



## Angola's political deadlock: the impossibility of a two-way solution

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Observers of Angola's political life tend to look at the country's past and to the modus operandi of its political and economic elite – often described as the 'presidential circle' in academic literature – to provide plausible explanations for any occurrence of political or social conflict. There are conclusive links between the past civil war and the political machinations of both the party in power – the MPLA – and UNITA, and there have been many international accusations pointing to the lack of democratic mobility of the civil society and governmental transparency. Angola's embryonic democracy, however, is finding root in the recent youth protests, a wave of demonstrations which started on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011 and has continued until now. The protests themselves are not news per se. Despite representing a shift in comparison to the social order of the past nine

years, there has been a decent degree of coverage of these events by Lusophone and international media channels and agencies. Given the recurrence of these popular actions and the domestic and international circumstances Angola is currently experiencing, though, political scientists have begun to question the impact of these youth demonstrations on several sectors of the country.

Firstly, it is vital to understand why these demonstrations are taking place. In the past whenever any type of popular upheaval has occurred, both the MPLA and UNITA would engage in a classic blame game. While the MPLA blamed UNITA for stirring the social masses for its own purposes, UNITA would in turn blame the MPLA for introducing anonymous 'agents' among demonstrators to create violence and chaos in order to blame UNITA – thus belying its peace credentials – a card the MPLA has often been successful in playing against its most direct political opposition. Having problems of its own, UNITA has declared that it did not help organize the latest youth protests, although the MPLA has again attempted to blame its rival party for the 'social disorder'. Yet, with no apparent political support to speak of, youth demonstrators have continued taking their problems and words of protests into the streets, frequently demanding the immediate

resignation of President José Eduardo dos Santos.

Academics have often been successful in explaining how the MPLA and the 'presidential circle' maintain a tight grip on Angola's civil society and political system,<sup>1</sup> mainly by directing their explanations and justifications to the regime's control of the media, an intense blending of public and private sectors – consequently creating situations where both are indistinguishable, buying the support of traditional authorities, and expanding the party's base of political support on the eve of elections, to name but a few. These political calculations made by the MPLA, although proven very successful in maintaining control and absolute oversight in the hands of the elite, have surfaced a latent and perilous consequence: in the minds of the Angolan people it is not only the MPLA that is in control, but also the MPLA that is responsible for any social degradation and financial instability, a sentiment often manifested in urban centers. The MPLA's magnanimous grip on all of Angolan society has also created a situation where due to its popularity it is, in the end, also responsible for the circumstances in which the

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Christine Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination", in Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (eds.), *Angola: The Weight of History* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2007), pp. 93-123.



greater part of the population sees itself immersed.

This is perhaps one of the several plausible reasons to explain why these youth protests can linger on without any active support from any political party. However, because many of these youth leaders are not experienced politically, they are often easily corruptible and exploitable. As of late, one youth leader of the MRIS, the *Movimento Revolucionário de Intervenção Social*, is said – mainly in blogs and other non-official websites – to have changed to the MPLA's side in exchange for a Mitsubishi van and 400.000 kwanzas. Such a move proves not only the corruptive spirit of these social movements, but also confirms that indeed there exists a direct link between the MPLA regime and the social and financial degradation of the Angolan people in the minds of these demonstrators.

Despite the domestic implications of the youth protests, there is also an international element to consider. Angola is a rising star in foreign policy making in Africa. Its diplomatic tentacles have extended to new and vigorous projects all across the continent, which, combined with its ability to project power at a quick pace – benefiting directly from the state's vertical political system – and its astonishing economic growth, have put Angola 'shoulder to shoulder' when negotiating with Western powers and a retracting South Africa. Today, many businesses and people depend upon Angolan investment and revenue to carry on with their daily lives. The fact that Angola is investing heavily in Portuguese companies creates a firm business environment between both countries, while forcing a reassessment regarding the relationship between colonial and colonized powers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Yet, Angolan Foreign Minister George Chicoti when visiting

Lisbon stated that the current wave of demonstrations in Angola could indeed evolve into a climate of conflict which would absolutely threaten many of the advantages Angola currently possesses in foreign policy affairs, while rolling back many of its established collaborations and partnerships with other countries, many still suffering the effects of the financial crisis.

Under the current circumstances, Angola appears to be locked in a balance between opening the regime into less vertical types of democratic rule and sacrificing much of its power projection abilities, and therefore its foreign policy momentum. If the current regime collapses, the investments Angola made in other regions and its fast paced decision-making capabilities will be sacrificed in favor of a democratic, consultative, checks-and-balances oriented regime, which would ultimately freeze much of the country's capacity to act. If, on the other hand the regime collapses without giving way to a democratic order, Angola may yet again be engulfed in civil conflict, painting a very grim picture for Angolan diplomacy and consequently shifting the country into a position of need instead of demand. Given the severe lack of internal investment and the grim needs of the general population, it would be impossible for Angola to democratize – consequently increasing its investments at home – without sacrificing its foreign policy momentum.

As it is, Angola's growth has projected it into an important position in several sectors of international political life. Multilaterally, Angola currently holds both the Presidency of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). Bilaterally, Angola's strong investments in Guinea-Bissau, Portugal, and many other African states (especially in terms of security) creates responsibilities the regime must not look upon lightly. If, at some stage, a single spark is enough to

set alight old hatreds in Angola, the country's leadership must proceed with caution and play its cards right, understanding that after 27 years of civil war, the country's growth and influence has reached a point where conflict will not only harm the country itself, but that others may suffer greatly from any political or economic rollback. Furthermore, any non-positive outcome of the current domestic situation in Angola would create further obstacles to the country's future development, especially by limiting its capabilities to finance itself in world markets. If much was at risk throughout the 1990s, the country's astonishing development in terms of foreign policy has only further pressured its elite to proceed cautiously in whatever it has planned to address the protests.

<sup>2</sup> See Pedro Seabra and Paulo Gorjão, "Intertwined Paths: Portugal and Rising Angola" (*South African Institute of International Affairs*, Occasional Paper No. 89, August 2011).



