- Vidal, Nuno, "Social neglect and the emergence of civil society", in Patrick Chabal & Nuno Vidal (eds. & co-auts.), Angola: the weight of history (New York & London: Hurst & Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 200-235.

Social Neglect and the Emergence of Civil Society in Angola[1]

Nuno Vidal

Introduction

Soon after independence, the Angolan political system assumed a modern patrimonial character. With a single party regime, there was a juxtaposition of State and party structures. Power was exercised by means of a distribution mechanism of State resources (primarily oil revenue) operated through the appointment of key-figures for the top jobs. Within the State administration, jobs were routes to access State resources for personal or private benefit. Public office became a perk or a personal reward and was not understood in terms of a mission to implement public projects. Accordingly, the differentiation between public and private spheres vanished along with notions of common good and collective interest[2].

Following the 27th of May 1977 attempted coup, the State security apparatus grew stronger and came under close presidential and party guidance, spreading fear and terror, as thousands were killed[3]. This resulted in the overlapping of the judicial, legislative and executive systems, with tight political control of the judiciary. Political power became concentrated in the hands of the President and administration was centralized in Luanda. The regime increased its authoritarianism and showed the first signs of elitism in the access to resources and benefits.[4]

Popular discontent and the loss of political legitimacy were partially disguised by the civil war. The conflict 'justified' hardships in living conditions and the deterioration of public services. As the conflict gained increasing ethnic overtones in the 1980s, it also allowed the regime to neglect its social obligations towards the majority of the population, which survived at the margins of the patrimonial system, without entirely losing the support of those who still identified with the great socio-political alliance at the heart of the MPLA[5]. The availability of valuable natural minerals such as oil allowed the

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[2] On the working logic of the Angolan political system see Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa: the genesis and development of the Angolan political-economic system, 1961-1987* (London: King's College, 2002), a PhD thesis.
[3] On the attempted coup see Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa…*op. cit., ch.5.
[4] See my chapter on politics in this volume.
[5] On the increasing ethnic overtones of the conflict in the eighties see Messiant, Christine, 'MPLA et UNITA, processus de paix et logique de guerre', in *Politique Africaine*, 57 (1995), p.44; also Messiant, Christine, 'Angola, les voies de l'ethnisation et de la décomposition — I — de la guerre à la paix (1975–1991): le conflit armé, les interventions internationales et le peuple angolais', i*n Lusotopie*, 1 (1994) pp.

regime to forego the 'exploitation'('mise au travail') of the population for the purpose of generating the resources needed to sustain the State. Together, these characteristics rendered the system unaccountable but without consequences for those in power, who could simply ignore the poor or *l'Afrique inutile* (to use Reno's expression)[6].

During the administration of Agostinho Neto (1975-79), the Angolan political and economic system clearly exhibited the characteristics of modern (neo-) patrimonialism as described by authors such as Chabal and Daloz, Médard and Bayart[7]. However, contrary to that analytical framework, Angola's neo-patrimonialism did not reach a point of coherent and operative stabilization: ties of distributive interdependence between patrons and clients loosened, patrimonial networks were restricted to the top of the State apparatus and the majority of the population became increasingly more remote from the prevailing system of redistribution. Service delivery by the State progressively collapsed, especially at in the social sector, which primarily affected the bottom layers of society and the poor. The social tissue became deeply fragmented and the social party's 'social compact' entered a process of terminal dereliction, shattering whatever remained of the MPLA's ambitions for the well-being of the newly independent nation-state.[8]. Although this process started during Agostinho Neto's administration, it accelerated during Dos Santos administration in the first half of the eighties – that is, much before the end of the 'socialist' phase of government.

A dominant patrimonial logic pervaded the social system; an authoritarian and repressive one-party regime manipulated the State media and mass organizations, all within the context of civil war. There developed an operative political rationality, shared and practiced by all layers of society, with an established set of rules for appropriation and distribution. People positioned themselves vertically in relation to the State

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155–210; Messiant, Christine, 'Angola les voies de l'ethnisation et de la décomposition — II — Transition à la démocratie ou marche à la guerre? L'épanouissement des deux 'partis armés' (Mai 1991–Septembre 1992)' in *Lusotopie*, 3 (1995) pp. 181–221; also Birmingham, David, *Frontline Nationalism in Angola and Mozambique* (London: James Currey, 1992) p.88.

[6] Reno, William, *Warlord Politics and African States* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p.35.

[7] Reference is made mainly to the following works: Médard, Jean-François, 'The Underdeveloped State in 'Tropical Africa: Political Clientelism or Neo-Patrimonialism?', in Clapham, C., ed., *Private Patronage and Public Power* (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), pp.162-192.; Médard, Jean-François, 'L'État néo-patrimonial en Afrique noire' in Médard, Jean-François (ed.) *États d'Afrique noire* (Paris: Karthala, 1991), pp.323-353; Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa, the politics of the belly* (London: Longman, 1989); Bayart, Jean-François et al., *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (London: James Currey, 1998); Chabal, Patrick, *Power in Africa* (London: Macmillan Press, 1994); Chabal, Patrick and Daloz, Jean-Pascal, *Africa Works* (London: James Currey, 1999).

[8] Such type of patrimonial dynamics occurred in Angola throughout the eighties, during the so-called socialist administration of President Eduardo dos Santos and is probably not much different from the ones occurring in different periods and in other mineral rich countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria; it is not possible here to explain at length the whole dynamics involved in this form of patrimonialism; on that subject see Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa: …*op. cit.; also Vidal, Nuno, 'Modern and Post-Modern Patrimonialism' in *Community & the State in Lusophone Africa,* edited by Malyn Newitt with Patrick Chabal & Norrie MacQueen (London: King's College London, 2003), pp.1-14; also Vidal, Nuno, 'The genesis and development of the Angolan political and administrative system from 1975 to the present', in Kyle, Steve (org.) *Intersections between social sciences* (Cornell NY: Institute for African Development of Cornell University, 2004)' pp. 1-16.

structures and along preferential solidarity chains of clientelism according to an 'ethic' of neo-patrimonialism. This inhibited the appearance of an alternative social logic based upon notions of citizenship or class (where people place themselves horizontally in relation to the State) and therefore hampered the emergence of Civil Society as understood in the West[9].

In a situation such as Angola (and possibly others in Africa), where there is no longer any distribution of resources to the great majority of the population, public services collapse and poverty thrives. The patrimonial ethics dilutes and social fragmentation reaches very high levels. Political power becomes illegitimate since it is unaccountable to those marginalized by the system, who might then be recruited by political rivals, either of a competing patrimonial type or of a counter-logic nature.

In such situations, there is room for competing patrimonial projects, led by ambitious or unsatisfied leaders gathering those cast out by the system in an attempt to replicate the central model at the regional or local level. These might aim to overthrow the current elites in power and take their place, but without questioning the inner logic of the whole system. On the other hand, within a context of deep social fragmentation as well as poverty and despair, there might be some opportunity to fill part of the "social void" with small counter-projects. Transnational networks linking national and foreign actors with a radically different social perspective in relation to patrimonialism (some national and international NGOs, International Governmental Organizations - IGOs, Church organizations, etc.), are able to recruit those marginalized by the system in order to seek to develop 'civil society', denounce patrimonialism and promote democratic notions of citizenship and the universality of Human rights.

In the late eighties and early nineties, the transition to a multiparty system and a market economy brought into the country a large number of international organizations – from IGOs to International NGOs, Church organizations, solidarity assistance, etc. Transnational networks gathered together expatriate activists, local communities and a marginalized Angolan intellectual elite, including some middle and high level cadres. Joining forces, they began to work with the people most in need of basic social support and progressively took over an ever increasing large portfolio of State responsibilities in social sectors such as education, health, basic sanitation, housing, support to Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) and rural development. Accordingly, the government was able to relax further its already minimal care of the millions of people affected by war. These dynamics were reinforced by the new multiparty 'freedom' and 'democratic' legislative framework, fuelling the emerging Angolan civil society organizations - CSOs, which were able to grow throughout the nineties and voice growing criticism against the government despite the severe constraints imposed by the regime.

