

India's interest in Angola

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The resource rich African continent captures a vital space in the geo-strategic calculus of India, a country that is currently emerging as a major economic powerhouse trying to reposition itself in the changing world order. Angola is no exception where the Asian power has carried out its engagement in diverse fronts, as it has done elsewhere in Africa.

New Delhi's engagement with Luanda as it is today did not unfold in a vacuum. India was one of the first countries to recognize the post-colonial government formed by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in 1975, following its support of nationalist movements against Portuguese colonial rule in the south-west African territory. While India set up its resident mission in Luanda in 1986, Angola established its embassy in New Delhi in 1992.

India also remained party to all three United Nations (UN) Angola verification Missions in Angola between 1989 and 1997, when that country was rid-

den with intra-state politico-armed conflict, to be resolved in 2002 with the signing of the *Luena* Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MPLA Angolan government and its *bête noire* the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Close political relations between the two countries were nurtured by the bilateral visits that were initially infrequent, yet uninterrupted. Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Angola in 1986 and Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos visited India in the subsequent year. Angolan Minister for External Relations João Bernardo de Miranda visited India in 2006. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos met in 2009 during the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy. There were several other important visits ensuing from the two sides as well.

India-Angola political visits are perceived to have become regular after 2004, when oil and diamond diplomacy took off as part of the global commodities boom. While resource partnership concretizes the relationships between the two countries, what remains is the overriding concern that for India to engage with Angola, like any other African country, is a way to garner support for its permanent membership in the expanded United Nation's Security Council.

Luanda, on the other hand, bandwagons with New Delhi in the demand for

putting an end to the trade-distorting policies in agriculture maintained by developed countries, which adversely affect developing countries and their integration into the world trading system.

Bilateral trade between India and Angola, which was only a few million dollars five years ago, surged to US\$4.24 billion in 2009-2010, mainly on account of oil imports. India, along with the United States and China, remains one of the main destinations of exports from Angola. India's exports to and investments in Angola have shown a perceptible increase after the cessation of civil war. The principal items of export are Indian tractors and transport vehicles, agricultural machinery and implements, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, tea, rice (Basmati), food and meat products, spirits and beverages, finished leather, paper/wood products, and petroleum products.

The growing trade and investment partnership is sustained by lines of credit extended by India, including US\$40 million for rehabilitation of Angolan Railways by the Rail India Technical and Economic Consultancy Services (RITES), US\$10 million for the purchase of tractors and US\$5 million for the agricultural sector on credit extended by the EXIM Bank of India.

On the energy front, crude oil is the main stay of the Angolan economy, accounting for over 90% of export



revenues and over 80% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Angola becomes the largest crude oil producing country in Africa, with estimated proven reserves varying between 12 to 15 billion barrels. The natural gas reserves are estimated at 2 trillion cubic feet. A full-fledged member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) since 2007 having a production limit of 1.9 million barrels per day, Angola is among six African countries (others being Libya, Nigeria, Algeria, Sudan and Egypt) identified by India for cooperation in the energy sector.

India has tried to get oil acreage in Angola, as part of its strategy to expand access to the African hydrocarbon field. Nevertheless, India's energy engagement with Angola is subject to the expanding presence of China in its oil industry. For instance, Indian state owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) was outbid by its Chinese competitor for an Angolan oil block in 2004.

India's diamond diplomacy seems more successful in Angola, the 4th largest diamond producer in the world. The Angolan state diamond company, Endiama, has agreed to do business directly with the large Indian diamond industry by setting up an office in Mumbai, while India is looking to open an institute for jewelry manufacturing in Luanda. Endiama has also invited Indian mining companies to explore and develop diamond mines in Angola.

The size of the Indian community present in Angola has reached in recent years nearly 5.000 persons, involved in trade as well as the manufacture of oil, steel and plastics. Moreover, there is a large number of people of Indian origin who hold passports of different nationalities including of African nations like Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo engaged in trading and construction businesses.

India carries a significant stake in its strategic partnership with Angola against the backdrop of solid political solidarity between the two countries.

While the engagement in the oil sector witnesses the overwhelming Chinese influence, negotiation in the diamond industry seems to be a success story. On the whole, the contour of a partnership based on the compatibility of interests retains a positive trajectory as reflected in the surging Diaspora linkages.

In the loop: old age piracy in the Mozambique Channel

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The punishment for piracy was death by public hanging. This was the fate of the famous William Kidd, whose body hung for three years at Tilbury Point facing the Thames, warning others of their fate. During the 18th and 19th centuries, piracy was the most diffuse form of organized crime in the world, often state sponsored. Only the innovations brought by the steam age in the 19th century, combined with many of the world's navies and the necessary political will, were sufficient to destroy the global networks of piracy and privateering operating widely in the same century. Today, long after the industrial revolution, piracy is returning to the seas, this time equipped not with sails and compasses, but GPS devices, RPG's and small but fast vessels, making short teams organized and extremely adaptable.

Recently, piracy has been reported off the coast of Mozambique. During Christmas 2010, Liberian registered tanker NS Africa and the Majestic, a cargo vessel registered in Panama, were forced to fight off and outmaneuver pirates operating

in the Mozambique Channel. A third ship, the Vega 5, is thought to have been hijacked on December 31st and is believed to be heading towards Somalia. The December 2010 attacks targeting the vessels off the coast of Mozambique – one of them confirmed by Mozambican Deputy Defense Minister Agostinho Mondlane as carrying Somali pirates – bear the fruit and feedback of the yet to be successful international sea monitoring operations in the Gulf of Aden. For all their tremendous naval apparatus, the world's most powerful, better-equipped navies are having difficulty eradicating piracy in the region. Proof of this lies in the expansion of piracy activities to the south.

