

Angola's Wealth: Stories of War and Neglect

After more than three decades of war, the humanitarian situation in Angola is catastrophic. Yet with Angola's resources in oil and diamonds, it could be one of the richest countries in the developing world. The Angolan government has the responsibility to increase its commitment to humanitarian relief and social spending. In addition, the international community must press both sides to make significant moves towards peace.



Giovanni Diffidenti/Oxfam

Executive summary

After more than three decades of war, the humanitarian situation in Angola is catastrophic. 78% of the rural population lives in deep poverty, and one child in three never reaches the age of five.

And yet, Angola could be one of the richest countries in the developing world. It has great wealth in natural resources, particularly oil. **Properly managed, the money from oil, diamonds and other natural resources could, in the short term, respond to Angola's humanitarian crisis. In the long term, these resources could bring prosperity and development to Angola's population for decades to come.** Instead, the bulk of the money goes to fight Angola's 26-year old war.

In a country that earns 90% of its revenues from oil, the national energy sector has been left to decay; many of the provincial capitals have been without electricity for more than 10 years. In fact, the oil sector – for export – is the only part of the economy that has expanded. Everything else has come to a grinding halt.

Angola's oil reserves are mainly off-shore; therefore neither oil companies nor the small number of Angolans profiting from the industry have much interaction with ordinary Angolans. **This creates an economic and political distance that encourages neglect and undermines accountability.** Most Angolans see few results of their country's wealth. Government spending on social services, such as health and education, remains just a fraction of what is spent in the war. **The Angolan government does not spend nearly enough on humanitarian aid, despite the fact that millions are in need.** 3.8 million people are currently displaced by the war, nearly one-third of the population.

In the following interviews with displaced people and analysis of the wider socio-political situation, Oxfam illustrates the cost – in human terms – of Angola's economy of war and neglect.

With the momentum of a growing network of peace activists, and with better accountability in government, peace talks may be on the horizon. **Still, the international community has the responsibility to ensure that moves towards peace have the full participation of Angola's civil society.** Their role will be crucial in monitoring and supporting a lasting peace.

Oxfam recommends that:

- The government must do more to ensure the delivery of humanitarian relief to populations in need, particularly in areas where humanitarian agencies do not have access.
- The international donor community must step up its provisions for humanitarian relief in Angola, in the face of the escalating humanitarian suffering from increased military action.
- The international community, under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, should adopt a binding international scheme for the certification of rough diamonds by December 2001.
- Both UNITA and the Government must act to end human rights abuses committed by their troops. As a military solution does not seem feasible, the international community must press both sides to create and maintain a lasting peace.

Oxfam International has worked in Angola since 1989. We work both directly and through partners to provide water, sanitation and health programmes, as well as education, food security and democracy-building work. Oxfam International's programmes together budget more than \$US 5 million and work directly with over 350,000 people.

Diplomats and political analysts talk about “The Malanje corridor”; this is a rough swath of land running North-South, from the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo through the heart of the country – east of the major cities of Malanje and Kuito. This area is perhaps the most contested region of Angola, as it is peppered with diamond deposits, UNITA’s main source of income.

Fighting continues to drive people from many villages in and around Malanje municipality. In Cangandala, internally displaced people (IDPs) have roughly doubled the town’s population. Many thousands of people have escaped Mussende, a contested village in Cuanza Sul province experiencing near-daily fighting. A recent survey by the ministry of health found 24% severe malnutrition and 33% global malnutrition in the region.¹

Fernanda escaped Mussende in April, two months before Oxfam interviewed her at a therapeutic and supplementary feeding centre in Cangandala. When asked why she left her village, she says that there was an extreme shortage of food, salt, soap and clothing. She would have come earlier, but the road was blocked. As soon as the road opened again, she fled with her three children, all under the age of four. The journey took four days, and it was very difficult with the children. Along the road there was nothing to eat. One child became very ill, which is why the family is now at the feeding centre.

UNITA had attacked Mussende, stayed a few days and then left. Fernanda thinks the objective of the attack was to kidnap young boys to fight, and to force women into carrying UNITA’s supplies. Fernanda’s sister was kidnapped by UNITA, and she has not had any news from her since. Other women who would not go with UNITA had their fingers cut off for refusing.

Fernanda has no desire to return to Mussende. Her family has all left or been killed.

Brief History of the War

At the time of Angola’s independence in 1975, internal conflict had already begun. A political coup in Portugal the year before accelerated a swift exodus of the Portuguese settlers, taking with them most of the trained civil servants and educated elite.