Several major financial scandals since the late nineties and, especially, after the end of the civil war in 2002, changed the context within which CSOs operated. As international humanitarian aid progressively decreased, pressure was put on the government to invest in social sector and to assume a more transparent procedure in

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[9] See Chabal, Patrick and Daloz, Jean-Pascal, *Africa..* op. cit. ch.2

relation to public accounts, mainly oil revenues. However, results have been limited and the Angolan government has been able to circumvent such pressure without substantially changing its attitude. So far the main impact has been felt at the level of the CSOs – small, dependent and fighting hard to survive within an increasingly adverse context.

This chapter discusses the reasons why the social sector collapsed in Angola, the impact of transnational networks and projects, the effects of the transition to a multi party system, the process whereby CSOs emerged and the constraints and challenges they faced to survive. It is divided chronologically: the first part touches on the progressive neglect of the social sector during the socialist period; the second is concerned with the consequences of the transition to a multiparty system on the workings of the transnational networks and the emergence of civil society.

I – The social sector during the socialist period

1.1 – First signs of neglect by the end of Neto's administration

During the very first few years after independence, at the height of ideological and revolutionary fervour, there was a certain commitment to the idea of devising policies and initiating programmes for the development of the social sector, including education, health, housing, social support and community services. This commitment was also nurtured by the arrival of Cuban volunteers trained in these areas (especially in health and education), who made a contribution to its management and organisation[10]. However, after an initial phase during which the government showed some concern with these issues, by the end of Neto's presidency (1977-1979) there were clear signs of contraction in social expenditure, which led to the strangulation of programmes in most sectors.

Education was one of the main priorities of the new government and in the first years of independence, several measures were successfully introduced. There was a massive enrolment of children for the first four academic school years[11]. Significant efforts were made in adult education, especially for the veterans of the armed forces (FAPLA), and for workers and peasants: between 1976 and 1979 around 330,000 people were made literate.[12] Almost 759,000 illiterate adults were enrolled in 37,000 literacy classes[13]. A system of technical and professional training was set up along with higher education[14].

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[10] By 1977 these Cubans numbered 5000; In *Le Monde* (November 9, 1977); also *Africa Contemporary Record - ACR,* 10 (1979), p.B510.

[11] In 1979, the intake was 2,4million children, four times greater than in 1973; In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I^o Congresso Extraordinário do Partido, realizado em Luanda de 17 a 23 de Dezembro de 1980* (Luanda: Secretariado do Comité Central, 1980), p.80.

[12] Ibid. p.80.

[13] 70,000 literacy teachers had been trained and 615 literacy brigades constituted, composed of 4,950 young volunteers; in *ACR*, 14 (1983), p.B590.

[14] The Faculty of Juridical and Administrative Sciences was inaugurated, as was the Higher Institute of Educational Sciences; by 1980, there were over 2,000 university students; In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I^o Congresso Extraordinário*... op. cit...1980, pp.80–81.

However, between 1979 and 1981, the number of primary-school children remained exactly the same[15] and the number of literate people grew by only 9,000[16]; an insignificant number when compared with the previous 330.000 and the illiteracy rate of 80% at the time of independence. From the two thousand university students enrolled in 1980 it was later known that only 180 had finished their courses and the number of literacy enrolments dropped in the following years from the previous 759.000 to just 100.000[17]. These were clear signs of regression in the education sector, a tendency that would drastically increase in the ensuing five years.[18]

Within the health sector, assistance was given by foreign doctors (the number of Cuban doctors increased by 16.5% between 1977 and 1980).[19] The government set up, under its own auspices, 1,260 health units; the most important of which were the Central Hospitals of Luanda[20]. Several free vaccination campaigns for children were launched every year.[21] Primary health care was developed, with the creation of health centres, especially in rural and suburban areas. A project for the education of paramedical professionals was implemented[22].

However, as with education, many problems including the contraction of available means and the lack of financial and material resources, along with poor transportation to the provinces and poor co-ordination between sectors for import and distribution of medicines[23], all brought about the rapid degradation of the short lived successes of the health sector.[24]

Housing became one of the most severe social problems. After independence, apartments and villas were in part confiscated to accommodate the new rulers and in part occupied by the general mass of population already living in those cities in less noble areas (with a clear priority given to the urban middle social strata). Despite such occupation of vacant places, there was an ever increasing demand for housing due to

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[15] In *ACR*, 13 (1982), p.B651.

[16] In *ACR*, 14 (1983), p.B590.

[17] *Relatório do Comité Central ao II° Congresso do Partido, realizado em Luanda de 2 a 10 de Dezembro de 1985* (Luanda: Edição do Secretariado do Comité Central, 1985), pp.120–122.

[18] Ibid. pp.120–122.

[19] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário... op. cit...1980*, p.81; see also *ACR*, 13 (1982), p.B651.

[20] It comprised 8 hospitals, 16 provincial health centres, 32 municipal hospitals, 16 centres for mothers and children, 16 leprosy hospices and 6 tuberculosis sanatorium; In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário... op. cit...1980*, p.81.

[21] For example, to mark World Health Day (April 7, 1977), 1,5 million children were vaccinated against polio; see *ACR*, 10 (1979), p.508.

[22] *E.g.* training of nurses, midwives and other health care technicians; In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário... op. cit...1980*, p.81.

[23] Serious failures in medicine distribution emerged throughout the whole country, as reported in 'Principais resultados do desenvolvimento económico-social da RPA no triénio 1978-1980' in *Orientações Fundamentais para o Desenvolvimento Económico e Social para o período 1981-1985* (Luanda: Secretariado do Comité Central, 1980), p.25.

[24] See *Relatório do Comité Central ao II° Congresso ...op. cit...1985*, pp.123–125; Also reporting problems in the health sector is David Lamb in *Los Angeles Times* (December 3, 1978); see also *Herald Tribune* (December 6, 1978).

several factors such as the continuous exodus of the rural population towards the cities prompted by the war, the arrival of a growing number of foreign advisers, counsellors, technicians, military personnel (the majority of whom were Cuban[25]) and the training of new State cadres demanding to be properly housed by the State[26].

For the lower social strata, who were flocking to the cities coming from rural areas, the solution was obviously to build more *muceques* (shanty towns) and these spread out-of-control around the cities, especially in Luanda, in a process which started as soon as 1976/77 [27] and increased during the eighties and nineties. Among the newcomers to the capital city were the Bakongos, who returned from Zaire and numbered 200.000 as early as 1977. They set up their own *muceques* such as Palanca, Maborr or Petrangol.[28]

For the new State middle cadres and the Cubans, a few dozens low-quality blocks of flats were built in Luanda during the late seventies and early eighties (made possible through Cuban aid). However the State's building programme did not extend much beyond those few buildings in Luanda and soon became totally stagnant. It was the informal sector that filled the gap and the whole city of Luanda turned to unofficial (and anarchic) construction[29], whereby thousands of annexes were built in the yards and gardens of houses or even on the flat roofs of blocks of flats.

In terms of social provisions, several national projects were discussed and started to be implemented under the pressure of workers and neighbourhood commissions as well as youth committees and mass organisations, including: nurseries for children of working women; socio-economic support to former guerrillas, widows and orphans of the guerrilla veterans; homes for the elderly and handicapped persons; refugee camps for people fleeing the war[30]. In 1977 around 50,000 Namibian refugees, targeted by South Africa, were transferred from the South to the North, where new camps were set up to house them. In the northeast provinces (Lunda South and Lunda North), camps were set up for around 18,000 refugees from Shaba (in Zaire) and several other initiatives of this kind were taken to support hundreds of thousands of displaced Angolans[31].

However, as early as the end of 1977 and early 1978, the funds to support such initiatives decreased and the first signs of neglect became evident[32]. By the 1980 party

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[25] The number of Cuban military was not made official but in 1978 was estimated at 19.000; in *ACR,* vol.11 (1980), p.B493. As already referred to, as early as 1977, the number of Cuban civilians in Angola under co-operative agreements (economic, scientific, cultural, technical and so on) was 5.000; in *Le Monde* (November 9, 1977); also *ACR,* 10 (1979), p.B510.

[26] Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa: …*op. cit.

[27] In *ACR,* 15 (1984), p. B597; I am obviously talking about the enlargement and construction of new *muceques,* because as it is known, *muceques* have existed since the colonial period.

[28] See Bhagavan, M R, *Angola's political economy 1975–85* (Motala: Swedish International Development Authority, 1986), p.24.

[29] In 'Principais resultados do desenvolvimento económico-social da RPA no triénio 1978-1980' … op. cit. p. 25.

