

India - Angola Relations

India and Angola have traditionally enjoyed friendly relations dating back to pre-independence era of Angola. India supported Angolan freedom struggle against the Portuguese colonial rule till the country attained independence in 1975. Later, India continued to support the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) which has remained at the helm of affairs of the country all along. Angola and its leadership appreciate India's consistent support in the past and hope to derive benefits from the significant advances India has made in recent times in agriculture, industry and technology.

Political Relations

Late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Angola in May 1986 and Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of Angola since 1979, visited India in April 1987. After a gap of 19 years, Angolan Minister for External Relations, Mr. Joao Bernardo de Miranda visited India in May 2006 and had useful meetings with the Ministers of Commerce and Industry, Petroleum and then Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Anand Sharma. He also called on PM. A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit. The two sides also agreed, in principle, to sign Agreements for the Promotion and Protection of Investments and Creation of Bilateral Commission for Cultural, Technical, Scientific & Economic Cooperation. The most recent high level meeting was on July 10, 2009 when Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos on the sidelines of the G-8 meeting at L'Aquila, Italy.

Shri Anand Sharma, then Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Angola from June 8 to 9, 2007 and had detailed discussions with the President of Angola, Ministers of External Relations, Petroleum and Geology & Mines, President of ENDIAMA and Secretary, Political Bureau of International Relations of the ruling MPLA Party (former Foreign Minister of Angola). Shri Jairam Ramesh, then Minister of State for Commerce, accompanied by a 10-member delegation, visited Angola from March 28 to April 1, 2008 and held discussions with Ministers of Geology & Mines, Oil, Vice Minister of External Relations, President of ENDIAMA, and the National Director of the Ministry of Commerce. Shri Murli Deora, then Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, accompanied by a delegation of oil and gas PSUs and others, visited Angola in January 2010, to enhance cooperation in the oil and gas sector between the two countries. In recent years, delegations from Reliance Industry Limited, HPCL Mumbai, Engineers India Ltd. and Mittal Investments UK Limited visited Luanda to explore cooperation in the oil and gas sector. Private sector Investments, trading and businesses from India need to be encouraged and promoted in Angola both in oil and non-oil sectors.

Other notable visits from Angola to India were of: (i) Dr. Manuel Calado, President of ENDIAMA (October 2006 and April 2007); (ii) Mr. Aguinaldo Jaime, Assistant Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Angola; (iii) Mr. Paulo T. Jorge, Secretary, Political Bureau of International Relations of the ruling MPLA Party; (iv) Mr. Joaquim Duarte da Costa David, Minister of Industry; (v) Mr. Gilberto Buta Lutukuta, the then Minister of Agriculture; (vi) Vice Minister for Health (September 2001) and also to participate in a Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in New Delhi (December 2007); (vii) Minister for Planning and Chairman of the SADC Council of Ministers (July 2003), (viii) Mr. Abrahao Pio Dos Santos Gourgel, Vice Minister of Industry (August 2005); and two private visits of Mr. Jose Eduardo Zu Du P. dos Santos (son of the President of Angola) (May 2007 and February 2008); (ix) Mr. Jose Maria Botelho De Vasconcelos. Minister for Petroleum to attend the Petrotech Conference in New Delhi (October 2010); (x) A delegation from Ministry of IT and Telecoms (e-governance) to assess the Pan Africa E-net Project

(December 2010); and Mr Georges R Chikoti, Minister of External Relations to attend India-LDC Ministerial Conference in New Delhi (February 2011).

From the Indian side, notable visits were of: (i) Shri Eduardo Faleiro, then MOS for External Affairs (October 1986); (ii) Shri A. Shreedharan, then MOS for Commerce (1990); (iii) Shri Mahendra Prasad, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) (September 2003); (iv) FICCI delegation (September, 2005); (v) Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council delegation (November, 2006); (vi) Delegation from Oil PSUs (September 2010); (vii) Delegation from MMTC Ltd (November 2010), (viii) Visit of Shri M.G. Vaidya, Chief Executive, State Bank of India (January 2011), and GAIL (India) delegation (May 2011). A number of private business delegations, including those organized by CII in November 2013 and FICCI in May 2014, have also visited Angola in the recent years resulting in a steady growth of bilateral economic and commercial relations. Minister for State (External Affairs) General (Dr) V.K. Singh (Retd) visited Luanda on 15 July 2015 as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India to hand over of invitations for the Third India Africa Forum Summit to take place in New Delhi on October 2015. During the visit he called on Vice President of Angola, Mr. Manuel Vicente and had meeting with Foreign Minister Mr. Georges Chikoti.