Instead of forming a government of national unity, the country’s rebel movements turned on each other. The Movimento Popular de Liberação de Angola (The People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola – known as the MPLA) has been headed by Jose Eduardo dos Santos since 1979. UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola – National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) is led by Jonas Savimbi.

For the rest of the 1970s and 1980s, Angola became a proxy battlefield for the Cold War. The United States offered covert assistance to UNITA, in order to challenge the communist MPLA. In addition to financial support to UNITA, South Africa intervened directly with military attacks, seeking to weaken the

camps of Namibia's South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) inside Angola.

The Soviet Union heavily supported the MPLA, with large arms transfers in the 1980s. Cuba, too, with Soviet support, had some 50,000 ground troops in the country.²

Large reserves of oil had been discovered off the coast of Cabinda in 1968, soon surpassing coffee as Angola's primary export. Because of its geographical location, being off-shore and far from the disputed territories, oil has been largely financing the government's side of the war. Diamonds – available without much capital investment in many of the unruly areas – have historically been funding UNITA's fight.

In 1989, progress towards peace came only after significant international pressure. The Bicesse Accords of 1991 led to public elections in 1992. However, the country spiralled back into war after UNITA refused to accept electoral defeat. The next two years saw some of the most ruthless fighting in Angola's recent history.

The Lusaka Protocol, signed in 1994, built on the earlier Bicesse Accord, but with new elements of power-sharing. Even though this was under the close watch of the United Nations – and some 7,000 peacekeeping troops – this peace plan faltered as well. The failure of the protocol was mainly because the warring parties refused to follow some of its key aspects, such as disarmament.

A major shortcoming of the Lusaka Protocol was the failure to include civil society in the negotiations. In addition, the fact that none of the violations of the agreement were made public, including human rights violations, curtailed civil society's ability to monitor the situation and apply political pressure to prevent a return to war.

The UN Security Council declared an arms and fuel embargo on UNITA in 1993, imposed travel restrictions in 1997, and finally sanctions on diamonds and financial assets in 1998. International observers agree that these last sanctions did succeed in cutting UNITA's income. If it has curbed, it has not taken away their ability to wage war. Instead, UNITA has made the transition back to guerrilla warfare. They now rely less on heavy artillery and fuel, and more on terror tactics and the ability to seize food and other resources from the population.

In 1998 both sides returned to war in earnest, and fighting continues to this day. Both UNITA and the MPLA are accused of committing human rights abuses against the Angolan population, including forced conscription, using child soldiers, kidnappings, the killing of civilians (either directly or through reckless disregard), sexual assault, and looting.³

At the time of writing, no clear military victory lies ahead for either side. Attacks occur daily, and are increasing in intensity in recent months.

For example, the attack on 5 May on Caxito, a city about 60 kilometres outside of Luanda, sent shock waves through the capital. The assault killed an estimated 200 people, injured hundreds more, and led to some 60 children being kidnapped (but later released, through the Catholic Church). In

addition, some 50,000 – 70,000 people were displaced because of the violence, walking towards Luanda in long columns stretching for many kilometres.⁴



Amelia Bookstein/Oxfam

In Cangandala, displaced people and local people live together in difficult conditions. Either side of this church path could be mined, so children cannot venture into the grassy areas.

Current Humanitarian Situation

The humanitarian consequences of nearly three decades of fighting have reached a nadir. The UN estimates that 3.8 million people have been displaced by the fighting, nearly one-third of the population.⁵ There is near-continuous mass movement of people in the country: 101,000 people were reported newly displaced in the four months between January and April of 2001 alone.⁶

Displaced people continue to arrive in insecure, unfamiliar and hostile places characterised by little or no access to food, and a lack of potable water or basic shelter. In addition, educational opportunities, health services and employment opportunities are extremely limited in the provinces for everyone, but particularly for displaced people.

The government claims to control some 90% of the country, but they can only secure the major towns and cities; much of the countryside remains inaccessible by road. The vast majority of humanitarian aid must be delivered by air, as convoys are often attacked and looted. More than 500,000 people – possibly dangerously short of food and supplies – are out of reach due to the insecurity.

A recent United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) study in Camacupa (a partially accessible town in Bie province) provides a window into what the humanitarian situation may be like in other areas. The UN reports malnutrition in Camacupa to be 46%;⁷ rates are probably even worse in other places.

Both UNITA and the government have been known to be re-laying anti-personnel landmines, despite the fact that the government has signed – but not yet ratified – the 1997 Ottawa Convention against the use and stockpiling of landmines.⁸ There are already 70,000 to 90,000 amputees in Angola, direct victims of the widespread use of landmines. In many of the cases women or young girls are killed or maimed by landmines, as they are often the ones sent out to forage for basic means of survival, such as food, firewood and charcoal.