[30] See 'Principais resultados do desenvolvimento económico-social da RPA no triénio 1978-1980'…op. cit.

[31] See *UNHCR publication*, 5 (October 1977), p.2; also *ACR,* 14 (1983), p.B590.

[32] Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa ...* op. cit., pp.230-231.

congress, the results of such programmes were reduced to a mere declaration of future intentions but without any concrete plans[33]. As an alternative, and especially because of the acute pressure of refugees and internally displaced people, the Angolan government increased its demands for international support from organisations such as the UN system (UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, WFP), the League of Red Cross Societies and Northern European countries like Sweden and Norway[34]. These were the first signs of a tendency, which grew stronger in 1979.[35] Significant humanitarian aid to Angola began during this period (late 1977 and 1978), when the first signs of collapse in the social sector became apparent. Such aid increased markedly during the first five years of the 1980s as we will see.

In the field of community services, in parallel with the main responsibilities of the provincial commissariats (currently the provincial governments), several tasks were given to ODP groups (People's Defence Organisation). Apart from their role as paramilitary forces, these groups were to offer social provisions in their respective provinces, municipalities, neighbourhoods or villages, such as carrying out maintenance and repairs on schools, hospitals and various other public buildings, cleaning and sanitation. Beyond the ODP and commissariats, in the first years of independence (1975-1977), there were regular government appeals to voluntary civic work on specific days of the month to clean the streets. These activities were quite successful[36].

Nevertheless, as early as 1978, the commissariats and the ODPs, as well as the voluntary activities that were effectively fulfilling their tasks and community services, soon became neglected not only in the provinces but even in the capital city. In 1978, Luanda was reported to have fallen 'into a tatty and dirty state of disrepair', 'in decay, with rubbish and rubble in the ill–repaired streets' with chronic and progressively acute lack of water, electricity, basic sanitation, drains and rubbish collection[37].

In sum and taken as a whole, the analysis of the social sector during Neto's administration reveals an initial concern and effective policy commitments but, even before his death (September 1979), the first signs of political failure in these sectors started to appear. The key question is why?

The standard answer is that this was due to the war effort and the increasing import of consumer goods and equipment (and that was in part the official argument used[38]). However, if such increased expenditure must be acknowledged, it cannot be taken as the

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[33] See *Relatório do Comité Central ao Iº Congresso Extraordinário...* op. cit...1980, pp. 93-94.

[34] In *UNHCR publication*, 5 (October 1977), p.2; The UNHCR built up a sum of US$1.2 million into its 1977 emergency programme and a further 4.1 million for 1978 to finance the relief phase. A programme of longer-term assistance was to follow; ibid. p.2.

[35] In *ACR*, 14 (1983), p.B590.

[36] Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa ...* op. cit., pp. 231-232.

[37] Reported by David Lamb to the *Los Angeles Times* (December 3, 1978), also in the same sense is a report to *The Sunday Telegraph* (June 25, 1978).

[38] On the use of the war argument to justify the non-achievement of several socio-economic goals during the three year period of 1977-1980 see See *Relatório do Comité Central ao Iº Congresso Extraordinário...* op. cit., 1980, p.83.

main reason for that sudden collapse (end of 1977 and 1978) for three reasons. First, that period also coincided with the increase in Angolan oil production and the dramatic rise in the price of oil (from US$12 per barrel in 1974 to US$28 in 1979)[39], representing an average income of 1 billion $US/year between 1975 and 1980[40]. Second, arms expenditure remained relatively constant in the late 1970's (around US$500 million per year) and only increased significantly in the early eighties[41]. Finally, those services did not depend exclusively on the State, but also relied significantly on voluntary work and the community commitments of the general population. Thus, a different explanation must be found[42].

From the government's perspective, the decline in social policies seems to be related to the appearance of a phenomenon whereby the ruling elites became progressively more 'comfortable' with neglecting the general population and this for a double reason. In the first instance, they began to feel quite secure in economic terms, with a huge oil rent that did not depend on the productive efforts of the general population. Secondly, they also felt politically secure because, on the one hand, the population had no votes to express their political disaffection with a party tightly controlled and able to count on a feared political police and judicial system. On the other, insofar as UNITA was militarily active, the government could always count on support generated by the fear of that enemy, which represented a threat against the great Creole/M'Bundu alliance at the heart of the MPLA[43].

From the people's perspective (those supposed to participate in voluntary work) the reasons for the lack of community commitment seemed also to be twofold. First, it was related to the post-27th May 1977 repression that was mainly directed against the revolutionary and ideologically fervent generation of the youth committees (usually involved with and committed to social policies). This also undermined the independent activity of workers and neighbourhood committees, syndicates and mass organisations (initially linked to the youth committees in terms of social initiatives)[44]. Secondly, the

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[39] In *Shell Bulletin SBS* (1986).

[40] Hodges, Tony, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (London: James Currey, 2001), p.2.

[41] In Collelo, Thomas, ed., *Angola, a Country Study* (Washington: Federal Research Division, 1991), p.234.

[42] Even approaching the war impact in more general terms, at the level of the whole economy and from a strictly economic point of view, the war *per se* cannot explain the production decline as explained by a Portuguese economist: see Ferreira, Manuel Ennes, *A Indústria em tempo de Guerra (Angola, 1975–91)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos/IDN, 1999).

[43] Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa ...* op. cit., pp.224-226; on this subject see also Messiant, Christine, 'Angola, les voies de l'ethnisation et de la décomposition — I — de la guerre à la paix (1975–1991): le conflit armé, les interventions internationales et le peuple angolais', in *Lusotopie*, 1 (1994) pp. 155–210, especially 169; also Messiant, Christine, 'MPLA et UNITA, processus de paix et logique de guerre', in *Politique Africaine*, 57 (1995) p.46 ; Messiant, Christine, 'Angola: entre guerre et paix', in Marchal, Roland and Messiant, Christine, *Les chemins de la guerre et la paix: fins de conflit en Afrique orientale et australe* (Paris: Karthala, 1997), p. 169; also Heywood, Lynda, *Contested Power in Angola, 1840's to the Present* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2000), p.152.

[44] It is not possible to explain here the sociological and political phenomenon of the youth committees and the impact of the 27th May attempted coup, for a deeper analysis see Mabeko-Tali, Jean-Michel, *Dissidências e poder de Estado: o MPLA perante si próprio (1962-1974),* 2 volumes (Luanda: editorial N'Zila, 2001); also Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa ...* op. cit..chap.5.

decline of social service appeared to be related to, on the one hand, the general disillusionment that came from the realisation that Angola's wealth, previously exploited by the Portuguese[45], was not to be shared by all and, on the other hand, to a growing economic austerity that forced most to resort to informal activities in order to compensate for the loss of purchase power of salaries. As Zenha Rela states:

> *[The 27th May] marks the end of any 'état de grâce' that the politicians might have used to mobilise the people. It was the crude awakening from the state of euphoria in which people lived until then, the consciousness of daily difficulties and a **transformation of attitude: the solution of problems which was until then considered as a collective action [...] became each individual's problem,** because people had to solve their own problems; if underhand 'schemes' were the only way to solve these problems, then everyone tried to be involved in one[46] [my bold].*

Therefore, there were clear signs of a weak commitment to public welfare. The palpable result was a progressive decline in social services during the period 1977-1979. Consequently, not only did the existing living conditions deteriorated for most of the people (in terms of education, health services, housing, social support and community services), but their future prospects were also jeopardised (diminishing, for instance, their children's chances of socio-professional and economic advancement or even their life expectancy). In the medium and even longer terms, such decline meant an increasing economic and social fragility for the bottom layers of society (the majority of the population) most in need of social support.

1.2 – The dos Santos administration and the collapse of the social sector

During the socialist phase of Eduardo dos Santos Presidency (1979-1987)[47], the social sector was increasingly neglected, thus reinforcing the tendency that had begun to be noticeable by the end of Neto's administration. As was clearly recognised by the Central Committee (CC) report to the 1985 Congress, social provisions had worsened between 1980 and 1985.

Education had clearly declined from the early independence successes:

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[45] On this issue see for instance, Carreira, Iko, *O Pensamento estratégico de Agostinho Neto* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1996), p.148. Also supporting the same argument of a different conception of independence among the lower ranks of society, essentially based upon expectations of material benefits is Daniel Chipenda in a public interview to the National Radio of Angola, programme *Foi há vinte anos* (June 17, 1995).

