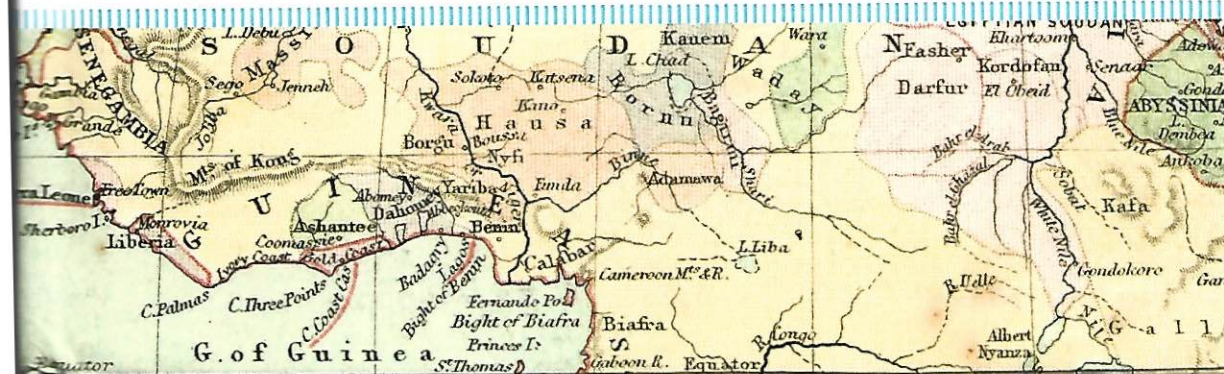


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RYAN SHAFFER has a PhD in history with expertise on extremism and security. He has written numerous articles, book chapters and reviews. Shaffer's books include *African Intelligence Services: Early Postcolonial and Contemporary Challenges* and *The Handbook of Asian Intelligence Cultures*.

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Angola

Intelligence Culture Supporting Hegemony

Nuno Fragoso Vidal

This chapter argues that the Angolan intelligence and security services have maintained their foundational purposes and strategic objectives since they were created in 1975.¹ In particular, the intelligence culture supports and protects the hegemony of the ruling party and its elites, which have been in power since 1975. The chapter explores this history by examining the intelligence culture's strategic continuities and responses by the intelligence services to domestic and international challenges that did not alter their foundations or strategic objectives.

The chapter is organized chronologically in four sections. The first describes the intelligence services before the 1977 attempted coup and the period after it. It highlights the government insulating the services from foreign influences other than Cuba and its state security police character. The second section focuses on the period from the 1990s transition through the end of the civil war in 2002, wherein the services were influenced by a new international thinking about security services in a post-Cold War era. This section describes how the intelligence services were focused on winning the civil war in Angola and maintaining the regime. The third part deals with the postwar reconstruction of the ruling party's hegemony within the multiparty setting and reshuffling of the services into an intelligence community, through the 2010 constitution that reinstated the intelligence services' earlier state security character. The fourth section details new threats and challenges to the ruling party that emerged during the 2010s and the international illiberal authoritarian populist movement to secure hegemony in the 2020s.

BACKGROUND

Angola gained independence while immersed in a civil war during the global Cold War. The bipartition and then tripartition of the nationalist movement's struggle in Angola involved open military confrontation between movements and international alliances, which was a serious challenge for the newly independent state. The struggle between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola—Partido do Trabalho, MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola, FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola, UNITA) became a military conflict with direct and indirect foreign involvement even prior to independence on November 11, 1975.

While supported by Cuban troops and Soviet military material, the MPLA repelled South African/UNITA attacks coming from the south and the offensives from the FNLA, Zairean military, and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-funded mercenaries in the north. Although the FNLA was neutralized and disbanded by 1979, the war continued during the 1980s with a stronger UNITA, which was openly supported by South Africa and Zaire. Additionally, it was indirectly funded and supported by the United States between 1976 and 1985 during the existence of the US Clark Amendment, which banned supplying arms to Angolan groups. This funding became direct after the Clark Amendment's repeal in 1985 under the Reagan administration. Last but not least, the country was an oil producer and had significant diamond production, which raised the conflict's international stakes.