Examples of extortion, rape and physical assault are commonly reported as being committed by both sides of the conflict. While it is important to acknowledge the human rights abuses by UNITA, the government bears a heavy responsibility for the discipline of its own troops, and for the protection of the population as a whole, regardless of ethnicity or geographical location.

In addition to the direct effects of the war, endemic poverty has left the country in a desperate state. Life expectancy is just 47 years, and Angola ranks 160 out of 174 in the UN's Human Development Index.⁹ Infant mortality is the second highest in the world, as one child in three will never reach the age of five.¹⁰ Only 17% of the children are vaccinated, and only 31% of the population has access to safe water.¹¹ 40% of the schoolrooms have been destroyed and looted, and less than 5% of the Angolan municipalities have functioning justice systems.¹²

Angola falls well below the averages for sub-Saharan Africa on almost all indicators for health, sanitation and education. **Something has gone dreadfully wrong in a country with such potential for wealth and development.**

Lucia and Avelina, a mother and her grown daughter (who has children of her own), left Mussende because of the war. Avelina arrived in Cangandala in January, seeking medical help for a child that was ill. Her husband, a teacher, disappeared in Bie´ province, and she has had to manage alone.

Lucia came after an attack in February when she was nearly killed by a shell exploding in her house. Five other family members died in that attack; Lucia survived, but was badly wounded in the leg. She was taken to Rio Kwanza, but the bridge was destroyed. With the help of the military, she crossed the river by canoe and was then taken to join her daughter in the IDP camp. Lucia has regained much of her strength after treatment, but she still cannot walk very far.

In addition to a lack of food, salt and clothing in Mussende, these women witnessed an alarming escalation of violence. Both government troops and UNITA troops abuse the women.

One time, however, when government troops allegedly raped women in town, their commander brought the whole community together after the incident. Then the commander shot and killed all five men accused of the crimes, in front of the community.

The women were shocked, as they had never before seen anyone be executed like that.

Humanitarian Response

The UN estimates that only 1.2 million people – out of the millions of war-affected – benefit from international or government aid.¹³ The international community, working with Angolan and international NGOs and agencies, provide health, sanitation, food and water services to a fraction of the people displaced and impoverished by Angola's war.

According to the UN, the international community provided about \$US140 million in response to the 2000 UN Consolidated Appeal (UN CAP), some 54% of the required needs. So far this year, the 2001 CAP is just 34% funded.¹⁴ The UN reports that, despite worrying levels of malnutrition in certain pockets, insufficient or late contributions to the World Food Programme (WFP) have led to pipeline breaks and fluctuations in ration levels.

The Angolan government has made some strides, particularly in working with UN OCHA to integrate into national legislation Minimum Operational Standards for the resettlement of IDPs. Resettlement, however, is very politically charged. Unfortunately, since August 2000 there have been no cases of resettlement which have completely complied with the new law.

It is crucially important that people are only resettled through voluntary and transparent procedures. Particular concerns about safety from attack and food security must be resolved before encouraging large numbers of people to move. **The government is ultimately responsible for the security of these settlements, and must ensure that the civilian populations are not put in the position where they can be used as human shields.** Not only does this jeopardise the safety of the population, but it is against international humanitarian law.

Amelia Bookstein/Oxfam



This woman just arrived in an IDP camp outside of Malanje. She left her home village when it came under attack by UNITA, and does not want to return to such an insecure area.

The government's response to the humanitarian crisis has, to date, been inadequate.

Government officials have made insufficient effort to ensure that isolated or relocated populations can be accessed to enable the provision of emergency aid.

There are places where the government has access, but remain too insecure for humanitarian agencies to operate. For example, State administration has been established in Cazombo, in Moxico province, and conditions are reportedly quite serious for thousands of IDPs in the area. Still, security clearance has not been granted, and little effort has been made to make corridors for aid.

Many places in Uige, Zaire and Malange provinces are in a similar state. Despite the fact that humanitarian needs are dire and any response could be lifesaving, the government has not mobilised to the extent needed to deliver relief to the population.

