

# ANGOLA

## Welcome to the Angola pavilion at Osaka Expo

The rapidly transforming Southern African country will present its wealth of cultural heritage, natural resources and investment opportunities in Japan this year

Angola intends to pull out all the stops at the World Expo this year in Osaka.

"Building on the success of our previous pavilions at world expos, our goal for Expo 2025 is to draw a very large audience, share Angola's culture and present many opportunities for investment," said Albina Assis Africano, general commissioner for the pavilion of the vast southern African country.

"This marks Angola's second participation in a world expo hosted by Japan, the first being in 2005 in Aichi, where we joined the African Pavilion. For 2025, Angola is taking a significant step forward with its own dedicated pavilion," Africano added. "That reflects the progress the country has made and its ambitions in key areas, such as health, education, agriculture, technological innovation, tourism and the green economy. These sectors highlight the fact that economic, social and environmental transformations are underway in Angola, laying a solid foundation for partnerships and investment opportunities."

The Aichi Expo took place in Nagoya, just three years after the end of Angola's debilitating civil war. Since then, the country, which borders the Atlantic Ocean, Namibia, Zambia, Congo and the Republic of Congo, has been a beacon of peace and stability in its region. Angola's wider transformation, however, started in 2017, when Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco was democratically elected as president. Lourenco inherited an economy that was totally dependent on oil, as well as a country with a poor climate for doing business and high levels of societal inequality.

Over the past seven years, his administration has introduced numerous reforms to strengthen and diversify the economy, bolster governance and improve the business environment. These include a new private-sector investment law that makes it easier and more advantageous for international entities to invest in the country, as well as legislation to encourage competition and the privatization of state-owned bodies.

Lourenco's measures are working. According to the International Monetary Fund, Angola's gross domestic product grew by 3.8% in 2024, reaching over \$90 billion. A dynamic hydrocarbon sector is still the largest contributor to the economy, generating about 30% of GDP. Nonoil sectors are also expanding, particularly mining, agriculture, fisheries and services such as trade, transportation and logistics. Foreign direct investment is also on the rise and supporting diversification. In 2024, Angola's oil industry received \$9.7 billion in investment inflows, an 11.3% year-on-year increase, while investments into nonoil sectors rose 185% to \$354 million over the same period.

This upward trend is likely to continue, with various industries offering opportunities for investors. These include the oil sector, with new exploration licenses being made available this year, and mining. Angola is one of the world's biggest diamond producers, but its lands also contain extensive



**Albina Assis Africano**  
General Commissioner,  
Angola Pavilion, Osaka Expo

untapped deposits of many other in-demand minerals. Agriculture is another example, as only around 10% of its 86 million acres (34,803,000 hectares) of fertile land has been cultivated to date. Agricultural regions benefit from a climate that suits a wide range of crops and easy access to water flowing through the nation's rivers. Those rivers also offer huge potential for aquaculture and hydroelectric power.

**'Economic, social and environmental transformations are underway in Angola, laying a solid foundation for partnerships.'**

Albina Assis Africano, General Commissioner,  
Angola Pavilion, Osaka Expo

Expansion of the country's mining and agricultural sectors, as well as food manufacturing and other export-focused industries, is being facilitated by investment in infrastructure. One notable illustration is the extension and modernization of the Lobito Corridor, a rail network connecting mineral-rich parts of Angola, Congo and Zambia with Angola's Port of Lobito. New infrastructure is also supporting growth in tourism. For instance, a new airport with the capacity to handle 15 million passengers a year has recently opened in Luanda, Angola's capital. This will enable many more visitors to discover the nation's wealth of natural, cultural and historical treasures.

Japan has been a crucial partner in nurturing Angola's ongoing development. The two countries

have shared a friendly diplomatic relationship since 1976, the year after the African nation gained its independence from Portugal. However, bilateral connections stepped up a gear when Lourenco became president. Various high-level meetings have taken place since then, including a state visit by Lourenco to Japan in 2023. Among other things, this led to the Japan-Angola Investment Agreement, which came into force in 2024 and seeks to liberalize, promote and protect investments between the two nations.