[46]Zenha Rela, José Manuel *Angola entre o presente e o futuro* (Lisboa: Escher, Agropromotora, 1992), p.53.

[47] Although officially sanctioned only in 1990 (MPLA's IIIrd congress), the change to a market economy and to a multiparty system was already discernible by 1987 (*cf. infra*) — as has been recognised by other authors as well; see Messiant, Christine, 'À propos des "transitions démocratiques", notes comparatives et préalables à l'analyse du cas Angolais', in *Africana Studia*, 2 (2000), pp.61–95; also in the same sense is Hodges, Tony, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (London: James Currey, 2001).

In spite of the efforts made, there was a drop in the education system. The literacy programmes that were so successful during the first years of independence also show signs of regression[48]

Health care services were also failing rapidly:

The sharp deterioration during the first phase of the five-year period was expressed through the negative evolution of available indicators, including access to health services and increased morbidity from the main contagious diseases[49].

The State housing sector was stagnant and unable to face demand:

It is a fact that without constructing new houses and finishing the building work that has already been started, it will not be possible to solve the problems of housing. On the other hand, State housing has not been regularly maintained and has even deteriorated somewhat, which again adds to the acuity of the problem.[50]

Despite substantial international aid, the State sector was unable to fund, or even implement, government social policies:

In terms of support to the displaced population and the integration of returned people there have been difficulties in bringing the guidelines to fruition [...]. In spite of the high levels of international aid, the resources given were insufficient.[51]

As for community services the report simply admitted that:

During the past five years, the services were not given the necessary means to function.[52]

This general deterioration of the social sector (at a time of greater want due to a worsening of socio-economic conditions and the intensification of the war) had the most immediate and dramatic effect upon the lower social strata, not only in rural areas (where an estimated 500,000 to 700,000 Internal Displaced Persons - IDPs, were in critical need of social assistance[53]) but also in the urban areas, where there was a desperate need for

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[48] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao IIº Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.121. According to Mohanty, 'From 1980-85, in primary education there was a decrease in the number of pupils (10 per cent annually) and teachers (14 per cent annually) on average'; in Mohanty, Susama, *Political Development and Ethnic Identity in Africa, a study of Angola since 1960* (London: Sangam Books, 1992), p.209. Education accounted for 2 per cent of the country's total foreign exchange expenditure during 1980-85; ibid. p.209.

[49] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao IIº Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.123. 'Health, like education, accounted for 2 per cent of the country's total foreign exchange expenditure during 1980-85'; in Mohanty, Susama, *Political Development* … op. cit. p.209.

[50] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao IIº Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.128.

[51] Ibid. p.125.

[52] Ibid. p128.

[53] According to the UN in 1985, 'More than 500,000 people are estimated to be in critical need of assistance, mainly in the Northern, Central and Southern provinces. [...] Many displaced people are in dire

clean drinking water[54] and street cleaning, and where public sanitation systems collapsed[55]. Diseases such as yellow fever and cholera made a frightening reappearance. In 1985, cholera was responsible for the death of 4,000 people in the city of Luanda alone[56] and one out of every three children died[57].

The main official argument used to justify such a collapse was the difficult financial situation resulting from the increased war effort:

> *The activities in the social sector over the past five years have reflected the general difficulties caused by the military situation and by financial and economic matters, which were affected by the limitations on budget, foreign currency and investment.* [58]

Indeed, arms expenditure doubled in 1980 (increasing to more than US$1 billion[59]) and in 1983 it was estimated that Angola spent 50% of its foreign exchange earnings on defence[60]. However, such an explanation cannot be taken at face value because the report itself denied such argumentation when, despite the chaotic situation in that area, it clearly set as the main objective for future social policy a reduction in spending, with the following unsustainable argument:

> *Some measures have been taken and others are under way aimed at diminishing the dependence of these sectors on the State's general budget, so that those who benefit from them can realise the true value of some of the services that the State provides for them.* [61]

In other words, the government's neglect towards the social sector (mostly affecting the poor) was to become the norm, independently of any possible later increases in State revenues – thus clearly breaking any future linkage between State revenues and social policy. So, the obvious question is why?

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need of clothing, blankets and shelter; In *Africa Emergency - UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa* (June 1985). Under the clarifying title 'Les stigmates d'un effondrement', Jean-Claude Pomonti reported that 'Le comité international de la Croix Rouge, qui dispose d'antennes locales, estime la situation 'très grave'. Sur les hauts plateaux [...] se trouveraient la majorité des 467.000 'personnes deplacées' selon les calculs officiels angolais. En fait, d'autres sources font état, pour l'ensemble du territoire, de 700.000 refugiés de l'intérieur, soit un habitant sur dix'; In *Le Monde* (January 28, 1981).

[54] Article by Jean-Claude Pomonti under the title 'Les stigmates d'un effondrement' in *Le Monde* (January 28, 1981); the same problem of the lack of water is reported by Quentin Peel in *Financial Times* (September 14, 1981).

[55] Article by Jean-Claude Pomonti under the title 'Les stigmates d'un effondrement', in *Le Monde* (January 28, 1981); also stressing the grubby and run-down condition of Luanda is the report of Michael Holman in *Financial Times* (June 21, 1982). Referring to 1982, a description of these problems can also be found in Pepetela, *Geração da Utopia* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1992), pp. 212-213, 234, 236-237.

[56] According to Western aid workers 'it was a miracle that not more people died'; article by Paul Betts in *Financial Times* (September 21, 1987)

[57] In *Africa Emergency - UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa* (June 1985).

[58] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao II° Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.120.

[59] Until then they had remained stable (around US$500 million per year in late 1970's); In Collelo, Thomas, ed., *Angola, …* op. cit. p.234.

[60] In *ACR,* vol.15 (1984), p.B594.

[61] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao II° Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.120.

From the rulers' perspective the answer here provided is related to the trend already noticeable during Neto's presidency: the social strata most affected by the neglect in social policies had decreasing economic and political value. Economically, the ruling elites were more autonomous than ever in relation to the productive effort of the masses. Politically, there were virtually no formal mechanisms by means of which the population might express their political disaffection with the government given the dominance of a single party in an authoritarian and repressive regime. Moreover, the regime could still count on some political support from large parts of the population because of the fear of UNITA.

On the other hand, because the collapse of the social sector had already become obvious by the end of Neto's presidency, there were a number of international donors willing to fund social initiatives in order to save people from starvation. Therefore, the government intensified its requests for international aid during the first five years of the 1980s, having received a very positive answer from several countries and organisations, namely: UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, UNESCO, ILO, WHO as well as from co-operation and development agencies from Northern and Western countries[62], the EEC, and the International Red Cross (which had been helping to feed thousands of people in the most affected provinces since 1981[63]).

Accordingly, the government's future strategy for social policy began to rest on foreign aid, as clearly and officially outlined in that same December 1985 Central Committee report:

> *Resorting to international co-operation to complement the resources available internally and to accelerate the pace of national reconstruction and of social and economic development is an objective necessity.*[64]

As a consequence of the new policy and despite the major recovery in oil revenues (which nearly doubled in 1987)[65], the emergency aid requested by the government increased from US$96.1m in 1985[66] to US$116m in 1987[67]. It was becoming increasingly clear that social sector expenditure was not directly linked to the availability of internal resources.

II – The social sector during the transition to multi party politics

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[62] Ibid. p.140. In June 1982, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) announced that it was giving US$21m to Angola; In *Rádio Nacional de Angola* (June 6, 1982), cit. in *SWB* - Summary of World Broadcasts, British Broadcasting Corporation Monitoring (June 8, 1982); Three years later, on 15 January 1985, the same organization announced that Angola expected to commercially import about two-thirds of its 1984-1985 food deficit and had succeeded in securing food aid pledges for most (71.000t) of the 83.000t balance; cit. in *ACR,* vol.17 (1986), p.B621.

[63] In Bhagavan, M R, *Angola's …* op. cit. p.20.

[64] *Relatório do Comité Central ao II° Congresso* ...op. cit...1985, p.146.

[65] Angola's annual oil revenues almost doubled, from previous US$1.1 billion in 1986 to US$2 billion in 1987; in Hodges, Tony, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism…* op. cit. p.2.

[66] In *Africa Emergency - UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa* (June 1985).

