**Illiberalism in Angola**

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Social 30-1

Mr. Dalton

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**1.**

José Eduardo dos Santos is currently the head of state and the head of the government. He leads the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola Party, also known as the MPLA. MPLA has been in power since the 1975 and José Eduardo dos Santos ruled since 1979. This is longer than many other leaders worldwide. MPLA has been winning elections since being in power but in the 1992 election, the opposition parties believed the MPLA was involved in electoral fraud, and with a civil war occurring in Angola, the election kept getting delayed up until 2008 where the MPLA won a majority of the vote and did so again in 2012. Some believed that the election results were fake but the European Commission and the African Union confirmed that results were legitimate.

**2.**

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| Freedom Rating | 5.5 |
| Political Rights Rating | 6 |
| Civil Liberty Rating | 5 |

Angola, with an overall freedom rating of 5.5, is not considered a free country. Limited freedom of speech and press, gets people arrested and tortured on a daily basis. Human rights violations and the corruption of the government are big problems that lead to these poor ratings.

**3.**

All countries have some form of political corruption occurring, usually in the government itself. The corruption in Angola sets it apart from most other countries because it is one of the highest in the world. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 being the most corrupt and 100 being the least, Angola was rated 22 in 2012. Even though Angola supports elections, overall it acts in an illiberal manner. From the elections to the government system, corruption plays a big role on Angolans' lives. Most of the corruption in Angola is caused by the problems in the law. After the introduction of the new constitution in 2010, the President received all the power in political matter. José Eduardo dos Santos has total control over the all members of the government and can not only appoint and dismiss the cabinet and the Chief of State, but also the Judges of all levels of courts, including supreme. This allows the President to run the country his way without any other part of the government interfering with his plans and if the judges don't agree with or argue against the President, they can simply be replaced by newer ones. In Angola, elections are also greatly affected by corruption. Even though the recent 2008 election results were considered valid, the opposition parties in Angola were not treated in the same manner as the MPLA was. MPLA was greatly supported by the National Electoral Commission and did anything to make them win like delivering ballot papers late and not opening several hundred polling stations. Since the media is government owned, it supported the MPLA as well. Opposition in the elections is allowed and everyone is allowed to vote, but with biased organizations like the National Electoral Commission, voting for the opposition is useless.

Minority rights has been an issue in Angola for a long time. The government promises to keep the people safe from discrimination no matter what makes people different from the majority. But with barely any enforcement of these strict laws, rarely are people ever arrested or charged for discrimination, so these laws that were meant to create equality among the people become useless. The minority population of north eastern provinces has often complained how businesses and other industries prefer to hire people of other ethnic groups over them, even if their skill levels are the same. Other than some Anti-Muslim views, religious freedom is not too big of a problem. Unlike most countries, Angola not only has a problem with the minority rights, but with human rights as well. With the government and the officers being able to do anything they want, there is no level of privacy in Angola. People can be monitored at any time and house searches can also occur without the direct permission of officials. There are cases of violence and torture, usually linked to the government and corruption, on a day-to-day basis. Those who make it to prison experience extreme torture and are sometimes unable to meet their basic needs. Even though it’s illegal, many people are arbitrarily arrested and tortured by the police, which leads to many deaths, and with this level of excessive force, most officers are still not held accountable for what they have done.

Most people in Angola don't know what the government does because of the issues with the freedom of expression. Most forms of media, like newspapers, radio stations and TV Channels, are government owned and are heavily biased. Other than the remaining private news organizations and the use of internet, it is hard to get the true information across the country. The constitution guarantees the freedom of expression and media but these rights were getting slightly limited every day to a point where a journalists are now being threatened with detention and prosecution by the government. Journalists that support anti-government protests, or anything that the government doesn't like, are usually attacked by the security forces and could get arrested. Publishing false information about the government could also get a person arrested as it is against the law. For reporting corruption, Editor William Tonet was fined approximately $105,000 US and received a one year sentence. The laws put Angola farther away from democracy and liberalism, and closer to dictatorship.

**4.**

A group of rappers were attacked by 15 masked men because of anti-government songs. The musicians were part of a youth movement who organized street protests and spread news not found in the government run media. The attackers took computers and documents that belonged to the group that were related to their radio program and the website. The President of Angola was criticized on their website so they believe the attack was an undercover security operation but the police blamed it on gangs. The group is still willing to keep going for the future of the people in Angola.

I think this attack was caused by the government because the President was being targeted. In a democratic country like Canada where there is more freedom, and the laws are enforced, this wouldn`t have happened. This story supports my conclusion of illiberalism in Angola.

A group of rappers in Angola known for their anti-government lyrics have been beaten up in the capital, Luanda.

About 15 masked men burst into the house where they were meeting. "They didn't say a word, they just started to beat the people," Kady Mixinge, a member of the group who was injured in the raid, told the BBC.

The attackers also took computers and documents belonging to the group which has been involved in broadcasting a radio programme on the internet.

Mr. Mixinge said several people were taken to hospital for treatment and the police have said they are investigating the raid late on Tuesday night.

“It was obvious that they didn't want to kill us, they just wanted to scare us”

The BBC's former Angola correspondent Louise Redvers says the musicians belonged to a youth movement which has set up the website Central 7311 in the last year.

It has been organising rare street protests and using social media to spread alternative news not found in the state-run media.

President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, who has been in power for more than 32 years, has often been a target of the website.

On Wednesday, the authorities announced that Angola's second parliamentary election since the end of the 27-year civil war in 2002 will take place on 31 August. Under a recently adopted constitution, presidential elections have been abolished and the leader of the winning party automatically becomes president.

Mr. Mixinge said the musicians, who were meeting in the house of popular rap artist Carbono Casimiro, were attacked as they did not agree with government policies.

"They broke the doors down… they tried to break our heads and they also tried to break our legs and arms," Mr. Mixinge told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme.

"It was obvious that they didn't want to kill us, they just wanted to scare us and put the fear into our hearts so that we stop doing our democratic actions and activist actions.

"There is a lot corruption in Angola, a lot of poverty, so we express our views against these kinds of things and the regimes does not like this they just attack us because our views, because of our ideals, that's it."

The same group of youth activists were attacked while trying to hold a demonstration in Luanda in March - they allege it was an undercover security operation.

The police denounced the violence blaming it on rival gangs.

Mr. Mixinge said he did not feel fearful and the group did not plan to stop their activities because of what had happened.

"We believe that this country and the people of this country deserve a better life.

"We believe in democracy, we believe in tolerance, we believe in respect, and these are things that a country needs to be able to develop."

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18180023