# First impressions: Portugal and the UNSC eight months on

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When, on October 12<sup>th</sup> 2010, Portugal won a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the next two years, the country was already aware of the challenges that would immediately arise with such a responsibility. After a hard-fought international campaign to secure the necessary votes against the other contenders – Canada and Germany, the latter also elected – the time had now come to assume the fair share of responsibilities that accompanies such a high-profile international position. In other words, now it was time for the “hard part”.<sup>1</sup>

Holding an indisputable legitimacy as the primary international overseeing body, the UNSC is tasked with dealing on a daily basis with a multitude of issues ranging from pressing security threats to global coordination on an endless myriad of topics. As such, much of Portugal's contribution as a non-permanent member would depend first and foremost in its ability to prove itself useful and/or influential for any matter brought up to discussion within the Council. That in turn, would also greatly depend on the country's own initial objectives for such a role and how far it would be able to see them through. Juggling varying international dynamics with the prosecution of the country's own foreign agenda thus came to constitute an immediate challenge for Portuguese diplomacy in the halls of Turtle Bay.

With that in mind, after eight months “on the job”, this article will attempt to shed some light on Portugal's preliminary course of action within the UNSC, seeking to provide a mid-way assessment of the developments of the first year. To that end, Portugal's own official goals and agenda for this mandate – which were

abundantly proclaimed and reaffirmed during the lengthy electoral process – will be taken into account in order to contextualize the country's current positioning in the Council. Afterwards, a more in-depth analysis of the ongoing term will be in order while taking into consideration Portugal's responsibilities and main instruments of action at the UNSC. Conclusions will then be drawn as to what can be expected for the remainder of Portugal's term on the Council and for its ability to continue coping with the unexpected twists and turns of international politics on the world's highest stage.

## Portugal's tentative agenda

Since it first presented its intention of running for a non-permanent seat back on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2000, Portugal incessantly sought to convey to its peers the basic guiding lines that have helped to sustain Portuguese diplomacy throughout recent decades. In essence, they include all the major tenets upheld by the UN and the international community: respect for international law, the principles in the UN Charter and human rights; the defense of multilateralism; the promotion of a collective security system, etc. Not exactly a surprise, but a necessary requirement in any campaign for a position in a major international institution. Prevailing custom dictates that any would-be candidate commits itself to act upon such principles and more so if a country is running for a seat at the UNSC. Portugal was no exception and, in that sense, to uphold such guiding principles figured high at the country's priorities for the UNSC.

On the other hand, Portugal also intensively advocated for a reform of the UN, towards a more democratic, representative, coherent, effective and accountable organization, namely through greater transparency and efficiency in the UNSC. This specific emphasis is easily explained if one takes into consideration previous

<sup>1</sup> See Pedro Seabra and Paulo Gorjão, “Portugal and the UN Security Council victory: now for the hard part” (*IPRIS Lusophone Countries Bulletin*, No. 12, October 2010), pp. 5-9.

Portuguese experiences in this body – specially during the 1997-1998 term – when the country worked hard to improve the openness and accountability of the council's meetings and decision-making process.<sup>2</sup> The defense of revamped and reformed methods and procedures for the 2011-2012 term can thus be considered as a follow-up interest of such a previous predisposition and was certainly understood as a compelling argument for several smaller/neglected countries that ended up supporting and casting their vote for Portugal's bid.

Perhaps more importantly, though, Portugal also explicitly and actively stood by international peace and security as central cornerstones of the international engagement professed by the UN itself. To that end, Portugal pledged to contribute to the development of peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations under the continuing leadership of the UN. Likewise, the challenges posed by climate change, the situations of women and children in armed conflicts and the issues of conflict prevention and peaceful resolution also remained central to Portugal's campaigning platform and were duly promoted as eventual prime concerns within the UNSC.

This core of general leitmotifs must also be complemented by specific geopolitical situations that are of great interest to Portugal and that were therefore potentially worthy of receiving a greater focus amidst the UNSC working agenda. Among these, Guinea-Bissau stands out as a constant concern, but the same can be said of Timor Leste's ongoing nation-building process and every other matter that deals directly with the remaining Lusophone countries (support for Brazil's UN reforming views included). On the other hand, while standing by its bridge-building vocation and its publicized preferential ties with Africa, developments in Sudan

and in the Ivory Coast were equally considered central to any future agenda, while the traditional neutrality in the endless Middle East peace negotiations remained integral to Portugal's tentative approach towards this particular region as a future non-permanent UNSC member.

So, to recap, before actually beginning its term, Portugal presented itself not only as a country mutually committed with the existing international legal framework while keen on reforming some of its leading structures, but also as an active global partner engaged and interested in the positive outcome of many concrete issues that could threaten regional stability or require long-term international focus. Still, good intentions and structured planning aside, what matters in the final analysis is what Portugal actually managed to achieve when the opportunity was granted to implement this agenda. Although still fresh, the first months of Portugal's term allow for a tentative assessment of the results obtained so far.

### **The first eight months**

The UNSC today is best known for the occasional tense debates and discussions between the world's main powers, holding permanent seats and veto power. Whenever international crises erupt, they are usually brought to the Council's attention, thus

setting a motion a lengthy – and sometimes ineffective – process of debating, with the aim of reaching a consensual position. Unknown to many, however, much of the UNSC's workload is actually channeled on a permanent basis through several subsidiary bodies that range from the Peacebuilding Commission to the Counter-Terrorism Committee or even to specialized Sanctions Committees.<sup>3</sup> As with every other non-permanent member, Portugal

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2 See António Monteiro, "A Experiência Portuguesa na Presidência do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas" (*Nação e Defesa*, No. 104, 2003), pp. 81-95.

3 This is possible under Rule 28 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council that states, "the Security Council may appoint a commission or committee or a rapporteur for a specified question". Presently, there are more than twenty of these structures.



was entitled to chair some of these, and thus lead the internal discussions on such issues, for the duration of a year.

At the top of the wish list, it was an open secret that Portugal desired the presidency of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Indeed, not only would such responsibility allow the country to act upon one of its central electoral platforms – the reform of the UNSC’s internal functioning – but it would also provided a considerable dose of leverage over the remaining countries in attendance. However, perhaps due to precisely such eagerness in advocating change and transparency in a static institution like the UNSC, Portugal’s hopes ended up dashed when that group’s chair was awarded to Bosnia-Herzegovina instead. A slight disappointment for the Portugal’s expectations, but far from decisive, since Portugal managed to secure an informal agreement from the other members that in 2012 it would be placed at the head of this particular committee. It is therefore safe to assume that the effective persecution of this particular goal has only been delayed for the time being.