Over the years, the Japanese public and private sectors have been core contributors to Angola's advances in health, infrastructure, agriculture, education, training, information and communication technologies, energy and other fields. At the moment, for instance, the Japan International Cooperation Agency is helping the country expand its electricity transmission system. Toyota Tsusho Corp. is transforming Angola's Port of Namibe in a project valued at about \$700 million, and Toyo Engineering Corp. has just been awarded a contract to supply urea technology to a planned fertilizer plant, which will be one of the world's biggest urea-based fertilizer facilities.

One key platform for fostering bilateral relations has been the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. "Angola has seen significant benefits from TICAD, particularly in areas such as training, infrastructure and humanitarian assistance. These efforts have played an important part in strengthening Angola's human capital," Africano said.

The ninth edition of TICAD will take place in Yokohama in August and Japan will co-chair the conference with Angola, which currently holds the presidency of the African Union. "TICAD 9 and Expo 2025 provide Angola with a unique platform this year. The Angolan delegation plans to use these events to build partnerships, encourage trade and investment and connect business leaders from both nations," she said.

Angola is participating under the sub-theme "Saving Lives" at the expo. Africano explained: "This reflects the critical role education and health have in shaping a brighter, healthier future for the Angolan people. Our focus is on improving health and quality of life through education and by combining traditional practices with modern science and technologies. The pavilion will also emphasize the value of preserving cultural heritage and advancing sustainable development."

Africano is looking forward to the next six months in Osaka. "I extend my warmest greetings to the organizers of this extraordinary event and to all my fellow commissioners, with whom I have built strong bonds of friendship and collaboration. This spirit of unity captures the essence of the expo as a global event, one that encourages learning, sharing, cooperation and the celebration of cultural diversity," she said. "I welcome everyone to the Angola Pavilion at Expo 2025!"



Angola is emphasizing the value of advancing sustainable development and preserving cultural heritage at the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

## Facilitating the digital transition

Telecommunications company MSTelcom is helping position Angola as a hub for digitalized industries by investing in infrastructure, innovative services and strategic partnerships

In recent years, the Angolan government and telecommunications companies have made substantial investments to support the country's digital transition and position Angola as an African hub for data-focused industries.

A key contributor to those efforts has been MSTelcom, which was set up by the state-owned oil group Sonangol in 1996, and has since become a leading national supplier of telecommunications services to a diverse range of industries.

"Over time, our client base has grown from our initial stronghold in oil and gas to making significant inroads into other sectors, including mining, banking, insurance, transportation, logistics and the wider telecommunications market," said CEO Felisberta Martins Jesus. "Our product portfolio spans telephony, the internet, fiber-optic and satellite network transmissions, radio frequency, data centers, websites and cutting-edge information technology products, such as cloud, cybersecurity and the Internet of Things solutions."

The company has built up an extensive fiber-optic infrastructure network to boost Angola's connectivity. "Our fiber-optic cables link the north and south of the country with the capital Luanda, we have established connections with the Congos and are expanding toward Namibia. We have also developed a partnership with Angola's Namibe Railway, through which we are enhancing internal connections and extending our reach to Zambia," Jesus said. "We are focused on continuing to improve and expand our infrastructure. There are areas of the country that are still unconnected and we want to ensure every Angolan has access to digital connectivity."

While it strives to achieve this ambition, MSTelcom has integrated its services into the



**Felisberta Martins Jesus**  
CEO, MSTelcom

country's Angosat-2 satellite program. "Our satellite network provides comprehensive coverage not only throughout Angola, but also across the region. Additionally, we hold a stake in Angola Cables, which operates one of the most important global submarine cable networks," she said. "Through our strategic partnerships and investments, we are facilitating international connectivity and collaboration."

### Mutually beneficial collaboration

The company is dedicated to providing innovative services. For example, it pioneered high-quality cybersecurity solutions in Angola and has recently introduced drone technologies in partnership with Terra Drone, a Japanese company that specializes in the supply of drones and drone-based services.

