

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Angola Summary 20 August 2024

President João Lourenço (2017-present) announces on 30 July he has negotiated a ceasefire between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. Lourenço further proposes a framework for lasting peace, to be discussed in Luanda this week. Parliament passes the new Lei da Segurança Nacional (national security) on 14 August despite concerns raised over freedom of speech and the media. Pan-African research network Afrobarometer finds support for Lourenço is declining among Angolans.

Lourenço negotiates ceasefire between DRC and Rwanda

President **João Lourenço** (2017-present) announced on 30 July he had negotiated a ceasefire between the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** and **Rwanda** which came into effect on 4 August.¹ The announcement came after the second ministerial meeting in Luanda between DRC and Rwanda and confirmed that Lourenço had the agreement of their respective presidents DRC's President **Felix Tshisekedi** (2019-present) and Rwanda's President **Paul Kagame** (2000-present) for a formal open-ended ceasefire. The ceasefire is to be supervised by Angola's reinforced Ad-Hoc Verification Mechanism.²

The **African Union (AU)** mandated Lourenço to mediate the conflict in the eastern DRC in 2022 when hostilities in the region were increasing to dangerous levels.³ By July 2022, Lourenço had managed to establish the **Luanda Roadmap** to address the inter-state dimension of the crisis through dialogue between the DRC and **Rwanda**.⁵

However, the Luanda Roadmap did not halt the crisis and by June the situation, and relations between the DRC and Rwanda, had deteriorated so far that there was a "very real risk of provoking a wider regional conflict."⁶ At the beginning of July, the **United States (US)** and Angola brokered a two-week humanitarian truce with the Rwanda-backed **M23** rebels in eastern DRC that began on 5 July. This truce was supported by the DRC and Rwandan governments and was extended until the end of July.⁸

Since the 30 July announcement, the diplomatic efforts have been almost ceaseless. Lourenço visited Rwanda on 12 August and followed this with a trip to the DRC on 13 August.¹⁰ After those visits, Lourenço announced on 13 August that he had proposed the framework for a lasting peace agreement to the two parties, to be discussed in Luanda this week.¹¹

Despite the ceasefire, the situation remains fragile. Foreign affairs minister **Tete António** warned: "Ceasefire we may have many, but there must be political will between the parties to conquer peace, because the mediator, by himself, cannot do much."¹²

¹ Jornal de Angola, 13 Aug 2024

² Jornal de Angola, 30 Jul 2024

³ Amani Africa, 14 Jul 2024

⁵ Amani Africa, 14 Jul 2024

⁶ Amani Africa, 14 Jul 2024

⁸ Amani Africa, 14 Jul 2024

¹⁰ Jornal de Angola, 13 Aug 2024

¹¹ Jornal de Angola 13 Aug 2024

¹² Jornal de Angola, 12 Aug 2024

There is no certainty the ceasefire will hold and all previous agreements have been violated. In fact, M23 rebels captured the town of **Ishasha (North Kivu Province)** on the day of the ceasefire. M23 said it is not "automatically bound by the Luanda negotiations."¹³

One major factor that may now work towards peace, despite the position of M23, is the involvement of the US in supporting Lourenço's efforts in the last months. US investment in building the **Lobito Corridor** from the DRC mining regions to Angola gives it a direct interest in brokering peace and helping to ensure a supply of raw materials for green energy is shipped to the US.¹⁵ US secretary of state **Antony Blinken** has been directly involved in negotiating with Rwanda, which is a longstanding US ally, since 2022 and has since worked closely with Lourenço on this peace initiative.¹⁷

Angola passes new National Security law

Parliament passed the new **Lei da Segurança Nacional** (national security) on 14 August, in one of the last acts of the parliamentary year. Minister of state and head of the military house of the president **Francisco Furtado** presented the bill, clarifying that the previous law is "maladjusted" to the constitution and Angola's political and social context.¹⁹

Furtado said that the new law ensures that Angola's national security system is based on the principle of legality and is exercised on a broad front ranging from crime prevention and maintenance of public order to human security, the civil protection of people and property, as well as the reduction of the harmful effects of major natural or artificial disasters.²¹

The law was first put to parliament and initially approved on 25 January 2024 before a specialist committee reviewed it.²³ Opposition politicians and international nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) have extensively criticised the law, raising concerns for freedom of speech and the media in Angola. Opposition **UNITA's** resistance to the bill reportedly focused on the idea that policies affecting security and defence services should not be made by a president who is also head of a political party.²⁴

Meanwhile, US-based **Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)** said in April this year that the proposed law could hinder the public's right to information and severely undermine press freedom.²⁵ CPJ said the proposed law would create a national security system headed by the president which would include the police, intelligence services, and the military:

"There was new power to "[prohibit] broadcasting from public or private radio systems or disrupt telecommunication services, under undefined exceptional circumstances and within the limits of the constitution. Police would have autonomy to survey premises, buildings, establishments and people "whose activity is likely to disturb public order".²⁶

Fellow US-based NGO **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** agreed the law contained provisions contrary to the rights to freedom of expression and the press set out in the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, which Angola ratified in 1992.