But if Portugal did not achieve one of its primary objectives right up front, what other responsibilities were then assigned? Interestingly enough, Portugal was entrusted the chairmanship of the Security Council committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), in charge of the international sanctions on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea/North Korea over its illegal nuclear activities. This comprises a far reach from Portugal’s traditional comfort zone in terms of foreign policy, and a high-profile and extremely demanding spotlight, especially if we take into consideration the frequent stand-offs and crises that have arisen on the heavily militarized Korean peninsula over the past few years. Given this tension, monitoring the application of sanctions and evaluating their actual impact can quickly evolve into a rather central role if the situation deteriorates. Still, despite the risk of “new North-Korean provocations and the strategic differences between the US and China”

on this matter,<sup>4</sup> for the last eight months this particular committee has seen most of its works blocked by general indecision over how to engage with North Korea.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, China’s refusal to allow publication of a report highlighting North Korea’s lack of compliance with the imposed sanctions – and China’s own connivance, for that matter – has also contributed to this deadlock. In light of this, it is no surprise that Portugal’s line of work has been structurally constrained, especially given that it is inevitably dictated by the pace of developments originating from the six-party talks framework.

Portugal, however, has also had other issues to worry about. On par with the North Korea Committee, Portugal was assigned the chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, in charge of debating the draft procedures for the International Draft Mechanism for Criminal Courts, which will take over after the UN’s two international criminal courts, for the former-Yugoslavia (ICTY) and for Rwanda (ICTR), by 2014. Not exactly primetime news material, but still an important task for a country that ran for the UNSC as a member of the international community deeply committed to respect for international law.

Moreover, on top of these two ‘occupations’ and despite

not holding the front lead, Portugal was also named Vice-Chair of the committee on proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, under resolution 1540 (2004) as well as of the committee on sanctions to Liberia, under resolution 1521 (2003).<sup>6</sup>

There was one international development, though, that caught the world off-guard and added a new dose of responsibility to Portugal’s term in the Council: the Arab Spring movement and, more specifically, the unraveling situation in Libya. As the world mobilized in condemning

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4 Nuno Santiago de Magalhães, “Portugal, as Nações Unidas e a Coreia do Norte Nuclear” (IPRI, Occasional Paper No. 51, March 2011), p. 9.

5 See “Security Council Report – August 2011 Monthly Forecast” (United Nations Security Council, 29 July 2011), pp. 13-14.

6 For a complete list of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the UNSC’s subsidiary bodies for 2011 see “Note by the President of the Security Council” (United Nations Security Council, S/2011/2, 4 January 2011).

Muammar Gaddafi's regime's oppression, a new package of sanctions began to be elaborated at the UN. The need for a new committee in charge of monitoring and coordinating the enforcement of the new legal regulations was therefore required and Portugal was subsequently requested to head this body.<sup>7</sup> This unexpected turn of events, which resulted in Resolution 1970, then led to a coveted position of centrality amidst the concerted international efforts that sought to address the Libyan crisis. Furthermore, the Sanctions Committee proved invaluable in undermining the financial foundations of Gaddafi's rule, and was therefore considered a central part of the international response. The situation further escalated when consensus emerged on the need to impose a no-fly zone on the ground under Resolution 1973. For its part, Portugal continued to stand by its previous condemnation of "the indiscriminate violence against civilians, the gross and systematic violation of human rights and of humanitarian law, perpetrated by a regime that had lost all its credibility and legitimacy vis-à-vis its own population and the international community"<sup>8</sup> and thus voted favorably for such an operation. Although it did not physically contribute to NATO's air sorties, it was then clear that Portugal remained very much committed

to their success since it saw it as necessary step towards resolving this specific crisis.

These last eight months already provide a few hints regarding Portugal's diplomatic efforts within the UNSC. It is important to notice that many of the 'larger issues' that Portugal identified during its candidacy as potential causes to pursue when in the Council, have been constantly brought to the UNSC's attention in the last few months and were duly addressed by Portuguese diplomats. Moreover, it is undeniable that Portugal, together with the rest of the international community, was playing by ear regarding the landslide in Northern Africa and the deteriorating situation in Libya that followed.

Still, when the Libyan regime crumbled down and the National Transition Council (NTC) forces took control of Tripoli, Portugal was also quick in acknowledging the new status quo and subsequently pledged its support to the new authorities. As ambassador José Moraes Cabral stated, in light of the new developments, "Portugal stands ready to support the Libyan people on their path to peace and democracy, including in the framework of the Security Council and the 1970 Sanctions Committee in this new phase in which funds need to be made available for state-building, economic recovery and urgent humanitarian assistance".<sup>9</sup> Portugal's role, this time in unfreezing those Libyan assets precisely targeted by the 1970 Committee, thus remained crucial.

But if Libya proved in itself the unexpected factor in Portugal's term so far, what to make of its previously targeted 'interests'? Regarding Timor Leste, for example, Portugal played an active part in underscoring the need for continuing international support even after the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor

Leste (UNMIT) fulfils its term in 2012.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, after the initial fears of instability following the referendum

7 Teresa de Sousa and Isabel Gorjão dos Santos, "Portugal vai presidir ao Comité de Sanções da ONU para a Líbia" (*Pública*, 3 March 2011). See also "Note by the President of the Council" (*United Nations Security Council*, S/2011/2/Add. 1, 9 March 2011).

8 José Moraes Cabral, "Explanation of vote by the Representative of Portugal, H. E. Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, on the Resolution 1973 on Libya, in the Security Council Chamber" (*Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*, 17 March 2011).

9 José Moraes Cabral, "Statement by the Representative of Portugal, H. E. Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, at the Security Council on the adoption of resolution on Libya" (*Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*, 16 September 2011).