When attacks and hijacks of international trade ships began, the international community sent fully equipped warships to disrupt the menace. It soon became clear that pirates were able to operate very far from the coast, which laid the grounds for assuming the Mozambique Channel, with all its attractive security 'soft spots', could indeed be next. However, the international community's plan was shortsighted, focusing only on the areas around the Gulf of Aden, thus not properly supporting and developing the young Mozambican navy. Now, as pirates reach further south, both Mozambique and South Africa are threatened by the disruption of seaborne trade.

Piracy is the most serious threat southern African countries face. Approximately 96% of South Africa's exports are conveyed by sea and most Mozambican exports are also made by sea, 57.7% of which flow directly to the European Union. The greater part of Mozambique's imports – roughly 60% – also enter the country through the sea, making these trade routes indispensable both to Mozambican and South African economies. Furthermore, landlocked Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia will also be affected by piracy expansion if the matter is not addressed in a timely manner. Due



to their geographic nature, these countries depend on South Africa and Mozambique's – and to a certain extent Tanzania's – ports to be able to import and export, in other words, to create wealth. If southern African trade routes become affected or are avoided due to this nautical terrorism, social and economic consequences will be very grave. Hence, piracy in the channel cannot be ignored nor can it fall into oblivion in the hope that the issue resolves itself.

Although the need for a quick, effective resolution is clear, several impediments are set to create difficult obstacles in the process. Firstly, the only country with a capable navy – currently experiencing budget cuts – is South Africa, who already has deployed a frigate and a logistical support vessel to monitor piracy activity in the channel. Still, the area is too immense for one frigate to properly monitor. Secondly, the international community, preoccupied with its finances, will not be willing to set up the Gulf of Aden security apparatus in southern African seas, an operation that would elevate costs greatly. Moreover, whatever bilateral operations South Africa and Mozambique decide to undertake, technically they will always be a unilateral approach to the problem, as Mozambique is far from being able to parallel the patrolling capabilities of the South African navy. Responsibility for supporting Mozambique's navy in order to stop piracy that affects all of southern Africa must also not fall on the SADC or African Union's shoulders, as not only are the resources not in place, but the unilateral nature of the intervention would clearly remain the same. Hence, the only way to stop piracy from spreading in the Mozambique Channel lies in international intervention, especially from those countries with strong, developed navies, who must either patrol the area themselves or support the Mozambican and South African navies by ceding patrolling vessels and surveillance equipment. In the long term, allowing piracy in the southern

African seas to operate freely will have harsher financial consequences than the costs of setting up an operation of such magnitude.

In the 19th century, the combined forces of many of the world's navies overcame piracy. Invariably, the solution to today's piracy resides on a multilateral, coordinated intervention, especially from the United States, China, Russia, India and some European Union states, namely France and the United Kingdom. Allowing pirates to operate freely in one area provides incentives to act in other areas, maybe in Southeast Asia or even Latin America. If the root of the problem is not addressed, history will surely repeat itself.

Portugal and the Maghreb: Time to renew the vows

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On the December 17th a young man named Mohamed Bouzizi set himself ablaze in the Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzi, and his desperate act of protest sparked a wave of popular demonstrations throughout North Africa and the Middle East. These unprecedented and, until then, unthinkable demonstrations have already deposed the former presidents of Tunisia and Egypt, respectively Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, and have structurally affected the self-assurance and political procedures of many other Arab ruling elites.

The common and understandable reaction to these events is surprise. Although the motives that unleashed the demonstrations were well known and have existed for decades, hardly anyone could imagine that protesters in Tunisia would be able to topple a 23 years old authoritarian regime, let alone spark a wave of direct defiance to incumbent regimes along the region. The so-called Arab Street, usually portrayed as submissive to ruling elites or prone to Islamist violence, is starting to show how diverse and complex it really is. Contrary to what some may have thought, Arabs are not keen on authoritarian paternalism and aspire to better conditions of life, namely freedom. And if the debunking of entrenched authoritarian regimes raises many questions, what will follow also leads us to a myriad of possible scenarios. For better or worse, the processes at hand now are altering the region's post-colonial order and the complete spectrum of the ongoing changes will probably take months, if not years, to be fully comprehended.

Regardless of whether further regimes will collapse, protests have already taken hold of the region and their consequences have disturbed the world's geopolitical and geostrategic assumptions. The United States and the European Union are actors with significant interests in the region and, thus, are directly affected by the course of events. Both Washington and Brussels have always relied on the stability offered by these Arab regimes, and now that this factor was challenged, these two world players are simultaneously trying to understand what happened as well as how can they fit in the future political context.

Although on a different scale and scope, Portugal is also an interested player. At least since 2005, Lisbon has been making the Maghreb a foreign - and perhaps even economic - policy priority. That is, aside from the traditional three foreign policy pillars - European, Transatlantic and Portuguese speaking countries- the Maghreb would become the fourth axis of Portugal's stance in the world. When facing the current turmoil, Portugal must ask itself whether this venture is worth persevering. In order to answer this question, it is first necessary to understand the assumptions that made the Maghreb a foreign policy priority. Second, it is essential to see if those assumptions are still in place, and define, according to the findings, what course of action should be followed.

