

Modernization of Lobito port right on schedule

Lobito port is rapidly becoming a catalyst for economic growth and development for the entire region, and is looking to help Benguela province return to its glory days as an industrial power. Thanks to the nearly completed Benguela Railways (Caminhos de Ferro de Benguela) and a local cement factory, along with the port modernization program, its industries are beginning to flourish. The modernization project is a top-dollar item, with more than \$1 billion already spent on docks and terminals. In commenting on the renovation, the port's chairman, Anapaz Neto, said, "We're already seeing improvements and reaping the benefits. We'll soon be able to dock 12 to 15 ships at once."

That will be double the current

capacity of six to eight vessels. The overall plans are big: increasing the port capacity, from 2 million tons a year to 11 million tons, a 700,000-container working capacity. By 2010, the handling capacity was already up 10 percent. The port is not aiming to outshine the major port in the country at Luanda, but it is all part of a national plan to improve the maritime infrastructure to boost growth by lowering the costs for importers and exporters. "In fact, we're not competing with the port of Luanda. In a way, we're working with them. As we create more capacity here, we help alleviate the overcrowding in Luanda. That's all part of the national economic plan," Neto explained.

The port modernization plan covers three main areas: improving productivity, replacing worn-out equipment, and providing training for employees. And, it does not stop with the external improvements that Neto referred to. Another plan calls for alleviating the excessive amount of bureaucratic involvement that characterized the import process in the past. "My idea is to be a one-stop agent so that, when a boat arrives, everything can be taken care of in that one place. This is something we must do to make us competitive," he added. The port celebrated its 83rd year as a separate, independent entity from the Benguela Railways company earlier this year, and is proud to show how the



We're already seeing improvements and reaping the benefits. We'll be able to handle 12 to 15 ships at once; double the current capacity."

ANAPAZ NETO
CHAIRMAN, PORT OF LOBITO



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Significant investments mean the port of Lobito will be more competitive regionally and nationally.

modernization process is on schedule. Work on a 500-meter-long, 300-meter-wide loading and unloading terminal for minerals is underway, along with a dry dock, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Several parts of the expansion and modernization project have been finished. Most important, there is the paving, lighting, and a new railway line to carry cargo in and out of the port. One with more far-reaching effects is the VTS building, which will house an information and location system to track ships moving about in the Lobito area. Neto said that the port management can take credit for its leadership in the modernization effort. But, he is quick to point out, the speed and efficiency at which it is being carried out are thanks to the China Harbour Engineering Co which is in charge of the work. They deserve praise, Neto said, and, "They meet deadlines, and do the work on time and very efficiently."

Multiterminais: \$50 million to improve port services

Deciding to spend \$50 million on a port in Angola is not as easy as it may sound, but, for the consortium in charge, it is not only reasonable, it is the start of a much longer business project. The business group is Multiterminais — consisting of the Nile Dutch Africa Line BV, NDS Lda, and Copinol SARL — and the \$50 million is being used over the next five years to build new warehouses and offices, increase security, and expand the cargo terminal for the port of Luanda. The upgrade is part of a drive to turn Angola's major port into one of Africa's leading transshipment hubs.

It is also part of a vision. According to Leonel da Rocha Pinto, general manager of Multiterminais, "The port is an agent for change and the cargo terminal will contribute to that. "Moreover, the improvements are very important because the country is widening its horizons and making an effort to boost production." The Angolan government privatized the port in 2005 and gave Multiterminais a 20-year lease because they were better, faster and more efficient than the competition.

Because port logistics are important for the local economy and space at the port has always been a premium, a sister company, the Angola-owned Multiparques, is working with Multiterminais to provide better cargo handling and storage solutions for importers and exporters. Multiparques is in charge of management, terminal vehicles, containers, warehouses, and the distribution of goods,

and is starting to make a difference. Multiparques has allocated an additional \$70 million to develop a dry port at Viana, 15 miles inland from Luanda's port. This is expected to help ease congestion and keep transportation and cargo costs lower, so Angola's consumers can ultimately reap the benefits, as the price of goods goes down. Rocha Pinto said that he sees the benefits since containers can be removed immediately after they are emptied and the merchandise stored. This means lower costs and a shorter turnaround time, with containers being returned to the



Leonel da Rocha Pinto, general manager of the Multiterminais and Multiparques companies

clients in only two to five days. Rocha Pinto is also spearheading a drive to build new cold storage facilities. This new phase of development will be useful to importers of perishable goods, and will provide a storage facility for the growing number of local producers, before distributing their goods in Luanda.



A Reliable Partner, Open for Investment



Established in 2007, the Instituto Marítimo e Portuário de Angola (IMPA) is the body responsible for Angola's maritime network, with the power to coordinate, control, license and regulate the nation's ports. Working under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport, IMPA guarantees the good functioning of maritime traffic and portuary installations throughout the country, including the ports of Cabinda, Soyo, Luanda, Lobito and Namibe. As the country's economy grows, the demand for modern and high quality infrastructure is set to increase, ensuring IMPA has a vital role to play in Angola's future.