Within this context, the intelligence services' importance to the new state is obvious. One of the first measures of the newly independent government was the establishment of the Direction of Information and Security of Angola (Direcção de Informação e Segurança de Angola, DISA) eighteen days after independence, on December 29, 1975. With the country at war and a government backed by Cuban forces and Eastern Bloc advisers, the new intelligence service followed those communist models, which already had experience against the CIA, and was supporting the FNLA/Zairean/mercenary forces. DISA acquired an ideological orientation, and a militarized structure/hierarchy and had the character of a secret police along with little institutional scrutiny, an autonomous budget, and functioning under the direct authority of the president of the party/president of the republic (constitutionally, the president of the MPLA was also the president of the country).

With broad objectives (e.g., to defend the revolutionary conquests, the state, and party organs and members, and to reeducate deviant individuals), in the face of increasing domestic and foreign security threats and the ad-

ministrative institutional weaknesses of the new state, DISA progressively acquired more competencies. The number of mercenaries involved in the Angolan war and their capture in combat led to the approval of a specific law on mercenaryism, which expanded DISA's authority in judicial processes during February 1977.² After an attempted coup on May 27, 1977, led by former members of the MPLA Central Committee, Nito Alves and José Vandunem, that power was increased.

Several top party members were killed in the coup, and President Agostinho Neto's administration was only saved by the Cuban military, which effectively crushed the coup attempt. Shocking, however, was the result of DISA's investigation, which revealed that those behind the coup had counted on Soviet support until the late stages of planning.³ From then on, Neto insulated DISA and the presidential security force from foreign influences other than the Cubans. At this time, the Angolan intelligence and security service culture gained a pragmatic political-presidential-state security police character. The services' purpose was to defend the president as the Cubans had done. Meanwhile, the regime became more personalized, with power centralized and concentrated in the president's hands.⁴

The attempted coup was followed by a bloody purge of all those who might have been effectively or possibly related to the coup. Today the number of deaths (within thousands) is still unknown because executions occurred without formal charges or trials. DISA led the purge, which spiraled out of control throughout the country. It was legitimated by the president himself, who publicly stated that no time should be wasted with trials.⁵

There was no legal framework to support these actions until the May 1978 Law on Crimes against State Security was passed, which permitted DISA to conduct secret investigative operations and criminal and operational investigations, instruct juridical processes (collect evidence and judicially accuse), issue judgments (court competencies), and punish the accused with reeducation (in so-called reeducation camps).⁶ At the end of the purge, DISA's functions were juxtaposed with those of a police force, a public attorney's office, the judiciary, the penal system, and the special military forces (with its own militarized units). Due to the expansion of DISA's repression and arbitrariness after May 27, popular discontent and complaints from families in search of their missing relatives mounted. By 1979, after the purge and a subsequent move to carefully select new party members, the president and party felt secure enough, understood the purge had gone too far, and decided to dissolve DISA.

A restructuring of the central state administration reestablished the Ministry of the Interior (suspended since the coup leader, Nito Alves, was withdrawn as minister) and determined that the ministry would have two vice

ministers—one for internal order and one for state security.⁷ The previous DISA cadres, personnel, patrimony, and activities were integrated under the new Ministry of the Interior.

It soon became obvious that the move was merely a rebranding of DISA to quiet the public's discontent and resentment. Specifically, DISA was a scapegoat to shift responsibility away from the president. The president publicly announced DISA's dissolution as a punishment for the alleged abuses perpetrated by the agency that he purportedly only came to know about through the myriad letters from complaining families. Nevertheless, no trials were conducted against DISA's officers.