[67] Reported by Paul Betts to *Financial Times* (September 14 and 21, 1987).

With the end of the socialist system in the late eighties, with the transition to a multi-party system (1990), the peace agreement (Bicesse, 1991) and the preparation for the first general elections ever, a new political situation emerged.

A constitutional revision in 1991 (law 12/91), approved the basic principles of a multiparty democracy, defining Angola as a democratic State based on the rule of law. Other complementary legislation was approved, including the right to assembly and demonstration (law 16/91), the freedom of association (law 14/91), freedom of the press (law 25/91), the right to strike (law 23/91) and independent radio broadcasting (law 16/92). Preparing itself for the first elections and facing strong international and domestic pressure, the MPLA had to allow some real openness, become more tolerant and flexible.

Up to 1991, the absence of independent CSOs meant that the Church was the isolated voice defending Human rights. But the new legal and political context opened a space for the emergence of myriad organizations within civil society, along with opposition political parties, private media, independent labour and professional unions, and NGOs – several of which concerned with social and humanitarian problems such as the deterioration of social services, increasing poverty and the deplorable living conditions for the majority of the population.

International organizations arrived *en masse* (from IGOs to NGOs, churches, charitable institutions, solidarity assistance, etc.). It was time to think about reconstruction and development. Money flew in along with development activists, ideas, projects and strategies, which had in common a shared belief that the centralized, authoritarian, top-down model of the socialist regime (so-called democratic centralism) was outdated and had clearly failed. It was felt that it should be replaced by a more encompassing and inclusive development approach, centred on the people's needs and the recognition of 'democratic' values and principles such as citizenship and the universality of human rights.

2.1 – Cooperation between national and international activists supporting Angolan civil society organizations - CSOs[68]

An important degree of cooperation emerged between the newcomers (IGOs, International NGOs, donor community) and all those internally committed to the emergence of CSOs. This 'alliance' was beneficial to both. The newcomers needed local expertise and competence to help them with their projects' design, implementation and development. The local organizations needed foreign partners, whose support (financial, institutional and capacity building) was vital in their struggle for survival in a society

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[68] Unable to enter into the specific historical development of Angolan CSOs and having dealt with the media in my paper on politics in this volume, I will focus on national NGOs and related forms of association such as Church organizations and solidarity assistance that clearly dominate the civil society arena insofar as social sector is concerned. For a detailed study on the Angolan CSOs *parcours* see "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment of Human Rights Defender initiatives in Southern Africa*, a report of the Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa – NiZA by Ahmed Motala, Nuno Vidal, Piers Pigou and Venitia Govender (Amsterdam: NiZA, June 2005), pp.47-62.

controlled in all sectors by an authoritarian party/State[69]. The labour market thus created, offered an alternative opportunity to underpaid middle and high level cadres within the State administration (technical cadres, academics, intellectuals, public servants, etc.), who had been professionally frustrated, politically silenced, socially repressed by an authoritarian regime that kept them economically dependent and politically subdued. Under the cover of the new multiparty dispensation, they were able to find jobs in national and international NGOs and, picking up on issues raised by donors, some of those who had been silenced after the Nito Alves coup started to voice some genuine criticism – against regime abuses, the miserable living conditions of the majority of the population, the neglect of the social sector – and began advocating the respect of human rights.

Although the government initially tried to influence some of the national NGOs (infiltrating and controlling some of them, such as the Angolan Action for Development – AAD), it soon became clear that it was not possible to control each and every new organization. The number of NGOs increased steadily, eventually requiring a Forum for Coordination – FONGA (*Forum das ONGs Angolanas* – Forum of Angolan NGOs). The same happened with international NGOs, which came under the umbrella of CONGA (*Comité das Organizações Não Governamentais em Angola* – Committee of NGOs in Angola). Progressively, an Angolan civil society began to emerge. At first, the government did not seem to pay much attention to the dynamics arising from the relationship between internal and external social activism. This was due to three main reasons.

First, the new development perspective (more encompassing and inclusive) was related to development programmes that were supposed to be relegated to a secondary level in face of the priority given to emergency humanitarian intervention as soon as the war resumed in October 1992 (after UNITA rejected the electoral results). Second, the Angolan government was mainly concerned with the supervision not only of the amount of aid coming in but also of its distribution inside the country – that is, the definition of priority projects and geographical areas of intervention (*e.g.* favouring the areas controlled by the government to the detriment of those controlled by UNITA). Third, insofar as the war resumed right after the elections and there was consequently a need for a reinvestment in armament, the government became even more dependent on international aid to guarantee food deliveries and shore up social provisions.

By the early nineties, focus was directed to the set up of mechanisms for the coordination and management of the international organisations' activities – both in the provinces (through provincial governments) and in Luanda (through the Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration (MINARS) and the Technical Unity for Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UTCAH)) initially under the supervision of the Council of Ministers and after that of MINARS.[70] Insofar as the donor community preferred to

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[69] See my chapter on politics in this volume.

[70] Now also articulated with the Ministry of Planning; not to be confused with UN UCAH (Humanitarian Assistance Co-ordination Unit, of the United Nations), later replaced by the UN OCHA (UN Organization

channel aid through the UN as well as international and national NGOs rather than providing bilateral aid directly to the government, those controlling mechanisms were extremely important to the government, which sought to keep some control on, and derive political advantage from, the significant resources coming into the country. The myriad development projects concerned with social sector issues (housing, health, education, rural development, capacity building and so on) were often overtly used by the government for its own benefit[71].

Throughout the nineties the State's failure to deliver social services to the poorest sections of the population prompted national and international NGOs together with Church organizations to provide healthcare, education, food, sanitation, and support to IDPs in provinces all over the country. Emergency humanitarian aid was rarely considered in isolation and was in several cases linked to small CSOs development projects (WFP 'food for work' and micro agricultural projects in the outskirts of cities, where population flocked to escape the war). These organisations were slowly trying to disseminate a more inclusive and 'democratic' way of functioning, supporting a myriad other local projects, helping with capacity-building and stressing the need to respect and enforce human rights[72]. The engagement of donors and other developmental partners with CSOs also helped the creation of a wide range of small community-based organisations (CBOs), which also provided basic social services[73].

This led to a situation in which the State was responsible for very little expenditure in these sectors and where the role of international co-operation became critical. And this despite the astonishing growth in annual oil revenues throughout the period – US$2 billions in 1987, US$3.5 billions in 1990, US$5.1 billions in 1996 and US$7 billions in 2000[74].

Civil Society in Angola emerged out of this transition having benefited greatly from the involvement and support of foreign organizations and the dynamics of transnational networks. However, if on the one hand this involvement was essential to the

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for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) and recently substituted by the UN Transitional Coordination Unit.

[71] While studying several of those projects in the province of Malange in 1995, I had the opportunity to experience such procedures. There used to be a weekly meeting between the provincial government and all NGOs and IGOs working in the province and the main issues at discussion (besides security issues) were two: first, the government wanted to know exactly who was getting what (amounts of aid coming into the province every week); second, which organizations would assume specific social services and works that the government was interested in providing. The vice-governor would read a list of works (*e.g.* schools in need for rehabilitation, health centres to be supplied with material) and the organizations were supposed to pick up the ones that best suited them (some kind of a work distribution); see See Vidal, Nuno, *Strategies of participatory development: the Project Kuíje 91 in Malange/Angola* (Lisbon: ISCTE—Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa, 1997), Master's dissertation.

[72] See Vidal, Nuno, *Strategies of participatory development …*op. cit.

[73] See *Engaging Civil Society Organizations in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States,* World Bank Report n.32538-GLB (Washington: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 28 June, 2005).

[74] In Hodges, Tony, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism…* op. cit. p.2.

materialisation of CSOs, on the other hand, it also came to represent one of its major weaknesses – a serious dependency on foreign expertise, technical support and funding[75].

Insofar as there was no private sector independent from the party and State structures[76], there was no alternative for CSOs but to depend on external funding and even so, it was still difficult to survive without any form of 'cooperation' with the State. The biggest Angolan NGO – ADRA (*Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente – Action for Rural Development and Environment*) - had to find ways and means of pursuing 'constructive engagement' with State organisations whilst at the same time diversifying its external funding as much as possible[77].