In addition, examples of avoidable logistics constraints abound. In Kuito, a contested municipality that hosts some 158,000 IDPs, currently the airport can only handle 50-60% of what is required to meet humanitarian operational needs. Even though a contract to mend the airstrip was signed two years ago between the governor of the province and a private company, the repairs have not been made.¹⁵

In Camacupa, an area with some 30,000 displaced people in urgent need, the airstrip has not been repaired for 15 years. Huambo airport is also under repair, so that flights can only go in and out in the morning. In Mussende, from where many of the IDPs interviewed by Oxfam fled, the airstrip is mined and cannot be used. **Considering that more than 75% of humanitarian relief is delivered by air, the neglect of airstrips is more than just an obstacle to relief; it is a graphic illustration of the lack of government accountability to the population.** However, it is vitally important to keep the airports open even as they are being repaired, as they are the lifelines for the provinces.

In addition, fuel shortages are a major problem in many of the crisis areas. In Malanje for example, the major de-mining NGO, on which the government depends for de-mining areas designed for resettling IDPs, has had to curtail operations due to a lack of available fuel.

Oxfam, too, had to cut back on its programmes in Malanje for six weeks in February and March, after which Oxfam chose to fly in its own fuel from Luanda. Considerable time and money has been spent, cutting benefits to the local population. Oxfam had to suspend drilling for that period, a time when 7-8 new bore-holes could have been created, providing clean water to up to 8,000 people. **The government has not taken adequate steps to facilitate the transportation of fuel to populations living in these areas or to NGOs.**

Populations needing life-saving assistance are also deprived of humanitarian relief because of insecurity. Recently, attacks of convoys by both government troops and UNITA troops have left civilians killed or injured. For example, on 11 May an attack on a convoy on the Cacuso-Lombe road in Malanje killed seven civilians and injured 23. On 10 March, on the same road, a humanitarian convoy was attacked by government soldiers, leaving six civilians dead. These attacks, just two examples among many, severely limit the ability of NGOs, international agencies or other service-providers to carry out their work. Insecurity also hampers agriculture, trade or other steps to economic recovery.

The government can and should do much more to ensure the safety of NGO personnel and humanitarian convoys. **In addition to maintaining discipline over their own troops, the government must be much more pro-active in securing key roads to provide corridors for humanitarian aid.**

Okea is an old man, a respected Soba, or leader, from Massango. Oxfam interviewed him in Quessua, a temporary IDP camp outside of the district capital in Malanje. He reports that was forced to leave his village because UNITA was killing people, and he, as the leader, had to decide when to leave.

He has received assistance here from the government and from NGOs, but has not been able to farm because he has no tools. The government has been encouraging people to move to Lao, another area further from town, but many of the IDPs have resisted. Although Lao has been de-mined, people feel that it is unsafe. Lao is much closer to where UNITA has been known to advance, and attacks have increased recently.

With attacks coming within 2 kilometres of the city centre, people are suddenly more afraid. Even with a live minefield just 20 feet behind the tents of the IDPs in Quessua, Okea says they would rather stay where they are than risk being attacked again.

Oil Industry facts and potential

Angola is potentially one of the richest countries in the developing world. It is the second largest sub-Saharan oil producer, and the fourth largest (by value) producer of diamonds in the world.¹⁶

In 1999, oil equivalent to 1.39 billion barrels was discovered in Angola, the third highest in terms of discovery, after Iran and Saudi Arabia.¹⁷ The Economist Intelligence Unit has declared Angola to be “indisputably the most promising place in the world for oil exploration.”¹⁸

Executives in the oil industry estimate that Angola’s production will surpass that of Nigeria within ten years. Properly managed, Angola’s reserves of 10 billion barrels could last for 35 years.¹⁹ Depending on the price of oil, production and profit-sharing agreements, the oil industry could bring Angola’s citizens tens of billions of dollars, which are desperately needed.

Currently, however, the oil industry benefits only a select few. Out of a population of nearly 12 million, only some 10,000 people are employed in the oil sector.²⁰ Because the reserves are mainly off-shore, and out of UNITA’s reach, an enclave economy has developed. **This provides an economic sanctuary distanced from the effects of Angola’s war.**

In addition, oil is capital-intensive, rather than requiring investments in training and other human capital. This type of one-sided investment dominates the economy and short-circuits any long-term development strategy. This is particularly dangerous in a country that relies so heavily on a non-renewable resource.

There are more than 30 multinational companies investing in Angola's oil sector, including Chevron, Elf, Exxon Mobil (Esso), Texaco, BP-Amoco, Shell, Statoil and AGIP. Of these companies, some reported near-record global profits in the first three months of 2001.²¹

The United States bought 62.7% of Angola's oil exports in 1998.²² This is about 8% of the US's total imported oil.²³ With the arrival of the Bush-Cheney administration in Washington, and amid concerns about a new "energy crisis", the USA seems to be seeking to increase this percentage to 15%.²⁴ The fact that Angola may soon produce more oil than Kuwait ensures that the country will be of growing strategic interest.²⁵

The oil sector provided over 90% of official exports and 80% of government revenue in the 1990s.²⁶ It is a great disadvantage to the Angolan population that the economy is so heavily dependent on oil. This dependency on a single commodity leaves the country very vulnerable to price fluctuations on international markets.