The rebranding of the intelligence service lasted a year. In July 1980 a new institution was announced, the Ministry of State Security (Ministério da Segurança do Estado, MINSE).⁸ Kundy Paihama, a hard-line general in the MPLA, was appointed minister by new president Eduardo dos Santos. (Agostinho Neto died during a cancer procedure in Moscow in September 1979.) Under the ministry, the intelligence services gained more power within the state. It maintained the partisan political police, and military character of DISA, but on more organized, efficient, and discreet terms. MINSE was not involved in regular arrests and searches that might harm its image; those responsibilities were mostly left to the police.

As the war raged during the 1980s and as the internal civil order became better structured through the Ministry of the Interior and the police, the new ministry focused on supporting the armed forces.⁹ Its predecessor's militarized units were replaced by militarized special commandos who had direct involvement in surgical war operations demanding smaller units of special forces, according to intelligence gathered by the ministry. Additionally, there were several paramilitary organizations in neighborhoods and villages, such as the Organization of Popular Defence (Organização de Defesa Popular, ODP) and the Popular Brigades of Surveillance (Brigadas Populares de Vigilância, BPV). The ministry was also responsible for the surveillance of frontiers and sensitive areas and for securing strategic infrastructure and economic sites (e.g., diamond mining areas, onshore oil fields and compounds, roads, railways, and ports).

The ministry became vital to the regime and its war against UNITA until the end of the single-party system. Like DISA, it was directly subordinate to the president. Aside from the president, the institutional supervision was just a formality. The MPLA's National Security Commission (later MPLA's Cabinet of Security, operating under the president of the republic) was supposed to prepare an annual report for the Commission on Defence and Security of the parliament (People's Assembly) and present it to the plenary for approval. However, such reports were rarely produced and lacked significant

information because the People's Assembly was merely an echo chamber for the president and party.

THE NEW MULTIPARTY SETTING AND REBRANDING OF SECURITY SERVICES

As the Cold War was coming to an end in the late 1980s, the civil war in Angola was headed for a negotiated solution. Diplomatic talks since 1986–1987 led to the New York tripartite accords signed in 1988 between Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, which included the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and Namibian independence. Subsequent peace accords were signed in May 1991 between the national contenders (MPLA and UNITA), which made way for multiparty elections. The transition process had already started before the peace accords were proposed by the MPLA initiative. In December 1990, the MPLA Congress replaced the single-party regime with a multiparty, liberal democratic system. The anticipation allowed the MPLA to autonomously manage the transition, adapting state legislation and institutions to the new multiparty democratic setting while making sure that all state administration, including the legislature, executive, and judiciary, remained under its control to aid its election campaign.¹⁰

Insofar as the state security services were concerned, the pressure for reform was immediate because the Ministry of State Security was identified with the previous regime. The solution, in part, was the 1979 DISA formula, whereby MINSE was officially disbanded on February 23, 1991.¹¹ This, however, was effectively camouflage. On the one hand, part of MINSE's structures, cadres, and personnel were transferred to the Ministry of the Interior, concealed as regular ministry cadres. To directly command the services, the president appointed a former minister of state security, Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, better known as "Nandó," who then became deputy minister of the interior. Nandó had been minister of state security in 1986, having led a restructuring commission to modernize the services, and became deputy minister of MINSE until it was dissolved in February 1991 (meanwhile Kundi Paihama became minister until MINSE was disbanded). On the other hand, some services were detached from several units of the armed forces operating as military intelligence and remain dissimulated in those units as regular military, allowing them to work undercover.