The fragmentation of civil society organisations, which failed to engage in sound endogenous and sustainable capacity building, arose from two structural factors. First, there was limited, disjointed, short-term and project-by-project driven involvement of donors and international organizations. Second, there was competition for funds between CSOs and a preferential allocation of funds from each donor or group of donors to their "favourite" national partners (according to their own criteria). The same can be said about the cyclically changing development priorities of donors, usually moving from one fashionable area to the other without taking into consideration the specificity of each country and the dynamics already in place. The capacity-building deficit was much more serious for those smaller national organizations that never managed to go beyond the status of being "sub-contracted" by international NGOs to implement or co-implement small parts of bigger projects[78].

Such shortcomings and fragilities became all more visible when external funding began to decrease at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, at a time when the domestic context became increasingly adverse.

2.2 - Government-friendly CSOs and the donors' change of attitude

Being the main providers of social services, those national and international organizations gained increasing legitimacy by defending human rights. They publicised and documented serious abuses and violations. They criticised and pressured government institutions, demanding a change of attitude.[79] The Angolan private media and the international press began echoing these criticisms and demands. Opposition political

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[75] There are obviously a few exceptions to this general rule, see "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment* ...op. cit...pp. 47-62.

[76] The privatisation process in the early nineties mainly benefited the nomenclature, see Ferreira, Manuel Ennes, 'La reconversion économique de la nomenklature pétrolière', in *Politique Africaine*, 57 (1995), pp.11–26; also Aguilar, Renato, "Angola's private sector : rents distribution and oligarchy", in Karl Wohlmuth, Achim Gutowski, Tobias Knedlick, Mareike Meyn & Sunita Pitamber, *African Development Perspectives* (Germany: Lit Verlag, 2003); Aguilar, Renato, *Angola: getting off the hook*, a report for Sida (Gothenburg: Gothenburg University, 2005), especially pp. 13-18; see also my chapter on politics in this volume.

[77] See "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment* ...op. cit...p.52.

[78] See Vidal, Nuno, *Angola: Preconditions for Elections*, a report for the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa – NiZA (Amsterdam: NiZA, 2006); also "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment* …op. cit., pp.47-62.

[79] See "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment* …op. cit., pp.47-62.

parties sometimes joined in, though they rarely had as much leeway as the CSOs in this respect.

At times, such a posture made CSOs politically inconvenient to the regime, which took every opportunity to restrict the social or civic space they enjoyed. Although that space did contract on several occasions, especially when the war escalated, there was still some room for manoeuvring, especially because the party and the presidency soon understood that CSOs were of central concern for the donor community as well as pivotal protagonists within the contemporary developmental discourse.

Nevertheless, the party and the presidency also understood that something had to be done, considering the increasing criticism voiced by these organizations against the lack of government involvement in a severely disrupted social sector. Another major problem for the regime was the fact that the institution and person of the President was now (internally and externally) associated with poor governmental performance, which dos Santos had always tried to avoid[80].

In order to tackle these issues, the regime created 'government friendly'' CSOs, comprising organisations such as the President's Foundation (Eduardo dos Santos Foundation - FESA[81] - established in 1996) and the Lwini Social Solidarity Fund (set up by the first lady, Ana Paula dos Santos). Both organisations sought to improve the political image of the President, providing services that were supposed to be delivered by the State by using social bonus funds from oil and other international companies. These 'parallel' CSOs had easier access to national and provincial governments, official State permits and to the public and private sectors of the economy – both clearly dominated by the party in power and subject to the political logic of the regime. The strategy of a parallel civil society has continued to this day, with an increasing number of organizations set up or, in some cases co-opted, by top officials[82].

Because independent CSOs were seen as a threat to the regime, they became ever more dependent on outside donors. Nevertheless, more and more external actors began

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[80] Even though the President has been the effective head of government since he came to power in 1979, he has always made an effort to distinguish the Presidency from the government, rejecting governmental responsibilities[80], especially after the nomination of the so-called Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (GURN) in 1994 (comprising most of the parliamentary political parties, but completely dominated by the MPLA); also see my chapter on politics in this volume.

[81] On FESA and the regime investment on Civil Society see Messiant, Christine, 'La Fondation Eduardo dos Santos (FESA): autour de l'investissement de la société civile par le pouvoir angolais', in *Politique Africaine*, 73, (1999), pp.82–101.

[82] AJAPRZ (*Associação de Jovens Angolanos Provenientes da Zâmbia*), *Criança Futuro* (under the supervision of the former State security chief, Miala), *Acção Solidária* e *Amigos do Rangel*, among a few others, are clear examples of such organizations. They basically serve the government and presidential need to have a cooperative "civil society" that can be politically manipulated within the general patrimonial working logic: providing an extra source of well remunerated jobs that can be distributed among new or old clients and dependants; supplying selected social services as required by the president or the party according to specific political objectives and needs; participating in politically sensitive processes (*e.g.* law approval) without contesting it and therefore satisfying the international demand for taking into account "civil society" opinion.; see "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment…*op. cit., pp.47-62; also Christine Messiant's chapter in this volume.

to question this dependence. Some of the organizations that had worked for years in the country became progressively disenchanted with their true role in Angola, namely taking over the social responsibilities of the State. In a shocking public announcement, Jean Marc Perrain, chief executive of 'Médecins Sans Frontières – Angola' expressed what had become clear to everybody:

> *It is not understandable how a country as rich as Angola, producing and selling oil and diamonds, with an estimated annual oil revenue of US$7 billion per year, can invest so little in areas such as health. In our view, it is not normal that a humanitarian association such as MSF should provide absolutely everything that is required for the running of a hospital, be it in Kahala or in Kuíto. This does seem to be quite illogical. It would appear logical to us that complementary assistance would be given to the Ministry of Health because of the difficult situation in the country at present.*[83]

This statement came out at a time when the Angolan government was already facing the 1999 'Mitterand, Falcone and Gaidamak scandal', the 'Global Witness Report' and other reports exposing the mismanagement of oil revenues and endemic corruption within the Angolan political system, along with a long list of related activities uncovered by the media[84]. This, at the time when the national budget allocated excessively small amounts to the social sector.[85]

With the end of the civil war, which followed the death of Jonas Savimbi (February 2002) and the signature of the Luena peace memorandum (April 2002), many hoped for a rapid change in social policy – expecting major State investment in those areas at a time when an estimated three quarters of the country's 14 million people lived on less than a dollar a day and some 2 million were in danger of starvation[86].

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[83] Statement made by Jean Marc Perrin in Angola, on 9 November 2000, broadcast on channel 2 of the *Rádio Televisão Portuguesa* news programme 'Jornal de África' (November 11, 2000); see also *Diário de Notícias* (November 12, 2000); *Público* (April 27, 2000). Such statement was made at the presentation of the Médecins Sans Frontières Report *Angola: as aparências de 'normalização' escondem graves cenas de guerra,* (Luanda: MSF, November 9, 2000).

[84] For an in-depth approach on the scandals of gun-running, diamond trafficking and money-laundering involving Jean-Christophe Mitterrand (son of François Mitterrand), Jacques Attali (former president of BERD - *Banque Européenne pour la Reconstruction et le Développement*), Pierre Falcone (arms dealer and main supplier of arms to Luanda) and Arkadi Gaidamak (arms and diamonds merchant, holder of the former Angolan debt to the USSR), with multiple ramifications (including Sonangol), see *O Independente* (July 23, 1999); also *Público* (December 5 and 6, 1999), (January 14, 2000), (April 11, 2000), (July 30, 2000), (December 9, 2000), (December 23, 2000); also *Expresso* (December 16, 2000), (September 8, 2001); also the reports by *Global Witness* that names several members of the presidential clique involved in networks of arms dealing, missing accounts from oil income to the State and so on: 'A Crude Awakening: the role of the oil and banking industries in Angola's civil war and the plunder of the state assets', a report by *Global Witness*, December 1999; also 'All the Presidents' men', a report by *Global Witness*, March 2002: also 'A Rough Trade: the role of Companies and Governments in the Angolan Conflict', a report by *Global Witness*, December 1998. Editions at [www.oneworld.org/globalwitness/]; also McMillan, John, *The main institution in the country is corruption: creating transparency in Angola* (Stanford: Center on democracy, development and the rule of law, Stanford Institute of International Studies, February, 2005).

[85] Angolan national budgets: in 2001 – education, 5.06%; health, 5.03%; social security, 3.95%; housing and community services, 3.77%; in 2002 - education, 5.19%; health, 4.57%; social security, 3.36%; housing and community services, 2,14%. Angolan State budgets available at [www.minfin.gv.ao/].