Portugal and the Maghreb: building a new foreign policy axis

The current and former governments, both led by Prime Minister José Sócrates, invested much time and effort into establishing and deepening ties with the Maghreb. Perhaps, since the transition towards democracy in the 1970s, these were the Portuguese executives that dedicated most attention. Memorandums and agreements have been signed in areas such as trade, energy, culture, security or defense and periodical high-level meetings are held. Foreign Affairs Minister Luís Amado visited the Maghreb several times, as did José Sócrates, who in 2007, during a visit to Algeria, defined the region as a "foreign policy priority" to Portugal - an idea which was been reiterated ever since. And these statements are more than paltry intentions: For example, Portugal was Tunisia's 4th Foreign Direct Investor in 2010; and while Algeria was, in 2000, the 41st destination for Portuguese exports, in 2009 it became the 21st.

One of the last stages of building a new foreign policy axis with the Maghreb took place from March 21st to 23rd of last year, with Prime Minister José Sócrates visiting the region accompanied by Foreign Affairs Minister Luís Amado, Minister of Economy José Vieira da Silva, Minister of Science and Higher Education Mariano Gago as well as a delegation of Portuguese



investors. This tour visited Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, and had an agenda dominated by economic and energetic topics, which reflect the overall nature of Portugal-Maghreb ties so far.

But why is the Maghreb interesting for Lisbon? The main answer, as the aforementioned visit suggests, is found in Portugal's need to internationalize its economy. The Maghreb is an appealing market for Portuguese exports and, on the other hand, given the South Mediterranean countries' need for infrastructures and overall development, they provide business opportunities for Portuguese companies. Aside from trade, energy, the 5+5 Initiative and security – namely immigration, terrorism and organized crime – also explain why the region is vital for Portugal.

And there are some particular advantages for Lisbon, one being proximity. Although not geographically a Mediterranean country, Portugal is perceived as such by the Maghreb states due to its history and culture, thus not being considered an outsider in the region. Moreover, unlike other European countries with a colonial past in the region, such as France or Spain, bilateral ties with Portugal do not tend to stir controversy within the Maghreb societies and elites. Nonetheless, despite positive results and the unequivocal role now occupied by the Maghreb in Portuguese foreign policy, bilateral relations have been overly reliant on trade and business. There is an implicit linear idea that an economic relation is an antechamber for stronger and more consistent political ties. That does not necessarily mean that nowadays political relations do not exist. In fact, both the progress on economic issues as well as regular high-level meetings between Portuguese representatives and their counterparts from the Maghreb indicate that there are good political contacts. Nevertheless, areas such as culture, education or even justice have a much lesser degree of significance in the broad picture of bilateral ties, if compared with the economic dimension. Political issues such as these would allow greater involvement and even interdependence, and consequently give the Portugal-Maghreb agenda a wider variety of topics. Furthermore, when a diplomatic relation is largely based on trade and business, imponderables such as recession or political turmoil can compromise the entire potential of bonds which are intended to be of strategic importance. Evidently, strategic priorities require an amount of depth and structure able to uphold them in the face of adversity.

Taken as a whole, the political dimension was always secondary, and this new axis never had consistent planning that comprised medium-term objectives – a problem which is not an exclusive of bilateral ties with the Maghreb or of foreign policy in general.

Why the Maghreb still matters and what should be done

Despite the ongoing riots and the political instability inherent to the unfolding processes in the Maghreb, the assumptions that made the region vital to Portugal are still in place.

First and obviously, the geographic proximity has not changed. Second, Portugal still needs to internationalize its economy, especially against the backdrop of austerity measures and a much-speculated upcoming financial bailout plan. Third, if the Maghreb needed investment in infrastructures and assistance for its development before the current wave of protests, the abrupt political changes as well as the destruction and/or economic stagnation resulting from the street demonstrations accentuates that need even more. Fourth, the security concerns are even greater. Regardless of what the outcome of the political processes will be, the processes themselves tend to diminish the state's efficiency in many domains, namely with regard to effective control over streets and borders. Furthermore, aside from dealing with their own domestic challenges, states also have to cope with the spillover effects from neighboring instability – such as Tunisia and Egypt are experiencing due to migration flows coming out of Libya. In general, the context favors mobility both within and among countries, which facilitates immigration, smuggling of all sorts, and the mobility of terrorist cells and criminal organizations. Given the nature of the aforementioned threats, it is impossible to efficiently counter them outside of a cooperation framework.

The previously mentioned reasons affect Portugal's continued commitment in the region. Lisbon's presence and influence exists, as mentioned before, essentially through trade and business. Therefore, the absence of political and fiscal stability that results from the enduring turmoil may be evoked by some as an argument for a withdrawal, even if momentary. However, staying and sustaining immediate economic losses may reveal to be a strategic advantage for the future. In countries with emerging political elites such as Tunisia, the maintenance of economic activity will demonstrate that Portugal is a reliable partner, unattached to the previous status quo. Furthermore, it will allow Portugal to be on the ground from the inception of the political landscape that will govern these countries in the future, whatever it may be.

