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Angola Summary 29 May 2026

President João Lourenço (2017-present), currently president of the ruling Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), announces his candidacy for re-election as party president at a meeting of the Bureau Politico (BP) (political bureau), the MPLA's ruling body, on 11 May but will not seek a third term in office. Spain's national court issues a ruling on 28 April acquitting 15 individuals and three corporations on charges of paying illegal commissions to Angolan officials through Spain's state-owned food chain management company, Mercasa, between 2006 and 2016. State-owned oil company SONANGOL's profits now derive from its external investments, not from its core oil production and sales. SONANGOL's profits were Kz 862.4 billion (\$940m) in 2025, but it is still making losses from its so-called non-nuclear business. SONANGOL wants to diversify into producing strategic minerals for energy transition in the face of long decline in oil profits.

Lourenço puts forward candidacy to head MPLA until 2031

President **João Lourenço** (2017-present), currently president of the ruling **Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA)** announced his candidacy for re-election as MPLA president at a meeting of the **Bureau Politico (BP)** (political bureau), the MPLA's ruling body, on 11 May. The BP's sub-committee on candidacies said this was the only [submission](#) it had received to date.

The president of the MPLA has also become the president of **Angola** since the 2010 constitution was enacted, but Article 109 of the [constitution](#) stipulates only that the person who heads the national list of candidates chosen by the political party or coalition that wins the general election becomes president of the republic and head of the executive, and candidates are not exclusively limited to the heads of political parties. Parties may even nominate candidates from outside any political party.

However, in terms of the constitution, Lourenço cannot seek a third term in office. The constitution specifically [excludes](#) presidents who have served two terms in office from standing. The MPLA currently lacks the two-thirds majority of seats in parliament needed to [change](#) the constitution, with 124 seats out of 220, although there is no indication that such a move has even been considered. Lourenço [told](#) a political rally in December that he would be stepping down:

"I am only leaving power because the Constitution does not allow me to continue leading the country; if the Constitution allowed it, I would prefer to continue the race."

Lourenço and the party leadership began planning for the new leadership structures in 2024. In December 2024, at its 8th Extraordinary Congress, the MPLA revised Article 12 of its statutes, to [change](#) the way that the party's presidential candidate will be chosen. The head of the MPLA will no longer be automatically nominated as presidential candidate. Instead, the presidential candidate will be selected by the Central Committee, the second-tier MPLA body, based on proposals from the political bureau.

Lourenço appointed deputy and **Comissão Nacional Eleitoral** (national electoral commission) member **João de Almeida Azevedo Martins**, known as "**Ju Martins**", as his campaign representative. Lourenço's candidacy will very likely be ratified at the MPLA's 9th Ordinary [Congress](#), which will take place on 9–10 December 2026, and which will also likely select the MPLA's presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the 2027 presidential election.

Media sources propose possible presidential candidates including foreign minister Tété António, MPLA vice-president **Mara Quiosa**, and interior minister **Manuel Homem**. MPLA activist and major Angolan company **Omatapalo** chairman **Luis Nunes**, currently governor of **Luanda**, is prominent in supporting Lourenço. An ARC source close to several senior MPLA politicians revealed that **Adão de Almeida**, appointed president of the **Assembleia Nacional** (national assembly) in November last year, and presidential advisor **Virgílio Fontes Perreira** are seen as potential candidates for the posts of president and vice president. Lourenço will favour candidates who will continue his policies.

Several politicians from widely different wings of the MPLA have already declared their [candidacies](#) for the presidency. These include **Higino Carneiro**, a member of parliament who was recently indicted for corruption, **José Carlos Almeida**, a lawyer, engineer, **António Venâncio**, as well as **Irene Neto**, daughter of Angola's first president, **Agostinho Neto** (1975-1979), who did not rule out this possibility in an interview with **Novo Jornal**.