10 See United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1969 (2011)" (*United Nations Security Council*, S/RES/1969 (2011), 24 February 2011); José Moraes Cabral, "Statement by the Representative of Portugal, H. E. Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, at the debate at the Security Council regarding the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT)" (*Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*, 22 February 2011).

in Sudan and the birth of the Republic of South Sudan, Portugal continuously stressed that “the international community should continue to afford to the two States the support and encouragement they will need in the still difficult times ahead.”<sup>11</sup> As for Guinea-Bissau, Portuguese efforts were concentrated mainly on the country’s specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission where, alongside Brazil, it tried to keep the international interest and effort above constant incidents that threatened to taint the ongoing Security Sector Reform (SSR) process.

However, as the UN gathered for its 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, one topic in particular effectively owned the working agenda: Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas’s request for admission of the state of Palestine at the UN. Given Portugal’s stature as a non-permanent member, the country was in a critical but uncomfortable position, since it favored the Palestinian bid in general terms but could not risk compromising any negotiation efforts, improbable as they might appear. Amid the intense row of diplomatic backstage work occurring in New York – including the US’s pre-announced veto intention and the EU’s traditional disarray in this matter – Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho took the opportunity of his address to the General Assembly, to clarify Portugal’s position on Palestinian statehood: “[such a] step must be the result and logical outcome of negotiations. Therefore, we understand this request to be an expression of interest that will be fulfilled with the signing of a Peace Agreement, thus ending one of the longest conflicts of our era. Until then, we are open to support a strengthened status for Palestine in the United Nations”.<sup>12</sup> For all purposes, a middle ground approach that provides the Palestinians with a way out and a loose incentive for the return to negotiations. Nevertheless, as developments continue to unfold, the practicality of this proposal remains to be seen.

### Final remarks

In all fairness, extrapolating conclusions regarding Portugal’s proceeding term based solely in its first eight months would certainly provide us with an inaccurate account. In order to judge a country’s performance in one of the world’s most influential and publicly exposed stages one has to take its full duration into consideration while prudently acknowledging any initial achievements. Still, these last eight months already provide a few hints regarding Portugal’s diplomatic efforts within the UNSC. First, it is safe to say that the change of government in

June in no way altered the planned course of action for the country in the Council. Indeed, despite new slight changes of tone, the pillars of Portuguese diplomacy have remained largely unaltered and Prime Minister Passos Coelho and Foreign Minister Paulo Portas’s first ventures into these matters have only confirmed such a predisposition for continuity. It is therefore no wonder that the priorities for the Portuguese Representation at the UN have remained on track.

Second, it is important to notice that many of the ‘larger issues’ that Portugal identified during its candidacy as potential causes to pursue when in the Council, have been constantly brought to the UNSC’s attention in the last few months and were duly addressed by Portuguese diplomats. “Post-conflict peacebuilding”, “Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts”, “Security Implications of Climate Change”, “The impact of HIV/AIDS on international peace and security”, “Children and Armed Conflict” are just some examples of what the UNSC has considered so far this year. Although one should not overstate the merit of Portugal in this – specially since it was not Portugal who scheduled or organized these debates – the fact is, it provides a rather positive image of a non-permanent member sticking to and promoting its previously announced agenda.

Third, it is undeniable that Portugal, together with the rest of the international community, was playing by ear regarding the landslide in Northern Africa and the deteriorating situation in Libya that followed. Given that it was immediately catapulted to the frontline, by heading the newly instated Sanctions Committee on Libya, Portugal was given an opportunity to play a decisive role in this particular crisis. An unexpected turn of events, to be sure, but also a high-profile responsibility that ended up demonstrating Portugal’s credentials in matters of international security and protection of human rights.

Finally, the Middle Eastern conundrum continues to hold the potential to derail all the best-intentioned efforts that Portuguese diplomacy can come up with. Although the country cautiously maneuvered through the heated tempers in attendance of the General Assembly, Portugal will inevitably remain in the spotlight for the time being and any decision that it might adopt in the UNSC regarding this matter, will produce repercussions on one side or the other.

In the short-term, though, much of Portugal’s range will be better in evidence when it presides over the Security Council in November, which constitutes a highlight for any non-permanent member’s term. Foreseeing some of his country’s initiatives for that month, Prime Minister Passos Coelho has already indicated that “a meeting on new challenges to international peace and security” with the aim “to promote an integrated vision that mirrors the many challenges we face in the 21st Century” will

11 Luis Brites Pereira, “Statement by the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal, H. E. Mr. Luís Brites Pereira, at the Security Council Debate on Sudan” (*Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*, 13 July 2011).

12 Pedro Passos Coelho, “Speech of the Prime Minister to the General Assembly” (*Government of Portugal*, 24 September 2011).



be high on the agenda.<sup>13</sup> Portugal's goal is "to contribute toward a greater coherence between the different debates already held on that topic, thus reinforcing the effectiveness of [the UN's] joint action". Moreover, Portugal will continue to view with "utmost importance the institutional complementarity between the General Assembly and the Security Council" and plead for "the Council to be able to work in an open and transparent environment, in particular in its relationship with this Assembly."<sup>14</sup> To that end, it will organize an event on the working methods of the UNSC, further highlighting the country's commitment to the reform of this body.

All in all, early evaluations of these last few months cannot fail to be fairly positive. When viewed in comparison with other partners in a similar position,<sup>15</sup> Portugal has undoubtedly treaded a consistent path of engagement within the UNSC, trying to enhance its expertise in certain scenarios (i.e. Timor Leste, Guinea Bissau) while advocating on issues that it understands to be vital in the advancement of the core principles that sustain the international community. Moreover, despite the singularity of the Libyan situation, the fact that Portugal managed to adapt its discourse and objectives to a fast-evolving scenario bodes well for other future predicaments that are bound to arise in the remaining duration of Portugal's term. In that sense, expectations for the remaining year and a half are on course, as Portugal will eventually try to push harder for its agenda, and especially so for the reform of UNSC methods and functioning, while continuing to deal with a heavy international agenda that will never really subside.

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13 Pedro Passos Coelho, "Statement by the Prime Minister of Portugal, H. E. Mr. Pedro Passos Coelho, at the Security Council on the High Level Meeting on "The maintenance of international peace and security: conflict prevention"" (*Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*, 22 September 2011).