This kind of enclave economy encourages the neglect of other industry. Oil is the only sector of the economy that has expanded since independence. In fact, every other sector has crashed or been left to decay. Angola at one point exported sugar, rice, tobacco and fish. It was also the world's third largest producer of coffee; coffee is now produced at only 1% of 1970s levels.²⁷

Angola used to be a net exporter of food. Now the country receives an average of 200,000 tons of food aid a year.²⁸

Legitimate diamond trade earns just 7% of government revenue, and all other products combined make up only 1% of total exports.²⁹ Agriculture, manufacturing and the movement of food and services have all been cut because of insecurity and the lack of investment in infrastructure.

Even though Angola is an oil-producing country, energy is a significant problem for the population. In early 2000, the price of fuel jumped some 1,400%, greatly increasing the hardship of the population, who need fuel for cooking and transportation.³⁰ Experts estimate that the energy sector has decayed to a point where one-half of energy-generating capacity has been lost; some capitals have been without electricity for over ten years.³¹

Oil, Diamonds and War

In an economic environment such as this, transparency is a particularly crucial factor. Where government and industries are not transparent, vast sums of money can simply disappear. This creates an informal parallel system of finances that lies beyond public scrutiny.

International companies and organisations working within Angola have not been required to be as transparent as they in other countries. This has contributed to a vicious cycle where money is unaccounted for and the population receives little or no benefits from the natural resources of their country.

For example, of the thirty oil companies operating, BP is the only one that has publicly declared they will publish information about their oil revenues and payments in Angola. This is no small decision, as BP will invest some \$US7

billion into Angola in the next 10 years. The rest of the companies have been silent.

The lack of transparency is a major problem in a country at war, and the fact that the majority of the government's revenue comes from a small enclave encourages neglect of the interests of the vast majority of the population.

The Angolan government is carrying out an "Oil Diagnostic" as part of its Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) with the IMF. The SMP is a set of financial, policy and programme targets that the government must reach in order to qualify for lending at reduced rates of interest and, possibly, debt relief. In August 2001 the government was given an extension until November 2001 to fulfil the requirements of the SMP.

The Oil Diagnostic is an attempt to clarify what oil revenues are coming into the country, compared with what is recorded by Sonangol, the state oil company, and what is deposited in the central bank. This may be a first step towards establishing better transparency and accountability in the government and oil industry.³²

However, a key shortcoming of the Diagnostic is that the results of the study are not open to the public. This severely curtails the ability of civil society to monitor their own government representatives, and hinders their ability to lobby on their own behalf. **There is a growing network of people working for peace in the country, but the lack of transparency is a major obstacle to their work.**

Money from oil, and, to a lesser extent diamonds, has been used to finance the war directly. For example, \$US 870 million from the signature bonus payments for Angola's deepwater blocks 31, 32 and 33 was used by the government for arms purchases, as reported by Angola's Foreign Minister. In many cases, payments bypass the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank.³³ The dominant companies in those blocks are BP-Amoco, Exxon-Mobil and Elf.

Elf has also been involved in the cases of several major weapons transactions in France, including the trial of the son of the late President Mitterand. Jean-Christophe Mitterand was accused of arms trafficking and money laundering, connected to Franco-Angolan negotiations carried out between France's Interior Minister and President Dos Santos.³⁴ The case has been dropped, however, on legal grounds.

According to IMF data, the government spent 41% of its 1999 budget on Defence and Public Order. This proportion is striking, as it is set against only 4.8% spent on education, and just 2.8% on health.³⁵ Even compared to other developing countries in Africa, this percentage is low. Kenya, for example, spent 18.8% of its budget on education in 1996; Botswana and Namibia each spend about 22%.³⁶

The government reportedly spends 1.2 billion dollars per year on defence. In peacetime – admittedly, a tense peace – the Angolan government still devoted 18% of its GDP to defence.³⁷ This money, even a fraction of it, is more than enough to ensure the food security of all the war-affected people in the country. This is 20 times the UN World Food Programme proposed budget for the country, for example.³⁸

While Oxfam does not contest the right of a government to defend its population in a civil war, the high level of military expenditure makes it even more important that transactions in arms and weapons are carried out with the utmost public accountability.