Longrunning Spain-Angola corruption trials end

Spain's national court [issued a ruling](#) on 28 April acquitting 15 individuals and three corporations on charges of paying illegal commissions to Angolan officials through Spain's state-owned food chain management company, **Mercasa**, between 2006 and 2016. The ruling ends the long-running trial, which began in 2018. The 424-page judgement [concluded](#) that officials associated with Mercasa "*did not allocate any money, directly or indirectly through third parties, to corrupt Angolan authorities and officials or to carry out any action contrary to current legislation*".

A consortium of companies, including Mercasa, secured a multimillion-dollar contract with Angola's commerce ministry in the late 2000s for a wholesale market in Luanda. The prosecutors in the case alleged that the companies and individuals associated with them paid approximately \$22m in kickbacks to bribe Angolan officials to secure the contract. In its ruling, the court was particularly critical of the prosecutor's case, calling out a lack of evidentiary support and observed what it called "*an excessive demonisation*" of the agreements agreed upon at the time, when the country was emerging from its civil war that ended in 2002, [adding](#):

"...legal and conventional structures were characterised by their rigidity. Hence, it was logical that the parties involved in the contracts would ensure their emoluments or remuneration."

The case also involved the well-known **Portuguese-Angolan** businessman and fugitive, **Guilherme Augusto de Oliveira Tabeira Pinto**. Pinto has been [mentioned](#) in several corruption cases involving foreign companies in Angola, including Spain's now-dissolved state-owned defence firm, **Defex**, and was considered the 'go-to' contact for companies to help push contracts with the government through, often through facilitation fees. However, the court did not find that he received any money from the consortium, clearing him of charges in this case.

The case first broke when Lourenço assumed power and promised to crack down on corruption. It was portended at the time that should there be a guilty conviction, Angola would also pursue its own case but this ruling has stemmed this.

Sonangol's oil profits fall to 47% of income in 2025

State-owned oil company **SONANGOL** UEE 2025 [accounts](#) make it clear that SONANGOL's profits now derive from its external investments, not from its core oil production and sales. SONANGOL's profits were Kz 862.4 billion (\$940m) in 2025. Angolan financial newspaper, **Expansão**, says that despite this profitability, SONANGOL's accounts show it is still making [losses](#) from its so-called non-nuclear business, despite having divested many non-core companies. SONANGOL still has 65 non-core holdings, ranging from hospital **Clínica Girassol** to airline **Sonair**. These have caused SONANGOL losses of Kz 707.55 billion (\$770.8m) in the last five years, despite the profits from other privatisations.

SONANGOL's [holdings](#) in three companies, natural gas producing company **Angola LNG** (22.8%); Portuguese-Angolan-owned bank **Millennium BCP** (19.49%) and a 16.9% indirect shareholding in

Portuguese oil company **Galp**, made profits of Kz 459.4 billion (\$500m), 53% of SONANGOL's profits in 2025.

What is surprising is that oil production and trading, the entire core activity of the company, is not its main engine of [profit](#). The government's policy has been to insist that SONANGOL divest itself of interests that lie outside oil production and trading with the aim of producing an oil company rather than a major conglomerate that reaches into almost all areas of the economy. This strategy is likely to fail on the showing of the 2025 accounts. This year's profits will be different due to the steep rise in oil prices from the **United States (US)** war on **Iran** but this is only a temporary phase and cannot be a long-term strategy. SONANGOL's net profits of Kz 862.4 billion (\$940m) now conceal a [structural](#) problem.

Oil exploitation and production of 217,000 [barrels](#) of oil per day in 2025 generated 97.1 billion (\$106m) but SONANGOL has very high operating costs, amortisation and taxes. Refining and distribution made losses of Kz 820.3 billion (\$904.46m) in 2025. SONANGOL was to be [privatised](#) though a sale of 30% of the company but this will not happen at present.

While SONANGOL is pushing forward the development of new oil resources, SONANGOL chair **Gaspar Martins** has also proposed a new [strategy](#) and direction for the company, into critical minerals for renewable energy, [telling Reuters](#):

"Sonangol wants to diversify into (critical minerals essential for the) energy transition, ... (It) will be very useful for us to also have a stake and a presence in the development of these minerals."