Controlling the whole state apparatus, and with help from a professional political marketing firm in Brazil as well as aided by bellicose discourse from UNITA, the MPLA won the election (53.74 percent against 34.10 percent for UNITA). The presidential election required a second round of voting (José

Eduardo dos Santos got 49.56 percent, against Jonas Savimbi's 40.07 percent), but UNITA alleged electoral fraud and returned to war. When the war resumed in October 1992 and subsequently intensified, there was an urgent need to operationally and officially reinstitutionalize the intelligence and security services' functions. This occurred in August 1993 with the approval of the new Organic Statute of the Ministry of the Interior and in coordination with Deputy-Minister Nandó, who led until 1996.¹²

The new Law on National Security officially consecrated the new liberal democratic concept of national security and the nonpartisan character of security services.¹³ However, learning from the 1991–1993 experience, its activities were decentralized into three autonomous branches:

- The Service of Information of the Ministry of the Interior (*Serviço de Informação do Ministério do Interior, SINFO*), dedicated to internal/domestic threats, under the minister of the interior, but with financial and patrimonial autonomy;¹⁴
- The Service of Foreign Security (*Serviço de Segurança Estrangeira*), focused on external security threats, directly under the president of the republic;¹⁵ and
- The Service of Military Security of the Ministry of Defence (*Serviço de Segurança Militar do Ministério da Defesa*), focused on military affairs, under the minister of defence.¹⁶

The new formula rendered the services more effective, provided better-defined responsibilities, established an efficient relationship with the military and the police, and made it less politically focused than DISA and MINSE.

The new formulation was the result of several interconnected factors. First, it was an operational adaptation to the new constitutional setting through the “camouflaged” experience of 1991–1993. Second, it was part of a longer trend that started during the restructuring of the services initiated in 1986 at MINSE by Nandó, a man who originally ascended within the national police and who led better-defined competencies and articulation for the police and military. Third, it defensively reacted to the 1990s third wave of democratization (and the enforcement of political rights, freedoms, and transparency) and addressed increasingly demanding civil societies.¹⁷ Fourth, it was influenced by the emerging new international thinking on security services in the early post-Cold War era.

To be clear, it was not the case that a new, “Western” school of security services was incorporated. Rather, there was a need to understand how to adapt to a quickly changing international and domestic context while preserving intelligence and security services' major (though unofficial) role in

defending the president, party, and state machinery when the country was once again at war (since October 1992) against a stronger UNITA.

UNITA could control several cities and threaten, as never before, important economic sites such as onshore oil fields and even the capital city with new long-range artillery bought with diamonds from their controlled mining areas. By then without the Cuban expeditionary armed force, the government turned to Executive Outcomes (a private military contractor) to help train the Angolan military and fight alongside the Angolan Armed Forces, valuable for their deep knowledge of UNITA because several of their operatives were former SADF and had fought in support of UNITA in the 1980s.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the international community had changed. Former UNITA allies now saw the rebels as inconvenient for new business opportunities opened by the MPLA government. Understanding the favorable context, MPLA devised an encompassing domestic, regional, and international strategy to stop UNITA. There was massive reinvestment in weaponry and restructuring of the armed forces as the international arms sales ban was circumvented through a complex secret network involving top members of the French government.¹⁹ It also included international arms' businessmen (the Israeli French Russian Arkadi Gaydamak and Franco Brazilian Pierre Falcone) in what became known as the Angolagate scandal.²⁰ The effort later evaded the international blockade on blood diamonds, certifying the production in government areas while making it difficult to sell “UNITA's diamonds,” in a business arrangement involving the daughter of President Eduardo dos Santos, Isabel dos Santos, and the Welox of Israel of Israeli diamond tycoon Lev Leviev.²¹ In parallel, a military operation was put in place to support Kabila/Rwandan military forces in 1997 to depose Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire, which cut off UNITA from logistical support.

It is impossible to know how much influential Israeli businessmen Leviev and Gaidamak helped to improve the relationship between the Angolan and Israeli governments or to what extent such an approach between governments counted in the support of US administrations and led to the end of UNITA. As SINFO recovered some of MINSE's previous surgical military actions in effective support of the Armed Forces throughout the 1990s, support from Israel's Mossad and Israeli technology seems to have been crucial.²² Israel was commonly associated with monitoring of UNITA's military maneuvers since 1999. The decisive intelligence to precisely locate the column where UNITA's leader was and eliminate him was provided in February 2002.²³

