REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ANGOLA

INFORMATION FOR THE THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES – III IPAIT

BRASILIA, JUNE 6 THRU 8, 2005

MR. PRESIDENT OF THE THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES – III IPAIT;

DEAR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

First of all I would like to salute, in my name and on behalf of the entire Delegation of Angola, all of those taking part in the Third General Assembly of the International Parliamentarians Association for information Technologies.

I would like to express my happiness due to the fact that my country, Angola, has been admitted as a member of the IPAIT, during its second General Assembly which took place in Bangkok, from may 17 to may 19, 2005.

We would also like to salute our Brazilian comrades for the excellent job organizing this event.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AND COMUNICATION IN ANGOLA, IN GENERAL

As it is widely known, due to the small amount of financial resources, Africa is a developing continent which still lacks investments in information and communication technologies, which are fundamental for the enhancement of such programs as development and eradication of poverty.

Angola not only suffers from the described situation, but also has been through a thirty-year civil war that finished only three years ago.

Nevertheless, the lack of resources does not slow us down. It ends up making us congressmen put in an extra effort when trying to implant strategic and selective programs which will contribute in leveling out this technological differences turning us into full participants of the modern world.

It was not by chance that our country has signed in, at a Parliament level, with the IPAIT during its second General Assembly in Bangkok. We also preside, at a Government level, through our Vice-Minister of Science an Technology, the United Nations Council for Information and Communication Technologies, whose election has taken place recently.

We are convinced that the technological progress is not a simple piece of used clothing, with pre-established cost and size, ready to be offered to developing countries. It should be a process establishing knowledge in which the construction of human capacity and technologies grow in the same speed as in other countries, always taking in consideration the different needs and priorities within the different regions and countries.

However, a decisive ground for the success in the implantation of the "TIC´s", includes at least the use of free communication systems, sustainable support to investigation and development, both in the private and the public sectors, education and investment policies that will provide capacity building strong enough to face the local needs, and sufficient capacity to sustain and administrate these strategies.

It is with this point of view that our countries´ telecommunications program has implanted a digital technology nationwide including the capitals of every province.

Since the Bangkok Conference, the number of DIGITAL CITIZENS has risen 3%, compared to 1% of the nations population, which today is of 12 million people.

These domestic initiatives must obviously be sponsored by worldwide initiatives with great vision and by institutions that will help provide the resources helping to improve the capacity of our country.

For this reason our government has established partnership agreements with widely known enterprises in the world of information and communication technologies, such as Microsoft, which will enable cheaper and easier handling of the "TIC's", starting with the implantation of information systems in lower schools. It is expected that by the year 2015 the entire schooling system will carry such technologies.

Furthermore, the challenge faced by Angola is the one of combining the path of technological innovation with a both local and worldly political innovation. If this really happens, we will be able to obtain substantial increase in our possibility of reaching the fundamental goals of development that have been placed not only in our programs but also by the United Nations.

IMPLANTATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ANGOLA

The information and communication technologies at the National Assembly of Angola are still at an implantation phase. Our parliament with its multi-party system is a little over tem years old, as a result of the 1992 elections.

In order to assure administrative and technical support, since 1995 the National Assembly has been concentrating on the implantation of strategic policies where the result will be the gradual implantation of information and communication technologies ("TIC's") within its services. This will enable the Assembly to fulfill its duties by forming new staff and by modernizing its computer structure.

Today there is an Informatics Center, with the specific role of implanting new information and communication technologies in the Parliament of Angola.

A computer structure with six computers in 1995 turned into a 150-computer area, and since the last meeting in Bangkok, this area has evolved to carrying nearly 200 computers, which means that our parliament is on the right track concerning informatics.

180 out of the 200 computers at the Parliament are now connected to the internet. Presently, there is a system being implanted which has already improved the home page of the National Assembly, where files are now swapped among different divisions within the Assembly. Another system is currently being installed where a wireless connection will increase the quality and speed of the connection. This new system is due sometime before the end of the year.

Alongside, we also have another project that will modernize the communication and the audiovisual systems. This includes the a modern phone center together with a digital recording and filming system. This new equipment will give support to the current

transcription techniques used during the plenary session and the work carried on by the Commissions at the National Assembly.

In a near future there will also be quick public access to the information regarding the Parliament activities, not only through the internet, but also using other systems connected to the development of new information and communication technologies (Example: cable TV).

PROJECT: "Regional Initiative – Strengthening Computer Systems in Parliaments of Africa"

The National Assembly, with The United Nation's support, through UNDESA (Public Administration and Development Division), just as referred to at the II General Assembly in Bangkok, has been implementing since the beginning of last year, the project **"Regional Initiative – Strengthening Computer Systems in Parliaments of Africa",** sponsored by the Italian government.

