

**From:** Kapla, Robert  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 3, 2023 4:53 PM  
**To:** 'MatzaHR@state.gov' <[MatzaHR@state.gov](mailto:MatzaHR@state.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Angola / Oval Office meeting

Dear Helaina,

Please see my email to Amos (and Molly Phee), below. I recognize he's tremendously busy so I'm sharing it with you.

The Angolans are increasingly focused on an Oval visit this year. EXIM's anticipated financing of the Sun Africa project in Angola will be an excellent announcement the presidents could make. But there are several pillars of accelerating engagement they can also discuss. Rare earths/critical minerals is one example. Your comments during the recent PAC-DBIA meeting were important. Angola's Lobito Corridor is vital to accessing minerals in the DRC. Angola itself has reserves of 30+ of the 50 critical minerals. UK-based Pensana is trying to develop that market and process the minerals in the UK. Hopefully, Angola can continue to engage via the MSP and other avenues. Finally, noted below, there are very real strategic justifications for an Oval visit this year.

I'd be grateful if you could make sure Amos sees this background, and I would welcome an opportunity to speak with either of you in more detail about these and other matters with which we are advising the Presidency of Angola.

Sincerely yours,

Robert



**Robert S. Kapla**

Partner and Co-Chair for Global Public Policy  
Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP  
2550 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
T +1 202 457 6192  
O +1 202 457 6000  
F +1 202 457 6315  
M +1 202 641 4235

[robert.kapla@squirepb.com](mailto:robert.kapla@squirepb.com) | [squirepattonboggs.com](http://squirepattonboggs.com)

Find Us: [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

*(This material is distributed by Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP on behalf of the Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Angola. Additional information is available at the FARA Registration Unit of the US Department of Justice in Washington, DC.)*

**From:** Kapla, Robert  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2023 5:01 PM  
**To:** 'HochsteinAJ@state.gov' <[HochsteinAJ@state.gov](mailto:HochsteinAJ@state.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Angola / Oval Office meeting

Dear Amos,

My law firm has represented the Office of the Presidency of Angola since 2019 and is registered pursuant to the US Foreign Agent Registration Act. Thank you for your active support of the rapidly growing partnership between the United States and Angola. I would welcome an opportunity to brief you on our mandate. Its an important one on which we report directly to President Lourenço.

As detailed in my email to Ambassador Phee (below), we're pushing hard for an Oval Office meeting this year between Presidents Biden and Lourenço. While President Lourenço has built a profound record of accomplishments since 2017 on which to justify a meeting with President Biden, several timely developments make 2023 the opportune year for the meeting:

- This year marks the 30-year anniversary of diplomatic ties between the US and Angola. Relations under President Lourenço are a stark – and positive – contrast to where they started in 1993.
- While others in southern Africa are strengthening ties to China, President Lourenço is shedding Angola's historic relationships with China (and Russia) in favor of a new and strategic partnership with the United States. This is a fundamental shift in Angolan foreign policy.
- Angola is playing a critical role in brokering peace in the Great Lakes, including preparing to deploy troops to eastern Congo.
- Angola is keen to strengthen its military relationship with the United States to play a larger role in regional peace and security.
- American investment in Angola's non-hydrocarbon sectors (e.g., telecommunications, renewable energy, infrastructure), is a critical component to the bilateral relationship that the Angolans want to accelerate and expand.

Like you, we're very familiar with the Sun Africa project. On the President's instruction, we worked closely with the company to ensure its project aligned with Angolan priorities while maintaining strong US support. EXIM approval of this project—anticipated in May/June—would be a high-profile deliverable both Presidents could announce during their meeting. We understand there may be another trade and development announcement shortly that could also be rolled into the meeting.

Thank you again, Amos, for your support of Angola. Please let me know if you have any time to discuss – I could use your guidance as we rally support for the meeting. And do please read my note to Amb. Phee below, which provides some additional context to our effort and insight into Luanda's thinking.