In addition to Nandó, credit for a more effective articulation of the intelligence services' objectives with the military also belongs to his successor, deputy minister of the interior and chief of SINFO General Fernando Garcia Miala, who served from May 1996 to April 1999. Miala had a parcourse

within the military counterintelligence, having reached the position of assistant director. This experience in the 1990s made him an expert on foreign intelligence, and from then on he rose as a major strategist within Angolan security. Significantly, during the 1990s, despite the influence and productive articulation with Western and Israeli intelligence services, Angola's intelligence services remained stable, maintaining a school of cadres that became intelligence leaders from April 1999 onward.²⁴

RECONQUEST OF POLITICAL HEGEMONY IN THE 2000s

Coming out of the war as the uncontested victor over a humiliated and destroyed UNITA, the MPLA sought to renew the hegemony that was partially lost in 1991 with the multiparty shift. In terms of the security services, a new Law on National Security passed in August 2002 confirmed the previous format of three branches, considering them as part of an "intelligence community."²⁵ For the first time in the services' history, the word "security" was replaced by "intelligence" to characterize its activities in a new peaceful era.

SINFO was taken away from the minister of the interior and put under the chief of government, which according to the Constitution is the president of the republic.²⁶ The branch related to foreign security was now designated Services of Foreign Intelligence (*Serviços de Inteligência Externa*, SIE), still under direct authority of the president.²⁷ The branch focused on military security and was named the Services of Military Intelligence (*Serviços de Inteligência Militar*, SIM) under the minister of defence.²⁸

Although the war effectively ended in 2002, it took the MPLA another six years to schedule the first postwar elections in 2008. The long interval allowed the MPLA to carefully prepare the whole process, controlling as many variables as possible to shape the electoral outcome. This included electoral legislation, the electoral management body, voter registration, private and state media, electoral judicial structures, party campaign machinery, private and state economic sectors, official and unofficial electoral funding, and professional political marketing.²⁹ The formula was not much different from 1991, but this time it lacked domestic or international constraints and aimed to achieve two-thirds of the seats, which would enable the party to approve a new constitution at will.

Achieving its objective, the MPLA received 81.76 percent of votes during the 2008 election. This allowed the MPLA to approve the Constitution in 2010, which blended liberal-democratic trappings with the MPLA's renewed

hegemony—extreme concentration of power at the presidency, controlling the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary—superlative-presidentialism, as some constitutionalists define it.³⁰

In 2010 the MPLA was at the peak of its hegemony due to petrodollars from the 2008 oil boom along with renewed political legitimacy from the 2008 electoral victory and a new constitution. A new strategic partnership with China that began in 2002 regularly flooded the country with financial and technical support for infrastructure, which allowed the government to discard the Western donor/lending community and its conditions regarding transparency and human rights.

This strength prompted a reformulation of the intelligence services focused on domestic issues, officially and unashamedly reacquiring their state police security character. In March 2010, SINFO became the Service of Intelligence and State Security (*Serviço de Inteligência e Segurança do Estado*, SINSE), which along with the Services of Military Intelligence (SIM) and Services of Foreign Intelligence (SIE) would be "essential auxiliary organs" of the president's executive functions.³¹

It was up to SINSE and SIE to support the exercise of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers and (for SINSE) to support the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police in the fulfillment of their missions.³² As the president's auxiliary organs with such broadly encompassing functions, this reformulation meant that the intelligence and security services recovered their "big brother is watching you" role over the whole state and political system. Thus, the services' long path since 1991 had come full circle.

The new power upgrade also brought new challenges and strains within the political system. Transforming the whole intelligence community into auxiliary organs implied a closer relationship with the already existing organs in security, namely the Military House/House of Security of the Presidency of the Republic. Beyond administrative functions and articulation between the presidency and other national security organs, the House of Security has effective operational activities, directly leading the militarized Unit of the Presidential Guard (UGP), composed of thousands of men.

