

Former Angolan president Jose Eduardo dos Santos dies at 79

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Jose Eduardo dos Santos was president of Angola from 1979-2017.

Luanda, July 8 (RHC)-- Angola's former president Jose Eduardo dos Santos has died aged 79, the Angolan presidency has said on Facebook.

His death was reportedly confirmed at 11 a.m. on Friday by the medical team at a clinic in Barcelona, after being in coma for about a week. Zé Dú, as he affectionately came to be known throughout his long presidential term, has been living in Barcelona since late 2017, when he formally retired from political life, leaving power to his successor, the current president of Angola, João Lourenço.

Like many of his generation, Mr Dos Santos joined the struggle for Angola's liberation from Portuguese colonial rule early. As a student, he joined The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Angola's ruling party.

By 1961, he became an official member of the MPLA from neighbouring Congo Brazzaville, where he was exiled under pressure from the colonial government. He was chosen by the movement to study petroleum engineering in the former Soviet Union.

A decade on, he returned home having graduated, to serve in the guerrilla movement of his party for the Angolan liberation struggle.

From Angola's independence proclamation in November 1975, Dos Santos held important positions in the government and in his party. Between 1975-76, he held the role of the country's first foreign minister.

Following the death of Angola's first president, Antonio Agostinho Neto, dos Santos was nominated by the MPLA to become Neto's successor.

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