14 Pedro Passos Coelho, "Speech of the Prime Minister to the General Assembly", *op. cit.*

15 Ralf Neukirch, "Germany's Woeful Security Council Record" (*Der Spiegel*, 21 September 2011).



# Timeline of Events

## Angola

### 2 September (Luanda):

The *Novo Jornal* newspaper reported that former Sonangol CEO Manuel Vicente had been chosen by President José Eduardo dos Santos to be his successor. This succession could take place as early as the 2012 general elections or shortly after it. Vicente's name has been on the list of possible successors for some time. Manuel Vicente – who has a reputation of extreme competence and deep business ties with Chinese investors (most notably with Xi Jinping, the Chinese vice-president) – seems to lack support within the ruling MPLA party. President José Eduardo dos Santos is keeping the names of possible successors turning on the roaster, leaving no certainty about who might be chosen.

### 3 September (São Tomé):

Vice-President Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos 'Nandó' represented President José Eduardo dos Santos in the swearing-in ceremony for São Tomé and Príncipe's President Manuel Pinto da Costa. 'Nandó' relayed José Eduardo dos Santos' wish that Pinto da Costa would reinforce "friendship ties and bilateral cooperation" with Angola.

### 3 September (Luanda):

After a first attempt at protesting the 32-year rule of President José Eduardo dos Santos on March 7<sup>th</sup>, this time a group of around 200 to 300 young protesters gathered in the Independence Square in an authorized protest, without the support of any opposition party. Protests turned to violence when the group of youths decided to march towards the Presidential Palace, in response to the arrest of some companions who had gathered in the Independence Square sooner than expected. The violence is said to have erupted from unidentified civilian-dressed elements within the crowd, which were accused of belonging to the Secret Services or the MPLA security forces. At least 24 people were arrested.

### 6 September (New York):

Human Rights Watch denounced the move by Angolan authorities to arrest protesters and the use of "unnecessary and disproportionate" force.

### 7 September (Belgrade):

Angolan Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Manuel Augusto, represented his country at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Non-Aligned Movement's Ministerial Conference. Augusto expressed Angola's defense of non-interference by external powers in the internal affairs of other countries.

### 9 September (Washington):

The new Angolan ambassador to the United States, Alberto do Carmo Bento Ribeiro, presented his credentials to US President Barack Obama. On the occasion, Obama stressed the impressive economic recovery of Angola in the last decade and also the importance of the 2012 general elections.

### 9 September (Luanda):

MPLA spokesperson Rui Falcão stated to the *Novo Jornal* that Manuel Vicente's chances of becoming the next Angolan President are as good as anyone else's within the Party's Political Bureau.

### 11-12 September (Luanda):

Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf visited Angola, where she was received by President José Eduardo dos Santos. Liberia is set to become an oil-producing country, thus Johnson-Sirleaf sought to strengthen bilateral relations and technical cooperation in that sector.

### 12 September (Luanda):

18 of the 24 people arrested in the September 3<sup>rd</sup> rally were sentenced to 45 days to three months of jail. One of the defense lawyers said the judge did not convert jail sentences into fines due to great "political pressure".

### 15-16 September (Lisbon):

Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoti signed a Protocol on Visa requirements with his

counterpart, Paulo Portas, intended to facilitate the circulation of citizens and businessmen.

### 16 September (Luanda):

Luanda's provincial government banned public protests in the capital's Independence Square and said they may only take place on the outskirts of the city.

### 18 September (Abidjan):

An Angolan delegation, led by the country's Internal Security Director-General Sango André de Oliveira João, was received by President of Ivory Coast Alassane Ouattara. This visit's objective was to revive relations between the two countries, as Angola used to be a strong supporter of former President Laurent Gbagbo.

### 20-26 September (New York):

Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoti represented Angola the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. Vice-President Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos 'Nandó' was slated to represent Angola. However, he was retained in London due to medical reasons.

### 20-21 September (Luanda):

Serbian Defense Minister Dragan Sutanovac was granted audiences by President José Eduardo dos Santos and Minister of State and Chief of the Military House of the President Hélder Vieira Dias 'Kopelipa', and held a working meeting with his counterpart Cândido Pereira Van-Dúnem.

### 24 September (New York):

Foreign Affairs Minister, George Chicoti, met Guinea's President, Alpha Condé. Condé stated that he expects Angola to support his country's candidature to the AU chairmanship.

### 24 September (Luanda):

As a reaction to the demonstrations against Eduardo dos Santos, the MPLA organized several rallies to support the President. The party's first secretary in Luanda, Bento Bento, said that millions Angolans are "against disturbance and disorder".

**25 September (Luanda):**

A second demonstration gathered around 100 protesters to denounce the 32-year old rule of Eduardo dos Santos and asking for the release of the 18 protesters arrested on the September 3<sup>rd</sup> manifestation. The group wanted to march to the Independence Square but was stopped by police forces to do so.

**26 September (New York):**

Foreign Affairs Minister, George Chicoti, addressed the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, where he disapproved external intervention as a factor that obstructs the resolution of conflicts in the world. Chicoti defended the role of multilateral institutions, such as the SADC, ECCAS, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and of CPLP, where Angola participates.

**26 September – 3 October (Havana):**

An official Angolan Armed Forces delegation visited Cuba led by General Geraldo Nunda Sachipengo, Chief of the General Staff.

**28 September (Luanda):**

The Venezuelan embassy in Luanda informed that Angola will open an Embassy in Caracas until the end of the year.

## Brazil

**2 September (Sofia):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota travelled to Bulgaria where he met with his counterpart Nikolay Mladenov, Vice-President of the National Assembly Anastas Atanassov and with the President Giorgi Parvanov. Bilateral relations as well as international issues such as the Middle East and the UN reform were high on the agenda.

**4 September (Moscow):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota met with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov. Bilateral relations and the UN Security Council agenda were among the topics covered.

**5 September (Buenos Aires):**

Defense Minister Celso Amorim met with his Argentinean counterpart Arturo Puricelli. Strategic, military and technological cooperation, bilateral military production, UNASUL's South American Defense Council,

Haiti and the South Atlantic area were high on the agenda.

**5 September (Rabat):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota met with his Moroccan counterpart Taieb Fassi Fihri, seeking to discuss bilateral cooperation and the current situation in the Northern African region.