This project, that will happen for **two years** (September 2003 – September 2005), can be postponed due to its impact and result. It was officially launched in Mexico City on November 7, 2003, at the V Global Forum of Government Reinvention – Innovation and Government Quality in the 21st Century. At the ceremony were Mr. Kristinn Helgason and Mr. Flávio Zeni, representing the United Nations (UNDESA), and also the General Secretaries of Parliament who took part in the project, including the one from Angola.

The mentioned project is carried on by six other African Parliaments, which are: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania. It is expected that the newly formed African Parliament will soon join this group.

This project has as its main goal the enhancement of Information and Communication Technologies ("TIC'S") in the Parliament. The idea is to improve the quality of the parliamentary work by granting access to parliamentary documents to the people and therefor creating a new means of participation in the democratic process.

Hence, the connecting forces of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, the personal effort of its President, and UNDESA towards this project has already enabled us to undergo the 1st step[1] which is a research done by an enterprise called SINFIC. The name of this research is **"Parliament's Needs Assessment and System Requirements Analysis".**

The first step also includes the implantation of a *cybercenter* at the Parliament that will hold a total of 16 people. This center will be used as a training and browsing area for congressmen and parliamentary staff, all in the quest for "**digital inclusion".** The goal is to have 90% of the prospective users in touch with the computers within a years time.

We believe that this project will become even more dynamic in a near future with the implantation of the 2nd step of the project **(Development)**, since it is expected to bring about computer solutions for the problems faced during the 1st step.

The main goal of the UNDESA Project is to give efficient support to the Parliament structure and services, always keeping in mind the need for constant training among the Parliament staff.

Other important goals are to provide easy access to the Parliament's Session papers along with other important documents, enhance the people's participation in the political process and, at a regional level,

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[1] This 1st step (**Analysis and Design**) has simply tried to diagnose the functional needs of the Parliament in terms of informatics.

improve the communication among the African Parliaments ("E-PARLIAMENT").

There is also great need to develop specific computer skills and programs for the Parliament, as follows:

- Add efficiency to the process by implanting computer systems which are fit for parliamentary purposes;

- Increase the Parliament's computer services (internally and externally).   This should include internet use for easy communication between the Government and its People.

- Install a computer-based accounting system in order to improve the Parliament's general administration, also making it easier to prepare the Parliament's budget.

- Enhance the Parliament's capacity to review and oversee the country's national budget.

Our thoughts and convictions are confirmed by the results brought up by the International Convention held in Nairobi, in the Republic of Kenya, February 9-11, 2005 ("Opportunities and Challenges of Information and Communication Technologies to Consolidate Democracy and Parliament Governing").

This Conference was attended not only by several African delegations such as the one from Angola, but also by a group of European Congressmen. The main goal during the conference was to provide African Parliaments with analysis, strategies, tools, directions and rules for a well succeeded and sustainable use of the "TIC's". The Conference dealt with four main topics within the communications field, as follows:

1. Access to informatics;

2. Regulating the "TIC's";
3. Forecast of Pan-African relations;
4. Sustainability of the Parliament Information System.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Even though The National Assembly of Angola did notice some improvement in the information and communication technologies, it is clear that due to the fast running evolution of the "TIC's", our Parliament must keep on working hard in the sense of making this technological breakthrough something real in a near future even when compared to international standards **(e-Parliament Interoperability Framework).**

2. The main topic that has been discussed, under every possible standpoint, has been the means of providing the People with better access to information together with the idea of regulating the use of information and communication technologies. Therefor, we have the urge for modernization and/or adaptation of laws regarding the public access to information (in some countries like Angola, there is no legislation concerning the "TIC's"). It is our opinion that this debate should be carried on during this forum, especially with regard to the possibility of the members of IPAIT sharing all sorts of information concerning the "TIC's" in the legislative field, always taking in consideration the constant differences among the countries.

3. We do acknowledge the importance and thereby emphasize the need for multilateral and bilateral cooperation between the Parliaments of IPAIT. We must interact on both a technological and legislative basis in order to decrease the digital gap among

our countries, which is indeed part of the constitutive letter of our organization.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Brasilia, June 6, 2005

DELEGATION OF ANGOLA

- **CÂNDIDA NARCISO** – CONGRESSWOMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE 6TH COMMISSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE CHIEF OF DELEGATION

- **PAULO MATETA** – CONGRESSMAN

- **ADELINO ANTÓNIO** – CONGRESSMAN

- **ANICETO DA FONSECA EMÍLIO PEDRO** – PARLIAMENT STAFF

- **JOÃO FRANCISCO ANTÓNIO** – PARLIAMENT STAFF