NAIL)** (new international airport) expected to open;

Q4 2022 **Luanda (Angola)** **Angolan Diamond Exchange** to open;

2025 (**Angola**) Three major refineries at **Lobito** with capacity to refine 200,000 barrels/day, **Soyo** (100,000 barrels/day) and **Cabinda** (60,000 barrels/day), are expected to give Angola crude oil refining capacity of 360,000 barrel per day this year, meeting domestic needs and ending fuel imports;

2027 (**Angola**) State-owned oil company **Sonangol's** Strategic Exploration and Production Plan 2020-2027 gives Sonangol 10% of national production by this date, producing 120,000 barrels per day.

Chronology

24 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* State minister for social affairs **Carolina Cerqueira** announces that an emergency campaign will be carried out to clean up and collect solid waste in the province of Luanda;

24 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Finance minister **Vera Daves** says the old contracting model for operators of cleaning and basic sanitation in Luanda was unsustainable and impractical and that the Luanda provincial government has accumulated, between 2018 and 2020, a debt of over 200 billion kwanzas (\$304.7m) to the waste disposal companies;

23 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *VoA.* Governor of **Luanda Province** bans May Day demonstrations against the build up of uncollected rubbish in Luanda;

22 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Angola will develop diamond cutting for 20% of its diamond production in the medium term, according to mineral resources, oil and gas, minister **Diamantino de Azevedo**;

21 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* The Angolan Executive says that preparation of the Draft General State Budget (OGE) for 2022 will start in May 2021, to give time for wider consultation;

21 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Secretary of state for finance and treasury **Otoniel Santos** says the government plans to privatise at least 113 companies in 2021 including **Banco de Comércio e Indústria (BCI)**, with 40 companies being privatised in the first quarter, 60 in the second quarter, and 13 in the third quarter, probably including energy company **Biocom**, mobile operator **Multi-tel**, and television station **TV Cabo**;

21 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Namibia's** ambassador to Angola, **Patrick Nandago**, says Namibia expects to reopen the border with Angola shortly, following its closure in March 2020 due to **Covid-19**;

21 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Angola and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** sign a bilateral air services agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen relations between the two countries in the air transport sector;

20 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Luanda hosts the second mini-summit of heads of state and government of the **International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)** to discuss the political and security situation in **Central African Republic (CAR)**;

17 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* State-owned **Sonangol's** exploration and production business unit executive commission chair, **Ricardo Van-Deste**, says Angola will have enough crude oil production for the refineries at **Cabinda, Soyo** and **Lobito**, once completed, and for the upgraded Luanda refinery coming on stream in 2022;

16 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Sonangol** agrees to sell 31.78% of its assets held in **Puma Energy** to **Swiss** fuel trader **Trafigura** for \$600m, while retaining the **Pumangol** retail network of service stations, airport terminals in Luanda, **Catumbela, Cunene** and **Lubango**, the terminal store of the fishing port at **Luanda Bay** and Angolan company **Angobetumes**;

15 Apr 2021 **New York (United States)** *Angop.* **Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)** says Angolan authorities must refrain from arresting members of the press covering public events, after journalist **Jorge Manuel** is arrested on 7 April while covering protests against local authorities' evictions of people in the **Sequele** municipality of Luanda, and held for five days;

12 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Angola and the **United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)** agree strategy to tackle the plague of locusts that has destroyed crops in Angola's southern region, and will use airborne resources to spray the affected regions with insecticides;

12 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* The **Agência Nacional de Petróleo, Gás e Biocombustíveis (ANPG)** (Angolan national petroleum, gas and biofuels agency) holds a road show to present data showing more than 500 million barrels of oil are available in the onshore basins of **Lower Congo** and **Kwanza**, with nine blocks available for exploration and production by investors;

7 Apr 2021 **Cacuso (Malanje Province) (Angola)** *Angop.* The **Quitota** manganese mine in **Quizenga (Malanje Province)** announces it will begin manganese production at an average monthly production of 10,000 tonnes, rising to 40,000 tonnes;

7 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Spain's** President **Pedro Sánchez Pérez Castejón**, arrives in Luanda on a two-day state visit, and to participate in an Angola-Spain business forum;

7 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* Controversial Angolan politician **Bento Joaquim Sebastião Francisco Bento** is appointed first secretary of the ruling **MPLA** party in Luanda province, a post he held from 2007 to 2016;

7 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Italy**-based oil company **Eni** announces discovery of a new light oil well in Block 15/06 on the **Cuica** exploration prospect located inside the **Cabaça Development Area** and close to the **Armada Olombendo FPSO** (east hub);

6 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Italy**-based oil company **Eni** chairman of the board **Claudio Descalzi** announces that Eni plans to invest \$7 billion in Angola over the next four years in research, production, refining and solar energy;

5 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* **Luanda Province** announces it will open a provincial office of the general inspection for state administration (**IGAE**) to conduct auditing, inquiries and inspection activities on organs and institutions of the state at all levels;

2 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop.* The government plans to spend about \$120m with funding from the state budget and international partners over the next four years to increase industrial production, reduce foreign dependence on basic foodstuff and create jobs, with the allocation of

\$44.7m for the improvement of the **Viana Industrial Complex** in Luanda and the completion of the **Fútila Industrial Complex**;

1 Apr 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. President **João Lourenço** meets **United States (US)** ambassador **Nina Maria Fite** to discuss policies on corruption and money laundering and the offer of the **US Treasury Department** to train Angolan staff;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **United States** offers \$20m donation in 2021 for the fight against malaria in Angola;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **Brazil's** ambassador to Angola, **Rafael de Mello Vidal**, announces plans to re-launch the bilateral strategic partnership with Angola, in the fields of infrastructure, energy and agriculture;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **Banco Nacional de Angola (BNA)** (central bank) governor **José de Lima Massano** says the bank is looking at rescue plans for **Banco Económico (BE)** but has not reached a decision;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **Banco de Desenvolvimento de Angola (BDA)** (Angolan development bank) says it has a credit portfolio estimated at \$250m available to support business initiatives of primary and secondary investors in the national economy;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. Mineral resources, oil and gas minister **Diamantino Azevedo** announces that the **Angolan Diamond Exchange** will open in 2022, and will be based on the **Antwerp** and **Dubai** models;

31 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. National police general commander **Paulo de Almeida** announces the restructuring of the **Polícia de Intervenção Rápida (PIR)** (rapid intervention police), noting an urgent need to revitalise, modernise and rejuvenate the organisation and to train young people.

29 Mar 2021 **(Africa)** *Financial Times*. **China-Africa Research Initiative** research shows **Chinese** lending to **African** public sector borrowers fell to \$7 billion in 2019, from \$9.9 billion in 2018 and \$28 billion in 2016, suggesting lenders became concerned about the sustainability of rising debt levels on the continent;

29 Mar 2021 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jeune Afrique*. **Isabel dos Santos** accuses President **João Lourenço** of pursuing a "personal vendetta" against her to destroy her business empire, in a filing to a **London** court that cited secret recordings of members of Lourenço's inner circle;

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