**6 September (Asunción):**

Defense Minister Celso Amorim met with his Paraguayan counterpart Catalino Ortiz and President Fernando Lugo. Defense cooperation along the common border was high on the agenda.

**8 September (Montevideo):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota and Defense Minister Celso Amorim attended the II Meeting of Foreign and Defense Ministers from South American nations contributing to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The drawdown of the current forces on the ground was high on the agenda, with Amorim asking for a 15% reduction by the end of the year.

**11-12 September (Istanbul):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota's Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu and with President Abdullah Gul. Bilateral relations and pressing international issues were high on the agenda.

**18-22 September (New York):**

President Dilma Rousseff travelled to New York, where she officially opened debates for the 66<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly – thus becoming the first female president to ever do so – while supporting the international recognition of a Palestinian state. Rousseff also took the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with several peers, including her British, French, Mexican, Chilean Peruvian and Colombian counterparts.

**21-24 September (New York):**

According to Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota, Brazil will hold off plans to purchase new fighter jets at least until 2012 as the government cuts spending to fight the global economic crisis. At the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Patriota also took part in meetings with his G4, G15, IBSA, BRICS and ASPA peers.

**28-29 September (Brasília):**

Foreign Minister Antônio Patriota met with his Cuban counterpart, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla. Bilateral relations and the strengthening of cooperation initiatives to benefit third countries was high on the agenda.

**29 September (London):**

Brazilian Robério Oliveira Silva was elected as the Coffee International Organization's next Executive-Director.

**29 September (Brasília):**

Brazilian Congress approved the sending of a Brazilian vessel, together with an airplane and with over 300 sailors, to join the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in a bid to underscore the country's commitment to developments in the Middle East.

**29 October (Brasília):**

During a Senate hearing, Defense Minister Celso Amorim confirmed that at least 257 Brazilian troops, out of a total of 2.200, will leave Haiti by March 2012.

## Cape Verde

**3 September (São Tomé):**

Outgoing President Pedro Pires represented Cape Verde in the inauguration of São Tomé and Príncipe's new President Manuel Pinto da Costa.

**6-8 September (Praia):**

Defense Minister Jorge Tolentino met with his Angolan counterpart Cândido Pereira Van-Dúnem, with the aim of deepening military cooperation between the two countries. The possible training of Cape Verdean military policemen by Angolan instructors was high on the agenda. Van-Dúnem also took the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister José Maria Neves and outgoing President Pedro Pires.

**9 September (Praia):**

President Jorge Carlos Fonseca was inaugurated as the next President of the Republic of Cape Verde. Several foreign dignitaries attended the ceremony including São Toméan President Manuel Pinto da Costa, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, Guinean Prime Minister Carlos Gomes



Júnior and CPLP Secretary General Domingos Simões Pereira, among others.

**15-16 September (Ponta Delgada):**

Prime Minister José Maria Neves attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Metropolis International Conference in Azores.

**19-24 September (New York):**

Prime Minister José Maria Neves attended the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly.

**22 September (Coimbra):**

Cape Verde's first President after the country's independence, Aristides Pereira, died at the age of 87.

**22 September (Washington):**

According to a report released during the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Annual meeting, Cape Verde is one of the four African countries on course to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Moreover, the same report highlighted that in 2010, Cape Verde was amongst the ten most reforming countries in the world.

**26 September (Lisbon):**

Prime Minister José Maria Neves met briefly with Portuguese Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, with the EU-Cape Verde Special Partnership and bilateral ties high on the agenda.

**28 September (Brussels):**

The European Parliament approved with 539 votes in favor, 82 against and 21 abstentions, the new fishing agreement between the EU and Cape Verde, which will come into force from November 2011 to August 2014.

## Guinea-Bissau

**9 September (Praia):**

Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior represented Guinea-Bissau in the inauguration of Jorge Carlos Fonseca as Cape Verde's President.

**9 September (Praia):**

During a radio interview, Prime Minister Carlos Júnior said ousted Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi would be welcomed "with open arms" if he seeks exile in Guinea-Bissau.

**16 September (Bissau):**

Following Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior's offer of asylum to Muammar Gaddafi, President Malam Bacai Sanhá released a statement saying that he "is concerned by the Prime Minister's declaration and especially the interpretation of it. The presidency is not going in the same direction as this declaration".

**20 September (Bissau):**

The Bissau-Guinean economy is expected to grow 5.3% this year according to a projection from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

**20 September (Bissau):**

The Cabinet reshuffle announced at the end of August was officially formalized as President Malam Bacai Sanhá swore in the new officials, including new Foreign Minister Mamadú Jaló Pires and new Defense Minister Baciro Dja.

**23-29 September (New York):**

Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior took part in the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. In his address, Junior called for the US and the EU members to help the impoverished West African country control its maritime borders against drug traffickers. Afterwards, Junior also met with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon with the implementation of a peacebuilding plan and social and political reforms in Guinea Bissau high on the agenda.

**25 September (Bissau):**

During the celebrations of the country's 38<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary, President Malam Bacai Sanhá declared himself proud of how far Guinea Bissau had reached and highlighted the "near total stability" on the ground for the past two years. Sanhá also disclosed that several high-ranking military were ready to retire, as a step to accomplish the ongoing Security Sector Reform (SSR) process.

## Mozambique

**1 September (Maputo):**

Portuguese groups Américo Amorim and Visabeira teamed-up with Mozambican investors to inaugurate a new retail-bank, the Banco Único. Portuguese banks already play a major role in the Mozambican banking system.

**3 September (Maputo):**

President Armando Guebuza opened the 10<sup>th</sup> All-Africa Games, held in Maputo. In his speech, Guebuza hoped these games would promote peace and African unity.

**5 September (Maputo):**

Mozambique is set to become a world-player in the biofuels field. According to Hélio Neves, the biofuel program coordinator at the Agricultural Promotion Centre, there are some 30 projects active in the country, which amount to a US\$100 million investment.

**9 September (Matola):**

Cimpor, a major Portuguese cement firm, opened a cement mill which has the capacity to produce 600,000 metric tons annually, in an €18 million investment.