But the current moment is also an opportunity to learn from the past. Portugal, as many other states and even organizations such as the European Union, focused its action on business and institutional relations. In other words, these Western states have generally overlooked the political dimension of bilateral relations and neglected the establishment of ties with social forces. As a result, Portugal was – like Europe – bypassed by events on the streets and largely ignored who the emerging political actors are.

The ongoing wave of protests offers the possibility to either partially reset or even restart diplomatic relations, and consequently opens a wide range of new approaches. Both the countries that lost their leadership as well as those which maintain their ruling elites will have to reshape – the former, at least in part – their institutions, providing an opportunity for Portugal to have a role in assisting in that change. Bearing in mind that Portuguese



presence, contrary to Spanish or French, is by and large free from 'neo-colonialism' labeling, Portugal may have a comparative advantage in gaining some leverage. This is particularly relevant if we consider the central consequence of the demonstrations: the people have acquired a political voice and from now on the ruling elites will have to pay more attention to what the Maghreb's main street thinks.

And these ramifications lead to another important lesson regarding the apparent dichotomy stability-versus-freedom. Protests have shown that turning a blind eye to social grievances and claims will, in the medium/long run, affect the immediate stability offered by authoritarian regimes. Hence, it is in Portugal's interest to place the political agenda at the same level as its economic ambitions. Lisbon should also adopt a broader standpoint and, instead of restricting itself to institutional relations, create and promote ties with associations and movements from civil society.

It is then necessary to strengthen the political angle of inter-state relations and, in the case of Portugal, some interesting policies are already implemented and only require greater depth. Defense cooperation is one of those policies where Lisbon has good foundations and should invest more. The first bilateral cooperation agreements were signed in the 1990s with Morocco and Tunisia, respectively in 1993 and in 1995, and later with Algeria in 2005, with Libya in 2008 and with Mauritania in 2010. Cooperation was initially held under Annual Bilateral Cooperation Programs. Although successful, these programs led to isolated activities that extinguished cooperation once they were achieved. Then, the Portuguese National Defense Ministry proposed and agreed on Triennial Indicative Plans with the Maghreb countries, giving greater continuity and strategic depth to bilateral defense cooperation. Periodical cooperation of a structural character in this domain tends to homogenize defense cultures among the armed forces involved, narrow the gap of principles and procedures between different military institutions, and build bonds of trust – both formal and informal. Contacts and mutual assistance in this field are crucial given the role that South Mediterranean Armed Forces occupy in their countries – a role that was clearly displayed in Tunisia after former President Ben Ali left for Saudi Arabia, or after former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak relinquished his position. Knowledge and contacts, especially informal ones, are essential in moments of political uncertainty. If cooperation in the realm of defense is a correct and important decision that should be maintained, the same cannot be said when it comes to intelligence services. The Maghreb's own characteristics and its proximity to Portugal make it crucial to have eyes and ears in the region. That became even more obvious when Portugal decided to consider the Maghreb a strategic priority. In order for that to happen, Portugal needs to have its

own autonomous intelligence sources on the ground. However, the investment made by Lisbon in this area has always been far below real necessities. And if the situation was already deficient, it became even worse when Portugal decided to close the intelligence posts, or 'antennas', in the region: Morocco lost its antenna; the one in Madrid that monitored Algeria was closed, and despite plans to open one in Algiers, the decision was put on standby; also suspended were intentions to open antennas in Tunis and Tripoli. The decision, although harmful, would be understandable if justified with budget constraints. Yet, if that is the case, the explanation requires further clarification because while the Maghreb's antennas were closed, others with much less strategic importance such as New Delhi and Moscow remain open.

Final remarks

The assumptions that have placed the Maghreb on the short list of Portugal's foreign policy objectives are not only in place but, in some cases, are even more pressing. It is true that the protests at hand and their ramifications have shaken the geopolitical and geostrategic landscape, but instead of inverting the need to make the Maghreb a priority for Portugal, they have stressed it. Geographical proximity, economic interests on both sides of the Mediterranean, the energetic needs and the security concerns continue to demand a Portuguese commitment to the region.

In an interview to the Portuguese media, Foreign Minister Luís Amado rightly stated that Portugal's role in Europe depends on what it can achieve outside of it. The Maghreb is certainly a region that not only serves Lisbon's interests on a bilateral basis, but also contributes to Portugal's stance in Europe. There are common interests and Portugal has a comparative advantage in the region if compared to its European partners. However, to be effective, those advantages require continued dedication and investment.



Timeline of Events

Angola

1 February (Addis Ababa):

Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoty criticized delays in setting up the agenda for the 16th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, as well as its narrow scope limited to peace and security issues, at the expense of other topics related to the development of the continent. However, Chicoty considered the meeting to be positive and productive, in particular given the consensus reached over the Ivorian crisis, which he termed to be in tandem with Angola's long standing position.

1 February (Luanda):

Japan announced that through its International Cooperation Association, it would fund a US\$50 million hydroelectric dam on the Cutato River in the Bié province.

2 February (Luanda):

Russian Ambassador to Angola Serguey Nenchev praised relations with Angola, which he qualified as "high level", mainly owing to President Dmitry Medvedev's visit in 2009.

