

# **Candidature of the Republic of Angola to the Human Rights Council**

**Term 2018-2020**

## **Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251**

### **Introduction**

- a) In line with its internal democratic process, the Republic of Angola decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term of 2018-2020 as a testament of its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights.
- b) The Republic of Angola was a founding member of the Human Rights Council, having had the privilege of participating in the negotiations and approval of the institution-building package, and served two consecutive terms from 2007 to 2013 in this august body. Since the end of its previous terms in the Council, the Republic of Angola remained engaged with the international human rights agenda by fulfilling its commitments to advance human rights consistent with its constitutional provisions which embrace broadly the values and principles of democracy and fundamental freedoms enshrined in key international instruments.
- c) Angola has endured three decades of armed conflict, and its consequences are still fresh in various spheres of our society. However, in the last 15 years of effective peace, political stability along with the consolidation of the democratic process and the rule of law are priorities of the Government.
- d) Therefore, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of its diplomatic relations with all of its partners at international, regional and sub-regional levels.

### **II. State of implementation of its commitments**

The Republic of Angola has fulfilled the commitments made in the framework of its two consecutive terms on the Council from 2007 to 2013. These achievements were consolidated through the following measures:

- a) Approval of the Constitution in February 2010 which fully guarantees individual and collective rights and freedoms, and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination in any form. Under Article 26 (3) the Angolan Courts must apply international legal instruments, and notably the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and other Treaties to which Angola has acceded.

- b) The Justice sector is undergoing a broad reform process, aimed at strengthening legal mechanisms in order to improve the access of people to the Justice System and improving national legislation by bringing it into line with international legal instruments on human rights.
- c) Angola has strengthened the presence of the Ombudsman at the National level in all 18 provinces of its territory and integrated human rights principles into the national education curricula.
- d) Angola has improved its cooperation with the UN Treaty Bodies and Instruments by signing and acceding to the following international UN treaties in the field of Human Rights:
  - International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its optional Protocol in September 2013;
  - International Convention for the Protection of all persons from enforced disappearances, in September 2013;
  - Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2014;
  - United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its additional protocols, specifically the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (Palermo Protocols) in 2013.

#### **Instruments signed and in the process of ratification**

- (a) Additional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the Abolition of the Death Penalty;
- (b) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- (c) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- (d) Optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

(e) Optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

### **Cooperation with International and regional human rights mechanisms**

- (a) Angola has improved its cooperation with the OHCHR, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as with the HRC Special Procedures mechanisms. As a result, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mme Navy Pillay paid a visit to Angola in April 2013. In 2016 the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants and the President of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights also visited Angola.
- (b) Angola created the Inter-Sectorial Committee on Treaty Reports whose tasks include providing information on how Angola meets its international obligations in the field of Human Rights.
- (c) Angola held in Luanda from 28 April to 12 May 2014 the 55th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission).

### **III. Commitment's and pledges for 2018-2020 candidacy to the UNHRC**

#### **1) Angola will continue to promote and protect human rights at international and regional levels by:**

- a) Strengthening a constructive dialogue and cooperation with the Human Rights Council members and observer states;
- b) Improving cooperation with non-governmental organizations as a positive and important element of the dialogue in the work of the Council;
- c) Committing to implement the welcomed recommendations made at the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, recognized as the only appropriate and universal mechanism of the Council aimed to assess and evaluate the Human Rights situation of all Member States;
- d) Committing to the universality and indivisibility of all human rights, as well as civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights including the Right to development;

- e) Supporting regional and international processes that seek to increase compliance with the human rights principles and fundamental Freedoms;
- f) Ensuring adequate and effective responses to Human Rights crises when they occur, guided by universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity while promoting international dialogue and cooperation;
- g) Maintain cooperation of the Government with the OHCHR and the ACHPR, as well as with the UN and regional special procedures mandates holders and the *United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office* in order to promote and protect human rights.
- h) Maintain interaction with civil society so that it can better advocate for the rights of migrants and contribute to policies and practices affecting the human rights of migrants, in order to foster a healthy public debate on this issue, since a sustainable human rights environment requires a vibrant civil society, including independent unions and a strong NGO community.
- i) Adopt a national human rights action plan.

## **2. Ratification of the United Nations human rights treaties such as:**

- a) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture;
- b) ILO Conventions, including on migrant workers (no 97 and 143), freedom of association, right to organize and collective bargaining (no 87 and 98), domestic workers (189) and private employment agencies (181), and consider seeking technical assistance from the International Labour Organization to ensure Angolan legislation and practice are in line with these Conventions, in the coming year;
- c) Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT);
- d) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD);
- e) Adhere to the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which applies to all categories of prisoners, both criminal and those imprisoned under any other non-criminal process which sets out minimum standards for, inter alia, personal hygiene, clothing, bedding, food, exercise, access to communication with the outside world and medical services.;

f) Consider withdrawing the reservation to Article 26 of the 1951 Convention;

### **3. Advancing Human rights:**

Investing in human development is investing in human rights. In this regard, Angola recognizes that the interconnectivity and universality of all human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural – is essential for the full enjoyment of those rights. Angola is committed to pursue the following measures:

#### **a) Right to education**

Angola recognises the right to education as a fundamental right. The education system benefits from a considerable amount of the national budget over the years based on the premise that all children should have access to free primary education. Angola is committed to supporting international efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal N° 4.

As already mentioned, Angola adopted a national strategy for human rights education which aims to introduce human rights into school curricula in order to expand the culture of human rights in Angola, with a contribution of the civil society.

#### **b) Right to Health**

Angola is committed to expand and improve the provision of health care services to all nationals, with special attention to maternal and child healthcare as well as to those most vulnerable, such as people in rural areas, the disabled and elderly. As such, a vital first step has been to focus on improving sanitation and sewage systems, as well as the quality of potable water in rural areas and beyond.

#### **c) Rights of persons with disabilities**

The Government will continue working to realize the rights of persons with disabilities guaranteed in the Constitution, in particular those rights relating to the access to health care, education and training necessary for a life of dignity. After ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as its Optional Protocol in December 2012, Angola enacted the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, the Strategy for the Promotion and Protection of Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Council for the Protection of the Persons with Disabilities (CNAPED) which is the multi-sectorial body in charge of monitoring the implementation of the policies adopted.

#### **d) Rights of children**

In recent years, many programmes and action plans have been developed to help the education system meet the challenge of the changes under way. Special measures have been implemented to advance the rights of children. Angola is committed to strengthen and expand a range of measures for the promotion and protection of children, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols, with particular attention on implementing the Strategy for the Prevention and Combating Violence against Children and universalization of birth registration.

#### **e) Promotion of women's rights and combating gender-based violence**

The Constitution of the Republic of Angola establishes equality between men and women and prohibits all forms of discrimination. National legislation has been strengthened in order to prevent all forms of violence against women. Angola is committed to supporting the advancement of women by adopting appropriate and effective legislation and policies to consolidate equal opportunities and non-discrimination in our society and pursue gender parity in key areas like education and health.

The Government of Angola will reinforce efforts to achieve its goals of advancing the democratic process and diversifying the economy through several political and socioeconomic ongoing reforms which seek to guarantee and consolidate the rule of law and the enjoyment of the fundamental rights of Angolans.