**12 September (Maputo):**

The Saharawi Embassy in Maputo issued a statement focusing on Mozambique's support for West Sahara's "struggle for freedom and independence". Deputy Foreign Minister Henrique Banze expressed Mozambique's commitment to "defending the just cause of the Saharawi people in international forums".

**13 September (Luanda):**

Outgoing Mozambican ambassador to Angola António Matonse presented his farewell greetings to National Assembly Speaker António Kassoma.

**16 September (Nampula):**

Three American and one Britton were arrested and accused of possessing illegal weapons. The westerners were allegedly working for the US security firm GreySide and were preparing to support the rescue of a ship held by pirates north of Mozambique.

**19 September (Mumbai):**

Indian state-owned BPCL will invest US\$400 million for a 10% stake in a liquefied natural gas terminal in Mozambique, which will have a total cost of US\$4 billion. A company subsidiary – Bharat PetroResources – and its partners, claim to have discovered some 6 trillion cubic feet of gas.

**20-25 September (New York):**

President António Guebuza represented Mozambique at the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

**20 September (Matola):**

Prime Minister Aires Ali laid the first stone of a 5.000 house complex financed by the Chinese. The project is estimated to cost US\$439 million and will also include roads, schools, clinics and a shopping centre over 18 months.

**22 September (New York):**

At the margins of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Guebuza stated to the press that divergent interests between the countries are the main obstacle to speedy implementation of the desired reforms to the United Nations Security Council.

**22 September (New York):**

President Guebuza also spoke about the Cahora Bassa Dam, in which the Portuguese state still holds a 15% stake (Portugal started to sell its 82% share to Mozambique in 2007, a remainder from colonial times). Guebuza hopes the transfer of the remainder can be agreed in the upcoming bilateral summit between the two countries in November.

**26 September (Washington):**

The World Bank granted US\$70 million to support the development of water supply in Maputo and the country's capacity to deal with natural disasters. Mozambique is still very reliant of foreign donor support.

**28 September (Maputo):**

In the midst of a coal fever in the Tete province, the Ministry of Mineral Resources, Afonso Mabica, decided to suspend the issuing of new prospecting and mining concessions licenses. This suspension is intended to allow the Ministry to access if companies that already hold licenses are complying with the terms of their contracts.

**28-30 September (Maputo):**

The Joint Inter-Governmental Meeting between Mozambique and Vietnam took place in Maputo. On the occasion, Vietnam's Ambassador to Mozambique, Dang Gland, stated to the press that his country intends to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the areas of agriculture, education and defense, amongst others. Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister, Eduardo Koloma, announced Mozambique will open an Embassy in Vietnam until the end of the year.

## Portugal

**1 September (Berlin):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel to discuss bilateral relations and the current financial hurdles in the Eurozone.

**1 September (Paris):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho and Foreign Minister Paulo Portas attended an international summit on the future of Libya, after the fall of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

**2-3 September (Sopot):**

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas attended the informal gathering of EU Foreign Ministers. The situations in Libya and Syria, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian issue, were high on the agenda.

**3 September (São Tomé):**

Former President António Ramalho Eanes represented Portugal at the inauguration of São Tomé and Príncipe's new President Manuel Pinto da Costa.

**6-8 September (Lisbon):**

While in Portugal for a private conference, former Brazilian President Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva took the opportunity to meet with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho and Foreign Minister Paulo Portas, to whom he conveyed his disposition to serve as an unofficial Brazilian ambassador for companies interested in Portugal's upcoming privatization bids.

**7 September (Benghazi):**

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas paid a visit to Libya where he met with the President of the National Transitional Council (NTC) Mustafa Abdel Jalil, seeking to convey Portugal's support for the NTC's rule and interest in deepening trade and economic relations between the two countries. The matter of the contracts previously signed with Portuguese companies during the Gadhafi years was also addressed.

**7 September (Lisbon):**

Portuguese bank Millennium BCP announced that it had signed an agreement with Angolan bank Banco Privado do Atlântico to establish a bank in Brazil focusing on corporate and trade finance.

**8 September (Lisbon):**

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, Foreign Minister Paulo Portas and Defense Minister José Pedro Aguiar-Branco, to discuss the organization's ongoing reform efforts, including the move of STRIKEFORNATO headquarters to Portugal. Aguiar-Branco also took this opportunity to reinforce Portugal's commitment to Afghanistan with the contingent of 228 men already on the ground.

**9 September (Praia):**

Finance Minister Vítor Gaspar represented the Portuguese government at the inauguration of Jorge Carlos Fonseca as Cape Verde's next President.

**9 September (Berlin):**

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas met with his German counterpart Guido Westerwelle to discuss issues related to both countries' agendas in the United Nations Security Council.

**14 September (Lisbon):**

Ibero-American Secretary-General Enrique V. Iglesias met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, Foreign Minister Paulo Portas and Speaker of Parliament Assunção Esteves. Preparations for the next Ibero-American Summit were high on the agenda.

**14-18 September (Lisbon):**

Angolan Foreign Minister George Chicoti met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, Foreign Minister Paulo Portas and Defense Minister José Pedro Aguiar-Branco. The highlight of the visit included a much desired visa protocol to facilitate the issuance of visas between the two countries.

**15-16 September (Warsaw):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho travelled to Poland where he met with his counterpart Donald Tusk, with the European financial crisis as the main topic. Coelho also took the opportunity to meet with President Bronislaw Komorowski.

**16 September (Paris):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho met with his French counterpart François Fillon and President Nicolas Sarkozy to discuss bilateral relations and European affairs.

**19 September (Lisbon):**

According to a report released by the Bank of Portugal, the debt of five Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP) to Portugal totalled €1.746 billion at the end of 2010. According to the document, of the five countries Angola was the one with the biggest debt, around 60% of the total, or €1.056 billion. Mozambique was the country with the second largest debt to the Portuguese state, having seen a rise of €65 million between 2009 and 2010. Cape Verde's debt, on the other hand, grew to €196 million while São Tomé and Príncipe's rose to €49 million. For its part, Guinea Bissau's fell by €7 million due to appreciation of the dollar against the euro.