The Government's Ministry of Social Affairs and Reintegration (MINARS) is quite opaque about how much the government allocates to humanitarian relief. According to UNDP sources, the government has allocated 3.4% of its budget to MINARS in 2001, covering humanitarian relief, salaries, and administrative costs.³⁹ However, a near-complete lack of transparency hinders any progress in trying to discern how much money is spent, and where. **Local groups, civil society networks, and national NGOs have little leverage on their own government, as that information is simply not available for public consumption.**

On the UNITA side, the illegal and opaque exploitation of natural resources unquestionably facilitates the war effort. Occupying key diamond areas proves to be quite lucrative, as diamonds can be sold or bartered for food, fuel, or ammunition, despite UN embargoes.

Alluvial diamond deposits are found on the surface of river banks, and are relatively easy for an individual with little or no equipment to unearth. In contrast to oil, alluvial diamonds need little capital investment but the process is labour-intensive, involving many small players to make a profit. Angola also has kimberlite diamond deposits, but these require capital-intensive mining technology and have not been developed to any significant extent.

Experts agree that the exploitation of diamonds sustained the ability of UNITA to acquire arms and re-supply heavy artillery used to bombard Kuito and other capital cities in 1992-1994, at the height of the fighting. **This siege warfare directly led to the death of tens of thousands of people.**⁴⁰

UNITA earned some \$US 600-700 million from diamonds at its peak in 1996, before the UN imposed sanctions on diamonds and UNITA financial assets in 1998. Since the sanctions, and as a result of some successful government offences regaining control of key mines, experts estimate that UNITA's income from diamonds fell in 1999 to \$US 120-300 million.⁴¹ However, diminished though the supplies may be, diamond regions are still very much the arenas of conflict.

Antonio was born in Cangandala in 1954, and lives in a village nine kilometres outside of the town. He reports that he has had a difficult life, with hard work and illnesses, and there has many times been a shortage of food. He is visiting a health centre because of pains in his chest.

He lives alone now, as his wife was killed by a stray bullet during a UNITA attack in 1998. He reports that local people have many difficulties, and the town has been stretched to its limits because of so many displaced people. Still, there is little tension between displaced people and residents, as they are all affected by the war and poverty.

The effects of war and the effects of poverty cannot be isolated from each other. War brings poverty, he says. Before the war, there were not these problems of hunger and a shortage of food. People weren't depending on the UN, on NGOs or on anybody but themselves. Since the war, everything has been destroyed. Other problems, like a shortage of water, have been exacerbated by the war as well.

When asked when the war will stop, he confesses that he does not know. He doubts whether people will stop the war, and wonders if God will. Those who believe that people have to stop the war, have to make those who are doing the fighting see the suffering of the people. The men who are fighting need to come to a peace dialogue, he says, because the people are suffering too much.

Possibilities for Peace

For the past two years, there has been a growing peace network in Angolan civil society that has been gaining momentum. In April 1999 civic leaders drafted and signed a peace manifesto, the first of its kind in Angola. In June of 2000, COIEPA, a joint committee of churches for peace, collected 10,000 people in a peace march in Luanda, demanding an end to the war.

On 1 June 2001, about 2,000 children marched through the capital, calling for an end to child abuse, abduction, conscription and exploitation. This was particularly poignant after the attack on Caxito, in which a large group of children were kidnapped.⁴²

Church leaders have been critical of both government and UNITA policies. They have recently become more vocal in calling for an end to military offences and a return to negotiations. Taking advantage of a new openness for political debate, church officials have recently positioned themselves as potential neutral interlocutors between the two sides, and have been able to facilitate the return of kidnapped people to their communities.

While the war is still being executed in many areas throughout the country, there have been moves towards negotiations. In a public letter to the church in May 2001, Savimbi asked the church to help with mediation between UNITA and MPLA. Dos Santos responded by stating publicly that he would be willing to negotiate if UNITA honoured the 1994 protocol.⁴³

However, both UNITA and the MPLA insist that the other side cease their military attacks before negotiations can move forward.

The Angolan government has announced that it will press ahead with elections in 2002, despite the lack of support from church and civil society groups. This could be contentious, as the insecurity from the war limits people's freedom of movement, and there has not been a national census in years. Peace activists are concerned that these elections will bring the veneer of peace, but no lasting changes that reflect the wishes of the population.⁴⁴



Amelia Bookstein/Oxfam

This little girl is waiting to be seen at a health clinic run by a medical NGO. Government spending on health and education remains far below that of other developing countries, and is just a small fraction of military expenditure.