"This collaboration has already borne significant results, notably in sustainability services such as measuring methane levels on oil platforms and carbon levels in mangrove zones. Sustainability holds a paramount place in our priorities," Jesus said. "As we navigate a dynamic telecommunications landscape, our commitment to innovation remains unwavering. Our objective is to continually innovate in ways that benefit our operations and, more importantly, contribute to the efficiency and satisfaction of our customers."

The CEO believes that establishing more relationships with Japanese businesses is vital for achieving this objective. "These partnerships would go beyond sharing knowledge. We aspire to learn from Japanese companies and to jointly invest for shared growth. Our goal is to foster win-win collaborations, where companies do not merely sell their products or services to us, but become integral parts of our growth story," she explained.

Jesus is confident that the country's telecommunications sector and its wider economy offer huge possibilities for Japanese companies interested in exploring them.

"The Japanese market's interest aligns with the vast opportunities in Angola, which has ample resources and a talented workforce. The people of Angola embody openness, resilience and profound optimism, fostering a vibrant atmosphere with immense growth potential," she said. "There is a valuable opportunity for harmonious collaboration, leveraging the knowledge and experience of the Japanese people with the ambitious spirit of the Angolans. Japanese companies are warmly welcomed here and we anticipate a mutually beneficial journey ahead."

## Close partnerships in technology

Japanese entities are important contributors to Angola's ongoing development of information, telecommunications, space and other technologies

Japan and Angola have established a strong relationship in information and communication technologies with an eye to embracing a digital future.

"For example, we are currently collaborating with Japan on the design and development of a road map for digital terrestrial television. We are adopting Japanese standards for this technological endeavor," said Minister of Telecommunications, Information Technologies and Social Communication Mario da Silva Oliveira.

"Furthermore, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation was the primary financier of our South Atlantic Submarine Cable System, which was completed in 2018," he added. Installed by NEC Corp., the SACS fiber-optic link runs from Angola to Brazil and was the first direct digital connection between Africa and South America. As a result of Angola's investment in this and other global submarine cables, over 70% of all African internet traffic now utilizes the country's digital infrastructure. "Angola is committed to becoming a telecommunications leader and hub in the region," Oliveira explained.

Japan was also the first supporter of Angola's space program, which was set up in 2012. "We have been working closely with Japan on this, both in general terms and especially in training," he said. "And in 2023, we signed a new memorandum of understanding with Japan regarding training activities for our national space program."

Angola's impetus for entering the space industry was a recognition that investing in satellite infrastructure was the quickest way to promote widespread digitalization in a vast country that spans almost 1.3 million square kilometers. In 2022, it launched its second satellite, Angosat-2, which uses new-generation high-throughput commu-



**Mario da Silva Oliveira**  
Minister of Telecommunications,  
Information Technologies and Social  
Communication

nication technologies. "We are now leveraging Angosat-2's resources to deploy free-to-use internet access points and fixed telephony installations in remote areas where there is no mobile coverage," Oliveira said.

As well as connecting people, Angola is using satellite technologies to develop its economy. Zolana Joao is the general director of the National Space Program Management Office, which oversees space activities. He said: "In our pioneering Earth Observation Program, we're integrating artificial intelligence with satellite imagery to create custom-designed products that cater to vital economic sectors. For instance, we have developed

programs that detect oil spills, assess crop health and monitor mining explorations. We're not just developing space solutions, we're developing a support system for our country's economy. We're at the forefront of space technologies and are excited about their potential."

Going forward, Angola wants to expand its digital capabilities by launching more satellites and extending its land-based fiber-optic network. According to Oliveira: "Through collaboration with other countries, Angola is also seeking knowledge to advance in technology industries, including the manufacturing and assembly of equipment, such as routers, radios, antennas, cabling and switches. The goal is to create job opportunities."

Around 35 million people live in Angola and 64% of them are under 25 years old. "One of our major challenges is youth unemployment," Oliveira said. "Therefore, our aim is to establish a robust technology industry that can produce equipment locally. Angola is a country of the future, and it has a very valuable human resource: young, highly creative people who are thirsty for work."