Sincerely yours,

Robert

**From:** Kapla, Robert

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 4, 2023 3:01 PM

**To:** 'PheeMC@state.gov' <[PheeMC@state.gov](mailto:PheeMC@state.gov)>

**Cc:** 'MassingaEJ@state.gov' <[MassingaEJ@state.gov](mailto:MassingaEJ@state.gov)>; 'MushingiTS@state.gov'

<[MushingiTS@state.gov](mailto:MushingiTS@state.gov)>; 'judd.b.devermont@nsc.eop.gov' <[judd.b.devermont@nsc.eop.gov](mailto:judd.b.devermont@nsc.eop.gov)>

**Subject:** Angola / Oval Office meeting

Dear Ambassador Phee,

As you may know, my law firm and I have been working with the Office of the Presidency of Angola since 2019 and are registered pursuant to the US Foreign Agent Registration Act.

We are pleased with the progress made in helping Angola find its way to a much stronger relationship with the United States. In our judgement, we have reached the moment where this relationship needs to be solidified at the highest level. If done in the right manner, we can count on a very promising future for the bilateral relationship.

With this in mind, we have been working to establish a meeting between President Biden and President Lourenço. We have thought to use the occasion of this year's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations to bring President Lourenço to Washington to acknowledge and celebrate the anniversary with Secretary Blinken at the Department of State and meet with President Biden in the Oval Office. We have discussed this idea with officers in your bureau and the US embassy in Luanda and have pursued it with President Lourenço's national security advisor. While not opposed to this approach, it is clear President Lourenço cannot accept an invitation to Washington without a formal assurance he will see President Biden.

Historically, the bilateral relationship has been fraught with misunderstandings, disagreements, and some controversy. This began to change after President Lourenço was elected in 2017 and quickly signaled his interest in moving closer to the United States. This was a fundamental shift in Angolan foreign policy, and it was not popular within the government. Yet the President's actions continue to demonstrate a commitment to shedding historic relationships with China and Russia in favor of a new partnership with the United States.

Indeed, under President Lourenço, nearly all aspects of the bilateral relationship – diplomatic, commercial, military, and cultural – are at their highest in decades. This is a stark contrast to his predecessor, who was the last Angolan President to meet his American counterpart 19 years ago, in 2004. The Presidency feels strongly that Angola has built a profound record of accomplishments and irreversible reforms over the past 6 years on which to justify a meeting this year between the two presidents.

We are informed that if President Lourenço is unable to meet with President Biden this year, there is real risk that the positive momentum both sides have generated since 2017 will begin to lose traction. The Angolans are not prepared to say this to the US government. But in an environment in which Angola's peers in sub-Saharan Africa are hedging their relationships with the US, President Lourenço faces increasing pressure to do the same.

An Oval Office meeting will validate President Lourenço's drive to establish a novel, game-changing partnership with the United States. We know the Angolans attach such importance to an Oval Office meeting that the meeting would be transformative. They tell us the sky is the limit with respect to commercial prospects in the energy, telecommunication, agribusiness, and infrastructure sectors; and defense cooperation among other opportunities they are prepared to discuss. Already there is a chorus of American businesses investing in Angola that would support the meeting. And if the US Export-Import Bank decides to finance Sun Africa's large renewable energy project in Angola (a decision we understand may be imminent), it will make an excellent announcement during the meeting.

Madam Ambassador, I would appreciate anything you can do to move the process forward by engaging the White House on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Robert



**Robert S. Kapla**

Partner and Co-Chair for Global Public Policy  
Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP  
2550 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
T +1 202 457 6192  
O +1 202 457 6000  
F +1 202 457 6315  
M +1 202 641 4235

[robert.kapla@squirepb.com](mailto:robert.kapla@squirepb.com) | [squirepattonboggs.com](http://squirepattonboggs.com)

Find Us: [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

*(This material is distributed by Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP on behalf of the Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Angola. Additional information is available at the FARA Registration Unit of the US Department of Justice in Washington, DC.)*