Recommendations

For the International community

- **The international community, the World Bank, the IMF, and all private financial enterprises must keep up consistent pressure for transparency and accountability on the Angolan government and on those companies dealing with either of the warring parties.**
- All oil companies operating in Angola should transparently publish their accounts with the Angolan government, including all signature bonus payments made.
- **The international community, under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, should adopt a binding international scheme for the certification of rough diamonds by December 2001.** Governments must set in place systems that effectively regulate the flow of rough diamonds. The international community should provide technological and financial support for the region's governments to set up these systems with proper law enforcement. The World Diamond Council and the industry as a whole must be committed to independent auditing and monitoring.
- **The international donor community must step up its provisions for humanitarian relief in Angola, in the face of the escalating humanitarian suffering from increased military action.** Support for the humanitarian community, including for initiatives in humanitarian corridors, should have the full political and financial support of the donor community.
- **The international community must press both the Angolan government and UNITA to return to peace talks, with the full consultation of civil society.**
- New partnerships that build the capacity of local and national NGOs, civil society, and civil administration should be explored. Civil society's peace initiatives should also be fostered and supported.

For the Government of Angola

- **As it signs new oil contracts and makes new discoveries, the government of Angola has the responsibility to increase its commitment to humanitarian relief and social spending.**
- **The government can and must do more to ensure the delivery of humanitarian relief to populations in need, particularly in areas where humanitarian agencies do not have access.** This involves being much more pro-active in repairing vital airstrips, securing key roads to provide corridors for humanitarian aid, and protecting NGO personnel and humanitarian convoys. In addition, the fuel shortage must be addressed.
- **The government's own minimal operational procedures for resettlement of displaced people must be adhered to.** It is crucially important that people are only resettled through voluntary procedures. Particular concerns about safety from attack and food security must be resolved before encouraging large numbers of people to move. **The government is ultimately responsible for security of these settlements, and must ensure that civilian populations are not put in the position where they are used as human shields.**
- **The government must act to end impunity for the human rights abuses committed by its own troops,** and act for the protection of the population as a whole, regardless of ethnicity or geographical location. The indiscriminate killing of civilians, the forced conscription of soldiers (including child soldiers), the rape and abduction of women, and the use of landmines must cease.
- **As a military solution does not seem feasible, new avenues must be explored, in consultation with civil society and the international community, to create and maintain a lasting peace.**

For UNITA

- **UNITA must end its terror tactics that prey on the population while still prolonging a military stalemate.** The indiscriminate killing of civilians, the forced conscription of soldiers (including child soldiers), the rape and abduction of women, and the use of landmines must cease.
- UNITA should work with neutral interlocutors to facilitate humanitarian corridors in UNITA- controlled areas to limit the suffering of distressed populations.
- In place of ongoing guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgency tactics that take a heavy toll on the population, UNITA should explore possibilities for a sustainable peace.

Notes

- ¹ Ministry of health data, Angola. March 2001
- ² Hodges, Tony (2001), pp 11.
- ³ For more information about human rights abuses, see Human Rights Watch (1999), pp 44-79. Or see MSF (2000).
- ⁴ UN OCHA (2001a)
- ⁵ *ibid*
- ⁶ UN IRIN (2001) World Food Programme NewsService. 'Facing the Reality of War', 4 June 2001
- ⁷ UN OCHA (2001a)pp.5. See also MSF(2001)
- ⁸ Human Rights Watch (1999) pp. 3-6.
- ⁹ UNDP (2000) pp. 157.
- ¹⁰ UN OCHA (2000) pp.24
- ¹¹ Hodges (2001) pp. 32-3
- ¹² UN OCHA (2000)
- ¹³ UN IRIN (2001) WFP NewsService, 4 June 2001.
- ¹⁴ Figures from Reliefweb, 'Summary of Requirements and Contributions by affected country/region as of 30 August 2001
- ¹⁵ UN IRIN WFP NewsService, 4 June 2001
- ¹⁶ Le Billon (2001) pp 57
- ¹⁷ EIU (2000)
- ¹⁸ EIU, as quoted by Hodges (2001) pp. 123
- ¹⁹ Hodges (2001) pp. 90
- ²⁰ Le Billon, (2001) pp. 61
- ²¹ BBC, (2001). 'Oil firms: excessive profits?'. 8 May 2001:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/business/newsid_1167000/1167805.stm
- ²² EIU (2000)
- ²³ Anderson (2000) pp. 46.
- ²⁴ Human Rights Watch (2000a) pp.35
- ²⁵ Oil company executive, personal communication, January 2001.
- ²⁶ IMF (2000). See also Le Billon (2001)
- ²⁷ Hodges, (2001) pp 95
- ²⁸ *ibid.* pp.94
- ²⁹ *ibid.* pp. 133
- ³⁰ EIU (2000) pp 22.
- ³¹ Hodges (2001) pp.97
- ³² For more information about the oil diagnostic and the SMP, see Human Rights Watch (2000b; 2001)
- ³³ Human Rights Watch (2000b)
- ³⁴ The Guardian (2001). 'French Arms Scandal nets another top politician'. April 21, 2001. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,476235,00.html>

