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## **Brazilian President Visits Angola, Promises Closer Economic Ties**

*by John Neagle*

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On Jan. 27, President Jose Sarney arrived in Luanda, Angola, for a two-day official visit, marking the first time a Brazilian head of state has visited that country. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister Roberto de Abreu Sodre, officials from several ministers, and a delegation of private businesspersons. Officials from both nations said they intend to expand trade ties, as Brazil needs Angolan petroleum and can provide technology to the country. In 1987, Brazilian exports to Angola totaled \$207 million; and imports, \$98 million, mostly petroleum products. Brazil is currently Angola's third largest trade partner, after the US and Portugal. After proclaiming independence from Portugal on Sept. 11, 1975, Brazil was one of the first countries to recognize Angola's leftist government. The two countries share Portuguese as a working language. During his visit, Sarney praised the "courage of the Angolan people who protected their sovereignty and contributed decisively to ending colonialism in Namibia, leading the way to the final liberation of southern Africa." In 1988, Angola concluded a US-brokered agreement with Cuba and South Africa for the complete withdrawal of some 50,000 Cuban troops from its territory by July 1, 1991. In exchange, Pretoria agreed to lead Namibia to independence. Luanda is still caught up in a 14-year-old civil war with rightist rebels of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, supported by Pretoria and Washington. According to members of Sarney's entourage, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos described Brazil as "our big brother, independent for the past 160 years," and said Brazil could be considered as a possible model for Angola's development. Under agreements already concluded, Brazil has committed \$1.1 billion worth of credits for Angola's economic reconstruction. The credits cover short-term food purchases, medium-term projects in transport, telecommunications and housing, and the Soviet-Brazilian hydroelectric project at Kapanda, in northern Angola. Dos Santos requested that Brazilian officials attend proceedings of the Southern Africa Development Coordination Council (SADCC) in areas that concern Angolan reconstruction. He also suggested that Brazil should play a role in the construction of a port in Namibia. Its only other port, Walvis Bay, is to remain under South African control. On Jan. 28, the delegations signed agreements on sea transport, agricultural development and film productions. Sarney said the accords showed that Brasilia was prepared to develop ties in a Third World context "irrespective of ideological differences." (Basic data from Notimex, Xinhua, 01/27/89; AFP, 01/28/89)

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