Within an extremely concentrated political system, the auxiliary organs are a first layer of all state powers (legislative, executive, judicial, and military). Considering the distributive neo-patrimonial character of the system, the first layer also provides primary access to management and distribution of state resources, most prized by political competition. This led to clashes between the security services and the president's House of Security. Disagreements mounted between two "strongmen": the head of the House of Security, General Vieira Dias Kopelipa, and the director general of SIE, General Garcia

Miala. SIE had gained ascendancy within the intelligence community due to Angolan politics in the international capitalist world of state-private business networks (legal and illegal), as well as the political weight of its Director General Miala.

The clash between the two resulted in the arrest of General Miala in 2006; he was deposed as director general of SIE under the serious accusation of preparing a coup. Such accusations did not result in prosecution, but he ended up being convicted and sentenced to four years in prison by the Supreme Military Court in 2007 for failing to attend the ceremony of his military demotion. This was obviously a pretext, proving how politically manipulated the judicial system is. The affair was later explained (after Dos Santos left the presidency in 2017) as the consequence of SIE's investigation on major international corruption schemes involving multi-billion-dollar contracts and Chinese reconstruction loans through Kopelipa's Cabinet of National Reconstruction.³³

With the new administration of João Lourenço in 2017 and his announced fight against corruption, Miala recovered his rank, and he was appointed head of SINSE in March 2018. The intelligence and security services resumed its role in the Lourenço administration's war on corruption and efforts to recover state funds, trying to cope with "empty coffers" left by the former president.³⁴ Kopelipa lost his powerful position in the new administration and became a major target in the fight against corruption, being obliged to return funds and real estate worth billions of US dollars.³⁵ The affair revealed the potential dangers and intelligence services' weaknesses within an extremely personalized and concentrated political system. Moreover, it demonstrates how the intelligence culture is an upgraded version of an intelligence praetorian Presidential Guard that defends the president and the party above anything else.

THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITARIAN POPULISM

The new 2010 Constitution established that future elections would be general (legislative and presidential), with each party presenting a list of candidates for election and the first name on the list that wins the most votes becoming president. While the country was experiencing an oil boom and it had the power to shape the electoral process, the MPLA won subsequent elections with renewed two-thirds majorities, although with ever-shrinking voting percentages (71.84 percent in 2012 and 61.05 percent in 2017). In 2012, Eduardo dos Santos became president (the first and only election he had effectively

won since becoming president in 1979), but after thirty-eight years in power he left office in 2017. This opened the way to his successor, but he retained the position of party president for another year.

The international and domestic context was once again changing. In a country that relied heavily on revenues from crude oil within a neo-patrimonial system based on distributive clientelism, the steady decrease in international oil prices caused political strain. Moreover, the Arab Spring in 2010 had a major impact all over the continent, and criticism of the regime increased in the streets and on social media, targeting the president and the MPLA's elites, whose lavish and ostensive wealth were in sharp contrast to the impoverished population.³⁶ Indeed, mounting corruption scandals damaged the optimism of the early 2000s about economic growth and hope for poverty eradication as the shrinking electoral majorities since 2008 demonstrated the party's eroding popularity.

Meanwhile, "illiberal" movements were rising in Europe and elsewhere. The most cited example was the 2014 speech of Hungary's Prime Minister Victor Orbán referring to the economic success of nonliberal democracies such as Russia and Turkey.³⁷ Several African hegemonic regimes that had partially democratized their political systems throughout the 1990s, including Angola, saw opportunities, particularly the perceived rising international economic and political strength of some of its main supporters, like China and Russia. However, the attraction was not just the obvious source of renewed funding in terms of aid, loans, and investment that were provided by China and Russia. Rather, it was also legitimizing political discourses used to defend against decades-long Western criticism and pressures for liberalization and transparency as well as to respond to the growing domestic activism for democratization.