Furtado's intervention before the vote was seemingly to reassure members of parliament (MPs) that human rights were respected, saying:

*"The new concept of security will cover not only the security of the state but the broader notion of security of the human being, particularly the ability of man to live in freedom."*²⁷

¹³ East African, 7 Aug 2024

¹⁵ United States Institute of Peace, 8 Aug 2024

¹⁷ US Dept of State, 7 Aug 2024

¹⁹ Jornal de Angola, 8 Aug 2024

²¹ Jornal de Angola, 8 Aug 2024

²³ cpj.org, 1 Apr 2024

²⁴ VerAngola, 25 Jan 2024

²⁵ cpj.org, 1 Apr 2024

²⁶ cpj.org, 1 Apr 2024

²⁷ Jornal de Angola, 8 Aug 2024

The law is said to be comprehensive in all aspects including cybernetics, space and unspecified aspects that constitute risks and threats to national security.²⁸ UNITA leader **Adalberto Costa Junior** said that contentious areas had been "purged" from the law, without specifying, but that grey areas remain in the law.³⁰ The 71 UNITA MPs abstained from voting on the law.

While it seems the more concerning elements of this law have been mitigated, opposition **Bloco Democrático** has still called for a protest march in Luanda on 31 August against the law.³¹

Afrobarometer survey shows support for Lourenço has fallen to 26%

Pan-African research network **Afrobarometer** published a new in-depth study of perceptions of democracy in Angola on 8 August showing that support for Lourenço is declining.

Development activist, social scientist and **Observatório Político e Social de Angola (OPSA)** (political and social observatory of Angola) founder **Sérgio Calundungo** carried out the Angolan survey between 27 March and 19 April 2024.³⁴

The results found a disapproval of 74.2% in the management of the economy, and red cards in job creation (87.3%) and price stability (86.2%).³⁶ On the upside, 36% think corruption has increased in Angola.³⁷ Only 26% of the survey sample approved of the way Lourenço has performed his duties in the 12 months before the survey, a fall of 3% from 2022. Despite dissatisfaction with the government and Lourenço, the survey found the ruling **MPLA** would win the elections again, forecasting that MPLA would win 30% of the vote and UNITA 27%.³⁸

Unlike many of the 39 African countries analysed as part of Afrobarometer's series, support for democracy strengthened in Angola between 2019 and 2022 - Lourenço's first period in office. However, in 2024, Angolans are described in the survey as among the most dissatisfied with the quality of their democracy, with a fall in support for democracy to 45%. Furthermore, 38% of respondents thought that the country is a democracy but fewer were said to be reasonably or very satisfied with the way that Angola's democracy works, at 24%.⁴⁰

Calundungo assessed that weaknesses in primary institutions and accountability need to be fixed, to increase confidence in the operation of democracy:

*"There is no point in having democratic legislation and institutions without guaranteeing effective control of its operation on the basis of the rules provided for by the democratic "game". The weak level of control of the law and the institutions and the absence of accountability ... turns out to be a major obstacle to democracy."*⁴¹

Continuing high inflation and high consumer prices in Angola are major drivers of political dissatisfaction, particularly in the capital, where approximately 25% of Angola's population lives and works, often in the informal economy. By June this year, inflation in the capital had reached 42.8% as a result of the scaling back of fuel subsidies, leading to raised fuel prices and last year's currency depreciation.⁴³

Despite the low scores for the state of democracy and the high cost of living, there is no desire for a "strongman" or for a military government to solve the political issues with 66% rejecting military rule.

²⁸ Jornal de Angola, 8 Aug 2024

³⁰ VerAngola, 14 Aug 2024

³¹ VerAngola, 31 Aug 2021

³⁴ ENAPTSS.ao, accessed 14 Aug 2024

³⁶ Expansao, 10 Aug 2024

³⁷ African Insights 2024: Democracy at risk – The People's Perspective

³⁸ Expansao, 10 Aug 2024

⁴⁰ Expansao, 10 Aug 2024

⁴¹ Expansao, 10 Aug 2024

⁴³ Bloomberg, 19 Jul 2024

Calundungo's view is that the apparent contradiction between the minority preference for democracy and the majority rejection of authoritarian governments results more from dissatisfaction than from the lack of political maturity of citizens.