**19-23 September (New York/Washington):**

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas travelled to New York to participate in the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly and hold several bilateral meetings with his peers, including those from Uruguay, Namibia, Nauru, EU and CPLP, among many others. Portas also attended high-level meetings on international cooperation over terrorism and represented Portugal in a special summit regarding the situation in Libya. Moreover, Portas also took the opportunity to meet with several key US Senators and Representatives, after a brief visit to Washington aimed at improving Portugal's foreign image.

**22-23 September (Wrocław):**

Defense Minister José Pedro Aguiar-Branco attended the Informal Gathering of EU Defense Ministers. Aguiar-Branco took the opportunity to announce cuts in Portuguese defense spending but reassured his peers that the country would remain committed to most of its current international assignments.

**22-24 September (New York):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho took part in the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. Passos Coelho also took the opportunity to meet with his counterparts from Colombia, Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Qatar, Serbia, Israel, Palestinian Authority, Kuwait, South Sudan, Guinea-Bissau, as well as with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

**25-27 September (Washington):**

Foreign Minister Paulo Portas paid a bilateral visit to the U.S., where he met with Secretary

of State, Hillary Clinton, with the Middle East and the EU high on the agenda. Portas also took the opportunity to visit the Organization of American States (OAS), the US Chamber of Commerce and the think-tank Council on Foreign Relations.

**26 September (Lisbon):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho met briefly with his Cape Verdean counterpart, José Maria Neves to whom he conveyed Portugal's support for the EU-Cape Verde's Special Partnership and the deepening of bilateral ties.

**26-29 September (Lisbon):**

Timorese Prime Minister José Alexandre 'Xanana' Gusmão, accompanied by Foreign Minister Zacarias Albano da Costa, visited Portugal and met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva and Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho, among other dignitaries. The strengthening of bilateral relations and joint cooperation projects was high on the agenda.

**29 September (Warsaw):**

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho attended the EU-Eastern Partnership Summit. Coelho also took opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili, Moldovan Prime Minister Vladimir Filat, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich and Slovakian Prime Minister Iveta Radicová.

**30 October (Lisbon):**

Banco Espírito Santo (BES) announced that it had signed an agreement for a US\$300 million three-year loan from China Development Bank under a cooperation treaty with the Chinese state-controlled lender, with the aim of investing in Africa.

## São Tomé and Príncipe

**3 September (São Tomé):**

Manuel Pinto da Costa was formally sworn in as São Tomé and Príncipe's next President, after winning the election on August 7<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony was attended by several foreign officials, including Cape Verdean President Pedro Pires, former Portuguese President António Ramalho Eanes, Angolan Vice-President Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos 'Nandó', President of Equatorial

Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema and Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan.

**9 September (Praia):**

President Manuel Pinto da Costa represented São Tomé and Príncipe in the inauguration of Jorge Carlos Fonseca as Cape Verde's new President.

**26 September (New York):**

Foreign Minister Manuel Salvador dos Ramos represented São Tomé and Príncipe in the United Nations 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Ramos took the opportunity to note that "the widespread use of international mediation as a technique of resolving crises as a fundamental feature of peaceful conflict resolution has not always matched our expectations and produced the expected results".

## Timor Leste

**1-5 September (Nanning):**

President José Ramos-Horta attended the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) as a guest speaker.

**2 September (Díli):**

Deputy Prime Minister of Timor Leste José Luís Guterres announced that Army Chief Taur Matan Ruak had tendered his resignation. This decision is widely interpreted as a preemptive move towards a possible candidacy for the 2012 presidential elections.

**5-9 September (Auckland):**

Prime Minister José Alexandre 'Xanana' Gusmão attended the Pacific Islands Forum, with climate change and specially the threat of rising seas to low-lying nations, high on the agenda. He also took the opportunity to meet with New Zealander Defense Minister Wayne Mapp, to sign a memorandum of understanding about future defense arrangements, including the downgrading of New Zealand's troops in Timor Leste by next year.

**7 September (Díli):**

Indonesian Golkar Party Chairman Aburizal Bakrie met with President José Ramos-Horta, to whom he conveyed his support for Timor Leste's application to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

**8 September (Díli):**

During a party congress, Fretilin Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri called for Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão to step down as his cabinet faces scrutiny over corruption claims ahead of elections.

**13 September (Díli):**

Timor Leste inaugurated its new monetary authority, named Timor Leste's Central Bank, which will be in charge of carrying out policies to maintain domestic price stability, including providing the economy with liquidity, along with regulating and supervising the banking market, and in the future the insurance market.

**13-15 September (Port-Villa):**

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, accompanied by Foreign Minister Zacarias Albano da Costa, visited Vanuatu where he met with his counterpart Sato Kilman and President Iolu Johnson Abil, to thank the country for their contribution to the struggle for the independence of Timor Leste. Gusmão also took the opportunity to donate US\$500.000 to the Vanuatu-based secretariat of the Melanesian Spearheaded Group.

**15 September (Díli):**

Minister Counselor and Special Envoy of President Mohamed Abdelaziz of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic Maulainin Sedik met with President José Ramos-Horta. The latest developments in the negotiations between the Polisario and Morocco were high on the agenda.

**17 September (Díli):**

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão met with senior Chinese political advisor Li Jinhua, with the improvement of bilateral relations high on the agenda. Jinhua also took the opportunity to meet with President José Ramos-Horta, National Parliament President Fernando 'Lasama' de Araújo and former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri.

**19-23 September (New York):**

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, as well as Foreign Minister Zacarias da Costa, attended the opening of the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. Gusmão also took the opportunity to hold several bilateral meetings with other world leaders, including UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

**26 September (Díli):**

Timor Leste's Navy officially received three South Korean decommissioned vessels to help the country guard its territorial waters and preserve marine resources.

**26-29 September (Lisbon):**

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão paid an official visit to Portugal where he met with President Aníbal Cavaco Silva and Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho. The expansion of bilateral ties and Timor Leste's possible interest in Portugal's upcoming privatization process were high on the agenda. Portuguese Defense Minister José Pedro Aguiar-Branco also announced that 12 Timorese military would join the Portuguese contingent in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) as of January 2012. Gusmão also took the opportunity to meet with the Timorese community in Portugal.



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