2 February (Lisbon):

Angola's national oil company Sonangol intensified contacts to buy a direct stake in Portugal's oil company Galp Energia. Nowadays it detains an indirect participation through Amorim Energia, but Sonangol's goal is to partially or totally buy Italy's ENI 33% participation in Galp Energia. The company's CEO Manuel Vicente travelled to Lisbon accompanied by Angolan State Minister and Chief of the Presidency's Civil Office Carlos Feijó, and several contacts were made at entrepreneurial and governmental levels. Brazil's Petrobras announced it dropped out of the race to enter into Galp Energia's capital.

4 February (Caxito):

On the 4th of February Celebrations, Angolan Vice-President Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos 'Nandó' declared that the country's government is strongly committed to the national reconstruction program and to the strengthening of democratic rule.

4 February (Luanda):

The newspaper Novo Jornal stated that the Angolan Armed Forces could be on the verge of sending up to 110 men to Guinea-Bissau under the framework of military and technical cooperation.

7-9 February (Luanda):

The Angolan Foreign Affairs Ministry's Broad Consultative Council, which will debate the Ministry's organic statute, diplomatic statutes, norms on diplomatic missions and the financial management of consulates for three days, was formally opened with the presence of President José Eduardo dos Santos and Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoty. José Eduardo dos Santos declared a stronger and more organized Ministry is necessary, with improvements in its organizational and organic structure, so that Angola can assume a more coherent external action. The President also defended diplomats should retire at 60. Chicoty stated that Angola should improve its south-south cooperation framework within regional structures such as the SADC and ECCAS.

8 February (Luanda):

Angolan Ambassador to China João Manuel Bernardo stated that he envisaged deeper relations between Angola and China in 2011, further investing in the fields of finance, telecommunications and civil construction, as well as agriculture, with a soon to be announced US\$2.5 billion Chinese grant for the agrarian sector.

8 February (Luanda):

President José Eduardo dos Santos received the Executive Secretary of the Southern Africa Development Community, Tomaz Salomão, to discuss the Community's perspectives ahead of Angola's tenure at its head in August.

8 February (Luanda):

Norwegian Secretary of State for Human Rights Erik Lahnestein visited Angola, where Foreign Minister George Chicoty received him. Lahnestein invited President José Eduardo dos Santos to visit Norway until the end of the year, and praised the good relations between the two countries.

9 February (Luanda):

Angolan ambassador to Portugal José Marcos Barrica defended that peace in Angola opened

a window for larger political, economic and socio-cultural relations with Portugal, and mentioned the fact that Angola remains the country with which Portugal maintains greater cooperation ties outside Europe.

10 February (Luanda):

Equatorial-Guinea's ambassador to Angola, José Esono Micha Akeng, said after a meeting with Vice-President Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos 'Nandó' that his country supported Angola's stance on Ivory Coast's ongoing crisis.

11 February (New York):

After visiting the DRC and Angola, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström released a statement denouncing systematic sexual violence practiced on Congolese women and girls caught up in expulsions from Angola, on both sides of the border.

15-17 February (Luanda):

Finnish Foreign Trade and Development Minister Paavo Väyrynen met with Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoty and discussed ways to strengthen trade relations between the two countries.

17 February (New Delhi):

Ahead of the Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference, Indian Foreign Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna received his Angolan counterpart George Chicoty, alongside other African Foreign Affairs Ministers. Krishna stated that in recent decades India has been reinvigorating its historical ties with the continent.

18-21 February (Luanda):

Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Perestrello travelled to Angola, to provide official Portuguese support to local efforts of delimitation and expansion of the country's continental platform. Perestrello met with Angolan Vice-Minister of Defense Gaspar Santos Rufino.

21 February (Tokyo):

Angolan Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoty visited Japan, where he was received by his counterpart Seiji Maehara. The two opened negotiations on a bilateral investment treaty. If negotiations are brought to a positive conclusion, Angola will be the first sub-Saharan country to seal an investment pact with Japan.

**28 February (Luanda):**

Sonangol celebrated its 35th anniversary. The company's CEO Manuel Vicente stated on the occasion that Sonangol plans to acquire a direct stake in Portugal's oil company Galp Energia.

Brazil

1 February (New York):

Brazil assumed the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council. The situations in Haiti, the Middle East, Sudan, Guinea-Bissau, Timor Leste, Somalia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, as well as the sanctions regime for North Korea, will be high on the agenda.

4 February (Bogota):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota travelled to Colombia where he met with his counterpart María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar to discuss, among other things, regional issues like the strengthening of Unasul and both countries' temporary memberships at the UN Security Council.

7 February (Caracas):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota met with his Venezuelan counterpart Nicolás Maduro, seeking to review bilateral relations and regional issues of common interest.

7 February (Rio de Janeiro):

Brazilian state-run oil company Petrobras announced that it had ended talks to buy a stake in Portugal's Galp Energia, with no successful outcome in sight.

7-8 February (Brasília):

US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner met with Brazilian officials, including President Dilma Rousseff and Finance Minister Guido Mantega, to gather support in helping the US pressure China into allowing its currency to appreciate.

8 February (Brasília):

President Dilma Rousseff allegedly told US officials that Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet is the best option for the nation's Air Force, in the current opening bid, but that she seeks better terms regarding technological transference by the US.

10-11 February (New York):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota hosted a debate at the UN Security Council devoted to "Security and Development". Patriota also took the opportunity to attend ministerial gatherings of the G4 and the IBSA Forum as well as meet with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN General Assembly President Joseph Deiss and other counterparts, like Portuguese Foreign Minister Luís Amado.