Joao agreed that the nation's young population is a significant advantage for fostering growth, as well as for international partners and investors.

"However, it's not just about our young people and the technology sector — all of Angola's industries are hungry for collaboration," he said. "Angola has huge untapped potential. If Japan shared its technological advances with Angola, we could accelerate progress by transferring knowledge, tools and best practices. Sectors such as health care, education and sustainable infrastructure, for example, would benefit immensely. Let's build bridges, solve problems and make collaborations between Japan and Angola thrive."

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# Oil tapped for economic diversification drive

A leading national player in the hydrocarbon industry is reinvesting its revenues into mining and logistics to support the prosperous development of Angola's wider economy

For decades, Angola's thriving oil and gas industry has been the main driver of the nation's economy and a prominent target for foreign investors. The National Oil, Gas and Biofuels Agency, which regulates the sector, forecasts that more than \$60 billion in new investments will be injected into the sector by 2030, thanks to the imminent launch of large-scale production sites and a licensing round for up to 10 additional exploration blocks.

In recent years, the country has also worked hard to diversify into other industries.

"Angola has made significant strides, but there remains a need for further development across various sectors. As a result, the country presents numerous opportunities for foreign direct investment," said Ulanga Gaspar Martins, chairman and CEO of Poliedro Oil Corp., a leading domestic player in hydrocarbons, mining and logistics.

However, he cautions, new investors face challenges, such as trying to navigate Angola's complex exchange rate and land policies. "To facilitate investments, collaborative efforts between the state and investment partners are imperative," Martins said. "The importance of international investors having a local investor as a partner is underscored by the need to understand the nuances of our economy and to share risks. While not obligatory, foreign investors often prefer this approach, realizing the advantages it brings."

Collaborating with a local expert can be a mutually beneficial experience.

"Partnerships are crucial for Poliedro, as we need more internal capacity to independently execute projects across the three sectors we operate in. While our ambition is substantial, we are realistic about our current capabilities and recognize the need for external support," he said. "Our collaborative partnership model emphasizes shared responsibilities, excellence, risk sharing and complementarity. We apply this philosophy across all our sectors, welcoming the latest trends and aligning ourselves with industry leaders."

**An increasingly multifaceted company**  
Poliedro was founded in 2004 as an upstream oil company, after that industry was opened to national investors. It secured an interest in Angola's offshore oil block 2/05 and currently holds a 12.5% share in this field, which it is developing. In 2016, the corporation ventured into the



**Ulanga Gaspar Martins**  
Chairman and CEO,  
Poliedro Oil Corp.

mining sector with the purchase of a diamond mine in Malanje, a province in the north of the country. Since then, Poliedro has expanded its focus to include logistics.

"Our 10-year strategic plan to 2030 aims to position Poliedro as a significant player in oil, mining and logistics. That plan is summed up by our motto: transform and prosper. While the majority of our revenues will continue to originate from extractive sectors, we intend to apply those resources to the real economy, specifically excelling in logistics to contribute to broader Angolan economic development," Martins explained.

In line with this plan, the company recently underwent a rebranding process that introduced a subtle change to its logo. He explained: "We opted for a geometric figure, symbolizing our multifaceted approach. Currently active in three pivotal sectors of Angola's economy, our logo philosophy reflects the diverse angles of action that define our operations."

Poliedro has also evolved into a holding company with four subsidiaries. "In the oil sector, we have established Poliedro Energy. Our plan involves expanding in this area, with a specialization in mature oil field participation or operation. The goal is to become an operator by 2030, but we acknowledge the necessity of strategic

partnerships to achieve this sooner," Martins said. "In addition, we are broadening our focus to encompass the wider energy spectrum. We are emphasizing the entire value chain, not just oil production."

Another of the company's subsidiaries is Poliedro Mining, which is currently engaged in a diamond project and is now looking to diversify its portfolio by exploring the potential in strategic minerals for the agricultural sector, with the aim of lessening the country's reliance on international markets for supplies such as fertilizers.