SONANGOL is positioning itself for a longer-term role in Angola, in a post-oil world as demand for critical resources continues to [rise](#). Angola has a key position in the supply chain for critical minerals. through the **Lobito Railway** and minerals export port of **Lobito**. Angola has known [deposits](#) of lithium, copper, quartz, cobalt, manganese, uranium, iron ore and rare earths. Lithium and cobalt are key to electric vehicle batteries, while copper is essential for power grids and renewable energy infrastructure. Martins notes that SONANGOL already has seven concessions to [explore](#) for uranium, lithium and quartz.

Planner

9 Apr - 27 Jul 2026 **Cabinda (Angola)** International public tender for the 20-year management and development plans for the **Caio** deepwater maritime terminal;

Jun 2026 **Moxico (Angola)** **Luau Hybrid Photovoltaic Plant** in Moxico, and full associated distribution and electrification network, comes on line;

Jun 2026 **Luanda (Angola)**. Angola's first gold refinery, in **Viana**, with a capacity to process approximately 20kg of gold per day, is expected to begin operating by June;

Jul 2026 **Lunda Norte (Angola)** The 42.2MW **Cafunfo** photovoltaic power plant to begin the supply of energy;

1-2 Aug 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** Luanda to host an extraordinary session of the **African Union's** Conference of Heads of State and Government to analyse threats to peace, security and development;

9-10 Dec 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** The ruling **MPLA** party to hold its 9th Ordinary Congress;

2026-27 **(Angola)** **World Bank** entities, the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** and the **Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**, will promote investment in key sectors in Angola;

2026 **(Angola)** **Angolan Cargo and Logistics Certification Regulatory Agency** will open logistics platforms in **Luvo (Zaire)**, **Caála (Huambo)** and **Namibe** this year;

2026 **Luanda (Angola)** Privatisation of telecommunications company **UNITEL** and sale of government stakes in **Standard Bank Ltd** expected to take place;

2026 **(Angola)** Government to introduce **World Health Organisation** approved malaria vaccination and anti-malaria education programme;

Dec 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** The **World Bank**-funded \$230m **Bitá Water Treatment** plant in Luanda is expected to start up, according to **France**-headquartered **Suez International África**, who are carrying out the work;

2026 **Cabinda (Angola)**. End of phase 1 of construction of **Porto do Caio** is expected in the first half of the year;

2023-2026 **(Angola) Programa de Privatizações (PROPRIV)** (privatisation programme) extended to manage government divestment of 138 companies;

2027 **Cabinda (Angola)** **United Kingdom**-based **Gemcorp's Cabinda Refinery** begins phase 2 of refinery in 2027 and phase 3 to upgrade the units immediately thereafter;

2027 **Cuanza-Norte (Angola)**. The first turbine of the **Caculo Cabaça** dam, is expected to begin operating in 2027, according to the energy and water ministry;

Aug-Sep 2027 **(Angola)** National elections will be held; **João Lourenço's** final term as president ends;

Dec 2027 **Quipungo (Angola)** Effective start-up of **Quipungo Photovoltaic Power Plant (Huila Province)** postponed to December 2027;

Chronology

28 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Police detain over 200 suspects in **Bengo Province** during a large-scale operation launched after an illegal gold mine collapse killed 28;

27 May 2026 **Lusaka (Zambia)** *Lusaka Times*. **European Investment Bank's** development arm, **EIB Global**, selects **Zambia, Angola, Burundi** and **Ethiopia** as beneficiaries of a €10m (\$10.8m) global health fund initiative aimed at strengthening their primary healthcare systems;

25 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Mining Weekly*. A landslide at an illegal gold mining site in **Bengo Province** kills at least 28 people, aged between 16 and 35, while four others are rescued after search operations concluded;

20 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Angola and **Serbia** are preparing to strengthen their bilateral cooperation following a meeting in Luanda between Angola's international cooperation state secretary, **Domingos Custódio Vieira Lopes**, and the **Serbian** ambassador, **Milos Perisic**;

