



## MAIN STORIES

### The Return of José Eduardo dos Santos

### Freedom House's 2021 Freedom of the Net Report

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Angola's former president José Eduardo dos Santos has returned to Luanda after a two-year absence to find his party, the MPLA, more divided than ever. Some reports speculate that he has come back to seek a truce with his successor, João Lourenço.
- According to Freedom House's 2021 Freedom of the Net report, Angola is rated as party free with a score of 62 out of 100. Scores are based on a scale of 0 (least free) to 100 (most free).
- President Lourenço appointed Mário Augusto Caetano de Sousa as Minister of Economy and Planning, replacing Sérgio de Sousa Mendes dos Santos.
- President Lourenço appointed five new members to his Advisory Council. He also made a number of changes at state enterprises.
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) member countries fighting terrorist groups in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Province have each taken on a different role in the operation. Angola has been tasked with delivering equipment to the troops on the ground.
- September saw a number of protest actions, mostly organised by UNITA.
- Three Angolan non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have filed a complaint with the Portuguese justice system denouncing alleged corruption and money laundering schemes carried out by former managers of Sonangol, including former Vice President Manuel Vicente.
- German prosecutors issued a €150,000 fine to state-owned KfW IpeX-Bank, following a €50 million loan linked to Isabel dos Santos, the daughter of Angola's former president and the subject of serious corruption allegations.
- Angola ranks 153 out of 165 countries (1=best; 165=worst) and territories included in the Economic Freedom of the World: 2021 Annual Report produced by Canada's Fraser Institute.

# ANGOLA



- Moody's Investors Service raised Angola's credit rating on 13 September.
- Fitch currently estimates that the government faces US\$5.2 billion (7.4% of GDP) of external principal and interest payments on debt in 2021 and an additional US\$4.7 billion in 2022, rising to US\$6.5 billion in 2023.
- Three foreign companies - MTI Energy, Brite's Oil, and Intank - secured stakes in Angolan onshore blocks at the end of September. All of them have strong links with Nigeria.
- Angola's annual inflation rate climbed for the fifth straight month to 26.1% in August 2021, its highest since October 2017, as the kwanza remains under pressure.
- By 5 October 2021, Angola had registered 59 371 Covid-19 cases, 1584 deaths and 48 259 recoveries. More than 1 013 000 tests had been done.
- Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are in dispute over three offshore oil blocks. Angola's has not changed its approach to the problem, however. It has absolutely no intention of sharing them.

