

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AT THE**  
**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ANGOLA**

The implementation of ICTs at the National Assembly of Angola is still an ongoing process. The Angolan Parliament in its current shape as a multiparty assembly is almost fourteen years old and is the result of the first multiparty elections held in September 1992.

Thus, the National Assembly has since 1995 started to make serious efforts to gradually implement an ICT's policy in the parliamentary services so that they can provide a more efficient technical and administrative support. This policy targets both the training of the parliamentary community (Members of Parliament and staff) as well as the modernization of the available IT equipments.

The organization chart of the Parliamentary Administration provides for the existence, among other bodies, of an IT Center, whose main mission is to manage the Parliament's IT system and implement the new ICT's at the National Assembly.

Regarding the implementation and dissemination of the ICT's, several measures have been undertaken in order to ensure that all services of Parliament were duly equipped. Hence the progressive increases of the available number of IT equipments from 120 PCs in 2003/2004 to 220 in 2005/2006, out of which 190 are connected both to the Intranet and Internet.

Since the IV IPAIT General Assembly held in Rabat, the connectivity of the intranet was significantly improved due to the installation of a gigabytes` back – bone and the migration from cabling of category 5 to 6, as well as the installation of a mixed network combining both “Cabling” and “Wireless” in the new building of the National Assembly, although in an experimental stage. Likewise, two telephone switchboards were installed in each of the two buildings of the Assembly. Currently, the interconnection of these two switchboards is an ongoing process and it will finally result in a better communication among the members of the parliamentary community.

The National Assembly's home page ([www.parlamento.ao](http://www.parlamento.ao)) is currently being reconstructed and the major challenge facing this work is to make this page more regularly updated. Currently the home page is maintained by Nexus, the Parliament's provider, who also undertakes the responsibility of its updating after receiving the relevant data from the Parliament's IT Center. The focus is now to the

decentralization of the process of the home page's update, a task that will now be directly undertaken by the pertinent parliamentary services.

Furthermore, the modernization of the audiovisual system is in its final phase with the installation of central digital audio recording software named "SISAUDIO." This Brazilian made software is capable of recording audio for 82 consecutive hours and has played a huge impact in the production of Hansard of the meetings of the Chamber and Committees. "SISAUDIO" can also be available on audio via Intranet, where the debates of the House can be heard.

On another note, as it was underlined in the previous IPAIT meetings, the National Assembly of Angola is since 2004, part of the Project "Regional Initiative – Strengthening the Information Systems of Parliaments in Africa" which is supported by the Italian Government and managed by the United Nation's Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The Project general objective is to promote the use of ICTs in parliaments with the aim of increasing the quality of the parliamentary services; facilitate the access of citizens to the parliamentary documents and create new forms of the civil society's participation in the democratic process.

The Project was initially expected to last only *two years* (September 2003 – September 2005), but it was later prolonged for further two years due to its positive effect in the parliaments part to it. These parliaments are from the following countries: Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, as well as the Pan African Parliament.

The said Project has mobilized the support of all the relevant stakeholder inside Parliament, including the Speaker, and it is, therefore, expected that the conclusion of its 2nd phase will lead to the implementation of IT systems able to manage the legislative process, the hansard`s, parliamentary data, among others.

Note that one of the Project's deliverables was the setting-up in May 2005 of a *Parliamentary Cyber Center*, fully equipped by the Project and with the capacity of serving 15 users simultaneously. This Center has been used, among other things, for IT training of MPs and staff in an effort to reach the so called digital alphabetization at Parliament. It should also be highlighted that the Project is supporting the strengthening of the Parliament IT Center with several high tech equipments of the last generation.

## **Conclusions**

- ⇒ Despite some progress made by the National Assembly of Angola in the field of ICTs, it can be said that the day-by-day evolution and complexity of these Technologies do require that the Angolan Parliament keeps making efforts in order to allow that in the short term most of its MPs and staff are fully familiar with them having in due account the relevant international standards.
  
- ⇒ The worldwide debate on the citizens' access to information versus the regulation of the use of ICTs also deserves a due consideration. In this context, both the Angolan Parliament, as a legislative body, and its Parliamentarians, as lawmakers, should strive to speed up the process of adopting a legal framework regulating the access to the public information.
  
- ⇒ The Angolan Parliament recognizes and reiterates the importance and need of a parliamentary cooperation - multilateral and bilateral – in the ICT's field among IPAIT Member Parliaments. This will definitely ensure the exchange of good practices and experiences and contribute to the decrease of the digital gap among the IPAIT Member countries, which is one of the purposes of the

IPAIT Charter. A good example of such cooperation is the provision by the Brazilian Parliament to the Angolan Parliament, of the software “SISAUDIO”, a step that can only be applauded.

Thank you.

Helsinki, 15 January 2006.

**The Angolan Delegation**