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Angola Fact Sheet

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Angola-UK Relations

Lord Malloch-Brown's visit to Luanda on the 14 and 15 June is the first British ministerial visit to Angola since 2003. The visit is timely as the UK is seeking to re-engage with Angola and Angola is building deeper diversified relationships with members of the international community including the UK. Angola is currently the president of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Chair of the Gulf of Guinea Commission and sits on the UN's Human Rights Commission.

British policy towards Angola has lacked depth and engagement has been limited. In 2005, Angola was deemed strategic for British energy needs, but despite this label the bilateral relationship remains patchy with limited access for British officials to key policy makers in Luanda. In March 2009 the British government re-opened its credit line for exports to Angola, with a value of up to US\$70 million for entirely private investments.

Diplomacy

The UK opened its embassy in Luanda in 1978 following the trial of British mercenaries captured by the Government. Throughout the 1980s British diplomatic presence was inconspicuous. During this period, the UK showed sympathy towards the UNITA rebels although this policy changed in late 1992. Angola has maintained an Embassy in London since the 1980s. The Angolan State oil company SONANGOL and state airline TAAG retain offices in London. A number of British officials have visited such as the Secretary of State for International Development (April 2002) and the Minister for Africa, (December 2002, February 2003, March 2003).

Diana, Princess of Wales, visited Angola in January 1997 as a guest of the British Red Cross and Halo Trust, a British NGO working to clear landmines. Her visit was a watershed moment for international efforts to eradicate antipersonnel mines with iconic photos of the Princess with landmine survivors. It helped lead to the Ottawa Landmine Ban Treaty and the Nobel Peace Prize for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines that year.

The most frenetic UK diplomatic engagement was in 2003 when Angola sat on the UN Security Council. Baroness Amos, then Minister for Africa, visited Angola

three times in search of Angolan support for the UK-US position on Iraq should there have been a further UN Security Council resolution. President dos Santos was invited to visit the UK on one of these trips. That invitation still remains open.

Angolan officials are regular visitors to the UK. President dos Santos visited in 1992. Other visitors have included Isaias Samakuva, the new UNITA leader (October 2003), Vice Minister for Territorial Administration (May 2005); Deputy Prime Minister (November 2004); Minister of Social Reintegration (February 2004); Finance Minister (April 2004); Vice Minister for Territorial Administration (May 2005); Vice Minister Foreign Affairs (October 2005) and the Minister of the Economy (May 2009).

There have also been a number of parliamentary delegations from Angola visiting the UK. Many of these visitors were invited by the Angola Forum at Chatham House which has become a focal point for research, debate and policy analysis towards Angola. The Forum was founded in 1998 and has grown in reputation in recent years. It also provides support to an All Party Parliamentary Group on Angola, which visited Angola in May 2003 and in September 2006.

There are a large number of Angolans studying at UK higher education institutions, including in Manchester as part of a SONANGOL training scheme. The British Embassy in Luanda has also offered a small number of scholarships to Angolans for MA courses in the UK. Through the British Council the UK provided English language training for the Forças Armadas Angolanas (FAA) until June 2009 when it ended due to funding cuts. The policy was aimed at enhancing Angola's capacity to contribute to international peacekeeping commitments. The British Council is considering opening an operation in Angola in 2009 primarily aimed at providing English language training.

Aid

Between 1993 and 2000 the UK provided £48 million of assistance for Angola, peaking at £13.5 million in 1993/94. From 1996 to 1998 Angola was among the top ten recipients of UK assistance. Between 2000 and 2002, UK aid for Angola was mainly for humanitarian purposes. The most significant development programme has been the Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (LUPP), for democratic planning and management of basic services for the urban poor.

The DFID Angola programme, which was run of the British Embassy in Luanda, was valued at some £9 million per annum for the period 2003-2006. During 2007-2008 DFID supported Angola through both bilateral and regional assistance, valued at some £6m, channelled through international NGOs or UN agencies. Current support aims to help strengthen key multilaterals in Angola, including the World Bank, UNICEF and European Commission. DFID support for Angola's 2008 legislative elections included a £1million electoral education project and it plans to extend its support for the presidential and municipal elections. DFID provided £750,000 per year for demining although this ended in 2009.

In 2005 the DFID programme was earmarked for closure due to its small size and as Angola became a lower Middle-Income Country with a fast growing economy. The DFID office in Luanda was closed in March 2009 and all Angola activities are now managed out of DFID's Pretoria office as part of its southern Africa programme.

The number of UK-based NGOs prioritizing work on Angola has declined since the end of the conflict. Amnesty International, One World Action, CAFOD and Christian Aid have remained actively engaged. Save the Children Fund, Oxfam GB and Care International are also engaged.

Trade

The majority of the two-way trade with Angola is related to the oil sector. During 2004 the UK exported £119.28m of goods to Angola, the vast majority of which were for products relating to the oil and gas industry. In the same year, the UK imported around £9.94m from Angola. The bulk of this was crude oil. Apart from BP which has a major stake in the oil sector and plans to invest some US\$8bn by 2010, other British companies operating in Angola include British Airways, Compass Group and De La Rue. Crown Agents and a number of Scottish service companies are also involved.

In March 2009 the British government re-opened its credit line for exports to Angola, with a value of up to US\$70 million for entirely private investments. This credit line is aimed at funding exports in the medium term and is appropriate for essential goods, services and projects for Angola based in the UK.

Trade statistics

UK Trade with Angola (£million)

	UK exports*	UK imports
2003	103.7	9.8
2004	119.3	9.9
2005	158.3	15.0
2006	206.3	16.0
2007	273.5	154.5

**UK exports are principally oil-related*

Crown Agents was contracted in March 2001 to February 2006 to reform customs operations at the Port and Airport of Luanda. In December 2005 the Angolan Finance Ministry ordered the setting up of a commission to negotiate the extension of the contract with Crown Agents for another three years and the contract was approved in early April 2006. As in Mozambique, the customs programme has had a significant impact. The average time taken for a consignment of goods to pass through customs in 2001 was three weeks; the process now takes 48 hours. In 2004 it collected some US\$823.73m, an increase of a third in revenue over the same period in 2003. A number of trade missions including the London Chamber of Commerce, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and scoping missions by the UK West Africa Action Group of the Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, have visited Angola. The UK WAAG with financial support from BP and UK Trade and Investment and the Scottish development agency, launched business services support in Luanda in January 2001. The UK WAAG and the Angolan Chamber of Commerce have discussed setting up a UK-Angola Chamber of Commerce.

Conclusion

Lord Malloch-Brown's visit to Angola is timely as Angola seeks to renew its international partnerships. Angola plays an important role in southern and central Africa and has become one of the major destinations for UK oil and gas investment in the world.