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- ³⁵ IMF (2000)
- ³⁶ Ministry da Educação, Angola 1999 quoted in JMJ international report to Oxfam on Education
- ³⁷ IMF (2000b) *Staff Report for the 2000 Article IV Consultation and Discussions on a Staff Monitored Program*. African Department, International Monetary Fund, June, Washington DC. As quoted in Hodges (2001), pp. 138.
- ³⁸ Personal communication, WFP 8 June 2001
- ³⁹ Government of Angola data from UNDP, personal communication, 18 June 2001.
- ⁴⁰ Le Billon, (2001) pp. 71.
- ⁴¹ Ibid. pp.69
- ⁴² The Economist (2000). "Angola: A new Crusade", vol. 356, no. 8176, July 8 2000.
- ⁴³ UN OCHA (2001c) 'Angola: IRIN Focus on church's role in new path to peace' June 6 2001.
- ⁴⁴ UN OCHA (2001d) 'Angola: Government committed to elections despite security concerns.' 7 June 2001.
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/Rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/f6fec6330aa1598985256a64007333d1?OpenDocument>

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Oxfam International Advocacy Office, 1112 16th St., NW, Ste. 600, Washington, DC 20036 Phone 1.202.496.1170, Fax 1.202.496.0128, E-mail: advocacy@oxfaminternational.org, www.oxfam.org

Oxfam Germany

Greifswalder Str. 33a
10405 Berlin, Germany
+49 30 428 50621 (ph)
E-mail: info@oxfam.de
www.oxfam.de

Oxfam-in-Belgium

Rue des Quatre Vents 60
1080 Buxelles, Belgium
32.2.501.6700 (ph)
E-mail: oxfamsol@oxfamsol.be
www.oxfamsol.be

Oxfam Community Aid Abroad

National & Victorian Offices
156 George St. (Corner Webb Street)
Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia 3065
61.3.9289.9444 (ph)
E-mail: enquire@caa.org.au
www.caa.org.au

Oxfam GB

274 Banbury Road, Oxford
England OX2 7DZ
44.1865.311.311 (ph)
E-mail: oxfam@oxfam.org.uk
www.oxfam.org.uk

Oxfam New Zealand

Level 1, 62 Aitken Terrace
Kingsland, Auckland
New Zealand
PO Box for all Mail: PO Box 68 357
Auckland 1032
New Zealand
64.9.358.180 (ph)
E-mail: oxfam@oxfam.org.nz
www.oxfam.org.nz

Intermon Oxfam

Roger de Lluria 15
08010, Barcelona, Spain
34.3.482.0700 (ph)
E-mail: intermon@intermon.org
www.intermon.org

Oxfam America

26 West St.
Boston, MA 02111-1206
1.617.482.1211 (ph)
E-mail: info@oxfamamerica.org
www.oxfamamerica.org

Oxfam Canada

Suite 300-294 Albert St.
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 6E6
1.613.237.5236 (ph)
E-mail: enquire@oxfam.ca
www.oxfam.ca

Oxfam Hong Kong

17/F, China United Centre
28 Marble Road, North Point
Hong Kong
852.2520.2525 (ph)
E-Mail: info@oxfam.org.hk
www.oxfam.org.hk

Oxfam Quebec

2330 rue Notre-Dame Quest
Bureau 200, Montreal, Quebec
Canada H3J 2Y2
1.514.937.1614 (ph)
E-mail: info@oxfam.qc.ca
www.oxfam.qc.ca

Oxfam Ireland

Dublin Office:
9 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2, Ireland
353.1.672.7662 (ph)
E-mail: oxireland@oxfam.ie
Belfast Office:
52-54 Dublin Road, Belfast BT2 7HN
44.289.0023.0220 (ph)
E-mail: oxfam@oxfamni.org.uk
www.oxfamireland.org

Novib

Mauritskade 9
2514 HD. The Hague, The Netherlands
31.70.342.1621 (ph)
E-mail: info@novib.nl
www.novib.nl

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