The attraction did not seem to be the adoption of a new model of authoritarianism, such as replacing a patrimonial matrix with a Chinese type of totalitarianism or a form of Russian autocracy. Russian and Chinese regimes are based on strong hierarchical and well-organized and -disciplined bureaucracies and parties, while the Angolan party and state are marked by informality, patron-client legitimacy networks, and extreme concentration and personalization of power, which are obstacles to proper institutionalization of efficient bureaucracies and administrations. The attraction of such "new" discourses and models is in no way ideological either because those illiberal experiments, such as Russian imperial nationalism, Xi Jinping's "socialism with Chinese characteristics," and Victor Orbán's Christian illiberal democracy, do not have meaning in a neo-patrimonial system.³⁸

Instead, the attraction is the international legitimization of authoritarian procedures and mechanisms, providing regimes with effective processes for

their hegemonic objectives. This means, for instance, the limitation of individuals and minorities' fundamental rights in the name of a higher common good or to protect core values as supposedly defended by the leadership.³⁹ More specifically, it includes the possibility to legally and institutionally constrain fundamental rights and freedoms, as in China and Russia. In short, it is the possibility to internationally legitimize several of the procedures and mechanisms targeting fundamental rights that the Angolan political system has been camouflaging under a democratic façade since the 1990s.

It is in this sense that one can understand the increasing Angolan politically strategic approach to China and Russia, including with its intelligence services. When the newly elected Angolan president João Lourenço rose to power in 2017, he wanted to be seen as Angola's Deng Xiaoping rather than as Angola's Mikhail Gorbachev, as demonstrated by his economic policies.⁴⁰ Insofar as the intelligence services are concerned, a rising priority has emerged since 2010 toward cooperation with the intelligence and security services of Russia and China, though without forgetting the long and loyal Cuban partnership.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

How the new Angolan intelligence services model will evolve in the 2020s depends on how the new leader and the party manage the challenges ahead. These challenges include an economic and financial crisis, increasing popular criticism and disillusionment, a reshuffle of presidential entourage and search to find new loyalists, a struggle against corruption to recover funds from the elite that the president himself has been a part of since independence, a need to reunite the party after the 2022 election loss of the two-third majority (51.17%), and rampant corruption. Despite the past and present challenges, the foundational principles of the Angolan intelligence and security services from 1975 through the present have demonstrated continuity and resilience. Angola's intelligence culture secures the status quo and the hegemon, represented by the president, the MPLA, and its regime, above anything else and independent from the constitutional setting.

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1. This work was supported by the program Knowledge for Development Initiative, funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology, Portuguese Ministry for Science, Technology and Higher Education & the Aga Khan Development Network, under grant 333169403.

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Benin

The Presidentialization of National Intelligence

Juste Codjo

Formerly known as Dahomey, Benin has struggled to establish a professional intelligence community since it achieved independence from France in 1960. The evolution of the country's intelligence services closely mirrors its political trajectory, which consists of three major historical periods. The first, often referred to as the "instability period," covers the years 1960 through 1972. During this twelve-year period, the country experienced six regime changes as a result of military coups. The second era, which lasted from 1972 to 1990, was defined by one-party rule under a military dictatorship. The third era, which began after the 1990 National Conference, is marked by multiparty competition and democratic aspirations. This chapter examines the intelligence community's changes in structure and culture throughout each period.

This chapter argues that Benin's intelligence services are primarily directed at serving the president's political agenda. More than a simple politicization, the services are subject to what can be referred to as a "presidentialization" of national intelligence. Since independence, intelligence services have been created, organized, structured, equipped, funded, and employed by and for presidents. The lack of involvement by other branches of government in the establishment, funding, and oversight of the intelligence community is a striking phenomenon that has only reinforced the presidential grasp on this critical state instrument. Such presidentialization of the intelligence services severely compromises the country's ability to build a professional organization dedicated to providing actionable intelligence that supports decision-making for national security, rather than political, purposes.

The analysis presented in this chapter partly draws on informal communications between the author and former members of Benin's intelligence services. Some served in the field, while others have been in leadership roles.