"The agricultural sector has emerged as a central focus for our economy, which demands sustained investments in technology and expertise to reduce dependence on imports and enhance food security. Resolving immediate economic challenges hinges on this diversification effort," he said. "Addressing Angola's food insecurity, we recognize the need to identify ores in the mining sector that can lower agricultural costs through local production and utilization. We see numerous advantages in fostering complementary partnerships as they align with our logic and philosophy for sustainable growth in mining."

The third subsidiary is Poliedro Logistics. The company has operated a retail gas station in Angola for some years and intends to create a larger network. However, its overall ambitions in this industry are much more expansive.

"We spotted a gap in integrated logistics services for various sectors in Angola, especially the demanding oil and mining industries. Therefore, the company aims to organize and equip itself to facilitate movement from production centers to consumption and transformation centers," Martins said.

In 2023, Poliedro took a substantial step in this direction when it acquired a 40% stake in the French company Sonasurf, which is part of the Bourbon group, a worldwide leader in maritime and subsea services for the hydrocarbon industry. Sonasurf is a crucial operator in Angolan maritime logistics, particularly in relation to transporting people and equipment to the growing number of offshore oil platforms in the country's waters.

According to Martins, "Having achieved this objective, Poliedro remains vigilant for new opportunities in logistics that align with its vision for sustainable and profitable business ventures."



Over \$60 billion in new investments should flow into Angola's thriving oil and gas sector by 2030.

Potential ventures it is considering include bunkering, distributing and storing refined oil products for both national and regional customers, and providing logistics services that cater to Angola's expanding agricultural sector. "There are burgeoning opportunities in this area, with exporting Angolan avocados being just one example," he said.

The company's final offshoot is Poliedro International. This subsidiary provides innovative financial solutions sourced from global markets that facilitate the company's acquisitions and project developments, as well as offering similar personalized services to external clients.

### Fostering exceptional talent

Poliedro has transformed its management philosophy over the past decade to overcome problems with monitoring and advancing its core investments in the oil industry. Some key executives had insufficient experience of working in that sector and its staff lacked advanced technical skills.

"In 2018, founding shareholders who were still involved in management relinquished control to professionals unaffiliated with the company. Our management team now comprises primar-

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Ulanga Gaspar Martins, Chairman and CEO,  
Poliedro Oil Corp.

ily young Angolan professionals who are tasked with implementing our strategic plan. This change empowered Poliedro to manage its assets more efficiently, facilitating project identification, structuring and execution, which is exemplified by our recent acquisition of Sonasurf," Martins said. "Furthermore, the 2012 world oil sector crisis proved instrumental in freeing up talent in Angola, enabling us to engage individuals with a fresh mindset and a willingness to embrace new challenges."

Poliedro continues to attract top talent and invests significantly in training. "We now have

an exceptional team that is dedicated to making impactful strides. Our focus is on the ongoing development of our human capital in order to effectively navigate future challenges and global trends. Without a competent team with up-to-date knowledge, the company would be at a disadvantage given the demanding nature of our activities," he said.

The executive believes that international oil companies currently operating in mature Angolan fields that fall below their own productivity standards could take advantage of the skills and experience that Poliedro and some other domestic businesses have accumulated.

"Despite the emphasis on energy transition, oil will remain a fundamental part of the energy mix for the foreseeable future. Transitioning oil fields to national companies is logical as fields evolve and move from a developmental to a maintenance phase," Martins said. "This strategic move will empower the domestic business community to reinvest more robustly in the national economy. Although it presents a distinct challenge, it is well within the capabilities of national companies and, with the right partnerships, there are limitless possibilities for success."



## Helping Angola achieve its full potential



With 20 years of experience in Angola's extractive industries, Poliedro SGPS is a pioneering national leader in the oil and gas upstream and downstream sectors, as well as in mining and specialized logistics for industries such as energy and mining.

We are now focused on diversifying and expanding our portfolio of activities across the value chains of our sectors of expertise. By investing in the country's economic development alongside international partners, we are helping Angola to transform and prosper.



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