[86] *The Guardian* (February 7, 2003).

International organizations working in the field such as CARE International or MSF virtually accused the government of criminal neglect towards its own population[87]. The much exhausted war argument could no longer be used to justify the lack of investment in those sectors. Moreover, oil production increased and provided the government with an average income of $USD 5 billion a year.[88]

In consequence, humanitarian aid decreased substantially[89] and the much awaited international donor conference kept being adjourned because it was conditioned on an agreement between the government and the IMF, which was supposed to set some principles of accountability and transparency in public accounts[90]. Humanitarian assistance was halted in several regions (mainly in the centre-north) that were no longer considered in need of such support.

In order to push the Angolan government to become more directly involved with local communities and their needs in the new peace context, the UNOCHA (*United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*) was replaced by the UN Transitional Coordination Unit (dependent on the UNDP) that was supposed to pass on the responsibility for coordination to government institutions such as the UTCAH and the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration (MINARS).

This new dispensation was supposed to put some pressure on the Angolan government to assume more responsibility for the provision of social services. However, contrary to any reasonable expectation, that did not happen. The decrease in humanitarian aid mainly affected development projects implemented by international and national NGOs or CBOs that indirectly benefited from that aid, leaving the government's attitude unchanged as the national budgets of the following years make plain[91]. Resorting

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[87] *Voz da América News Online* (June 11, 2002); *The Guardian* (February 7, 2003).

[88] From 2000 to 2003 Angola received an average of 5 billion dollars a year; see article 'Angola should be able to finance its own post war rebuilding' by Michael Dynes in *Times online* (February 24, 2003); Angola in currently producing 1.3 million barrels a day and is greatly benefiting from the steady increases in international oil prices over these two last years.

[89] See *Human Rights Watch World Report 2006* (New York: HRW & Seven stories press, 2006), pp.74-79.

[90] For a summary of the relationship between the Angolan government and the IMF see 'Some transparency, no accountability, the use of oil revenue in Angola and its impact on Human rights', a report by *Human Rights Watch*, January 2004, vol. 16, no. 1; this report also exposes the oil revenue and expenditure discrepancies in government accounts.

[91] Angolan national budgets: in 2003 – education, 6.24%; health, 5.82%; social security, 1.47%; housing and community services, 1,57%; in 2004 - education, 10.47%; health, 5.69% (of which 2.40% were for management services); social security, 4.30%; housing and community services, 3.07%; in 2005 - education, 7.14%; health, 4.97% (1.93% for management); social security, 6.47%; housing and community services, 4.13%. It is also worth noting that a significant part of these amounts were spent on salaries and management activities. The relative increase in education spending in 2003 is deceiving: more than a half of the 6.4% allocated to education was spent in salaries and management (3.27%); in 2004, of the 10,47%, allocated to education, 8.10% was spent on salaries and management and the same happened in 2005, with management alone absorbing 3.43% of a total of 7.14%. Angola is far below the 16.7% SADC countries average of national budget expenditures with education; Angolan State budgets available at [www.minfin.gv.ao/]. According to the World Bank, the composition of public spending in 2004 by function: health an education expenditures as a percentage of GDP in Angola (less than 2% for health and less than 5% for education) are (with the exception of equatorial Guinea) amongst the lowest in the African

to new and more favourable oil-backed loans (such as the one from China), the party drew up economic development plans with heavy investment in infrastructure and technology transfer[92] without paying proper attention to more immediate social problems such as the extreme poverty affecting most of the population, the disruption of health and education systems and the poor indexes of human development in Angola, which remains one of the world's poorest countries[93]. Moreover, it now became clear that the mechanisms of embezzlement entrenched during the war could be redirected towards profiteering from the country's reconstruction efforts[94].

As for the transfer of institutional responsibilities from the UN Transitional Coordination Unit to the government's UTCAH and MINARS, once again the results were different from those expected. According to several interviewees, the government became convinced that with such a transfer of responsibilities it would finally be able to tighten the grip on NGO resources and impose a more effective control on their activities in the field. Accordingly, government institutions have been less concerned with effective coordination of humanitarian assistance than with the control of NGO funds and equipment. A new NGO registration programme began in 2005 and is being progressively extended to integrate all national and international NGOs. The registration procedure and the requirements of regular report, specifying all activities, projects, funds, equipment, personnel, socio-economic impact, etc. gives the Ministry of Justice virtually total discretion. The approval or rejection of registration applications now depend, as the UTCAH director clearly stated, on his body's favourable opinion and on the level of project partnership established with government organisations[95].

In the end, the donors' change of attitude had no impact whatsoever on government social policy. On the contrary, it added more constraints to the work of CSOs and affected negatively the conditions of the poor. Without external funding, CSOs can hardly survive and most of them have to manage a rather complex balance between the donors' agendas, some form of cooperation with State organisations and the interests as well as needs of the communities they are supposed to serve.

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context, "such composition of public spending is far below the country's needs in terms of infrastructure reconstruction and provision of essential services to the population and seems to reflect political choices still concerned with the prevalence of a wartime budget"; in World Bank report n. 29036-AO, *Angola public expenditure, management and financial accountability*, February, 16, 2005, p.i, also pp. 5-6.
[92] See my chapter on politics in this same volume.
[93] Ranked at position 160 out of 177 of the UN Human Development Index and remaining one of world's poorest countries; see *Human Development Report* (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2005), p.125, p.222.
[94] See *Time for transparency, coming clean on oil, mining and gas revenues*, a report from Global Witness, March 2004, p.35. It is worth remembering that, according to the IMF between 1997 and 2001, $8.45 billions of public funds remain unaccounted (representing an average of 23% of GDP), Ibid. It is also noteworthy that Angola was ranked 133 out of the 145 most corrupt countries in the world by *Transparency International* (145 being the most corrupt), *in* [www.transparencyinternational.com].
[95] *Working meeting of UTCAH with national and international NGOs* (Luanda: Catholic University of Angola auditorium, November 29, 2005); agenda: (…) 3 - Presentation of national and international NGOs activities in the first semester of 2005; 4 – Directory of NGOs, information bulletin to be created, research on case studies, draft of the specific reports that must be presented by NGOs throughout the year; 5. Legalization of NGOs (…); access to public funds.

Because Angola is a major oil producer, it can exert some leverage upon the international community instead of the other way around[96]. Illustrative of this fact is that previous accusations made by international organizations of government neglect towards its own people, the lack of governmental transparency or political accountability stopped when the international strategic importance of Angola changed – that is, when oil prices reached record heights, competition to secure future oil supplies increased worldwide and the government was able to strike new economic partnerships with Asian governments showing no concern whatsoever with human rights[97]. The same can be said of the so-called 'Angolagate' Falcone episode of September/October 2004, whereby the French government drew back on its intentions as soon as the Angolan government retaliated by delaying the recognition of the French ambassador and refusing to renew Total's oil contract on block 3/80[98]. Equally, the World Bank, the IMF and the West gradually dropped their pressures for transparency, accountability and human rights in the face of the new international and economic importance of Angola[99].

Angolan CSOs also face increasing difficulties when they confront the government about access to external funding. Organizations such as SOS Habitat (standing for the rights of communities forcedly evicted by the State due to the new urbanisation plans in Luanda)[100] have extreme trouble in accessing external funding and according to its main representative, Luís Araújo, some donors refuse to fund the organization directly and even when they use an intermediary – such as international NGOs – they usually request secrecy.

Despite all the above mentioned constraints, it must nevertheless be acknowledged that some Angolan CSOs have been at the forefront of the most significant

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[96] See *More than humanitarianism:...* op. cit…, especially pp. 32-33, 49-50; also Aguilar, Renato, *Angola: getting off* …op. cit… especially pp. 13-18; Miranda, Arlindo, *Angola 2003/2004, Waiting for Elections,* a report for the Michelsen Institute, 2004*;* also Chabal, Patrick, 'Preface' in Vidal, Nuno & Pinto de Andrade, Justino, *O processo de transição para o multipartidarismo em Angola* (Luanda and Lisbon: Firmamento, 2006), pp. xxvii – xxxviii.