19 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. **United States (US)** Chargé d'Affaires **Shannon Cazeau** highlights Angola as a vital strategic partner in **Africa** across sectors like trade, energy, health and security;

18 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Lobito Corridor Investment Promotion News*. The **Lobito Atlantic Railway** says it operated around 5,000 trains in Angola in 2025 alone (including passenger and Angolan cargo trains), with copper and sulphur flows from the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** increasing;

18 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Expansao*. External auditor **Ernst & Young (EY)** says in its audit that **Banco de Desenvolvimento de Angola (BDA)** (Angola development bank) may not recover a loan of \$260m granted to **Angola Cables**, currently the bank's largest debtor, noting the bank has impairments of Kz 80 billion (\$86m) as of end 2025;

17 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Constitutional court and **Brazil's** public prosecutor's office sign a cooperation agreement to strengthen institutional capacities;

15 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. Switzerland's ambassador, **Lukas Gasser**, meets with **Assembleia Nacional** (national assembly) speaker **Adão de Almeida** to discuss cooperation in the areas of politic and economics;

15 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **United States (US)**-headquartered cobalt sulphate and metallic cobalt processing company **Evelution Energy** and **Singapore**-domiciled **Trafigura** will export cobalt extracted in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** to the US through the port of **Lobito**;

15 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. Members of parliament (MPs) approved the Joint Report-Opinion on the Draft Law on the Legal Regime of the Beneficial Owner at Committee Stage;

14 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. Foreign affairs minister **Téte António** says Angola remains committed to supporting the **African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD)**, with emphasis on advancing innovative financing mechanisms led by **Africans**, at the opening of the 74th Ordinary Session of the AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee;

14 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angop*. **Angola** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** announce they will build one of **Africa's** largest electricity transmission lines, linking **Malanje Angola** to **Fungurume**, in the DRC copper and cobalt mining region, and a second transmission line linking Angola's border province of **Zaire**, and **Inga (DRC)**, to ensure the supply of 2,000 MW to the DRC;

11 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. President **João Lourenço's** representative, **João de Almeida Martins**, formally submits Lourenço's candidacy for the presidency of the ruling **Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA)** at the party headquarters in Luanda;

11 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *The Namibian*. Former fisheries minister **Vitória de Barros Neto** is not accused of any crime related to **Namibia's Fishrot** scandal in her corruption trial;

10 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. President **João Lourenço** leaves for **Algeria** for a three-day state visit at the invitation of President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune**, aiming to strengthen bilateral ties through high-level talks and the signing of strategic cooperation agreements;

6 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. President **João Lourenço** receives his **Gabonese** counterpart, **Brice Nguema**, at the presidential palace in Luanda to discuss bilateral cooperation and issues of common interest, aiming to bring a new dynamism to the relationship between their nations;

5 May 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Jornal de Angola*. Angola's ambassador to the **United Kingdom (UK)**, **José Patrício**, meets with the Angolan community in **Manchester** to address concerns regarding document delays and requests for expanded mobile consular services;

29 Apr 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angola 24 Hours*. President **João Lourenço** appoints **Lúcio Gonçalves Amaral** to the position of defence minister;

29 Apr 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angola 24 Hours*. **Sonangol** says it has invested \$1.5 billion in the construction of the **Lobito Refinery** to date but the total investment needed may reach \$6.2 billion;

29 Apr 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Bloomberg News*. The trial begins of former fisheries minister, **Vitória de Barros Neto**, accused of embezzling Kz 300m (\$326,797);

28 Apr 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Bloomberg News*. **Australia's Rio Tinto** Plc and state diamond company **Endiama EP** form a joint venture to develop the **Chiri** kimberlite project, which is set to become the country's third-largest producer of the gems;

28 Apr 2026 **Luanda (Angola)** *Angola 24 Hours*. President **João Lourenço** appoints **João Ernesto dos Santos** to the position of Minister of State and head of the Military House of the President of the Republic, replacing **Francisco Pereira Furtado**;

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