Planner

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

Jun 2023 - Jun 2025 **Luanda (Angola)** Angola extends its mandate as a member of the **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) Executive Council** for two years;

Q3 2024 **Lucapa (Angola)** The **Lucapa** photovoltaic power plant will start producing power;

Sep 2024 **(China)** President **João Lourenço** to attend **China-Africa Summit**;

2024 **(Angola)** First phase of the construction of the **Barra do Dande Ocean Terminal** to be completed;

2024 **(Angola)** Angola to create two new provinces and a further 417 municipalities during this year;

2024 **(Angola)** Angola to begin exporting green hydrogen energy to Germany;

2024 **(Angola)** Completion of Angola's sole purpose-built gold refinery at **Viana** is expected;

2- 3 Oct 2024 Luanda (Angola) Angola Oil & Gas 2024 Conference & Exhibition 2024;

Dec 2024 **Cabinda (Angola)** Completion of the deep-water port **Porto do Caio** is expected;

Jan 2025 **Houston (United States)** Angola launches the next round of licensing oil and gas concessions, inviting exploration and production companies in the United States;

Chronology

14 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Institute for Security Studies*. A court sentences 198 **Lunda Norte** separatists, demonstrating under the banner of the **Manifesto Jurídico Sociológico do Povo Lunda-Tchokwe** (legal and sociological manifesto of the Lunda-Tchokwe people), to between four to eight years in jail for various crimes including criminal association, rioting, rebellion and damage to public property;

11 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Angola passes the rotating presidency of the **Southern African Development Community (SADC)** to **Zimbabwe**;

11 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Secretary of state for oil and gas **José Barroso** announces that the executive is bringing in strict measures to combat the smuggling of the state's strategic resources, such as diamonds, gold, other minerals and fuels given the harm to the national economy;

10 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **Chinese** ambassador to Angola **Zhang Bin** says that cooperation relations between Angola and China are currently going through a transition period to improve the diversification and sustainability of the Angolan economy, in a pragmatic relationship;

10 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Foreign affairs minister **Téte António** meets with **International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)** executive secretary **João Caholo**;

9 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **James M. Cowan**, executive director of the de-mining organisation, **United Kingdom-based Halo Trust**, asks authorities for institutional support to complete demining programs still underway;

8 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Expansao*. **South Africa's** President **Cyril Ramaphosa** visits Angola to discuss issues of regional defence and international relations with his counterpart, **João Lourenço**;

- 8 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Thisisnews*. President **João Lourenço** creates a multi-sectoral commission to prevent vandalism of public goods, monuments and buildings, public utility services, and water treatment facilities. A law on crimes of vandalism of public goods and services is under consideration in parliament;
- 6 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *ANGOP*. Angola welcomes the decision of the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** to lift the arms embargo on the **Central African Republic (CAR)**;
- 6 Aug 2024 **Mbanza Kongo (Angola)** *ANGOP*. Border police detain 23 citizens from **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** in **Zaire Province** for border violation and attempted smuggling;
- 6 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. The **Social Security Institute of the Angolan Armed Forces (ISSFAA)** plans to register 8,837 ex-army pensioners within a new model of the proof of life process, to eliminate ghosts and duplication;
- 2 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. The **International Labour Office** opens an office in **Luanda** to serve the **Portuguese Official Language African countries (PALOP)**;
- 2 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **Portugal**-headquartered **Mota-Engil** wins the public tender for the rehabilitation of **Porto Amboim Estaleiros Navais (PAENAL)**;
- 1 Aug 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **Cuba's** prime minister **Manuel Cruz** arrives in Angola for an official visit;
- 31 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *ANGOP*. **Madagascar's** President **Andry Rajoelina** arrives for a three-day official visit, at the invitation of President **João Lourenço**, to strengthen bilateral cooperation;
- 31 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *ANGOP*. Public health secretary of state **Carlos Pinto de Sousa** announces that vaccination of children under the age of one against malaria will start this year, following acquisition of the **Indian**-made vaccine **Serum 21**;
- 29 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *ANGOP*. **China's** embassy defence attaché Brigadier **Wang Jinyuan**, says the **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** is willing to work with the **Forças Armadas Angolanas (FAA)** (armed forces) to expand and deepen practical cooperation in the areas of national defence and army training;
- 29 July 2024 **Lunda Norte (Angola)** *ANGOP*. **Lunda Norte** provincial police command arrests 757 **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** nationals who entered Angola to dig for diamonds and intercepts 14,375 litres of fuel being smuggled across the border as part of an ongoing operation;
- 29 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Finance minister announces it made \$1.4 billion in foreign exchange available to the 22 banks operating in the Angola market during the first 6 months of this year;
- 29 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **Banco Nacional de Angola (BNA)** (central bank) instructs banking financial institutions that they should prepare a manual on crisis prevention and management and bank resolution planning;
- 25 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *ANGOP*. The **Angola/Portugal Economic Forum** takes place in Luanda and agreements are signed with Portugal's **Institute for Industrial Development and Innovation (IDIA)** and the other between the **Angola Industrial Association (AIA)** and the **Portuguese Business Confederation**;
- 25 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. China says trade with Angola is worth \$23.05 billion;
- 25 July 2024 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Angola exports 96.84 million barrels of crude oil during the second quarter of 2024, valued at \$8.11 billion.

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