12-13 February (Port-au-Prince):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota travelled to Haiti where he met with President René Prével, Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive, and presidential candidates for the second round Michel Martelly and Mirlande Manigat, seeking to review the progress of the electoral process, the evolution of the cooperation projects led by Brazil and the contribution of Minustah to the security and stability in Haiti. Patriota also announced a contribution of US\$300 million from Brazil, for the completion of the second round of elections in Haiti.

14 February (Buenos Aires):

Defense Minister Nelson Jobim met with his Argentinean counterpart Arturo Puricelli, to review bilateral defense ties and to seek the build up of a common regional defense industry. Afterwards, Jobim also visited Tandanor shipyard and further expressed Brazil's support for Argentinean claims over the Malvinas/Falklands.

14 February (Montevideo):

Defense Minister Nelson Jobim met with Uruguayan President José Mujica, Defense Minister Luis Rosadilla and Foreign Minister Luis Almagro. Regional cooperation over common defense projects and Haiti's reconstruction needs were high on the agenda.

15 February (Brasília):

Planalto Palace announced that US President Barack Obama will travel to Brazil on March 19th-20th.

15 February (Brasília):

Defense Minister Nelson Jobim said his ministry will cut up to US\$2.4 billion from its US\$8.9 billion budget this year, without affecting a pending multibillion dollar fighter aircraft contract.

15 February (Beirut):

Brazil officially assumed command of the Maritime Task-Force from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), with the aim of preventing weapons traffic to the country.

18 February (Brasília):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota hosted his Portuguese counterpart Luís Amado to review bilateral relations and assess issues such as the CPLP, the Alliance of Civilizations, EU-Brazil/EU-Mercosul relations, as well as both countries' strategies in the UN Security Council.

18 February (Brasília):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota disclosed some guidelines for Brazil's foreign policy in the coming

years. The relationship with China is to be given special attention while official channels with Iran are to remain open, in a bid to defuse local tensions. On the other hand, ties with the US are not going to be neglected but stalled global trade talks under the Doha Round framework are to remain a priority for Brazil's diplomacy.

21-22 February (Brasília):

French Foreign Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie met with her Brazilian counterpart Antônio Patriota to review the ongoing Strategic Partnership as well as to discuss international issues, including climate change and the reform of international institutions. Alliot-Marie also met with Defense Minister Nelson Jobim, seeking to provide reassurances regarding the French proposal for the long-lasting fighter bid.

22 February (Brasília):

Secretary General of the Organization of American States José Miguel Insulza met with President Dilma Rousseff and Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota, with regional issues and the upcoming General Assembly in El Salvador high on the agenda.

23-24 February (Washington):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota travelled to the US where he met with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, National Security Advisor Thomas E. Donilon, and Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner, in order to prepare President Barack Obama's upcoming visit to Brazil. Bilateral issues, Haiti, or the situation in the Middle East were among the items covered. Patriota also took the opportunity to meet with President of the World Bank Robert B. Zoellick.

25-26 February (Granada):

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota attended the 22nd Inter-sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of State of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), with the political and cooperation dialogue between Brazil and the Caribbean high on the agenda. Patriota also took the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with several of his local counterparts.

Cape Verde

1-4 February (Praia):

A technical assistance mission from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) visited Cape Verde to help technical staff from the Directorate-General of Trade and Industry to finalize the design of projects to be submitted for approval by the Integrated Framework Council.

**2 February (Praia):**

According to reports, Japan is to provide food aid to Cape Verde worth an estimated €2.9 million, aimed at ensuring food security.

6 February (Praia):

Prime Minister and PAICV candidate José Maria Neves secured a third term in Cape Verde's parliamentary elections, against opposition MpD leader Carlos Veiga.

14-15 February (Praia):

Defense Minister Cristina Lima met with Portuguese Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Parestrello to review the bilateral Technical-Military Cooperation agreements, with a focus on naval construction and repair.

17 February (Praia): According to figures published by the National Statistics Institute, Cape Verde's exports rose 33.1% in 2010. Spain is the largest export market, accounting for around 68.3%. Portugal is the second export market with 24.9%. In 2010 Portugal also consolidated its leadership among Cape Verde's European suppliers, with 45.5% of Cape Verdean imports. Imports from China rose by 158.6%.

24 February (Paris):

Cape Verde officially joined the Centre for Development of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Guinea-Bissau

1 February (Dakar):

Guinea-Bissau's Finance Minister, José Mário Vaz, who is also the current head of the West African franc zone council for single currency, warned about the risk of the fight over control of Ivory Coast's reserve in the regional central bank by the two opposing factions in that country, which could harm the stability of the region's banking and financial system.

2 February (Bissau):

Brazilian and South-African ambassadors to Guinea-Bissau, respectively Jorge Geraldo Kadri and Lulo Aron Mnguni, pledged their countries' support to Guinea-Bissau, particularly in the UN Security Council, in separate audiences granted by President Malam Bacai Sanhá.

3 February (Bissau):

Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Guinea-Bissau Joseph Mutaboba stated that the UN would continue to support institutional strengthening processes, in particular the implementation of national strategies for Security Sector Reform, Defense and Justice.

