

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco of Angola in Luanda, Angola
December 3, 2024

President Lourenco. Your Excellency, President Joe Biden, President of the Republic of the United States of America; esteemed members—[inaudible]—diplomatic relations since the 19th of May, 1993, which have been growing year after year, mainly since in Angola we started the process of fighting against corruption and impunity, and we establishing the best business environment.

The Angola President José Eduardo dos Santos was received in the White House in September 1991 and December 1995 by then-Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, respectively. I thank the fact that President Joe Biden has received me in a very friendly and warm manner in White House on the 30th November, 2023.

The two countries have been exchanging ministerial and business delegation visits where we have to highlight the visits by the Minister of National Defense of Angola and the Chief of Staff of the Angolan Armed Forces to Washington, DC, and the visits by various U.S. Secretary of State to Rwanda and, more recently, for the first time, the U.S. Defense Secretary and the Director General of CIA to Luanda.

On holding these state visits to Angola on the eves of Angola celebrating 50 years of its national independence, this will be marked in the history of the two countries as the first visit by a U.S. President touching the Angolan soil.

This does not only put an end to the past of our relations whereby within the cold war we had never been aligned, but also it marks an important turning point in our relations, which undoubtedly will know a new dynamics as from today.

We want to work together attracting U.S. direct full investment to Angola, opening business and—[inaudible]—opportunity for Angolan businessmen to the U.S. market.

We also would like to increase our cooperation in defense and security sectors, in access to military schools and academies, the military training in Angola, and hold more joint military exercises to cooperate more in programs of maritime security in order to protect the Gulf of Guinea and South Atlantic, as well as in the program of equipment and modernization of the Angola Armed Forces.

Important projects of public investment are ongoing with U.S. EXIM bank funding, City Capital, and the International Development Financial Cooperation—DFC—with U.S. companies such as Sun Afrique, Africell, Mayfair Energy—[inaudible]—GatesAir, amongst others, without talking about the oil companies, Chevron and Esso, who are based in Angola for various decades, as well as numerous U.S. service companies in the oil sector.

With company—[inaudible]—we are working in building cereal silos and the logistic platforms and parks along the Lobito Corridor and other points that considered as main grain production places in the framework of food security.

In the health sector, with USAID, Gavi, and Global Fund, we've been benefiting a lot in the programs of fight against malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS, COVID-19, as well as in the program of robotic surgery that is starting to become a reality in Angola, in partnership with the well-known hospital from Orlando, Florida, in the U.S.

We would like to see U.S. investors engaged in construction of power transmission lines, in high-voltage under public-private partnerships for southern African countries, namely for the region of Copperbelt in Zambia and D.R.C., as well as for Namibia, connecting to the southern countries' power grid.

Our AngoSat 2 project is working with NASA and Maxar in acquisition of high-resolution satellite images for monitoring natural disasters, namely in implementation of our national program of fight against the effects of droughts in the southern part of Angola, PCESSA.

The country is in the process of purchasing six aircraft, Boeing 787 Dreamliners, whose delivery will take place early next year, 2025.

We're also working with U.S. company Wicks Groups Consulting for Angola accession to Category 1 of Aviation Federal Administration, which could be facilitated by the full functioning of the international airport Antonio Agostinho Neto.

We highlight the fact that in June 2025, Luanda will host the U.S.-Africa Business Summit that will bring closer politicians, entrepreneurs, scholars, and civil society from the U.S. and Africa to talk about businesses, history, culture, and various cross-interests.

Mr. President, your vision and engagement for the success of the Lobito Corridor, as well as your great contribution to our transition—energy transition program in the construction of solar parks in the southern part of Angola will always be remembered as a great contribution to food and energy security, as well as towards economic and social development of Angola and the whole southern African region.

Once again, thank you very much, you're mostly welcome to Angola, and the Angolan people feel themselves very happy and proud of having you here in the city of Luanda.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Biden. Mr. President, thank you very much. It's good to see you again, and thank you for having me here today. I mean that sincerely.

I joked with you earlier when I said: "We Bidens are like poor relatives. We show up when we're invited, stay longer than we should, eat all your food, and don't know when to go home." [Laughter] But you've been very, very generous and hospitable. Thank you.

I'm proud—

[At this point, President Biden cleared his throat.]

Excuse me—very proud to be the first American President to visit Angola. And I'm deeply proud of everything we have done together to transform our partnership thus far. And there's so much ahead of us, so much we can do.

The results so far speak for themselves: building an ocean access railway—ocean-to-ocean access railway that's going to connect the continent from west to east for the first time in history.

Investing in solar energy projects. It's going to help Angolans generate 75 percent of its clean energy by next year—by next year.

Upgrading internet and communications infrastructure to connect all of Angola to high-speed internet networks. As we're doing that at home ourselves, I compare it to when Franklin Roosevelt took electricity to rural America. It didn't exist in rural America. The Government provided it.

Well, it's hard to get by these days in business or in ranching or anything else without access to the internet—knowing what's going on, when to sell your product and the like. It's critical.

And——

[President Biden cleared his throat.]

Excuse me—and increasing our agriculture production so Angolans can feed themselves and, quite frankly, the rest of the world and making a profit doing it: providing work, providing opportunities, providing muscle to your economy.

And increased agriculture production so Angolans, as I said, can not only feed themselves but—it's hard for people in a country that only has the borders of the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean to understand that it's hard to get a product from one country to another that are badly in need of agricultural products, but you can't get there. To get there, you not only help those people, but you help yourself, and you grow your economy.

And you've heard me say it before, Mr. President. The United States is all in on Africa. All in on Africa. And I think a testament to that assertion I've made to you when I saw you and I've made publicly before—you've heard me say it before, but the United States is all in—all in—on Angola. We've already, in—my administration alone has invested over \$3 billion in Angola thus far. The future of the world is here in Africa and Angola.

So, during this visit, I look forward to discussing how we keep ensuring democracy delivers for people—because if they don't think it's a democracy and they don't think they're in on a deal, they don't think they're part of it. And you've been working very hard to establish good democracy.

And secondly, how can we help build the strong ties between our nations and our businesses and our people? There's a lot to say on all of this, I know. We're prepared to—I think we're well on our way to answering a lot of the questions, but I think you should understand the extent to which we're prepared to be engaged.

And as I said to the President, ours is not—we don't think because we're bigger and we're more powerful that we're smarter. We don't think we have all the answers. But we're prepared to hear your answers to the needs you have, particularly answers to international debt financing and a whole range of other things we're prepared to discuss.

So I want to thank you very much for your personal welcome. I want to thank all of your colleagues for treating us so well since we've been here. And I mean it from the bottom of my heart.

The future of the world is in Africa. That's not hyperbole. It's going to be a billion people very shortly in this continent, a very diverse continent. And by—in another 20 years, you're going to be the largest country in the world—continent in the world. And so you're—we need you to succeed. This isn't all selfless. The more you succeed, the more we succeed, the more the world succeeds.

So thank you for being willing to have me, be willing to talk to me, and I look forward to a long relationship.

Thank you very much.

[Several reporters began asking questions at once.]

President Biden. Welcome to America. *[Laughter]*

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:10 p.m. at the Iron Palace. President Lourenco spoke in Portuguese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Angola, President Lourenço.

Locations: Luanda, Angola

Names: Lourenco, Joao Manuel Goncalves.

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