Economic and Commercial Relations

After the cessation of Civil War in the country, India's trade with Angola showed a perceptible increase. India's imports from Angola registered considerable growth from US\$ 4242.79 million (2009-2010) to US\$ 7157 million (2012-13) and is currently US\$ 5992 million (2013-2014), basically due to bulk purchase of crude oil. On the other hand, India's exports to Angola decreased from US\$ 675 million (2010-2011) to US\$ 536 million (2013-14). Total trade increased from US\$ 4877.85 million (2009-2010) to US\$ 6528 million (2013-2014). In fact, India has become 2nd largest trading partner of Angola after China, sharing about 15% of Angola's external trade. The data for the last five years is as follows :

India's Imports/Exports From/To Angola

(US\$ Millions)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Import	5112	6625	7157	5992	4617
Export	675	454	488	536	552
Total	5787	7079	7645	6528	5169

Angola remained the second largest source of crude oil for India, after Nigeria, in the Sub-Saharan Africa. GAIL and other Indian companies had shown interest in imports of LNG from Angola. The principal items of Indian exports are tractors and transport vehicles, agricultural machinery and implements, food and meat products, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, Tea, Rice (Basmati), Spirits & Beverages, finished leather; paper/wood products etc.

Government of India extended a line of credit of US\$ 40 million to Government of Angola for CFM Railway Rehabilitation Project, the first Government-to-Government initiative between the two countries and Rail India Technical and Economic Consultancy Services (RITES) Limited which started implementation of the project in 2005 handed the completed over to Angolan Minister of Transport on August 28, 2007.

EXIM Bank of India extended three credit lines of US\$ 5, 10 and 13 million for agricultural equipment and Indian tractors. These LoC's have been utilized by

Angola. Two additional lines of credits of amounts US\$ 30 and 15 million to construct a cotton spinning and ginning plant and an Industrial park was approved by EXIM bank in 2010. These projects are underway. Further, in June 2012, EXIM Bank of India extended a Line of Credit of US\$ 23 million to the Government of Angola for supply of tractors, implements and related spares.

The State Bank of India which opened its Representative Office in Luanda in April 2005 also extended a commercial line of credit of US\$ 5 million for supply of tractors from India.

As a goodwill gesture, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India gifted 5 ambulances manufactured by M/s Mahindra & Mahindra to the Government of Angola which were handed over on December 6, 2005 to Mr. Andre Luis Brandao, then Minister of Transport in the presence of Dr. Sebastiao Sapuilo Veloso, then Minister of Health, on August 28, 2006.

Optimum utilization of ITEC scholarships slots happened in 2010 due to sustained efforts by the Mission leading to 60 Angolan officials being sent to India to attend various courses. However, generally, ITEC slots from Angola remain unutilized or highly under-utilized due to language issues. No slots were used in 2014-15.

IAFS Process: Angola is yet to join the Pan-Africa E-Connect Project offered under IAFS-I in 2010 though the relevant Angolan authorities have recently shown interest in the Project, by proposing a technical mission to India. Further, India had offered to set up a Food Processing Business Incubation Centre in Angola under IAFS-II decision in 2011. Only in September 2013, a Ministry of Food Processing Industries Delegation visited Luanda and held technical discussions on the Project, after Angola finally evinced interest in the project.

Indian Community & Investments: At the turn of the century, Indian community in Angola was limited to around 500 persons, mainly in business and professionals at offshore oil fields. This number surged to nearly 5,000 in early part of the current decade with large number of Indians working in major projects such as Angola LNG project in Soyo Province and cement plant in Sumbe, constructed by ETA Star Group. With the completion of these projects, the Indian community has since declined in numbers and are currently engaged in catering, supermarkets, trading and other services; industries dealing in plastics, metal, steel, garments, etc. Geographically they are mainly in/around Luanda but are also dispersed in other provinces. Occasionally, the Oil companies bring in Indians on short-term assignments in offshore oil installations. Investments by Indian businessmen in Angola are basically discouraged by factors such as language barrier, distance, typical business ethics, and complicated procedures pertaining to business visas and issue of Work Permits. Of late, due to the declining foreign exchange reserves, the local authorities have imposed restrictions on the repatriation of dollars/foreign currency.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Luanda website:

<http://www.indembangola.org/>

Embassy of India, Luanda Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Embassy-of-India-Luanda/209463462473631>

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