[97] See my chapter on politics in this same volume; also *More than humanitarianism: a strategic US approach toward Africa;* a report of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2005), especially pp. 32-33, 49-50; also Aguilar, Renato, *Angola: getting off* …op. cit., especially pp. 2, 13-18; also Reed, John, "Angola o capitalismo dos petrodiamantes" in *Courrier Internacional* (Novembro 25, 2005), n.34, pp. 22-23; also Global Witness Press Release: *Western banks to give huge new loan to Angola in further blow to transparency* (September, 23, 2005).

[98] On the Falcone-Angola-gate affair see my chapter on politics in this volume; also, *Financial Times London (*August 6, 2004); *World Markets Analysis* (September 08, 2004); *International Oil Daily* (October 26, 2004); *Voice Of America-VOA* (November, 1, 2004); *ANGOP* (November, 2, 2004).

[99] See *More than humanitarianism*:…op. cit., especially pp. 32-33, 49-50; also *Human Rights Watch World Report 2006 ...*op. cit., pp.74-79; Aguilar, Renato, *Angola: getting off* …op. cit., especially pp. 2, 13-18; also Reed, John, "Angola o capitalismo dos petrodiamantes" in *Courrier Internacional* (November 25, 2005), n.34, pp. 22-23.

[100] See Amnesty International, *Mass Forced Evictions in Luanda – A Call for a Human Rights-Based Housing Policy* (2003); also Amnesty International, *Angola: Forced evictions/use of excessive force,* AI reference: AFR 12/001/2006 (January 25, 2006), AFR 12/005/2005(December 2, 2005); URL: http://web.amnesty.org

initiatives in the defence of human rights (civil, political and economic). They have been much more active in that area than the political parties in parliament (recent examples include the land law, HIV law, the struggle for the rights of forcedly evicted communities, improvements in the judicial system, better conditions for detainees and the media law).[101]

Conclusion

Angolan CSOs were conditioned from the start by two main factors – an adverse domestic context and external dependency. From colonial days to the present, Angolans have almost permanently been under authoritarian rule. A lack of democratic traditions hampered the emergence of CSOs, which only came into being with the implementation of a multiparty system in 1991 and mainly during the short periods of peace in 1991-92 (Bicesse agreement), 1994-98 (Lusaka protocol) and from 2002 onwards (Luena peace memoradum). The transition to a multiparty system, the 1991 legal reforms and the electoral process, opened a space for civil society but the MPLA still dominates the State and controls all social, political and economic, thus imposing continuous constraint over CSOs. The regime sees non-cooperative CSOs as a threat, being reluctant to accede to their demands.

At the same time, the short-term and project-by-project driven involvement of donors and international organizations, the internal competition for external funds and the preferential relationships with selected national partners, have contributed to fragment Angolan CSOs. Furthermore, their agendas are primarily determined by donors and foreign partners rather than by the needs of the communities in which they work. Born out of an extremely tight relationship with Western international organizations, Angolan CSOs are now facing a major challenge: reduced external support forces them to rely more and more on their own capacities at a time when the domestic context remains unfavourable.

According to a number of civil society activists, the forthcoming electoral process could be an opportunity for a major step forward in the assertiveness of Angolan CSOs[102] if they get appropriate international support. The MPLA needs to legitimize its power through internationally recognised free and fair elections and that might be the right opportunity for the international community and Angolan CSOs to put pressure for more regime openness. If the international support was important in 1992 it is now vital – since

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[101] See "Country profile Angola" in *An Assessment...* op. cit.. pp.47-62; Jilani, Hina, *Promotion and protection* ...op. cit.; Comerford, Michael, G., *O Rosto Pacífico de Angola* (Luanda: edição do autor, 2005), especially ch. 4.

[102] On the challenges faced Angola in its development towards democracy and the role that needs to be played by CSOs and Human rights Defenders in the next electoral process, see, Jilani, Hina, *Promotion and protection of Human Rights, Human Rights Defenders*, a report submitted by the special representative of the Secretary General on the situation of Human Rights Defenders, Mission to Angola (February 21, 2005).

the MPLA has reinforced its control over the State apparatus (in the face of a weak political opposition) and tightened its grip over civil society in general[103].

It is worth remembering that CSOs and opposition parties were all excluded from the Luena cease-fire memorandum of April 2002 (exclusively negotiated and signed between the two contenders) – just as they had been from the Bicesse peace agreement of 1991 and the Lusaka protocol of 1994. Since it has won the war, the government has felt free to impose more constraints on civil society, hampering the involvement of Churches and NGOs in politically sensitive issues such as the question of Cabinda[104]. It approved a new NGO bill in 2002, prohibiting NGOs from any political and partisan activities (Art. 21 b). It is up to the government and to the judicial system controlled by the government to assess the political nature of NGOs activities.

The majority of civil society activists think that internal leverage pushing for more openness can only be effective with the strong co-operation of the external partners. However, contrary to the situation in 1992, this external partner is not so much the so-called "international community" as a whole as those International CSOs committed to the respect of human rights and democratization. There seems to be general disappointment with IGOs and the donor community with regard to recent examples such as the so-called 'Angolagate' case and the World Bank and IMF relaxation on the pressure for transparency, accountability and Human rights.

To several of my interviewees, the initiative for external leverage now rests with International CSOs that have efficient and global lobbying power, networking and advocacy capacity – mobilizing international public opinion on the question of the Angolan political transition process. They see the need for linking internal and international activists sharing the same principles on civil, political and human rights[105].

One of the most recent examples of such need is the first national electoral network led by Angolan CSOs (the Angolan Civil Society National Electoral Platform or PLATA), created only on November 18, 2005 – at a time when the MPLA had already appointed more than a thousand members to integrate the Electoral Executive Commissions (the body responsible for the registration process in each and every province, municipality and commune all over the country). Still in its very initial stages, this initiative is trying to link previous projects and bring together the dispersed experience of existing independent provincial electoral networks The project's main

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[103] See Vidal, Nuno, *Angola: Preconditions* …op. cit.; Vidal, Nuno, "Multipartidarismo em Angola", in Vidal, Nuno & Pinto de Andrade, Justino, *O processo de transição…*op. cit., pp. 11-57; also my chapter on politics in this volume.
[104] The role of the Catholic Church together with Open Society was extremely important to denounce and stop serious human rights abuses in Cabinda, taking place in 2002 and 2003 in consequence of major counterinsurgency operations of the Angolan Armed forces against the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC-FAC); see reports on the human rights situation in Cabinda by M'Palabanda - Associação Cívica, 1st report, *Terror em Cabinda* (2002), also 2nd report, *Cabinda um ano de dor* (2003) and 3rd report, *Cabinda o reino da impunidade* (2004); also Amnesty International, *Arbitrary detention/Fear for safety/Fear of torture/Incommunicado detention* (AI, 133 December 2002).
[105] The feasibility of such and activity is discussed at the end of my chapter on politics in this volume.

objective is to coordinate, revive and/or create provincial electoral networks in order to promote the participation of civil society in the electoral process. Yet, the task is obviously difficult, having to catch up a on process already in motion and controlled by the MPLA in the so-called Informal Group on Elections, coordinated by the Ministry of Territorial Administration.

As stressed by one of PLATA's leaders, given the importance of churches in Angola the project could greatly benefit from the support, experience and national structures of COIEPA (*Comité Inter Eclesial para a Paz em Angola*), which is one of the very few surviving Angolan networking CSO still significantly funded by foreign donors[106]. However, and once more proving the difficulty Angolan CSOs have in developing long-term sustained and effective network projects, the three different ecclesiastical congregations forming COIEPA did not reach an agreement for a joint initiative regarding the electoral process, each one of them having its own agenda and (domestic and foreign) partners.

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[106] COIEPA is an ecumenical organization relating Catholic and Protestant Churches created in 2000; it is an alliance of CEAST (Catholic conference of bishops from Sao Tome and Angola), CICA (Council of Christian Churches of Angola) and AEA (Angolan Evangelical Alliance – also an umbrella for protestant Churches on pair with CICA). Together with other CSOs, COIEPA had a significant role during the last stage of the conflict in favour of a peace settlement; on COIEPA's *parcours* and the peace movement see Comerford, Michael, G., *O Rosto Pacífico…*op. cit.; also Messiant, Christine, 'Les églises et la derniére guerre en Angola (198-2002). Les voies dificiles de l'engagement pour un pays juste', in *Le fait Missionaire - War, peace and religion,* nº13, October 2003, pp.75-117.