10 February (Bissau):

Bissau-Guinean authorities burned over 800 kilograms of drugs apprehended between 2007 and 2010. The event was led by Attorney-General Amine Saad and witnessed by the diplomatic corps.

14 February (Lisbon):

A diplomatic delegation headed by Foreign Minister Adelino Mano Queta arrived in Lisbon and will go on to visit Madrid, London, Paris, Berlin and Brussels. The delegation's tour is a response to the EU Council's decision to open consultations with Guinea-Bissau under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement.

15-17 February (Dakar):

Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior visited Senegal where he met several ambassadors from the EU member states, US and other African countries. This trip was framed within the broader diplomatic effort to avoid further EU sanctions. Gomes Júnior pleaded for the "understanding and support of the international community". Upon his return to Bissau, Gomes Júnior reaffirmed his belief that the EU sanctions are unfounded and that the measures adopted overlooked efforts made by the government since the April 1st military mutiny.

17 February (Bissau):

Guinea-Bissau's Navy Chief of Staff, Bubo Na Tchuto, asked the EU to come forward with "evidence" that he is involved in drug trafficking, while asking the body to stop interfering with his country's internal affairs.

17-23 February (Bissau):

The CPLP's Executive Secretary Domingos Simões Pereira travelled to Bissau where he held several meetings with local officials, CPLP ambassadors and members of civil society. One of the main topics discussed was the recently imposed EU sanctions and the government's diplomatic strategy to counter further measures.

21-25 February (New York):

Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior met UN officials and participated in a Security Council Meeting. Although Gomes Júnior recognized institutional weaknesses, he defended that Guinea-Bissau is not a failed state. He also asked for the support of the UN and UN Security Council members on the coming consultations with the EU. The UN Security Council, through the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peace Building Commission, ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, issued a statement noting the progress made in the country since the April 1st military mutiny.

However, it also highlighted its concerns over growing drug trafficking.

25 February (Bissau):

President Malam Bacai Sanhá's spokesman Agnelo Regalla held contacts with EU officials ahead of the consultations under the Cotonou Agreement envisaged for March, which will discuss the end, maintenance or increase of the current EU sanctions.

22 February (Bissau):

Attorney-General Amine Saad issued instructions on how to deal with and combat drug trafficking. The document highlighted the exclusive responsibility of the Judiciary Police to investigate crimes related to these activities.

22 February (New York):

The UN Secretary-General released a new report on Guinea-Bissau. Ban Ki-moon highlighted the "noticeable progress that Guinea-Bissau has made to reverse the negative effects of the civil-military events that took place on April 1st 2010". However, the report warns that "political stability is essential if the country is to use the window of opportunity presented by the recently announced debt relief".

Mozambique

2 February (Pretoria):

The South African Navy announced that it is preparing a force to patrol the Mozambique Channel to cope with the threat of attacks on vessels by Somali pirates. That force will comprise a frigate and a logistical support vessel that will remain in the Mozambique Channel for over a month.

6 February (Maputo):

According to local reports, the Somali pirates who hijacked a Mozambican fishing vessel, the "Vega 5" on December 27th are demanding a ransom equivalent to US\$1.8 million as a condition for the release of the crew, consisting of 19 Mozambicans, three Indonesians and two Spaniards.

9 February (Maputo):

The Mozambican government denied any knowledge of a ransom demand made by the Somali pirates who hijacked a Mozambican fishing vessel, the "Vega 5".

13 February (Maputo):

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) awarded a further 18 contracts worth approximately US\$900 million to Mozambique.

**23 February (Maputo):**

A Chinese delegation – headed by Li Zhaozhao, Vice Chairman of the People's Political Consultative Conference – met with President Armando Guebuza and Speaker of Parliament Verónica Macamo seeking to reaffirm ties between Mozambique and China.

23 February (Brussels):

The European Commission announced that Mozambique and the European Union are to begin negotiations to sign a new fishing agreement, since the present one is due to expire on December 31st.

Portugal

4 February (Brussels):

Prime Minister José Sócrates attended the European Council meeting.

9 February (Lisbon):

Gabonese Foreign Minister Paul Toungui met with his Portuguese counterpart Luís Amado and President of AICEP Basílio Horta. The strengthening of political, economic and cultural relations, as well as regional issues and the UN Security Council – where Gabon also holds a seat as non-permanent member – were high on the agenda.

10-11 February (Lisbon):

German President Christian Wulff paid an official visit to Portugal where he met with his counterpart Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister José Sócrates and Speaker of Parliament Jaime Gama.

10-11 February (New York):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado took part in a UN Security Council meeting devoted to "Security and Development". Amado also took the opportunity to meet with his counterparts from India, Colombia, Brazil, and Colombia – S. M. Krishna, René Castro, Antônio Patriota and María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, respectively – as well as with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom he conveyed Portugal's stand on the most pressing international matters.

13-14 February (Panama City):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado travelled to Panama where he met with his counterpart Juan Carlos Varela, seeking to strengthen bilateral relations and open up new business opportunities.

14 February (Lisbon):

President of the EU Commission José Manuel Durão Barroso met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva and Prime Minister José Sócrates

to discuss the ongoing financial crisis and the European response.

14-15 February (Praia):

Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Parestrello travelled to Cape Verde where he met with Defense Minister Cristina Lima to review the bilateral Technical-Military Cooperation agreements, with a focus on naval construction and repair. Possible joint participation of Cape Verdean and Portuguese forces in future peacekeeping missions was also discussed.

15 February (Mexico City):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado met with his Mexican counterpart Patricia Espinosa, aiming to expand and diversify Portuguese exports in Latin America. EU-Mexico relations, Portugal's term at the UN Security Council and G20 issues were also high on the agenda.

16-17 February (São Tomé):

Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Parestrello travelled to São Tomé and Príncipe, where he met with Defense Minister Carlos Stock and Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada to sign a new cooperation program for 2011/2013 under the Technical-Military Cooperation framework with Portugal.

17 February (Vienna):

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation João Gomes Cravinho travelled to Austria where he met with Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Kandeh Yumkella, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Tibor Tóth, and with Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukya Amano. Cravinho also took the opportunity to meet with his Austrian counterpart Johannes Kyrle to discuss UN Security Council matters, the Balkans and the Middle East.

18 February (Brasília):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado met with his Brazilian counterpart Antônio Patriota and President Dilma Rousseff. Bilateral economic relations, cooperation opportunities under the CPLP framework, financing and environmental issues, the Alliance of Civilizations, EU-Brazil and EU-Mercosul relations as well as both countries' interests at the UN Security Council, were high on the agenda.

18 February (Ljubljana):

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation João Gomes Cravinho presented the

Portuguese experience with development policies at a conference promoted by the Slovenian government. Later, he also met with his local counterpart Dragoljuba Bencina, to assess bilateral relations between the two countries.

18-21 February (Luanda):

Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Parestrello travelled to Angola to provide official Portuguese support to local efforts of delimitation and expansion of the country's continental platform.

20-21 February (Brussels):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado attended the EU's Foreign Affairs Council and the General Affairs Council, where the unrest in the Arab World, the Horn of Africa, the Middle Eastern peace process and developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, were high on the agenda. Amado also took the opportunity to hold a bilateral meeting with his Slovenian counterpart Samuel Zbogar.

22 February (Brussels):

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation João Gomes Cravinho took part in the Informal Council of Ministers for Development, with the situation in southern Sudan, the Green Paper on EU Development Policies, the European Strategy for the Sahel region and the situations in Egypt and Tunisia high on the agenda.

22-23 February (Lisbon):

Moroccan Foreign Minister Taieb Fassi Fihri travelled to Portugal under the framework of regular political consultations, where he met with Prime Minister José Sócrates, President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Speaker of Parliament Jaime Gama and his Portuguese counterpart Luís Amado. Portugal's membership of the UN Security Council and regional/international issues of common interest were high on the agenda.

26 February (Kuwait City):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado travelled to Kuwait where he attended the country's 50th independence anniversary and the 20th liberation anniversary celebrations. Amado took this opportunity to meet with Vice-Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Muhammad Al-Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, to discuss bilateral relations and recent regional developments.

27 February (Amman):

Foreign Minister Luís Amado met with his Jordanian counterpart Nasser Judeh, under regular political consultations between the two countries. The escalating events in the region and Portugal's membership to the UN Security Council were high on the agenda.

**27-28 February (Alger):**

Foreign Minister Luís Amado met with Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci to assess the level of bilateral relations and discuss regional issues.

28 February (Geneva):

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation João Gomes Cravinho attended the 16th session of the UN Human Rights Council, to report on Portuguese governmental efforts towards the promotion and defense of human rights. The Libyan crisis and Portugal's candidacy to the Council for the 2014-2017 period were also high on the agenda.

São Tomé and Príncipe

16-17 February (São Tomé):

Defense Minister Carlos Stock and Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada met with Portuguese Secretary of State for Defense Marcos Perestrello to sign a new cooperation program for 2011/2013 under the Technical-Military Cooperation framework.

25 February (São Tomé):

According to Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada, the concession of the Ana Chaves deep-water port and of São Tomé's international airport to Angolan state-oil company Sonangol will be made official in the next two months.

Timor Leste

2 February (Díli):

President José Ramos-Horta awarded the Medal of the Order of Timor Leste to Australian Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston for his support to the country during his six years at the head of the Australian Defense Force.

10 February (Díli):

Timor Leste's government approved a plan of action leading to the creation of the country's National Development Bank. The National Development Bank is expected to be set up using public and private capital and to focus on financing medium-sized and large companies, supporting business owners, and attracting private investment.

14-15 February (Tel Aviv):

President José Ramos-Horta visited Israel, where he met with President Shimon Peres in an attempt to enhance relations between both countries.

16 February (Nadi):

Timor Leste and Indonesia jointly requested to attend the Melanesian Spearhead Group meeting to be hosted by Fiji in March, as observing parties.

17 February (Ramallah):

President José Ramos-Horta met with President of the Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas, with the Middle East peace process and Palestine's wish for unilateral independence high on the agenda.

21 February (New York):

Prime Minister José Alexandre 'Xanana' Gusmão attended an Investment Forum on Timor Leste, organized by the World Harmony Foundation.

24 February (New York):

The UN Security Council extended UNMIT's mission until February 26th 2012.

24 February (Washington):

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão met with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and USAID officials to discuss ongoing US efforts towards the development of Timor Leste.

25-28 February (Havana):

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão travelled to Cuba where he met with Vice President José Ramón Machado Ventura and several other national authorities to review cooperation programs between the two countries, namely on medical education of Timorese nationals.

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